

HANDBOOK OF PATRISTIC EXEGESIS

THE BIBLE IN ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY



CHARLES KANNENGIESSER

... τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ὑποτασσάμενοι ὡς ἰσχύς
... οὐκ ἐστὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς, κλητεῖ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,
... αἰσὶ τῆς οὐσίας ἐν ὁμοίᾳ, ἀγαπητοῦ θεοῦ, κλη-
... τοῦ ἁγίου. χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εὐελοία ἀπὸ θεοῦ
... πατρὸς ἡμῶν, καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

... us posse, quibus de unitate eius de-
uocati Iesu Christi, omnib⁹ qui Ron-
estis, dilectis dei, uocatis factis, Gra-
uobis & pax a deo patre nostro, & d-
Iesu Christo. Primū qdē gratias a-

HANDBOOK OF PATRISTIC
EXEGESIS

THE BIBLE IN ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

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VOLUME 1

Handbook of Patristic Exegesis

The Bible in Ancient
Christianity

by Charles Kannengiesser

WITH SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY VARIOUS SCHOLARS



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PREFACE

The present Handbook of Patristic Exegesis was in the making for over a decade. A first incentive for its conception came in the form of a circular letter from Brill inviting experts to collaborate on a number of projected handbooks. Soon after the signature of the contract the idea of a collection of essays dealing with the whole history of patristic exegesis revealed itself to be unworkable and counter-productive. The diversity of viewpoints in specialized approaches excluded a coherent oversight of biblical hermeneutics during the patristic period.

I made the risky decision to become solely responsible for the whole project under consideration, while calling on a number of friends and colleagues for help. Their sixteen "Special Contributions" enhance the present publication. One of these contributions, "Patristic Exegesis of the Books of the Bible," by David L. Balás and D. Jeffrey Bingham is noteworthy in its sheer volume (here the entire chapter 4 of Part A) and its methodological complementarity: whereas the Handbook presents patristic authors with regard to the Bible, Balás and Bingham concentrate on the Books of the Bible as presented by patristic authors.

The unselfish commitment and extreme patience of the contributors are for me a source of intense gratitude. My comparatively recent familiarity with written English, together with the challenges of teaching commitments, as much as the amassing of bibliographic information needed for a synthesis never attempted before, underlies the over-long incubation of the Handbook.

Without the assistance of Deacon Phil Dunn, my former student at Concordia University, who relentlessly computerized all bibliographic data, and without the friendly welcome of Father Claude-Roger Nadeau, s. j. in the oasis of his Bibliothèque de Théologie in Montreal, the project would have failed. The full support of Dr. Martin Singer, Dean of the College of Arts and Science at Concordia University, and that of the Department of Theological Studies since 1992 were another vital input towards the conclusion of the project. Heartfelt gratitude goes to all helping hands from which the incubating handbook benefitted during the past decade: my Australian relatives and friends, Anne and John Bright, Maureen and Denis McNamara, Pauline Allen and her staff; my French family, especially Josèpha and Fernand Jenny; my Japanese colleagues; and closer to home, my colleague at Concordia University, Russel Moroziuk, in the last stages of proofreading, and Bernard Glover, also of Concordia, whose expertise with computers made miracles. In different ways they all allowed the project to reach completion. Last but not least, the publisher Brill, taking on for me a human face through the

enthusiastic commitment of Hans van der Meij, Pim Rietbroek and their staff (in particular, Edgar Smith and Michel Pauw) in Leiden (Holland) and of Patrick Alexander in Boston, Mass. (USA) never failed to provide a generous and highly competent support. Prof. D. Jeffrey Bingham, already mentioned as a special contributor, was also kindly helpful in the editorial stage. With four modest Latin words, the dedicatory formula tries to express the debt of gratitude beyond all words which I owe to my wife, my best friend and student for almost a quarter of a century, and my inspiration for years to come.

C. Kannengiesser
Castillon La Bataille,
next to Saint-Émilion.
September 15, 2003.

ABBREVIATIONS

AAB	Annuaire de l'Académie Royale de Belgique
AAR	American Academy of Religion
AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
AAST	Atti dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Torino
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AAW	Anzeiger für die Altertumswissenschaft
AB	Assyriologische Bibliothek
ABenR	American Benedictine review
ABla	Analekta Blatadon
ABR	Australian Biblical Review
Abr-n.	Abr-nahrain. Leiden
ACEBT	Amsterdamse cahiers voor exegese en bijbelse theologie
ACI	Acta classica
ACR	Australasian Catholic Record
ACra	Analecta Cracoviensia
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
Aeg.	Aegyptus. Milano
AER	American Economic Review
Aev	Aevum
AFLN	Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Nice
AHC	Annuaire historiae conciliorum
AHDL	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge
AIEP	Association Internationale d'Études Patristiques
AJBI	Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute
AJP	American Journal of Philology
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
ALi	Artisan liturgique
ALMA	Archivum latinitatis medii aevi
AMAT	Atti e memorie dell' Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere 'La Colombaria'
AmiCl	L'ami du clergé
AMidi	Annales du Midi. Revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale
AMus	Anuario musical
AmUSt.P	American University Studies. Philosophy
AmUSt.TR	American University Studies. Theology and religion

AnBib	Analectica Biblica
AnBoll	Analectica Bollandiana
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
Ang.	Angelicum. Roma
AnGreg	Analectica Gregoriana
Anima	Anima. Olten
AnPhil	L'année philologique
ANQ	Andover Newton quarterly
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ANTF	Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Textforschung
AnTol	Anales Toledanos
Anton.	Antonianum. Roma
ANTT	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
AOSBM	Analecta Ordinis Sancti Basilii Magni. Roma
APFC	Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century
APraem	Analecta Praemonstratensia
ASE	Abhandlungen zur Socioethik
ASEs	Annali di storia dell'esegesi
ASNSP	Annali della (R.) Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa
Asp.	Asprenas. Napoli
AsSeign	Assemblées du Seigneur
AST	Analecta sacra Tarraconensia
ASTI	Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute (Jerusalem)
ASV	Anales del Seminario de Valencia
AThA	Année théologique augustinienne
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AThR	Anglican Theological Review
ATR	Australasian Theological Review
Aug(L)	Augustiniana. Louvain
Aug.	Augustinianum. Roma
AugL	Augustinus-Lexikon
AugM	Augustinus magister
AugSt	Augustinian Studies
Augustinus	Augustinus. Madrid
BA	Biblical Archaeologist
BAC	Bibliotheca de autores cristianos
BAGB	Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé
BALAC	Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétiennes

BASP	Bulletin de l'Académie Impériale des Sciences de St. Petersburg
BAth	Bibliotheca Athena
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBLAK	Beiträge zur biblischen Landes- und Altertumskunde
BeKa	Bedi K'art'lisa
Ben.	Benedictina. Roma
BenM	Benediktinische Monatsschrift
BenS	Benedictine Studies
Bess.	Bessarione. Roma
BETHL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum Iovaniensium
BETS	Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society
BEvTh	Beiträge zur Evangelischen Theologie
BFCL	Bulletin des facultés catholiques de Lyon
BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
BGBH	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Hermeneutik
BGrL	Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur
BHG	Bibliotheca hagiographica Graeca
BHR	Bibliothèque d'humanisme et de renaissance
BHTH	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
BI	Biography Index
Bib	Biblica. Roma
BIBP	Bibliothèque de philosophie
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
BIHBR	Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome
BIIRHT	Bulletin d'information de l'Institution de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes
Bijdr.	Bijdragen. Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie
BiKi	Bibel und Kirche
BiLe	Bibel und Leben
BiLi	Bibel und Liturgie
BiOr	Bibliotheca orientalis. Leiden
BiTod	Bible Today
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BKV	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter
BLE	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique
BLit	Bibliothèque liturgique
BN	Biblische Notizen
BPatr	Bibliographia patristica

BR	Biblical Research
BS	Bibliotheca sacra
BSAC	Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte
BScR	Bibliothèque de sciences religieuses
BSFEM	Bulletin de la Société Française d'Études Mariales
BSNTS	Bulletin of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BSRel	Biblioteca di scienze religiose. Roma
BSS	Bibliotheca sanctorum
BSt	Biblische Studien
BT	Bibliothèque de théologie. Paris
Burg.	Burgense. Burgos
BVC	Bible et vie chrétienne
BySl	Byzantinoslavica. Praha
ByZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
Byz(T)	Byzantina. Thessalonikē
Byz.	Byzantion. Bruxelles
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
Cath.	Catholicisme. Paris
CBiPa	Cahiers de Biblia patristica
CBNTS	Coniectanea Biblica. New Testament Series
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CC	Continental Commentaries
CCist	Collectanea Cisterciensia
CCICr	Civiltà classica e cristiana
CCR	Coptic Church Review
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CD	Das christliche Deutschland
CDios	Ciudad de Dios
Celt.	Celtica. Dublin
CFi	Cogitatio fidei
CGPNT	Catena Graecorum patrum in novum testamentum
CH	Cahiers d'histoire
CHB	Cahiers de Biblia Patristica
ChH	Church History

CHR	Catholic Historical Review
CiFe	Ciencia y fe
CitN	Citeaux in de Nederlanden
CleR	Clergy Review
CM	Classica et mediaevalia
CMech	Collectanea Mechliniensa
CNRTh	Cahiers de la Nouvelle revue théologique
COCR	Collectanea Ordinis Cisterciensium Reformatorum
Communio	Communio. Sevilla
Comp.	Compestellanum. Compostela
Conc (D)	Concilium. Einsiedeln
Conc (E)	Concilium. Madrid
Conc	Concilium. Religion in the Seventies / Eighties
CorPat	Corona Patrum
CPF	Collection Les pères dans la foi
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CQR	Church Quarterly
CRAI	Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres
CrCr	Cross and Crown
CrSt	Cristianesimo nella storia
CS	Contributions in Sociology
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CSion	Cahiers sioniens
CThJ	Calvin Theological Journal
CThM	Calwer theologische Monographien
CuBi	Cultura biblica
CuMon	Cudernos monásticos
CW	Classical World
DB(H)	Dictionary of the Bible. Ed. by James Hastings
DBM	Deltion biblikon meleton
DBS	Dictionnaire de la bible. Supplément
DC	Documentation catholique
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques
Diakonia	Diakonia. Mainz 1966-1969
Did(L)	Didaskalia. Lisbōa
Did.	Didaskaleion. Torino
Diss.T	Dissertationen. Theologische Reihe

DissAb	Dissertation Abstracts
Div.	Divinitas. Roma
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
DPAC	Dizionario patristico e di antichità
DR	Downside Review
DSp	Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique
DT	Divus Thomas. Freiburg, Schweiz
DTC	Dictionnaire de théologie chrétienne
DuKul	Duchovna Kultura
EA	Luther, Martin: Sämtliche Werke. Erlangen
EAg	= EstAg
EB	Die Heilige Schrift in deutscher Übersetzung. 'Echter Bibel'. Würzburg
EC	Encyclopedia cattolica
ECarm	Ephemerides Carmeliticae
Eccl.	Ecclesia. Encyclopédie populaire des connaissances religieuses
ECQ	Eastern Churches Quarterly
ECS	Encyclopedia of Catholic Saints
ED	Euntes docete
EE	Estudios eclesiásticos
EEC	Encyclopedia of Early Christianity
EeT	Église et théologie
EeV	Esprit et vie. Langres
EHPHR	Études d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses
EklPh	Ekklesiastikos Pharos
EkTh	Ekklēsia kai theologia
EL	Ephemerides liturgicae
EM	Emerita. Madrid
EncBib	Enciclopedia della biblia
EncC	Encyclopédie catholique
Eos	Eos. Wroclaw
EphMar	Ephemerides Mariologicae
Er.	Eranos. Uppsala
ERT	Evangelical Review of Theology
EstAg	Estudio agustiniano
EstB	Estudios biblicos
EsTe	Estudios teológicos
EstFr	Estudios franciscanos
EstJos	Estudios josifinos

EstTrin	Estudios trinitarios
ET	Expository Times
EtCarm	Études carmélitaines
EThL	Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses
EThSt	Erfurter theologische Studien
ETR	Études théologiques et religieuses
Études	Études. Publ. par des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus
EuA	Erbe und Auftrag
EurHS	Europäische Hochschulschriften
EvQ	Evangelical Quarterly
EvTh	Evangelische Theologie
EWNT	Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
EX	Ecclesiastica Xaveriana
FaCh	Fathers of the Church
FF	Frate Francesco
FKDG	Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte
FKTh	Forum katholische Theologie
FlorPatr	Florilegium patristicum
FMSt	Frühmittelalterliche Studien
Fr.	Franciscana. Sint-Truiden
FrRu	Freiburger Rundbriefs
FS	Franziskanische Studien
FThSt	Freiburger theologische Studien
FzB	Forschung zur Bibel
FZPhTh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller
GGA	Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen
GIF	Giornale italiano di filologia
Glotta	Glotta. Göttingen
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni opera
GOFS	Göttinger Orientforschung. Reihe 1, Syriaca
GöMisZ	Göttinger Miszellen. Beiträge zur ägyptologischen Diskussion
GOTR	Greek Orthodox Theological Review
GrB	Grazer Beiträge
GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
Greg	Gregorianum
GThT	Gereformeed theologisch tijdschrift

HandAm	Handes amsōreaj
HE	Histoire de l'église
HeB	Homiletica et biblica
Helm.	Helmantica. Salamanca
HEN	Hautes études numismatiques
HeyJ	Heythrop Journal
HibJ	Hibbert Journal
Hist(B)	Historia. Bratislava
HJ	Historisches Jahrbuch
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HPR	Homiletic and Pastoral Review
HR	History of Religions
HS	Historische Studien
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IBSt	Irish Biblical Studies
IER	Irish Ecclesiastical Record
IKaZ	Internationale katholische Zeitschrift
IKZ	Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift
IluCle	Ilustración del clero
Imm	Immanuel. Jerusalem
Interp.	Interpretation. Richmond, VA
Irén	Irénikon. Chevetogne
Ist.	Istina. Boulgne-sur-Seine
IThQ	Irish Theological Quarterly
ITS	Indian Theological Studies
IZBG	Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete
JA	Journal asiatique
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JAC.E	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum. Ergänzungsband
JANES	Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBR	Journal of Bible and Religion
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JES	Journal of Ecumenical Studies
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society

JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
JITC	Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center
JJP	Journal of Juristic Papyrology
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JLT	Journal of Literature and Theology
JÖB	Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik
JÖBG	Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft
JPTh	Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JR	Journal of Religion
JRH	Journal of Religious History
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
JSL	Journal of Sacred Literature (and Biblical Record)
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOT.S	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series
JSS	Journal of the Siam Society
JTC	Journal of Theology and the Church
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies
Kairos	Kairos. Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie. Salzburg
KaKe	Katorikku-kenkyu
KeTh	Kerk en theologie
KHÅ	Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift
KKTS	Konfessionskundliche und kontroverstheologische Studien
Kl	Kleronomia. Thessaloniki
Klio	Klio. Leipzig
Koin.	Koinonia. Essen
KuD	Kerugma und Dogma
Kyrios	Kyrios. Berlin
Lat.	Lateranum. Roma
Latomus	Latomus. Bruxelles
Laur	Laurentianum. Roma
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LCI	Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie
LingBibl	Linguistica Biblica
LJ	Liturgisches Jahrbuch

LoF	Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church
LouvSt	Louvain Studies
LS	Lebendige Seelsorge
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche
LTP	Laval théologique et philosophique
LuM	Liturgie und Mönchtum
Lum.	Lumen. Vitoria
LuthQ	Lutheran Quarterly
LW	Lutheran World
Man	Man. London
Man.	Manuscripta. St. Louis
Manresa	Manresa. Barcelona
Mar	Marianum. Roma
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie
MCom	Miscelánea Comillas
MD	La Maison-Dieu
MELi	Monumenta ecclesiae liturgica
Melto	Melto. Kaslik
MFC	Message of the Fathers of the Church
MGWJ	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
MH	Museum Helveticum
MI	Man in India
MillSt	Milltown Studies
MIOF	Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung
MitrBan	Mitropolia Banatului
Mn	Mnemosyne. Leiden
Mn.S	Mnemosyne. Leiden. Supplement
MonS	Monastic studies
Moreana	Moreana. Angres
MoTh	Modern Theology
MSLCA	Miscellanea di studi di letteratura cristiana antica
MSR	Mélanges de science religieuse
MTh	Melita theologica
MThZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift
Mus	Muséon: Revue d'études orientales
MySal	Mysterium salutis
NAKG	Nederlands(ch) archief voor kerkgeschiedenis
NCE	New Catholic Encyclopedia

NDid	Nuovo didaskaleion
NedThT	Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift
Neotest.	Neotestamentica
NGTT	Nederduitse gereformeerde theologiese tijdskrif
NGWG	Nachrichten (von) der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften (zu) in Göttingen
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
NRTh	Nouvelle revue théologique. Louvain
NSNU	Nuntius Sodalicii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis
NT	Novum Testamentum. Leiden
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTS	New Testament Studies
NTT	Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift
NTT	Norsk teologisk tidsskrift
NZSTh	Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica
OLoP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica
OLP	Oriental Library Publications
OLZ	Orientalistische Literaturzeitung
Or.	Orientalia. Roma
OrChr	Oriens Christianus
Orph	Orpheus. Catania
OrSyr	Orient Syrien
Ort.	Ortodoxia. București
OS	Ostkirchliche Studien
OTS	Oudtestamentische studien
OTWSA	Ou Testamentiese Werkgemeenskap van Suid-Afrika
PalCl	Palestra del clero
PapyCast	Papyrologica Castroctaviana
Par.	Paradosis. Fribourg
ParOr	Parole de l'Orient
PaVi	Parole di vita
Pazm.	Pazmaveb. Venezia
PBR	Patristic and Byzantine Review
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PGL	Patristic Greek Lexikon
Phil	Philosophy. London
PhJ	Philosophisches Jahrbuch

Phoe.	Phoenix. Leiden
PhW	Philosophisches Wörterbuch. Freiburg, Br.
PIA	Proceedings of the R. Irish Academy
PIBA	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLS	Patrologiae Latinae Supplementum
PO	Patrologia orientalis
POC	Proche-Orient chrétien
PRSt	Perspectives in Religious Studies
PSB.SI	Princeton Seminary Bulletin. Supplementary Issue
PSV	Parola spirito e vita
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
QVetChr	Quaderni di Vetera Christianorum
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RAM	Revue d'ascétique et de mystique
RAMi	Rivista di ascetica e mistica
RB	Revue biblique
RBen	Revue bénédictine de critique, d'histoire et de littérature religieuses
RBI	Revue biblique internationale
RBL	Ruch biblijny i liturgiczny
RBPH	Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire
RBS	Regulae Benedicti studia
RCatT	Revista catalana de teologia
RCB	Revista de cultura biblica
RCCM	Rivista di cultura classica e medioevale
RE	Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche
REA	Revue des études anciennes
REArm	Revue des études arméniennes
REAug	Revue des études augustinienes
REB	Revista eclesiástica brasileira
REByz	Revue des études byzantines
RechAug	Recherches augustinienes
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
REG	Revue des études grecques
REL	Revue des études latines
RelCult	Religión y cultura

Ren.	Renovatio. Regensburg
RestQ	Restoration Quarterly
RET	Revista española de teología
RevAg	Revista agustiniana. Madrid
RevBib	Revista biblica
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses
RF	Razón y fé
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica
RFNS	Rivista di filosofia neo-scholastica
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RHE	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique
RhM	Rheinischer Merkur
RHPHR	Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses
RHPPr	Romero-Haus-Protokolle
RHR	Revue d'histoire des religions
RHS	Revue d'histoire des sciences et de leurs applications
RHSp	Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité
RHT	Revue d'histoire des textes
RICP	Revue de l'Institut Catholique de Paris
RivAC	Rivista di archeologica cristiana
RivBib	Rivista biblica
RivLi	Rivista liturgica
RLM	Revue liturgique et monastique
RMab	Revue Mabillon
RMAL	Revue du moyen âge latin
RMP	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie
ROC	Revue de l'Orient chrétien
RPh	Revue de philologie, de littérature et d'histoire anciennes
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde
RQ.S	Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde. Supplementheft
RR	Review of Religion. New York
RSB	Rivista storica benedettina
RSC	Rivista di studi classici
RSCI	Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia
RSLR	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa
RSO	Rivista degli studi orientali
RSPHTh	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse
RSTh	Regensburger Studien zur Theologie
RTAM	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale

RThom	Revue thomiste
RThPh	Revue de théologie et de philosophie
RTK	Roczniki teologiczno-kanoniczne
RTL	Revue théologique de Louvain
RUO	Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa
RVS	Rivista di vita spirituale
SacDoc	Sacra doctrina
Saec.	Saeculum. München
SAH	Studia Augustiniana historica
Sal	Salesianum. Torino
Salm.	Salmanticensis. Salamanca
Sap.	Sapientia. La Plata
SB	Studia Byzantina
SBAW	Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
SBEsp	Semana biblica española
SBF	Studium Biblicum Franciscanum
SBFA	Studii Biblici Franciscani analecta
SBFLA	Studii Biblici Franciscani liber annuus
SBL.SP	Society of Biblical Library. Seminar papers. Annual meeting
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SC	Sources chrétiennes
Sc.	Scientia. Milano
ScC	Scuola cattolica
ScEc	Sciences ecclésiastiques
ScEs	Science et esprit
Schol	Scholastik. Freiburg, Br.
SCM	Studies in Christian Movement
SCO	Studi classici e orientali
Scr.	Scriptorium. Bruxelles
ScrB	Scripture Bulletin
ScrHie	Scripta Hierosolymitana
ScrinTheol	Scrinium Theologicum
Scrip.	Scripture. Edinburgh
ScrTh	Scripta theologica
ScrVict	Scriptorium Victoriense
SDGSTh	Studien zur Dogmengeschichte und systematischen Theologie
SE	Sacris erudiri: Jaarboek voor Godsdienstwetenschappen
SEÅ	Svensk exegetisk årsbok

SEAug	Studia ephemerides 'Augustinianum'
SecCen	The second century
Sef.	Sefarad. Madrid
Sem	Semitica. Paris
SHAW	Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften
SicGym	Siculorum gymnasium
SIDIC	Journal of the Service international de documentation judeo-chrétienne
SIFC	Studi italiani di filologia classica
SJTh	Scottish Journal of Theology
SKZ	Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung
SM	Sacramentum mundi. Freiburg, Br.
SMSR	Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni
SO	Symbolae Osloenses
SO.S	Symbolae Osloenses. Fasciculus suppletionis
Sob.	Sobornost. London
SP	Studies in Philology
SpC	Sponsa Christi
SPCIC	Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
SpicSol	Spicilegium Solesmense
SPMed	Studia patristica Mediolanensia
SpTo	Spirituality Today
SR	Studies in Religion. Toronto
SROC	Studi e ricerche sull'Oriente cristiano
SSL	Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense
SSR	Studio di sociologia della religione
SSRel	Studi storico-religiosi
SSTh	Studien zur systematischen Theologie
ST	Studies in Theology
ST(V)	Studja teologiczne. Wilno
STA	Studia et testimonia antiqua
StAns	Studia Anselmiana
StBi	Studi biblici
StD	Studies and Documents. London
StEcum	Studi ecumenici / Rivista di studi ecumenici
StEv	Studia evangelica
StHell	Studia Hellenistica
SThG	Studia historica Gothoburgensia

StHib	Studia Hibernica
SThU	Schweizerische theologische Umschau
STK	Semaine Théologique de Kinshasa
StMed	Studi medievali
StMon	Studia monastica
STP	Studi e testi di papirologia
StPat	Studia patavina
StPatr	Studia patristica
StPhilo	Studia Philonica
StPM	Stromata patristica et mediaevalia
Strom	Stromata. San Miquel
StT	Studi e testi
StTeol	Studii teologice
StTh	Studia theologica. Lund [etc.]
SU	Studia Urbana
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
SvTK	Svensk teologisk kvartalskrift
SVTQ	St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly
SWJT	Southwestern Journal of Theology
TaS	Texts and Studies. Cambridge
TE	Teologia espiritual
TFil	Tijdschrift voor filosofie
TGL	Tijdschrift voor geestelijk leven
THAT	Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament
ThDig	Theology Digest
Theol	Theology. London
Theol(P)	Théologie. Paris
Theoria	Theoria. Lund
ThG(B)	Theologie der Gegenwart
ThGl	Theologie und Glaube
ThH	Théologie historique
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
Thom.	Thomist. Washington, D.C.
Thought	Thought. New York
ThPh	Theologie und Philosophie
ThPQ	Theologisch-praktische Monatsschrift. Passau
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift. Tübingen
ThR	Theologische Rundschau
ThRev	Theological Review. Beirut
ThSLG	Theologische Studien der Österreichischen Leogesellschaft

ThTo	Theology Today. Princeton, N.J.
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift. Basel
TJT	Toronto Journal of Theology
TLB	Theologisches Literaturbericht
TLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TQ	Theological Quarterly
TR	Theologická revue
Tr.	Traditio. New York
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TRev	Theologische Revue
TRSR	Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose
TS	Theological Studies. Woodstock, Md.
TS(I)	Terra santa. Jerusalem
TTh	Tijdschrift voor theologie
TThQ	Tübinger theologische Quartalschrift
TThZ	Trierer theologische Zeitschrift
TTK	Tidsskrift for teologi og kirke
TTS	Tübinger theologische Studien
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TWBNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
TynB	Tyndale Bulletin
TyV	Teologia y vida
TZ	Theologie en zielzorg
UCP.CS	University of California Publications. Classical Studies
UnSa	Unam sanctam. Paris
VC	Verbum caro
VD	Verbum Domini
VE	Vida y espiritualidad
Verbo	Verbo. Enciclopédia Luso-Brasileira de cultura
VetChr	Vetera Christianorum
VF	Verkündigung und Forschung
VigChr	Vigiliae Christianae
VoxRef	Vox reformata
VoxTh	Vox theologica
VS	Vie spirituelle
VS.S	Vie spirituelle. Supplements
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VT.S	Vetus Testamentum. Supplements

WiWei	Wissenschaft und Weisheit
WS	Wörter und Sachen
WSt	Wiener Studien
WTJ	Wesleyan Theological Journal
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WZ(G)	Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald
WZ(H)	Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
YCS	Yale Classical Studies
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Buchwesen und Schrifttum
ZdZ	Die Zeichen der Zeit
ZHTh	Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
ZKTh	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik
ZRGG	Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte
ZThK	Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche
ZWTh	Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie

INTRODUCTION

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I
THE PROJECT OF THE HANDBOOK:
ITS FOCUS AND READERSHIP

The term “patristic” first appeared in print in the work of the Lutheran scholar J. F. Buddeus in 1727 (Mühlenberg 1996, 100). The word calls on a very ancient, inner-church tradition in vigor at least since the fourth century, recognizing certain former leaders of Christian communities as *patres*, “Fathers.” This honorific title implied orthodoxy, intellectual leadership, and in most cases, a literary legacy. While the title “Fathers” continues to be widely used for its convenience (but not without criticism for its gender bias), in contemporary scholarship it denotes the heritage of the early church as forming a distinctive cultural reality. The “patristic” era is located in history between the gospel event, to which the NT witnesses, and the collapse of the Roman Empire, that is, from the first to the seventh century of the Common Era in the West or to the ninth century in the East.

For many readers, rather than *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis*, a more accessible title might be *Handbook of Ancient Christian Exegesis*, since the phrase “ancient Christian” has a broader currency than “patristic.” On the other hand, if “patristic” has been preferred, it is because the precise focus of the Handbook is on the *academic* achievements in the field, that is, on the work of modern “patristic” scholars about ancient Christian exegesis, rather than about ancient Christian exegesis for its own sake. Hence its goal is not to add another study to the many publications already registered within its pages, but through analyzing relevant scholarly contributions, to attempt a coherent understanding of scholarly achievements within the whole field of patristic exegesis for almost a century. Thus an important goal is to provide a broader readership with an easy access to what has become highly specialized research and, on occasion, even to inform the specialists themselves of what is going on within the discipline.

There has been no earlier attempt to produce such a Handbook in the field of patristic exegesis. A survey of patristic literature centered on hermeneutical issues, valuable and needed as it may be, such as the recent *Introduction à l'histoire de l'exégèse* by B. de Margerie, or the succinct *Profilo* by M. Simonetti, or again, the attractive *Epochen der Bibelauslegung* by H. Graf Reventlow, does not adequately comply with the requirements of a Handbook. Two main reasons may explain the lack of such an important tool:

(1) The study of patristic exegesis as the scientific retrieval of early Christian traditions in a distinctive field of historical research found its proper

scholarly recognition only after World War II. Hence a short survey of the development of relevant studies during the five decades 1945–1995 needs to follow the present introductory remarks.

(2) The recognition of patristic exegesis as a distinctive field since the early 1950s resulted in such a prolific outpouring of studies that at first it seemed impossible to attempt a coherent and balanced assessment of all the scholarship involved. That very recognition has itself now reached the status of a critical expertise, in addition to new hermeneutical questions also to be discussed in the present introduction.

As long as the basic notions about the ancient interpretations of the Bible remained blurred, a handbook of patristic exegesis was hardly conceivable. The problem of the absence of a critical consensus about patristic hermeneutics among the experts themselves was compounded by the negative attitude towards this exegesis entertained in most circles of biblical scholarship. As a result, the interpretation of Scripture in the earliest Christian centuries, prior to Western and Byzantine Middle Ages, was relegated to the realm of erudite curiosities, irrelevant for any form of creativity in contemporary thought, and dispensable for serious theology. It must also be admitted that over the five decades, 1945–1995, it was not only ignorance or indifference that constantly slowed the needed theoretical clarification of patristic hermeneutics. It was also sectarian prejudice and confessional apologetics in the field itself. Only an extended bibliographic inquiry can adequately illustrate the slow process since the end of World War II by which patristic scholars finally succeeded in securing freedom of judgment and methodological criteria in regard to the hermeneutical aspects of Christian foundations, for quite too long obscured by conscious or unconscious partisanship.

If a handbook of patristic exegesis like this is now a viable and opportune project, two considerations, apparently contradictory, must be taken into account. On one side, the closing years of the twentieth century marked the end of an intense period of patristic scholarship which had been grounded in ecclesiastic and academic institutions all over Europe. It was a period which started with the strong cultural revivals after World War II, which had benefited from the institutional transformation of the 1960s and the financial facilities of the 1970s, before maturing in the achievements of the 1980s and 1990s. The collapse of many clerical institutions, the recession of theological and classical studies, together with the lack of private and public funding, may well entail a severe limitation of substantial contributions in the field for the future.

On the other side, more innovative thinking, reaching beyond the conventional boundaries of clerical and scholastic disciplines imposed on

former generations of students, has opened a new horizon for the study of Western traditions considered in their religious and cultural foundations. Since World War II, the period of time coinciding with the first centuries of the Christian movement has become identified as the highly complex era of *Late Antiquity*, no longer couched in terms that Gibbon had so dramatically styled “the decline” and “the fall” of the Roman Empire, but rather as the era of the “Christianization” of Greco-Roman classical culture which led to medieval and modern forms of society in East and West. The renewal of the historical definition of the period as Late Antiquity, at once provides a proper cradle for nascent Christian tradition as well as a more adequate perspective for the interpretation of the original structuring of Western identity.

Instead of being isolated from their secular context for more narrowly theological purposes—too frequently the practice in patristic studies of the past—the founding achievements of men and women in the early church became more and more perceived as exemplifying the social, political, and spiritual behavior proper to their own time. This changed perspective of Christian origins underlines the shifts currently at work in patristic scholarship. Thus, in becoming open to more secular questions, the basic status of Christian origins found itself profoundly changed, at long last released from the confines of confessional apologetics. The corresponding modifications within the discipline of patristic exegesis reflects an ongoing process of a much broader foundational re-modeling of Christian traditions among theologians and historians of Christian thought. There is no place here for further speculation on these lines. Only a few basic considerations may be suggested.

Christianity has played a major role as one of the major forces in the making of a Western culture. While keeping its constant focus on the interpretation of the Bible, the Christian movement slowly structured itself as it pervaded the whole texture of ancient society of the Roman Empire. When the barbarian kingdoms replaced the imperial administration in what was to become Europe, the culture of Late Antiquity merged into the Western Middle Ages, carrying with it a panoply of methods and models pertinent to biblical exegesis standard for long centuries. Even before trying to explore the riches of patristic exegesis it is important to note that medieval authors never attempted to revise, or even to question, these ancient methods and models. Peter Lombard in his *Liber Sententiarum* (shortly after 1140), or even the questing mind of Abelard (1079–1142) in his own scriptural references, did not sift through the opinions of earlier theologians with the intention of replacing or even modifying the earlier hermeneutical system. They discussed

theological statements based on the quoted biblical references rather than the ways in which the Bible was understood by the Fathers.

If the authority of the Fathers was the focus for the early Scholastics, it was the divine authority of Scripture itself that was at stake for the Reformers. Their new stance in the history of biblical interpretation did not directly target the principles of patristic hermeneutics, rather it firmly denied a system of interpretation based on papal authority. The divine inspiration of Scripture was to be considered as guiding interpreters by its own intrinsic authority. By investing each reader with the capacity for a correct interpretation of Scripture delegated to him or her by Scripture itself, Luther did not engage in a critical retrieving of patristic exegesis. More radically, he declared it obsolete. Confessional apologetics superseded the stereotyped commentaries of the Fathers, simply paraphrased until then. It was still the case in the first half of the twentieth century. While the biblical sources served as a proof-text for theologians in the frame of their scholarly (and less scholarly) disputes, in large measure the hermeneutical system of the early church was lost for the common believer.

In the following centuries, the history of interpretation did not follow the same paths or the same pace in Protestant and in Roman Catholic institutions. As early as the eighteenth century, due to a greater availability for assuming the challenges of Modernity, the Reformation churches, both on the Continent and on the British Isles, engaged into the fierce conflict of interpretations in opposing the rationalistic trends fueled in European minds by the Enlightenment. The Roman Church, choosing to keep true to her own institutional past, bluntly rejected Modernity. Nowhere was that negative attitude of the pontifical administration to produce more devastating effects than in her handling of sacred Scripture. A defensive reinforcement of all doctrinal positions inherited from the Christianity of the first millennium and from medieval scholastics not only consolidated the obsolete reading of Scripture on which those positions were based, but, by an inevitable circular effect, the fossilized biblical hermeneutics linked with the defense of that doctrine also led to a complete closure of any Roman doctrine to Enlightenment criticism.

From the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the impact of the European Enlightenment on the Christian churches was to result in a new kind of academic exegesis, first in Protestant circles, then much later, in fact only in mid-twentieth century, in the central offices of the Roman church. Though maintaining its fortress-like isolation, the Roman Church remained permeable to non-Roman hermeneutics. In fact, in predominantly Roman Catholic countries enough scholarship had prospered throughout the nineteenth cen-

tury to allow some individual initiatives which announced the future, despite the control of a very conservative Pontifical Biblical Commission. In fact, the same questions about inerrancy, divine inspiration, canonicity, or historicity of Scripture were debated in the separate churches. The immediate pastoral impact of these debates was to open a gap between ordinary churchgoers and learned students of Scripture. On the one hand, the academic foundations of exegesis favored a real collaboration between experts of different Christian denominations, but, on the other hand, in all churches a fundamentalist reaction grew out of the frustration and the resentment of Christian communities to whom no access to the academic debate was given. In fact, the new perspectives of biblical academia were basically distorted by these critical challenges to which Christian exegesis claimed to respond.

The critical notions of truth and verification, even the critical establishment of the literal content of Scripture, were the very prerequisites of the Enlightenment itself. They distracted Christian exegetes from the less sophisticated concerns of pastors, priests, and other community leaders in charge of their flocks. The pastors continued to use Scripture as divinely inspired proof-texts whose narrative and didactic statements could still be paraphrased in order to perpetuate a traditional set of beliefs, attitudes, and practices. At the same time, their colleagues in the specialized ranks of biblical exegetes spent all their time and energy in trying to solve the methodological problems imposed on them by their exegetical presuppositions, often without taking into account the actual needs of the church communities. The recent situation, seen through the eyes of the common believer, is that of a sophisticated field of scientific research called biblical exegesis, which has very little connection with actual church communities. The exegesis of the biblical text was detached from its founding religious culture by the very fact of its secular study in conformity with the requests of the Enlightenment and therefore was often deeply alienated from the believing church assemblies.

In a word, the need for the academic study of Scripture in its traditional status (as exemplified in ancient Christianity) cannot be detached from the need to give the Bible back to the churches. The fundamental issue is to conceive the task of exegesis as a spiritual exercise *within* a necessary submission to academic constraint and sophistication. This does not mean indulging in the romantic nostalgia of those who would suggest going back to the ancient reading of Scripture with its particular symbolic imagination and its specific literary ornaments. One rather must dare to interpret Scripture with a postmodern mind-set, without fearing the inevitable collision between canonized beliefs, apparently taboo in the common understanding, and on

the other hand to sharpen a critical awareness in theological matters, an awareness and creativity that can only be intensified by a consistent study of Scripture in line with present-day exegesis.

If this problematic situation is correctly evaluated, it seems necessary to define more precisely (1) the very *purpose* of the present Handbook and its *method*, (2) its *scholarly background*, and finally (3) its *tools and requirements*. A global survey of the past fifty years is facilitated by synchronic studies of given themes and of limited periods of time. It benefits from general evaluations made by the experts from different viewpoints.

While the first chapter of this Handbook is devoted to an analysis of the scholarship of the second half of the twentieth century, a very accurate and thoughtful survey was secured in France by experts from different countries on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Sources Chrétiennes (1943–1993): *Les Pères de l'Église au XX^e siècle. Histoire-Littérature-Théologie: "L'aventure des Sources Chrétienne"* (Paris, 1997). It includes the following essays relevant for patristic exegesis, listed in the volume order:

- A. Guillaumont, "La diffusion de la culture grecque dans l'Orient chrétien" (131–38).
 J. Fontaine, "Esthétique et foi d'après la poésie latine chrétienne des premiers siècles" (139–47).
 M. Alexandre, "Les écrits patristiques grecs comme corpus littéraire" (163–87).
 J.-C. Fredouille, "Les écrits patristiques latins comme corpus littéraire" (189–201).
 A. Le Boulluec, "L'apport des chrétiens au langage symbolique de l'Antiquité: Les Pères grecs" (225–36).
 J.-D. Dubois, "L'apport des chrétiens au langage symbolique de l'Antiquité: L'exemple de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne" (237–49).
 S. Deléani, "Le latin des pères: un domaine encore mal exploré" (251–64).
 R. Braun, "Tertullien et le renouvellement du latin" (265–74).
 G. Dorival, "La mutation chrétienne des idées et des valeurs païennes" (275–94).
 C. Dagens, "Une certaine manière de faire de la théologie: De l'actualité des Pères de l'Église à l'aube du III^e millénaire" (311–30).
 M.-J. Rondeau, "Jean Daniélou, Henri-Irénée Marrou et le renouveau des études patristiques" (351–78).
 A. Di Berardino, "Orientations actuelles des recherches patristiques" (379–402).
 J. Martinez, "La patrologie en Espagne: Les défis et les tâches" (403–16).
 H. J. Vogt, "Ce qui se fait en Allemagne dans le domaine de la patrologie" (427–35).
 B. Bobrinsky, "Le renouveau actuel de la patristique dans l'Orthodoxie" (437–44).
 P. Maraval, "La Bible et les Pères: Bilan de cinquante ans de recherches" (445–66).
 A. De Halleux, "Pourquoi les Églises ont-elles besoin aujourd'hui d'une théologie patristique" (511–25).

Other titles useful for an overview of the scholarship of the same period are:

1. Overviews of Patristic Studies 1945–1999:

Cavalcanti, E., “Quindici anni di studi patristici in Italia (Orientamenti metodologici),” in *Metodologia della ricerca sulla tarda antichità* (ed. A. Garzya; Naples, 1989), 189–222.

Kannengiesser, C., “Fifty Years of Patristics,” *TS* 50 (1989): 633–56.

Margerie, B. de, *Introduction à l'histoire de l'exégèse* (3 vols.; Paris, 1980–1983).

Mühlenberg, E., “Patristik,” *TRE* 26:97–106 (bibliography).

Reventlow, H. Graf, *Epochen der Bibelauslegung I: Vom Alten Testament bis Origenes* (Munich, 1990).

Simonetti, M., *Profilo storico dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome, 1981).

2. The Fathers as Interpreters of Scripture:

Agouridis, S., “The Fathers of the Church as Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures,” in *Eisegeseis Prôtou Orthodoxou Hermeneutikou Synedrou* (Athens, 1973), 81–102.

Bardy, G., “La diffusion de la Bible aux premiers siècles,” *BVC* 6 (1954): 40–52.

—. “Interprétation. Exégèse patristique,” *DBS* 4 (1949): 569–91.

—. “La lecture de la Bible aux premiers siècles,” *BVC* 6 (1954): 40–52.

Basevi, C., “Hacia la estructuración de una ‘Historia de la exégesi bíblica.’ Ensayos y Perspectivas,” *ScrTh* 22 (1990): 221–41.

Benedetti, G., “La Bibbia nella teologia patristica e medievale,” in *I libri di Dio* (ed. C. M. Martin; Turin, 1975), 53–118.

Bromiley, G. W., “The Church Fathers and Holy Scripture,” in D. A. Carson and J. D. Woodridge, *Scripture and Truth* (Leicester, 1983), 199–220.

Cignelli, L., “Iniziazione alla Bibbia nella chiesa patristica,” *PaVi* 28 (1983): 137–44, 223–33, 379–99, 461–69.

Curti, C., “Tradizione esegetica e teologica nel Basso Impero,” *La cultura in Italia* 2, 702–12.

Daniélou, J., “The Fathers and the Scriptures,” *TLond* 57 (1954): 83–89.

Flesseman van Leer, E., *Tradition and Scripture in the Early Church* (Assen, 1954).

Fontaine, J., “Les laïcs et les études patristiques latines dans l'Université française aux XX^e siècle,” *RBen* 94 (1984): 444–61.

Gandolfo, E., *La lettera di Dio agli uomini: La Bibbia secondo lo spirito dei Padri* (Saronno, 1978) (texts).

Gargano, G., “La lettura biblica dei Padri,” *StEcum* 2 (1984): 195–209, English 209.

Grant, R. M., *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible* (1963); R. Grant and D. Tracy, 1984.

- , “The Bible in the Ancient Church,” *JR* 26 (1946): 190–202.
- Green, W. M., “Patristic Interpretation of the Bible,” *RestQ* 5 (1961): 230–35.
- Herzog, R., ed., *Restauration und Erneuerung: Die lateinische Literatur von 284 bis 374 n. Chr.* (Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike 5; Munich, 1989).
- Kannengiesser, C., “Patrologie,” *Grande Encyclopédie Larousse* 15: 9174–76.
- , “The Spiritual Message of the Great Fathers,” in B. McGinn, ed., *World Spirituality. An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest* (New York, 1985), 16: 61–88.
- , “La Bible dans l’Église ancienne. Nature et présupposés de l’exégèse patristique,” *Conc* 233 (1991): 45–54; German: “Die Bibel wie sie in der frühen Kirche gelesen wurde. Die patristische Exegese und ihre Voraussetzungen,” *Conc* (D) 27 (1991): 25–30.
- Florovsky, G. V., *The Heritage of the Early Church: Essays in Honor of G. V. F.* (ed. D. Neiman and M. Schatkin; OrChrAn 195; Rome, 1973).
- Leloir, L., “La lecture de l’Écriture selon les anciens Pères,” *RAM* 47 (1971): 183–200.
- Margerie, B. de, “Réflexions sur l’exégèse patristique,” *EeV* (1981): 280–87.
- , “Three Suggestions about the Study and Diffusion of the Biblical Commentaries of the Fathers,” *DoC* 42 (1989): 185–88.
- Marin, M., “Orientamenti di esegesi biblica dei Padres,” *VetChr* 26 (1989): 247–74.
- Naduvilezham, J., “The Biblical Interpretation of the Fathers,” *Bible Bhashyam* 10 (1984): 5–11.
- Orme, A. D., *The Doctrine of Scripture in the Doctors of the Western Church* (diss., University of Georgia, 1974).
- Panagopoulos, I., *Hè hermeneia: Patristic Interpretation of Holy Scripture. The First Three Centuries and the Alexandrian Exegetical Tradition to the Fifth* (Orthodoxè Martyria 38; Athens, 1991).
- Pellegrino, M., “L’esegesi biblica nei Padri della Chiesa,” *Asprenas* 8 (1961): 21–45.
- Perrone, L., “L’iniziazione alla Bibbia nella letteratura patristica,” *CrSt* 12 (1991): 1–26.
- Sadowski, F., *The Church Fathers and the Bible: Selected Readings* (New York, 1987).
- Schäfer, R., *Die Bibelauslegung in der Geschichte der Kirche* (Gütersloh, 1980).
- Vernet, A., *La Bible au Moyen-Age*. Bibliographie (Paris, 1989).
- Wilken, R. L., “Scripture and Dogma in the Ancient Church,” *LW* 14 (1967): 163–79.
- Wood, J. D., *The Interpretation of the Bible: Historical Introduction* (London, 1958).

II PURPOSE AND METHOD

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

If the purpose of any handbook is to offer an easy access to specialized research for the ordinary reader, how should one specify “the ordinary reader” in the present case? A blurred definition, resulting from vague distinctions between scholarly and non-scholarly audiences, would not help to pinpoint the intended purpose. Such distinctions impose superficial categories, whereas the current transformation of society places “learned” and “unlearned” alike in front of an unprecedented newness of life. On the threshold of a civilization characterized by electronic communication, universalized to the point of being a “global village,” the spontaneous behavior of people in far-flung parts of the world announces the end of the Gutenberg era: television, computers, and internet not only challenge the primacy of the printed text for transmitting knowledge, but also challenge the age-old hegemony of the convention of book-reading. From the point of view of scholarship, these new sources of communication appear to dispense with the most laborious aspects of researching primary sources, which since the time of the Humanists was one of the main duties of a trained scholar. Unlike the reaction a century ago, few would uncritically applaud the impact of the present technological changes on social and economic procedures as evidence of progress. One would rather suspect that the enormous improvements introduced everywhere by electronics, in particular in production and distribution systems, may entail cultural ruptures with both the recent and distant past. Most young people today have become accustomed to learn history through television programs. Familiar with computers from primary school on, they may well become “readers” of the present Handbook as a product dating from a former stage of scholarship. Yet far from eliciting alarm, such considerations, while well grounded in the hard facts of current cultural mutations, hold out the prospect of an even wider communication for the many topics included in the Handbook. Specialist and non-specialist alike, willy-nilly we stand on the threshold of the “post-Gutenberg” era. *The present Handbook addresses readers who may already no longer be “readers” in the conventional sense.*

The question of readership leads to a further consideration. *Pace* some of my learned colleagues, I cannot see how a Handbook of Patristic Exegesis conceived in the precarious situation of today’s patristic enterprise can entirely dispense from being an “Introduction” to the field. Indeed such a

Handbook inevitably addresses *readers alienated (often against any conscious intention) from the traditional, humanistic, and Christian culture inherited from Europe*. The recent ruptures in Western traditions include the loss of classical languages, a distanciation from established religious institutions, and a bewildering ideological vacuum as soon as historic foundations are invoked for any paradigmatic evaluation. Such readers deserve to be informed objectively and clearly about the cultural legacy of ancient Christianity. The Handbook does not intent to deliver a self-celebratory discourse of patristic scholarship, but to put that scholarship to the test of its actual relevance in the cross-cultural and nontraditional public arena of today.

As a Handbook of Patristic *Exegesis*, the attempted work focuses on only one aspect of the cultural Christian legacy from before the Middle Ages, that is, its biblical core. A more general survey of the ancient Christian legacy would have to review *all* aspects of the Christianizing of Late Antiquity, diverse in nature and relative in importance as it was. The gigantic size of the encyclopedic *Festschrift* for Joseph Vogt (Tübingen), ed. by H. Temporini and W. Haase, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, tries to catch the multiple aspects of that Christianizing process during the first two centuries C.E., out of which emerged “Christian” Middle Ages in the East and the West of the Mediterranean world. As the neoplatonist philosopher Iamblichus noted sometime in the early fourth century, the time of founding a religious tradition by strictly oral communication was foregone after Alexandrian culture had spread over the whole Empire in Late Antiquity. In that postclassical context, religious mysteries nourished generations of devotees through *written* documents. Christianity was no exception in adding to Hebrew Scriptures its own revelatory, though not secret, literature. The formation of that collection of authorized, or “canonical,” writings was central as far as the church was concerned, not central as a static reference, but as a dynamic source of intellectual creativity.

The centrality of the Bible to the whole patristic reality is something that is not generally recognized. As written revelation, the Bible quickly became the exclusive proof-text for establishing the main features of Christian identity. Written in vernacular Greek, the NT itself was the work of the church. Under the aegis of apostolic authority, the NT texts presented God as speaking to early Christian generations in their native language, Koine Greek, the *lingua franca* of that time in the Mediterranean world as today English is around the planet. Linguistic immediacy was even experienced with the OT, because it was inherited in the Greek version, the Septuagint (LXX). One of the main challenges for the earliest Christian interpreters of Scripture would consist in stressing such an immediacy. They would reformulate LXX

sentences, too obviously marked by the Hebrew original, in Koine Greek and in a stylistic fashion more palatable to Late Antique readers. In the middle of the fourth century, the Donatist Tyconius in Roman Africa, became the first Western theoretician of biblical hermeneutics. Capitalizing on centuries of a strong dedication to Scripture as a *sacred* book, Donatism claimed to be a legitimate protest against bishops accused of being *traditores*, “giving away” or “betraying” the sacred books. The African dispute underlines the fact that the whole life of the early church communities gravitated around its scriptural pole, in the baptismal reception of its new members and its eucharistic liturgy, in the building up of a common understanding of faith, and in any encounter with cultural or religious opponents. The Bible as a patristic reality meant life or death for the church as a whole.

If patristic exegesis is at the very core of the cultural legacy of the early church, it is because generations of believers built up the church by identifying with the divine revelation received from the Bible. These believers initiated a rare, if not unique, process in the history of religions: they took over an intrinsically exclusivist body of sacred writings, proper to a particular religious tradition, and appropriated it to their own tradition, a tradition born out of the former one, but open to a spiritual self-definition which rejected that proper and genuine exclusivism. The inner dynamic of religious faith expressed in the early church was also strong enough to overcome the artifices of syncretism, when Christian believers spoke out their conviction in the terms of the Hebrew Scripture or in those of their own pagan religious backgrounds. The hermeneutical circle of early Christianity was complete: through the Bible the converts to Christianity dared to identify themselves as Christian, and only as Christians could they do so, as the church community which welcomed them claimed to be nothing else but a concrete and collective embodiment of the scriptural message. For that reason, Scripture never failed to satisfy the needs and to respond to the expectations of early Christians.

Before engaging in the methodological considerations imposed by the complexities of the patristic reality, a final precision is required concerning the purpose of the Handbook. Even those only marginally informed about patristic exegesis are aware that it is very different from contemporary exegesis. It would be beyond the proper scope of the Handbook to engage in a discussion about the extent of that difference. However, it has to give an account of patristic exegesis in its own right, while at the same time keeping the reader aware of the cultural gap between ancient and modern biblical exegesis. Thus the Handbook *addresses readers often prejudiced against, even when interested by, the exegesis of the Fathers*. It also addresses readers who are

not Christian, or not necessarily Christian, but who seek to evaluate according to contemporary criteria the achievements of early Christian interpreters of the Bible. It is an inescapable fact that it was in that form of activity that Christians gave the most coherent account of their self-understanding and their view of the world.

The classical foundations of Western traditions were initially formulated, or were re-formulated, by intellectual leaders of ancient Christianity, but all these “founders,” unconscious as they were in most cases of the historic momentum of their own times, unflinchingly sought to elaborate and articulate their thought in biblical terms. What is called their “exegesis” of the Bible was in fact a cultural inclusion of themselves as individuals or as a group into the symbolic frame offered to them by the Bible. Perhaps the best way to perceive what Scripture meant for early Christian generations could be through the following comparison: what people admit today about the omnipresence of television and the media in their lives finds its parallel in the omnipresence of the Scriptures in ancient Christianity. In Late Antiquity the Bible served as the very best mirror for souls in quest of transcendence and for Christian society in quest of itself. In fact, in his *Letter to Marcellinus*, this is the precise argument that Athanasius of Alexandria uses in his essay on how to pray the Psalms. It was through seeing themselves in that mirror that Christian believers found a coherent expression for both their most intimate convictions and their collective behavior.

The gradual recognition for the need for an in-depth study of the meaning of exegesis for the ancient church began to be articulated after World War II. In 1951 the “Elenchus Bibliographicus” of *Biblica* vol. 32 inaugurated a new section: “1. *De ipsa Historia Scientiae Biblicae*,” with the remark: “On the proper history of biblical science a consistent exposition seems to be missing” (*De ipsa historia scientiae biblicae tractatus systematicus videtur desiderari*, 32* n. 692). However, only four titles served to emphasize the expressed need:

Ebeling, G., *Kirchengeschichte als Geschichte der Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift* (Tübingen, 1947).

Hirschberg, M., “Die ‘Einfältigen’ und die Verkündigung. Zur Frage einer Breiten- und Höhentendenz in der Geschichte der Hermeneutik,” *EvTh* 10 (1950–1951): 425–32.

Leipoldt, J., “Zur Geschichte der Auslegung,” *TLZ* 75 (1950): 229–34.

Linton, O., “Ist die exegetische Forschung bloss ein Reflex von allgemeinen und theologischen Geistesströmungen?” (Swedish), *STK* 18 (1942): 112–24.

In order to illustrate the state of studies on the history of theology during the patristic period the “Elenchus” (1951) added the following titles:

Altaner, B., *Patrologie* (2nd ed., enlarged; Freiburg, 1950).

—. “Der Stand der patrologischen Wissenschaft und das Problem einer neuen altchristlichen Literaturgeschichte,” *FS G. Mercati*, vol. 1: *Bibbia, Letteratura cristiana antica* (Studi e testi CXXI; 1946), 483–520.

De Ghellinck, J., *Patristique et Moyen-Age: Études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale*. I: Les recherches sur les origines du symbole des apôtres; II: Introduction et compléments à l'étude de la patristique; III: Compléments à l'étude de la patristique (Louvain, 1946–1948).

Labriolle, P. de, *Histoire de la littérature latine chrétienne* (3d ed., by G. Bardy; 2 vols.; Paris, 1947).

Quasten, J., *Patrology I* (Westminster, Md., 1950).

Siegmund, A., *Die Überlieferung der griechischen christlichen Literatur in der lateinischen Kirche bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1949).

These publications announce the laying down of a scholarly foundation of high quality on which post-World War II generations of scholars would build their own vision of patristic exegesis. Altaner's “Der Stand” is highly significant for the general perception in his day about a new beginning in patristics. The same awareness was articulated by W. J. Burghardt, “On Early Christian Exegesis,” *TS* 11 (1950): 78–116; W. Schneemelcher, “Wesen und Aufgabe der Patristik innerhalb der evangelischen Theologie,” *EvTh* 10 (1950–1951): 207–22; L. Bouyer, “Le renouveau des études patristiques,” *Vie Intellectuelle*, February, 1947, 6–25: “Fullness and unity of the vision of faith with the religious and ‘existential’ features of its required understanding, finally the adoring recognition of the mystery expressed in dogmatic terms, such are the benefits to be expected from the patristic revival. Inseparable from the return to the Bible and the new interest in the liturgy, it is supposed to give us back a Christian way of life full of vitality” (25); F. L. Cross, “The Present Relevance of the Patristic Age,” *CQR* 149 (1950): 113–26; J. De Ghellinck, “Les recherches patristiques, progrès et problèmes,” Institut Catholique de Toulouse, ed., *FS Cavallera* (Toulouse, 1948), 65–85.

Additional titles in “Elenchus” 1951 mentioned the launching of “Sources Chrétiennes” and of two new American series of patristic texts, “Ancient Christian Writers” and “The Fathers of the Church” (see below, ch. 2, IX), as well as another fundamental tool for research, the *Index locupletissimus*, “Exhaustive (!) Index,” of Migne, realized by T. Hopfner, Berlin 1928–1945. The start was given to a bibliographic survey of the history of patristic

exegesis which would gain in size and substance each year for the next five decades:

- Charlier, C., "Exégèse patristique et exégèse scientifique," *Esprit et Vie* 2 (1949): 52-69.
 Grant, R. M., "Historical Criticism in the Ancient Church," *JR* 25 (1945): 183-96.
 Jouassard, G., "Les Pères devant la Bible," in *Études de Critique et d'Histoire Religieuse*
 (ed. Faculté Catholique de Théologie de Lyon; *FS L. Vaganay*; Lyon, 1948), 25-33.
 Wallach, L., "The Origin of Testimonia Biblica in Early Christian Literature," *RR* 8
 (1944): 130-36.

The same new section, "History of Biblical Science," makes mention of the following authors in vol. 34 (1953):

- Darby, J. H., "Patristic Commentary on the Holy Scriptures in the Breviary," *IER* 57
 (1952): 91-100.
 Grant, R. M., "The Place of the OT in Early Christianity," *Interp.* 5 (1951): 186-202.
 Rankin, O. S., "OT Interpretation, Its History and Development," *HibJ* 49 (1951):
 146-53.

Vol. 36 (1955) added:

- Bardy, G., "La diffusion de la Bible aux premiers siècles," *BVC* 6 (1954): 40-52.
 Daniélou, J., "The Fathers and the Scriptures," *TLond* 57 (1954): 83-89; *The Eastern
 Churches Quarterly* 10 (1954): 265-73.
 Flesseman-van Leer, E., *Tradition and Scripture in the Early Church* (Assen, 1954).

Vol. 38 (1957): Ehrhard, A. *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen
 und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche von den Anfängen
 bis zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Erster Teil: Die Überlieferung.
 Leipzig, J.C. Hinrichs, 1937-52.

- Alexander, J. N. S., "The Interpretation of Scripture in the Ante-Nicene Period. A
 Brief Conspectus," *Interp.* 12 (1958): 272-80.
 Vischer, L., and D. Lerch, "Die Auslegungsgeschichte als notwendige theologische
 Aufgabe," *StPatr* 1 (1957): 414-19.
 Wood, J. D., *The Interpretation of the Bible. Historical Introduction* (London, 1958).

This was a modest start, which in only one decade led to an extraordinary increase in the number of studies on patristic exegesis, among them the following *General Considerations on Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church* (titles compiled in *Biblica*, but listed in alphabetic order):

- Cambridge History of the Bible (The)* (Cambridge, 1969, 1970).
- Agouridis, S., *The Fathers of the Church as Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures* (in Greek) (Athens, 1973).
- Bauer, J. B., "Lexégèse patristique créatrice de symboles," *SacPag* 1 (1959): 180–86.
- Benedetti, G., *La Bibbia nella teologia patristica e medievale* (Turin, 1975).
- Bormann, C. von, "Hermeneutik I. Philos.-theol.," *TRE* 15: 108–37.
- Collins, T. A., "History of Exegesis," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2: 497–507.
- Crouzel, H., "Comment comprendre l'exégèse des Pères?" *AsSeign* 15 (1965): 71–87.
- Ebeling, G., "Hermeneutik," *RGG* (3d ed., 1959) 3:242–62.
- Gandolfo, E., *La lettera di Dio agli uomini: La Bibbia secondo lo spirito dei Padri* (Saronno, 1978).
- Gerber, W. E., "Exegese" III (NT und Alte Kirche), *RAC* 6:1211–29.
- Grant, R. M., *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible* (London, 1965).
- . "Historical Criticism in the Ancient Church," *JR* 25 (1945): 183–96.
- . "The Place of the OT in Early Christianity," *Intr* 5 (1951): 186–202.
- . "The Study of the Early Fathers Today," *ATHR* 44 (1962): 289–99.
- Green, W. M., "Patristic Interpretation of the Bible," *ResQ* 5 (1961): 230–35.
- Karpp, H., "Die Funktion der Bibel in der Kirche 1. Alte Kirche," *TRE* 6: 50–59.
- Lods, M., "L'autorité de la Bible chez les Pères de l'Église," *Reéf* 19 (1968): 43–55.
- Margerie, B. de, "Réflexions sur l'exégèse patristique," *EeV* 91 (1981): 280–87.
- Oikonomou, I., "Proposals for the Evaluating Classification of Patristic Interpretations of the OT," in *Eigêgêseis Prôtou Orthodoxou Hermêneutikou Synedriou* (Athens, 1973), 119–28.
- Orme, A. J., *The Doctrine of Scripture in the Doctors of the Western Church* (diss., University of Georgia [DissAb 35, 1974–75] 1974).
- Pépin, J., "Hermeneutik," *RAC* 14:722–71.
- Recchia, V., "L'iniziazione biblica negli autori cristiani antichi," *VetChr* 2 (1965): 67–99.
- Salguero, J., "Historia de la interpretación de la Biblia," *Introducción a la Biblia* (BAC 268; Madrid, 1967).
- Schäfer, R., *Die Bibelauslegung in der Geschichte der Kirche* (Gütersloh, 1980).
- Vogt, H. J., "Exegese und Kirchengeschichte: Antwort auf J. Blank," *TThQ* 159 (1979): 44–54.
- Wilken, R. L., "Scripture and Dogma in the Ancient Church," *LW* 14 (1967): 163–79.

II. POINTS OF METHOD

1. Territorial Determination

A first point of method is to determine more precisely the object of inquiry. It is a *territorial* determination, and consists in delimiting the proper field

to be covered by the Handbook as distinct from neighboring domains of research with which patristic exegesis entertains all kinds of connections.

Thus, with the exception of the special contribution secured by Michael Signer, my former colleague at the University of Notre Dame, and jointly signed by himself and Susan L. Graham, one will not find in this Handbook any consistent study about early Jewish or rabbinic exegesis, Philo of Alexandria, or the Dead Sea Scrolls, or again, Jewish Apocryphals and Jewish apocalyptic literature. Even Jewish-Christian Apocryphals in line with OT or NT, though mentioned, have been excluded from the field to be covered, not to speak about the immense contemporary literature on the biblical writings themselves. Such exegetical studies can only be mentioned when explicitly dealing with patristic data, in other words, with the history of patristic exegesis.

Another necessary delimitation separates the territory proper to this Handbook from the ever-growing domain of studies on ancient Gnosticism. In this case, the specific confines remain often blurred, as Christian Gnostics kept alive their allegiance to church communities. It would be wrong to exclude their exegetical achievements from a survey of ancient Christian exegesis, even if their hermeneutical and doctrinal principles diverged from mainstream teachings in the church. Anne Pasquier's special contribution on "Valentinian exegesis" demonstrates the vital importance of keeping gnostic thought in focus when discussing Christian exegesis of the second century. But it has been one of the major improvements of patristic studies in the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to a better informed knowledge of Gnosticism itself, to take its study out of the patristic viewpoint and to establish the history of ancient Gnosticism as a separate domain with its own methodology and its own tools for research. Therefore, like the disciplines of biblical exegesis, the proliferating monographs and articles on ancient Gnosticism had to be excluded from the present survey.

In the proper range of publications concerning patristic exegesis surprising limitations were also imposed:

(a) The Handbook is concerned only with *edited* sources. Studies on yet-unedited documents, interesting for the history of early Christian exegesis, may be mentioned, but the documents in question would not be further explored. Such fascinating research would be beyond the scope of the present work. The same is true of papyrology, paleography, codicology, or other technical aspects of the recovery of ancient sources, as long as in such publications patristic exegesis is not directly addressed.

(b) The textual history leading to new editions of biblical books, such as Kurt Aland's NT, must also be kept at a distance, when focusing on the

bibliography of patristic exegesis, and so must the extensive literature on the so-called *Vetus Latina*, the Latin text of the Bible older than Jerome's translations, and Jerome's *Vulgata* itself, be considered alien to the proper focus of such a bibliography. Nevertheless, the obvious relevance of such erudite data for a historical study of early Christian exegesis has to be taken into account in the Handbook as soon as the experts call on them for a better understanding of patristic exegesis, and in such cases they must be registered.

The edition of the *Vetus Latina* is a work of major proportion realized at the Benedictine abbey of Beuron: *Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel nach Petrus Sabatier, neu gesammelt und in Verbindung mit der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften herausgegeben von der Erzabtei Beuron (Freiburg)*:

- vol. 2 Genesis (B. F. Fischer)
- vol. 10.3 Canticum Canticorum (partly, E. Schülz-Flügel)
- vol. 11.1 Sapientia Salomonis (W. Thiele)
- vol. 11.2 Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) (partly, W. Thiele)
- vol. 12 Esaias (partly, R. Gryson)
- vol. 24.1 Epistula ad Ephesios (H. J. Frede)
- vol. 24.2 Epistula ad Philippenses et Colossenses (H. J. Frede)
- vol. 25 Epistula ad Thessalonicenses, Timotheum, Titum, Philemonem, Hebraeos (H. J. Frede); Epistulae catholicae (partly W. Thiele).

(c) Though focusing on patristic exegesis, the Handbook does not report on *all* aspects of modern scholarship about it, nor does it retrace in detail the history of relevant Western erudition since the time of the Reformation. In particular, a distraction would have been imposed on the reader in describing all the editions of patristic texts secured during the past four centuries. A constant reference to M. Geerhard's *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* and to the latest edition of E. Dekkers' *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* (1st. ed., 1951; 3d. ed., 1995) should suffice to guide the students' attention to a broader information in that regard. Only the more recent or more easily accessible editions will be indicated for practical purposes, and not always in a systematic way. Again, the present Handbook never dispenses from consulting Patrologies for contextual information, nor does it intend to repeat their bibliographical references.

2. Chronological Decisions

A second point calls for *chronological* decisions. Patristic exegesis is deeply rooted in hermeneutical and rhetorical practices of an earlier time, in Judaism with Philo and the rabbis, in Hellenism with the grammarians and

the rhetors of century-old school traditions. It also has its own cultural after-life, for instance in the West with Old Irish scholarship, Bede, and many other learned monks of the early Middle Ages. In order to avoid an undue inflation of information, a consistent dating of the period in which ancient Christian exegesis flourished needs to be established. The time scale would not be the same in the Latin West and on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. In the Oriental Empire and beyond its eastern border, ethnic and linguistic differences would impose their own chronology of patristic exegesis.

3. The Prosopographic Presentation

A third point of method, whose clarification is essential for the structuring of the Handbook, is *prosopographic* in nature. In patristic, more than in contemporary exegesis, the personal experience of the interpreters plays a vital role in their interpretive practice. They did not detach their commentary on sacred Scripture from their private commitment and their public office in the church or from the world of their local setting. In the necessary inclusion of individual studies of ancient interpreters in the Handbook, there is the need to avoid a reduplication of what can be found in any Patrology. Since the seventeenth century, from generation to generation, these manuals of “patrology” (the first appearance of that title is due to J. Gerhard, whose posthumous work dates from 1653) have accumulated information on the studies of individual authors in the patristic era. These outlines were, and still are, essentially prosopographic, author after author forming an impressive panoply of known Christian writers from before the Middle Ages, inventoried with extensive bibliographic and critical commentaries.

In a Handbook of patristic exegesis, however, the task should not consist in selecting only those authors who are specifically exegetes or in analyzing only exegetical writings. Indeed one of the most problematic aspects of the present Handbook consists in the need to describe in summary or to sketch a profile of the exegetical achievements of so many authors whom one would not consider as exegetes in the modern sense. Personal preferences as well as editorial choices inevitably imposed their mark on the writing of the Handbook. One of the unexpected consequences of writing a Handbook may well be that the process of focusing on questions of the purpose and methodology of a Handbook itself imposes a reshaping of the biographical profile of the “Fathers.” Their relevance in the church of their time or for posterity has long demanded a reconsideration determined specifically by their use of the Bible.

Part A
General Considerations

CHAPTER ONE
PATRISTIC EXEGESIS:
FIFTY YEARS OF
INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

Among the many cultural and intellectual surges of the period following the end of World War II was a spectacular development in the study of patristic exegesis. As part of a more general and internationally based revival of patristic scholarship, it caught the wave of new interests and methods of research in biblical exegesis. Benefiting from a shift of attention from the classical to the post-classical heritage of Antiquity in the secular academia, the exploration of patristic interpretations of the Bible became the privileged endeavor of a whole new generation of scholars. The purpose of this chapter is to retrace the history of the relevant scholarship since 1945, on the one hand tracing the prodigious number of publications on which this Handbook rests, and on the other hand, noting the inevitable limitations of the research in these same publications throughout the decades under scrutiny.

The half century that followed World War II was filled with a wealth of publications on patristic exegesis illustrated by a set of collections of primary texts and critical studies launched near the end of the war. More than any individual publication of the following decades the enduring success of these editorial initiatives, together with collections of patristic sources which were reactivated after 1945, testifies to the scale and the intensity of patristic studies in the second half of the twentieth century. Though necessarily sketchy and limited, the following survey of those invaluable editions of sources in their original texts or in translation as basic tools for specialized research is an indication of the extent of the patristic scholarship of the period.

This documentary chapter pays tribute to the generations of scholars whose commitment in Europe, in the Americas, and in Japan resulted in a prodigious explosion of patristic studies during the second half of the twentieth century. It presents a summary of some of the most spectacular achievements in the field without claiming to give a full picture of any of them.

First, the attention focuses on the publication of (I) *primary sources*. Individual editions and translations shall be mentioned for each patristic author in the historical survey of Part Two, again not *all* editions and translations, but only the best known or those actually in use. In Part Two chapter 15, a complementary list of such publications in the CSCO notes non-Greek and non-Latin sources.

Secondly, (II) *tools for research*, elaborated during the second half of the twentieth century, are reviewed: encyclopedias, dictionaries, lexica, patrologies. Though not ignored in the survey, electronic forms of publications

would quickly need an updating. Characteristically, the history of patristic research in the twentieth century is marked by a final dramatic change, this time in the field of technology.

Thirdly, one embarks on a navigation of the *mare magnum* of (III) *studies on patristic sources*. Brief descriptions of major series of such studies will provide some poles for orientation across the currents of a veritable ocean of specialized literature. Here even more than in the former sections of the chapter, though the erudite sight-seeing is very restricted, the resulting overview of the results of collective undertakings has never been before attempted on such an international scale.

Fourthly, a list of (IV) *learned journals* completes the introductory survey of the specialized documentation presupposed by the Handbook or included in it. The list is strictly limited to periodicals referred to elsewhere in the present work. Other journals may figure in subsequent bibliographies but those listed here were used in the elaboration of the Handbook. Some are subjected to closer analysis because their practical help was outstanding.

Such a survey of publications as the one investigated in this chapter is inevitably marked by personal factors. Doubtlessly, if compiled by a British or a German, an Italian or American author, the present chapter would shift its orientation. In spite of obvious limitations, one hopes that the presentation that follows opens a needed access to information in many of the main Western languages.

I
COLLECTIONS OF PRIMARY TEXTS,
NEW EDITIONS, AND TRANSLATIONS

In 1997 A. Keller began the publication of a major source of information: *Translationes Patristicae Graecae et Latinae. Bibliographie der Übersetzungen altchristlicher Quellen*. Erster Teil: A.-H. Stuttgart. Vernacular editions are listed in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish.

I. BIBLIOTHÈQUE AUGUSTINIENNE (BA)

Among the eighty-nine volumes planned before World War II by F. Cayré, the founder of the corpus, nine are dedicated to Augustine's exegetical writings in the strict sense. So far only one of them, *De Genesi ad litteram* (BA 47–48, ed. P. Agaësse and A. Solignac, 1972) has been published. Add BA 71–72, the *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, M. F. Berrouard ed., 1969 and 1978. All thirty-nine volumes published at this date, of which the most recent is *De doctrina christiana* (vol. 11/2, 1997), date from after World War II with the exception of BA 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, which were all republished in second editions between 1948 and 1952. See G. Madec, *La Bibliothèque Augustinienne: Présentation d'ensemble: Table analytique des introductions et des notes complémentaires* (Paris, 1988).

II. CORPUS CHRISTIANORUM (CC)

An enterprise of gigantic proportions, the Corpus Christianorum was launched by the Belgian publisher Brepols in 1954 for the Series Latina, in 1974 for the Series Graeca, and in 1983 for the Series Apocryphorum. A selection of titles more directly relevant for the study of patristic exegesis in each of the three Series should suffice as a preliminary information. All these titles are referred to in the historical survey of the present Handbook.

Series Latina (CCSL)

- III. Cyprian C., *Ad Fortunatum* (1972), IIIA. *De dominica oratione* (1976)
IX. Fortunatus Aquileiensis, *Tractatus XVII in Evangelium Mathaei* (1957)
IX A. Chromatius Aquileiensis, *Tractatus in Mathaeum* (1975)

- XIV. Ambrosius, *In Lucam, Esaiam* (1957)
- XIX. Apponius, *In Canticum* (1986)
- XXXII. Augustinus, *De doctrina christiana* (1962)
- XXXIII. —. *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum Locutionum libri VII, De octo quaestionibus ex Veteri Testamento* (1958)
- XXXV. —. *De Sermone Domini in monte* (1967)
- XXXVI. —. *In Iohannis evangelio tractatus CXXIV* (1954)
- XXXVIII. —. *Enarrationes in Ps. I–L* (1956)
- XXXIX. —. *Enarrationes in Ps. LI–C* (1956)
- XL. —. *Enarrationes in Ps. CI–CL* (1956)
- XLI. —. *Sermones I–L de Vetere Testamento* (1961)
- XLIV B. —. *Quaestiones evangeliorum. Quaestiones XVI in Mattheum* (1980)
- XLIX. —. *Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum* (1985)
- LX. Quodvultdeus, *Liber promissionum* (1976)
- LXVIII A. Prosper Aquitanus, *Expositio Psalmorum* (1972)
- LXXII. Jerome, *Hebraicae Quaestiones in libro Geneseos. Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum. Commentarioli in Psalmos. Commentarius in Ecclesiasten* (1959)
- LXXIII A. —. *Commentarius in Esaiam* (1963)
- LXXIV. —. *In Hieremiam* (1960)
- LXXVI A. —. *In Prophetas minores* (1969–70)
- XXVII. —. *In Mattheum* (1969)
- LXXVIII. —. *Homiliae in Psalmos, In Marci evangelium* (1958)
- LXXXVIII. Julian Aelclanensis, *Expositio libri Iob, Tractatus Prophetarum Osee, Iohel et Amos* (1977)
- LXXXVIII A. Theodore Mopsuesteni, *Expositionis in Psalmos Iuliano Aelclanensi interprete in Latinum versae quae supersunt* (1977)
- XC. *Florilegia Biblica Africana saeculi V* (1961)
- XCII. Primasius Hadrumetinus, *Commentarius in Apocalypsin* (1985)
- XCVII–XCVIII. Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum I–LXX* (1958)
- XCVIII. *Expositio Psalmorum I–CL* (1958)
- CVIII B–C. *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores* (1973–1974)
- CVIII D. *Florilegia; Testimonia divinae Scripturae* (1987)
- CXLII. Gregorius Magnus, *Homiliae in Hiezechielem Prophetam* (1971)
- CXLIII. —. *Moralia in Iob I–X* (1979)
- CXLIII A. —. *Moralia in Iob XI–XXII* (1979)

- CXLIII B. —. *Moralia in Iob XXIII–XXXV* (1985)
 CXLIV. —. *Expositio in Canticum Cantorum, In librum Primum Regum* (1963)
 CXLV. —. *Ecloga quam scripsit Lathcen filius Baith de Moralibus Iob quas Gregorius fecit* (1969)

Series Graeca (CCSG)

More technical and published without translations, the Series Graeca is the work of specialists writing on a high level of erudition, for their peers. As one notices, almost all the volumes of the Series are directly exegetical.

1. M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, vol. I (1983), II (1974), III (1979), IV (1980).
2. F. Petit, ed., *Catena graecae in Genesim et Exodum I* (1977), II *Collectio Coisliniana in Genesim* (1986).
3. C. Datema, ed., *Amphilochii Iconiensis Opera* (1978).
4. S. Leanza, ed., *Procopii Gazaei Catena in Ecclesiasten. Pseudo-Chrysostomi, Commentarius in eundem Ecclesiasten* (1978).
6. J. M. Olivier, ed., *Diodori Tarsensis Commentarii in Psalmos, I. Commentarius in Ps. I–L* (1980).
11. S. Lucà, ed., *Anonymus in Ecclesiasten Commentarius qui dicitur Catena trium Patrum* (1983).
12. K.-H. Uthemann, *Anastasio Sinaitae Sermones duo in constitutionem hominis secundum imaginem Dei nec non Opuscula adversus monotheletas* (1985).
14. M. Hostens, *Anonymi auctoris Theognosiae (saec. IX/X). Dissertatio contra Iudaeos* (1986).
15. F. Petit, *Catena graecae in Genesim et Exodum, II Collectio Coisliniana in Genesim* (1986).

Series Apocryphorum

The Series Apocryphorum results from a team working under the leadership of F. Bovon, then at the University of Geneva, a superb result indeed which attracted competent specialists on an international scale. The texts published in the first critical editions of this series are hardly known by the general scholarly community. Their translations from Greek, Latin, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, or Paleo-Bulgarian are therefore the more indispensable for future scholarship. A volume of commentaries, often the work of a whole group of experts follows each edition of a text. A special

mention must be made of the *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*, by M. Geerard (1992), which became part of the series, and which contained detailed information on the present stage of research and publication of all known NT Apocryphals. There is no need to emphasize that such apocryphal literature, though distanced from the present Handbook, cannot be ignored when it impinges upon patristic exegesis.

J.-C. Haelewyck, *Clavis Apocryphorum Veteris Testamenti* (1998).

M. Geerard, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (1992).

1.-2. E. Junod – J.-D. Kaestli, *Acta Iohannis* (1983).

3.-4. L. Leloir, *Écrits apocryphes sur les Apôtres* Traduction de l'édition arménienne de Venise, I. Pierre, Paul, André, Jacques, Jean (1986)—II. Philippe, Barthélemy, Thomas, Matthieu, Jacques frère du Seigneur, Thaddée, Simon, Listes d' Apôtres (1992).

5.-6. J.-M. Prieur, *Acta Andreae* (1989).

7.-8. P. Bottiolo, ed., *Ascensio Isaiae* (1995), II. E. Norelli, *Commentarius* (1995).

III. CORPUS SCRIPTORUM CHRISTIANORUM ORIENTALIVM (CSCO)

Created at the beginning of the twentieth century by J.-B. Chabot, I. Guidi, H. Hyvernat and B. Carra de Vaux, the Orientalistic Series of Louvain, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* (CSCO), reached a total of eighty publications before World War II. With its exceptional vigor, its new start in 1950 illustrates the collective dynamic which motivated scholars for the next five decades. Approximately 300 fascicles of critically edited texts and translations in different modern languages with "Subsidia," or additional erudite contributions in form of dictionaries, concordances, text critical analyses and other studies, were produced in CSCO between 1950 and the end of the twentieth century. European and North American scholars joined forces in a relentless effort to cover the whole of ancient Oriental literature whose works up to the thirteenth century C.E. witness to the riches of the patristic legacy either secreted away or still openly flourishing under the ruling of Islam. In Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, Iberian (or Old Georgian), and Arabic, the series included lectionaries and other liturgical documents, biblical texts and exegetical commentaries, *catenae* and innumerable homilies, able to communicate the values of patristic traditions still alive in the Orient a long time after the collapse of the Roman Empire.

The overwhelming achievement of the CSCO presents a clear case of a treasure house of documentation which has hardly been exploited by the

scholarly community, but which will provide a sound foundation for future interpretive work still to be undertaken in a systematic retrieving of ancient Christianity. Patristic exegesis being a central concern in the Louvain Corpus, the relevant fascicles will be listed below, in Part B, Chapters 15 and 16 in the chronological order of their publication and classified according to their original languages. Thus at a glance, the reader discovers unfamiliar sources. Thanks to the determined investment of a relatively small number of specialists, a whole world of Christian literature covering long centuries and vast territories east of the Mediterranean is still waiting in the CSCO for the endeavors of future scholarship.

IV. CORPUS SCRIPTORUM ECCLESIASTICORUM LATINORUM (CSEL)

Another ancestor among the current collections of patristic texts which displayed a renewed vitality after World War II is the Corpus of Vienna. Created by the Imperial Academy of Austria in 1864, the *Corpus Vindobonense* counted 69 volumes in 1939. For a new start after 1945, it changed its title into *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, thereby like GCS marking the explicit will to open its horizon of erudite publications. The *Commentary on Acts* by Arator (A. P. McKinlay, ed., 1951), Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* (G. M. Green, ed., 1963), Ambrose's *Commentaries on the Pauline Letters* (H. J. Vogels, ed., 1966, 1968, 1969), the *Opera Exegetica* of Marius Victorinus (F. Gon, ed., 1986), Augustine's *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos, Epistolae ad Galatas expositionis liber unus, Epistolae ad Romanos inchoata expositio* (J. Divjak, ed., 1971), *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* (D. Weber, ed., 1998), as well as four volumes of Jerome's *Letters* (the fourth volume of "Indices et Addenda," is due to M. Kamptner) in the new edition of L. Hilberg (1996), represent a valuable addition to the critical editions of exegetic works secured by CSEL during the past forty years. See M. Zelzer, "Ein Jahrhundert (und mehr) CSEL, Evaluation von Ziel und Veröffentlichungen," *Memorial Dom Eligius Dekkers, OSB = SacEr* 38 (Louvain, 1998–1999), 75–99.

V. GRIECHISCHE CHRISTLICHE SCHRIFTSTELLER (GCS)

The prestigious Corpus of Berlin was initiated in 1891 by a Commission of the Prussian Academy of Sciences whose members were the philological celebrities Diels, Dillmann, Gebhardt, Harnack, Loof, and Mommsen. The

first volume with the exegetical and homiletic works of Hippolytus appeared in 1897. Thirty volumes were published up to the end of World War I, a task uninterrupted by the war itself, while a total of forty volumes were in print before the collapse of the Third Reich. When giving the series a new start in the early 1950s, the editors decided to drop “drei” in its original title: “Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte.” The new open chronology allowed the integration of Basil of Caesarea’s *Homilies on the Hexameron* (E. Amand de Mendieta and S. Y. Rudberg, eds., 1997) into the Corpus, as well as Eusebius of Caesarea’s voluminous *Commentary on Isaiah* (J. Ziegler, ed. 1975).

Highly significant also in GCS were new critical possibilities given by a more thorough study of ancient manuscripts in the “Neubearbeitung aller bisher erschienenen Origenes-Bände,” “the reworking of all volumes of Origen published so far” as announced in “Origenes IX” (1959). At least, Origen’s *Homilies on Luke in the Translations of Jerome and the Greek Fragments of the Homilies and the Commentary on Luke* (M. Rauer, ed.) started to materialize the project in that volume of 1959, but the expressed intention apparently had no other following.

VI. PATROLOGIAE CURSUS COMPLETUS. SERIES LATINA. SUPPLEMENTUM (PLSUP)

Special attention must be paid to the *Supplementum* of Migne’s Latin *Patrology* (PLSup), published by A. Hamman, from 1958 to 1970 in five volumes. The updating of PL up to the early 1970s presents all patristic and medieval texts discovered and published since Migne’s PL was printed. These new texts constitute many additions to Migne which would normally find their place in a new edition of the celebrated *Patrologia*. Even for small fragments of texts already in PL, if ever produced in a new critical edition, A. Hamman consistently indicates in full detail how the fragments have been edited as well as the manuscripts on which the newly reproduced texts are based, with an acknowledgment of their first publishers. In other words, not only is PL thereby updated, but at the same time an updated survey is secured for the critical work on Latin patristic sources completed in the first half of the twentieth century. Such an initiative, beneficial as it is for generations of students to come, witnesses to a remarkable collective awareness among patristic experts in the immediate aftermath of World War II, that a new era was dawning for patristics.

The list of titles in PLSup, *Textus singulis scriptoribus attributi*, enumer-

ated in vol. V, *Indices* (1974), the work of L. Bailly and J.-P. Bouhot, covers over sixty pages PL format. From Ambrose of Milan to Pope Zosimus, each author's name is followed by the list of his writings reprinted in PLSup: eight such titles for Ambrose, for Augustine 148 (essentially the collections of his sermons published by Caillau-Saint-Yves, Lambot, Mai, Morin, Willmart and others), with even a greater number for pseudo-Augustine. Caesarius of Arles, almost entirely authenticated in the sources since the early twentieth century, has almost as many titles as Augustine. Other heavy-weights of the twentieth-century critical editions are Chrysostomus Latinus, Epiphanius Latinus, Eusebius Gallicanus, Gregorius Magnus, Pelagius I. Jerome accounts for 190 titles. It is fascinating to examine the editorial work leading to such an accumulation of up-dated primary sources, especially when one considers the achievements of the second half of the century, such as the discovery of new sermons and letters of Augustine which surprisingly enough had escaped the attention of all former editors.

VII. PATROLOGIA ORIENTALIS (PO)

As a project conceived in 1897 at a “Congrès des Orientalistes” in Paris, the *Patrologia Orientalis* was founded by R. Graffin and, for a long period of time, directed by him and F. Nau. The first volume of the series appeared in 1907, its volume 25 in 1943, the series maintaining its publications and its standards throughout World War II under R. Graffin's firm direction. Still under his supervision, volume 26 came out in 1945. After R. Graffin's death, years past before the series took a new start with his nephew, F. Graffin, a Jesuit expert in Syriac, as director. From 1957 until the late 1990s. twenty imposing volumes enriched this prestigious collection.

The following titles of PO since 1945 are of a special interest for students of patristic exegesis. Note that vol. 26 is dated from 1945, but its five fascicles are actually to be dated as follows: 1945 (fasc. 1), 1946 (fasc. 2), 1948 (fasc. 3), 1950 (fasc. 4), 1949 (fasc. 5). The same disposition is kept in the subsequent volumes.

In vol. 27 (1954–1957) among other works is that of M. Brière, L. Mariès, B.-C. Mercier, eds., *Hippolyte de Rome, Sur les Bénédictiones d'Isaac, de Jacob et de Moïse* (1954).

The *Ethiopian Synaxarion*, or *Book of the Saints*, started publication in PO, vol. 1 (I. Guidi, ed., 1907). It was continued in vol. 7 (I. Guidi, ed., 1911), vol. 9 (I. Guidi and S. Grébaut, eds., 1913) and vol. 15 (S. Grébaut, ed., 1927). Its critical edition and translation received a new start still with S. Grébaut

as editor in 1945, and was freshly energized by G. Colin from vol. 43 (1986) to vol. 46 (1994).

The critical edition and French translation in PO of Severus of Antioch's one hundred twenty-five *Cathedral Homilies* required even more enduring efforts if not a longer period of time. Started in vol. 4 (1908) with R. Duval as editor, their publication continued in vol. 8 (1912) and 12 (1919) with M. Brière, Vol. 16 (1922), with M.-A. Kugener and E. Triffaux as editors, vol. 20 (1929) with M. Brière, ed., and vol. 22 (1930), again with I. Guidi, ed. After World War II the editing of Severus's *Homilies* started again in vol. 26 (1948), still with M. Brière as editor. In vol. 29 (1961) Brière's work was published posthumously; it continued to serve as the basis for F. Graffin's editing in vol. 35 (1969), for F. Graffin and C. J. A. Lash's collaborative editing in vol. 36 (1972), and again for F. Graffin's tireless dedication in vol. 36 (1974), 37 (1975) and 38 (1976), the latter publication benefiting also from the collaboration of C. J. A. Lash and J.-M. Sauget. During almost seventy years from 1908 to 1976, the perseverance of eight distinguished specialists of Syriac language finally made available for the first time in a modern language one of the most amazing monuments of patristic preaching whose original Greek text is lost. This masterpiece still waits for a proper analysis with regard to its relevance for patristic exegesis.

The Old Georgian Version of biblical books called for a first publication in vol. 26 (1950), *The Old Georgian Version of the Gospel of John* ed., R. P. Blake and M. Brière; then for a second in vol. 27 (1955), *La version géorgienne ancienne de l'Evangile de Luc*. M. Brière ed., and a third one, vol. 29, *The Old Georgian Version of the Prophets*, R. P. Blake ed.; *Petits Prophètes*, M. Brière (1961). *The Old Georgian Version of the Gospel of Matthew* had been edited by R. P. Blake in vol. 24 as early as 1933.

Another example of a multi-authored editorship spread over a long period of time is due to *Le Candélabre du Sanctuaire de Grégoire Abou' Ifaradj dit Barhebraeus: Quatrième Base: l'Incarnation*, J. Khoury, ed., vol. 31 (1964); *Neuvième Base: Libre Arbitre*, P.-H. Poirier, ed., vol. 43 (1985); *Dizième Base: Résurrection* E. Zigmund Cerbù, ed., vol. 35 (1969); *Onzième Base: Jugement dernier* N. Séd, ed., vol. 41 (1983); and finally *Douzième Base: Paradis*, also N. Séd, ed., vol. 40 (1981).

La chaîne arménienne sur les Épîtres Catholiques, by C. Renoux, covers at present vol. 43, fasc. 193 (1985), "I. La chaîne sur l'Épître de Jacques"; vol. 44, fasc. 198 (1987), "II. La chaîne sur les Épîtres de Pierre"; vol. 46, fasc. 205-6 (1994), "III. La chaîne sur la première Épître de Jean."

An important set of exegetical homilies and other writings highlight-

ing the use of Scripture in Syriac and Armenian traditions complete the Orientalistic contribution of PO:

- vol. 27, fasc. 1–2: *Hippolyte de Rome. Sur les Bénédictiones d'Isaac, de Jacob et de Moïse* (1954).
- 30, fasc. 1: *Hymnes de Saint Éphrem conservées en version arménienne*, L. Mariès and C. Mercier, eds., (1961).
- 32, fasc. 1–2 (1966), fasc. 3–4 (1969): *Soma Deggua. Antiphonaire du Carême. Texte éthiopien avec variantes*, B. Velat, ed.
- 34, fasc. 3–4: *Homélie de Narsai sur la Création*, P. Gignoux, ed., (1968).
- 35, n. 163: *Le Codex Arménien Jerusalem 121, I. Introduction aux origines de la liturgie hiérosolymitaine. Lumières nouvelles*, (1969), C. Renoux, ed.
- 36, n. 168: II. *Edition comparée du texte et de deux autres manuscrits* (1971), C. Renoux, ed.
- 38, fasc. 1, n. 174: *Homélie contre les Juifs par Jacques de Saroug* M. Albert, ed., (1976); fasc. 4, n. 177: *Trois homélie syriaques anonymes et inédites sur l'Épiphanie*, A. Desreumaux, ed., (1977).
- 40, fasc. 1, n. 182: *Narsai's Metrical Homilies on the Nativity, Epiphany, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension*. F. G. McLeod (1979), vol. 41, fasc. 2, n. 187: *Barsabée de Jérusalem sur le Christ et les Églises* M. van Esbroeck, ed., (1982); fasc. 4, n. 189: *Homélie anonymes du 6ème siècle: Dissertation sur le Grand Prêtre, Homélie sur la pécheresse I, II, III*, F. Graffin, ed., (1984).
- 42, fasc. 1, n. 190: *Hésychius de Jérusalem, Homélie sur Job*, C. Renoux, ed.; C. Mercier and C. Renoux, transl. (1983).
- 43, fasc. 4, n. 196: *Jacques de Saroug, Six homélie festales en prose*, F. Rilliet (1986).

VIII. SOURCES CHRÉTIENNES (SC)

The performance of Sources Chrétiennes is spectacular, even unique, as a series entirely dedicated to the Church Fathers. Projected by the Jesuit V. Fontoynt at Lyon in the years 1932–1937, the collection effectively started in 1942 and counted 437 volumes at the end of the 1990s. Its initial promoters, H. de Lubac, J. Daniélou and C. Mondésert, all three Jesuits, intended fostering a return to ancient “sources” of Christian spirituality which would counterbalance the abstract aridity of the scholastic system prevalent in the seminaries and theological circles of Catholicism at that time. Targeting a broad public of educated lay-people as well as clerics, and thanks to a careful manage-

ment and a well focused open-mindedness in their theological motivation (the “nouvelle théologie” of Fourvière was a contemporary phenomenon), the founders of *Sources Chrétiennes* attracted numerous collaborators. After the first few volumes of the series were published without critical editions (later on they all had such editions) one publication after another showed constant scientific improvement. At the start, Greek patristic sources were privileged; Henri de Lubac established Origen of Alexandria as a front-runner among the many ancient authorities whose works were launched into the modern world in SC. The edition of Latin authors started only with vol. 19. A set of “non-Christian texts” (in fact, a highly problematic title! Later it became the “Série annexe de textes parachrétiens,” see vol. 44) started with vol. 23, *Extraits de Théodote*, and vol. 24, *Ptolémée, Lettre à Flora*. The tentative inclusion of sources from the non-Greek speaking traditions in the Orient, Syriac and Armenian, in particular, with the *Homilies* of Philoxenos of Mabboug (vol. 44), translated and commented on by E. Lemoine (1956), met with an immediate success. This initiative was followed by the publication of other sources of those traditions communicating a wealth of spiritual commentaries on the Bible: *The Book of Prayers* by Gregory of Narek (transl. from Armenian, I. Kéchichian; vol. 78, 1961); the *Commentary on the Diatessaron* by Ephrem (transl. from Syriac and Armenian, L. Leloir; vol. 121, 1966); the *Hymns on Paradise* also by Ephrem (transl. R. Lavenant, vol. 137, 1968); the *Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch* (transl. with commentaries, P. Bogaert, vol. 144, 1969, 2 vols.); the poetic work on *Jesus the Only Son of the Father* by Nerses Snorhali, who died in 1173 (transl. from Armenian, I. Kéchichian, vol. 203, 1973); the *Dialogues and Treatises* of John of Apamea, a spiritual leader of the fifth century in northern Syria (transl. R. Lavenant, vol. 311, 1984); the *Expositions* by the fourth century Aphraat the Wise from Persia (transl. from Syriac, M. J. Pierre, vols. 349 and 359, 1988–89). A more eccentric edition was *Pseudo-Philo, Biblical Antiquities*, originally in Hebrew, the work of a Jewish scholar living in Jerusalem (?) apparently before 70 c.e. (transl. D. J. Harrington, vols. 229–230, 1976).

Starting with Hilary of Poitiers’ *Tractatus Mysteriorum* (vol. 19, 1947) and Leo I’s *Sermons* (vol. 22, 1947), ancient Latin sources flourished in SC to a total of one hundred and twenty-five volumes in 1998. A new edition of Tertullian’s works is near completion with fifteen volumes available, whereas Augustine, massively published elsewhere, is only present in SC with his *Commentary on the First Letter of John*, (vol. 75, 3rd. ed., 1984), and his *Easter Sermons* (vol. 116, 1966). Among the titles accepted for publication in the near future figures Tyconius’s *Book of Rules*. In short, Ambrose of Milan, Caesarius of Arles, Cyprian of Carthage, Gregory the Great, Hilary of

Poitiers, John Cassian, Jerome, Lactantius, Leo the Great, Marius Victorinus, Rufinus of Aquileia, and Tertullian, among others, form in SC a chorus of exclusively Latin voices, crossing five centuries of ancient Christianity, and giving a diversified account of ancient biblical exegesis in the West.

SC offers an impressive amount of primary texts inherited from Greek-speaking churches. Authors from the first (Clement of Rome) to the thirteenth (Nicholas Cabasilas) century C.E. offer a broad access to the main genres of biblical exegesis notwithstanding anonymous productions such as the *Letter to Diognetus*, the “Chaîne palestinienne sur le Psaume 118” (vols. 189–190, 1972), the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (vol. 387, 1993), and others. Some writings were totally unknown in their original texts before reaching the potentially world-wide readership of SC. Such were the two thousand *Letters* of Isidore of Pelusium (vol. 422, 1997; another volume to come); the *Commentary on the Canticle* by the monk Nilus of Ancyra (vol. 403, 1994; another volume announced) the *Correspondence* of Barsanuphius and John of Gaza (vols. 426–427, 1997–98), as many first critical editions of documents starting to vibrate with new life thanks to competent editors and commentators. The Greek Christian sources form an ocean of symbolic language in Late Antiquity. To chart that ocean and to record their findings in modern critical editions, more than one series of SC would be required. Hence there is no surprise that many exegetical works are still missing even in the unparalleled achievement of SC, in which currently over a hundred titles signal a properly exegetical content, and most others allow the modern reader to become familiar in one way or another with exegetical practices in a variety of literary genres.

Through the agency of SC a complete edition with texts, French translations and commentaries, in thirty-six volumes, of Philo of Alexandria has been produced. A series “Medieval Continuation” was added to SC, inaugurated in 1958 with Aelred of Rievaulx, *When Jesus Was Twelve Years Old* (vol. 60), and continued with William of Saint-Thierry’s *Treatise on the Contemplation of God*, (vol. 61, 1959), Richard of Saint Victor’s *De Trinitate* (vol. 63, 1959), and many others in the next four decades (among the forthcoming volumes figure the second volume of Bernard of Clairvaux’s *Sermons on the Canticle* and the first volume of his *Letters*). Thus the biblical mind of the Fathers is proven to be creatively at work in medieval scholarship at least in its monastic establishment.

IX. SOURCES OF PATRISTIC EXEGESIS IN OTHER
COLLECTIONS (BY LINGUISTIC AREAS)

Dutch

- Vigiliae Christianae, Supplements. Texts and Studies of Early Christian Life and Language*, J. H. Waszink and J. C. M. van Winden eds., from 1987:
vol. 1. J. H. Waszink and J. C. M. van Winden eds., *Tertullianus, De idololatria*, 1987.
6. H. Marti, transl., *Rufinus of Aquileia, De ieiunio I–II*, 1989.
 7. G. A. M. Rowhorst, transl., *Les Hymnes pascales d'Éphrem de Nisibe*, II. Textes, 1989.
 16. F. X. Risch, ed., *Pseudo-Basilii, Adversus Eunomium IV–V*, 1992.
 20. M. Vinzent, transl., *Asterius von Kappadokien*, 1993.
 21. R. Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und der Streit um den Kanon des AT und die Auslegung von Gal 2, 11–14*, 1994.
 34. M. Marcovich, ed., *Clementis Alexandrini Protrepticus*, 1995.
 39. M. Vinzent, ed. and transl., *Markell von Ankyra, die Fragmente. Der Brief an Iulius von Rom*, 1997.

English

Ante-Nicene Fathers and Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers

This double series (*ANF*, 10 vols.; *NPNF*¹, 14 vols.; *NPNF*², 14 vols.), originally published in Great Britain during the second half of the nineteenth century as an imposing piece of Anglo-Catholic apologetics, was reprinted in the United States in 1885 and 1886. The latest reprint in Massachusetts dates from 1995.

Texts and Studies (TS)

Initially created by J. A. Robinson in Cambridge in 1891, but closed in 1952, the series started again in 1954 under the direction of C. H. Dodd. It has given five additional contributions to the study of patristic exegesis, closely linked with critical editions:

- M. Black, ed., *A Christian Palestinian Syriac Horologion*, 1954.
I. A. Moir, *Codex Climaci Rescriptus Graecus* (Ms. Gregory 1561, L), 1956.
D. W. Gooding, *The Account of the Tabernacle. Translation and Textual Problems of the Greek Exodus*, 1959.
Q. W. Muncey, *The New Testament Text of St. Ambrose* 1959.
F. Lo Bue, *The Turin Fragments of Tyconius' Commentary on Revelation*, 1963.

Ancient Christian Writers (ACW)

Created in Washington, D.C., in 1946 by J. Quasten, W. J. Burghardt, and J. C. Plumpe, at the Catholic University of America, one hundred twenty volumes of patristic sources have been published in English translations, among them exegetical works by Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom. The original orientation of the series was towards ancient Christian apologetics.

The Fathers of the Church (FaCh)

Published in New York, N.Y., under the editorship of L. Schopp from 1947 on, the series includes many exegetical works of patristic authors:

Ambrose of Milan, *On Creation, On Paradise, On Cain and Abel, On Genesis*, with other exegetical works.

Augustine of Hippo, *On Genesis, On the Gospel of John*.

Basil of Caesarea, *Exegetical Homilies*.

Jerome, *Homilies on the Psalms*.

John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John*.

Among the volumes published in the 1990s one notes:

Vol. 91. St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Selected Prose Works: Commentary on Genesis, Commentary on Exodus, Homily on Our Lord, Letter to Pustius*. Transl. by E. G. Mathews, Jr., and J. P. Amar. Ed. by K. McVey. Washington, DC 1994 (with general introduction and bibliography).

Vol. 92. St. Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John 112–124. Tractates on the First Epistle of John*. Transl. by J. W. Rettig, 1995.

Vol. 94. Origen, *Homilies on Luke. Fragments on Luke*. Transl. by J. T. Lienhard, 1996 (Introduction).

Vol. 97. Origen, *Homilies on Jeremiah. Homily on 1 Kings 28*. Transl. by J. C. Smith (1998).

Oxford Early Christian Texts (OECT), H. Chadwick, ed.

Created by Henry Chadwick, the series provided the following publications:

M. Bévenot, *Cyprian, De Lapsis and De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate*, 1971.

E. Evans, ed., *Tertullian, Adversus Marcionem*, 1972.

W. R. Schoedel, *Athenagoras. Legatio and De resurrectione*, 1972.

R. W. Thomson, *Athanasius, Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*. 1971.

Oxford Early Christian Studies (OECS)

Also initiated by H. Chadwick in 1971 and co-edited with R. Williams and A. Louth, the series provides the following titles for the study of early Christian exegesis:

- R. Hillier, *Arator, On the Acts of the Apostles. A Baptismal Commentary*, 1993.
 T. De Bruyn, *Pelagius' Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 1993.
 C. T. R. Hayward, transl., *Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis*, 1995.
 R. E. Heine, transl., *Gregory of Nyssa's Treatise on the Inscriptions of the Psalms*, 1995.
 R. P. H. Green, *Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana*, 1996.
 A. B. Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars. A History of an Idea*, 1991.
 P. W. L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century*, 1990.
 C. E. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum. Patterns of Future Hope. Apocalyptic Literature in the Early Church*, 1992.
 R. P. Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyricus and the Nicene Revolution*, 2001.

Scriptores Latini Hiberniae, Dublin, 1955.

French

Ictys. Lettres Chrétiennes was created by A. Hamman in 1957 as a challenge to SC by distributing popular translations of Church Fathers on a large scale and at much more affordable prices. The success of the enterprise confirmed the existence of a genuine contemporary interest for sources of early Christian thought presented without scholarly apparatus. The prevalent use of Scripture in ancient Christian writings is obvious to the eye of any reader discovering such sources for the first time. In full or partial quotation texts were presented under thematic heads:

1. The Birth of Christian Literature
2. The Empire and the Cross
3. Philosophy turns to Christ
4. Lives of the Desert Fathers
5. Baptism
6. Rich and Poor in Early Christianity
7. Christian Initiation
8. The Mystery of Christmas
9. Eucharist
10. The Mystery of Easter

11. Ways toward God
12. Women
13. Marriage

German

Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur was launched by the Byzantinist P. Wirth and the patristic scholar W. Gessel, in Stuttgart, “in this situation of farewelling Antiquity” (in dieser Situation des ‘Abschieds von der Antike’):

10. *Origenes. Die griechisch erhaltenen Jeremiahomilien*, ed. E. Schadel (1980).
18. *Origenes. Der Kommentar zum Evangelium nach Mattäus, I*, ed., H. J. Vogt (1983).

Fontes Christiani (1988)

With N. Brox, S. Döpp, W. Geerlings, G. Greshake, R. Ilgner, R. Schieffer as editors, the series “Fontes Christiani. Zweisprachige Neuausgabe christlicher Quellentexte aus Altertum und Mittelalter” constitutes since 1988 a German equivalent of *Sources Chrétiennes*, whose critical texts are occasionally reproduced. The elegant volumes multiplied in high speed with an obvious success in German-speaking countries. Over forty of them circulated by 1999. The whole series is currently programmed with three hundred titles. Among the titles already published, some are specially valuable for the study of patristic exegesis, such as vol. 1 (1991), *Didache-Traditio apostolica*; vol. 2, 1–5 (1991–1996), Th. Heithers edition of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans*; vol. 4, 1–2 (1991), H. J. Sieben, *Origen. In Lucam Homiliae*; vol. 8/1 (1993), N. Brox, *Irenaeus. Ad Haereses*; vol. 16, 1–3 (1994), F. Dünzl, *Gregory of Nyssa. In Canticum Canticorum*; vol. 17, 1–2 (1994–95), P. Bruns, *Theodore of Mopsuestia. Katechetische Homilien*; vol. 18 (1995), G. Schnieder, *Evangelia Infantiae Apocrypha. Apokryphe Kindheitsevangelien*; vol. 19 (1995), M. Lattke, *Oden Salomos*. A first series of twenty-five volumes was completed in 1996; simultaneously, a second series of another twenty-five volumes was announced, with *Augustinus. Über die christliche Lehre*, 2 vols. (1999); *Gregor der Grosse. Evangelienhomilien*, 2 vols. (1998) among the forthcoming titles.

Testimonia. Schriften der altchristlichen Kirche (Test), Düsseldorf, 1960.

Patristische Texte und Studien (PTS), Berlin, 1964, K. Aland and W. Schneemelcher eds.:

1. M. Tetz, ed., *Eine Antilogie des Eutherios von Tyana*, 1964.
4. H. Dörries, E. Klostermann, M. Kroeger eds., *Die 50 geistlichen Homilien des Makarios*, 1964.
7. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. I, 1969; vol. 12, II, 1973; vol. 17, III, 1975; vol. 22, IV, 1981; vol. 29, V, 1988.

Texte der Kirchenväter (TKV). Eine Auswahl nach Themen geordnet, 5 volumes, Munich, 1963–1966.

Prepared and edited by A. Heilmann, with the scientific assistance of H. Kraft, these five attractive volumes exemplify the desire, mainly expressed in Roman Catholic circles after World War II, to diffuse patristic writings on a more popular level than the one J.-P. Migne had targeted in the nineteenth century. The French series SC had engineered such an attempt on the grand scale. TKV represents a much more modest achievement, the numerous exegetical quotations in its collections of excerpts translated with great care. The four collections of quotations are subtitled:

- I. God, Creation, Man, Sin.
- II. Grace, Christ, Sanctification.
- III. Christian Life, Charity, Christian Society (the most extended section).
- IV. Church, Sacraments, Scripture (pp. 315–381), Eschatology.
- V. Realized by H. K. Kraft, includes a “Lexicon of Church Fathers” in alphabetic order of five hundred pages, a sort of mini-patrology, and “Indices.”

Each excerpt in the four series is introduced with an indication of its contents and followed by a reference to the quoted source. A complete list of those indications and references at the end of volume V facilitates the use of the collection.

Traditio Christiana (TC), Zurich, 1969.

Greek

Consult the βιβλιοθήκην Ἑλληνῶν Πατέρων καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικῶν συγγραφεῶν, “Library of the Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers”, published by the Apostolic Diakonia of the Greek Church published in Athens.

Italian

Biblioteca Patristica was launched by M. Naldini and M. Simonetti, in Florence:

4. *Clemente Alessandrino. Estratti profetici*, ed., C. Nardi.

10. *Ippolito. L'Anticristo*, ed., E. Norelli.
18. *Origene. Omelie sui Salmi*, ed., E. Prinzivalli (1991).

Collana di testi patristici, directed by A. Quacquarelli:

1. *Origene. Commento al Cantico dei Cantici*
2. *Atanasio. L'incarnazione del Verbo*
14. *Origene. Omelie sulla Genesi*
16. *Gregorio Nazianzeno. La Passione di Cristo*
17. *Gregorio Magno. Omelie su Ezechiele I-II*
24. *Giovanni Damasceno. Omelie cristologiche e mariane*
27. *Origene. Omelie sull' Esodo*
35. *Giovanni Crisostomo. Commento all lettera ai Galati*

Corona Patrum Salesiana. Sanctorum Patrum Graecorum et Latinorum Opera Selecta, ed. P. Ricaldone, Turin, 1936.

The series, directed at the instruction of the Italian clergy, includes *Series Latina* and a *Series Graeca*, with critical texts borrowed from earlier editions, easy translations, biblical references, and analytical tables of content.

Japanese

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Augustine's *Confessions* has been translated at least nine times into Japanese. A complete translation of Augustine's works in thirty volumes (among them, vol. 6: *De doctrina christiana*, transl. T. Kato; vols. 16–17: *De Genesi ad litteram*, transl. E. Katayanagi; vols. 18–20: *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, vols. 23–25: *Tractatus in Iohannis Evangelium*, transl. H. Izumi, H. Kaneko, T. Shigeizumi, et al.) began to be published in 1979 and is now completed.

An intense program of translations, put into effect at the Institute of Medieval Thought at Sophia University, Tokyo, focuses on a *Corpus fontium mentis medii aevi*:

- vol. 1. *Early Greek Fathers*: Didache, Justinus Martyr, Theophilus Antiochenus, Irenaeus Lugdonensis, Clemens Alexandrinus, Hippolytus Romanus, Origenes, Gregorius Thaumaturgus, Methodius Olympus, Eusebius Caesariensis, Athanasius Alexandrinus.
- vol. 2. *Golden Age Greek Fathers*: Arius, Alexander Alexandrinus, Eusebius, Athanasius, Cyrillus Hierosolymitanus, Basilius Caesariensis, Gregorius Nazianzenus, Gregorius Nyssenus, Johannes Chrysostomus.
- vol. 3. *Later Greek Fathers and Byzantine Fathers*: Evagrius Ponticus, Nestorius, Cyrillus Alexandrinus, Pseudo-Macarius, Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita, Johannes Climacus, Maximus Confessor, Johannes Damascenus,

Theodorus Studita, Symeon Novus Theologus, Michael Psellus, Gregorius Palamas, Nicolaus Cabasilas.

vol. 4. *Early Latin Fathers* (1999): Tertullianus, Novatianus, Cyprianus, Lactantius, Marius Victorinus, Hilarius, Ambrosius, Hieronymus, Prudentius, Paulinus Nolanus, Sulpicius Severus, Pelagius, Augustinus, Iohannes Cassianus, Prosper Aquitanus, Leo Papa, Caesarius Arelatensis.

vol. 5. *Later Latin Fathers* (199): Boethius, Benedictus de Nursia, Cassiodorus, Martinus episcopus Bracarenensis, Gregorius Magnus, Isidorus episcopus Hispalensis, Ildefonsus episcopus Toletanus, Defensor monachus Locogiacensis.

This series constitutes a monumental achievement in the history of Japanese patristic studies.

Another series, Kyo-Bun Kwan's *Selected Works of Early Christian Writers* (from the first to the third century) includes vols. 8–10: Origenes, *Contra Celsum* (transl. M. Demura) and Origenes, *De Principiis*, *Commentarium in Iohannis Evangelium* and *Commenarium in Canticum Cantorum*, (transl. T. Odaka). Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, is also translated in that series.

Spanish

Biblioteca de Patristica (1986)

Twenty-five volumes published, comparable with the Italian *Collana di Testi patristici*, addressed to the general public.

Fuentes patristicas (1997)

With original texts, translations, and annotations directed to an academic readership, under the responsibility of E. Romero Pose.

In process: *Monumenta christiana iberica*; see J. Martinez, "La Patrologie en Espagne": *Les Pères de l'Église au XXème siècle*. Paris 1997, 403–416.

II

INSTRUMENTA STUDIORUM:
 DICTIONARIES, ENCYCLOPEDIAS, PATROLOGIES,
 BIBLIOGRAPHIES

I. BASIC REFERENCE BOOKS

Altaner, B. – Stuiber, A., *Patrologie*, was at its eighth edition in 1978, after the seventh in 1966, and the sixth in 1960; in addition there was an American translation in 1961, a French edition in 1962, a second Italian edition in 1944, and a Spanish edition in 1972 (Altaner's original edition dates from 1938, a first Italian version from 1940, a Hungarian version from 1947).

A. Di Berardino published the two volumes of the *Dizionario Patristico e di antichità cristiane* in 1983 and 1984, with over 170 collaborators listed. Four important entries on patristic exegesis are signed by M. Simonetti: "Allegoria," "Commentari Biblici," "Diodoro di Tarso," "Esegesi patristica." Also relevant are the articles "Bibbia" (E. Peretto), "Cantico dei Cantici" (P. Maloni), "Catene Bibliche" (C. Curti), "Generi letterari" (P. Siniscalco), and contributions by E. Dassmann, J. Gribomont, A. Quacquarelli, V. Saxer. A French translation followed in *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du Christianisme ancien*, 1990; an English translation *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* in 1992.

Ferguson E., *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, supported by a strong team of contributors, first appeared in 1993, then in a second and enlarged edition in 1997: pp. 34–37, "Allegory" (J. W. Trigg); 74–78, "Apocryphals" (D. M. Scholer: NT; J. J. Collins OT); 205–211, "Canon" (of Scripture) (L. M. McDonald); 456–58, "Genesis" (J. P. Lewis); 580–84, "Interpretation of the Bible" (D. Farkasfahy); 986–88, "Rhetoric" (F. W. Norris). There is no entry on "Exegesis." For individual entries of patristic interpreters or books of the Bible, consult the Index.

Hamman, A., *Guide Pratique des Pères de l'Église*, Paris, 1967. This publication is not for the specialist, but conceived as an initiation of 326 pages for young (or not so young) students. It is pleasantly written, illustrated with well-chosen quotations: a masterpiece of "vulgarisation" in the French term, it was conceived as a companion volume to the series "Ictys," which was created with similar intentions by the author.

Quasten, J., *Patrology*. Vol. I: The Beginnings of Patristic Literature; vol. II: The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus; vol. III: The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature. Utrecht – Brussels 1950, 1953, 1960. A. di Berardino,

Patrologia vol. III: Dal Concilio di Nicea (325) al Concilio di Calcedonias (451). I Padri latini. Cabale 1978. French edition: J. Laporte, transl., *Initiation aux Pères de l'Église*, 3 vols. Paris 1955, 1957, 1963. J.-P. Bagot, transl., vol. IV: "Les Pères Latins" Paris 1986.

It took three decades to complete the best-known Patrology in the English-speaking world, a work of high erudition, pedagogical and attractive, with excellent bibliographies. It was quickly recognized as a classic.

II. AUGUSTINUS LEXIKON (AUGL)

With Cornelius Mayer and others as editors, volume I: Fasc. 1–2 *Aaron–Anima, animus*, appeared in 1986, acclaimed by the critics as "a notable event and a most welcome addition to the resources available to the student" (H. Chadwick, *JEH* 39 [1988] 140). In German, English, or French, its programme announces 1200 entries. It focuses on the person and the work of the bishop of Hippo without neglecting any of his friends or foes. To archaeology and topography (with maps), the *AugL* adds liturgical and doctrinal themes and concepts. All the writings of the versatile bishop have their critical notice brought up to the latest state of research. Some of Augustine's more famous statements are introduced into the alphabetical set of entries and located in his written legacy. Most useful for the study of Augustine's familiarity with Scripture are the articles dealing with OT or NT figures, those on allegory and other hermeneutical issues.

The leading experts of Augustinian studies from all over the world contribute to the *AugL*. In 1994 its first volume was completed, a last double fascicle 7–8, *Civitas Dei—Conversio*, bringing its content to a total of 1,294 columns. Eight years needed for the first three letters of the alphabet represent a slow pace. In Y.-M. Duval's words, the enterprise "might progress more slowly than one would wish for, but it progresses" (*REAug* 41 [1995] 362). Five years later, no acceleration was noticeable, but the high standard of the *AugL* continued to be celebrated by the specialists.

C. Mayer, *CD-Rom Corpus Augustinianum Gissense (CAG)*: In the same publishing house, Schwabe & Co, Basel (where the first edition of Augustine's works was printed in 1505–1517!), Cornelius Mayer, teaching at the University of Giessen (Germany), produced the result of fifteen years of a well-organized collective preparation, a CD-Rom with the full text of the Augustinian *Opera omnia* and a bibliography of circa 50,000 titles. The whole Augustinian text, painstakingly revised on the basis of the latest critical editions, includes the most recent discoveries, such as the Dolbeau sermons.

All biblical and other citations are identified with their references; All forms are lemmatized as in the publications of Louvain's CETEDOC. One finds in CAG "the integral materials for a *Biblia Augustiniana*; and I guess that if A.-M. La Bonnardière had known it, fifty years ago, she would have completed her programme of commentaries on the use made by Augustine of biblical books" (G. Madec, *REAug* 42 [1996] 325).

III. BIBLIA PATRISTICA

In 1965, André Benoit and Pierre Prigent created a "Centre d'Analyse et de Documentation Patristiques" (CADP) at the Protestant Faculté de Théologie of Strasbourg (A. Benoit et P. Prigent, "Les Citations de l'Écriture chez les Pères," *RHPPhR* 56 [1966] 161–68). After a short time the Centre became associated with the CNRS, the "National Centre for Scientific Research" in Paris, whose financial support allowed the launching of *Biblia Patristica* in 1975. By the end of the century, six volumes and a Supplement were published:

1. *Des origines à Clément d'Alexandrie et Tertullien*, Paris 1975.
 2. *Le Troisième siècle (Origène excepté)*, Paris 1977.
 3. *Origène*, Paris 1980.
 4. *Eusèbe de Césarée, Cyrille de Jérusalem, Épiphanes de Salamine*, Paris 1987.
 5. *Basile de Césarée, Grégoire de Nazianze, Grégoire de Nysse, Amphiloque d'Iconium*, Paris 1991.
 6. *Hilaire de Poitiers, Ambroise de Milan, l'Ambrosiaster*, Paris 1995.
- Supplément: *Philon d'Alexandrie*, Paris 1982.

Each volume collects between 40,000 and 50,000 biblical quotations in patristic sources. After lists of the sources analyzed, of their editions and their abbreviated titles, all biblical occurrences are enumerated from Gn 1: 1 to Rv 22:19, even when limited to small elements of verses or to allusions. Fruitful exchanges with the Vetus Latina Institute of Beuron and the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung of Münster/W. facilitated the gigantic task. After twenty years of a real success story, P. Marvel, the director of CADP announced forthcoming volumes on "the Egyptian writers, then those of the Syriac language, finally all the other Fathers and 'minor' writers (if that makes sense) of the fourth century"; he describes as "quasi-eschatological perspectives" the volumes projected on Jerome, Chrysostomus, Augustine, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret of Cyrus, and others (*Les Pères de l'Église au XX^e siècle*, 450). A lack of public funding and fewer human resources may bring the enterprise to a halt despite the continuous improvement of electronic technology.

IV. *CORPUS CHRISTIANORUM* (CETEDOC)

Since 1982, under the general title *Instrumenta Lexicologica Latina*, and thanks to the diligence of Paul Tombeur, the *Corpus Christianorum* finds itself enriched year after year by fascicles of computerized forms of words for some volumes of the Latin series, presenting the lexical *thesaurus*, or “treasure,” of specific authors or works. For instance:

CC—*Thesaurus Patrum Latinorum: Thesaurus Sancti Gregorii Magni*: Series A. Formae: Enumeratio formarum. Index formarum a tergo ordinatarum—Concordantia formarum (on microcards). CETEDOC, Paul Tombeur, ed., Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1986.

CC—*Instrumenta Lexicologica Latina*: “The *Instrumenta Lexicologica Latina* have been conceived to provide experts with fundamental tools for research, needed by the scientific study of a text or the inquiry about given phenomena whose occurrence in a specific work needs clarification (forms, a set of forms or expressions, citations, entries significant for their orthography, morphology, syntax and style,” “Les *Instrumenta Lexicologica Latina* ont été conçus de telle manière que les chercheurs puissent disposer des instruments de travail fondamentaux que nécessitent l’étude scientifique d’un texte ou la recherche concernant des phénomènes donnés dont on veut savoir s’ils sont attestés dans une oeuvre précise (formes, ensembles de formes ou expressions, citations, lemmes caractéristiques orthographiques, morphologiques, syntaxiques et stylistiques” (P. Tombeur).

Several fascicles of the series are of special interest for the study of patristic exegesis:

Fasc. 2: Jerome, C. Rufinus

6: *Ars Ambrosiana*

8: Gregory the Great, *In Canticum Canticorum, In Librum Primum Regum*

26: Primasius, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*

36: Apponius, *In Canticum*

40: Leo the Great

42: *Florilegia: Flor. Frisingense*

In addition to the *Instrumenta* already mentioned, the *Cetedoc Index of Latin Forms*, or *Thesaurus formarum totius latinitatis a Plauto usque ad saeculum XXum*, “represents a first step towards producing a huge Latin dictionary database,...a revolutionary tool, containing almost 70 million forms drawn from the entirety of ancient Latin literature, from the literature of the patristic period, from a vast body of medieval material (including in particular the *opera omnia* of Thomas Aquinas), and from collections of Neo-Latin works.... By ‘forms’ is meant the different actual occurrences of

a lexical entry within any extant discourse.... Within the limits of the texts incorporated in the database, scholars get information on the first occurrence of a form, all the works in which it appears, the authors who use it, its frequency of occurrence throughout the centuries.”

Since the end of 1997, the *Cetedoc Index of Latin Forms* is available as a *printed Wordlist* providing the complete alphabetical list of forms, together with indication of frequencies according to period; and as a *CD-ROM* “which allows users to search the entire database of 70 million forms in the most complex ways.”

V. DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

With John H. Hayes as general editor and four hundred contributors, the *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, published in 1999, in Nashville, Tenn., contains a synthesis of world-wide scholarship in two volumes of over 600 pages each. Experts with Jewish, or Christian, or Muslim and other religious backgrounds, present a very readable text, divided into two columns per page. The reception-history of each book of the Bible receives special attention, for instance Genesis in 13 cols., Exodus in over 14, Deuteronomy in 43, Jeremiah in 22, and Job in 25. A bibliography follows each notice. Some major trends or distinctive areas are singled out such as “Afrocentric-, Armenian-, Asian-, Ethiopian-, Evangelical-, Feminist-, Gnostic-, Hispanic American-, Mujerista-, Orthodox-, Post colonial-, Postmodern-, Womanist Biblical Interpretation.” Other general surveys deal with “The Bible and Art”(15 cols.), “The Bible and Western Literature,” (almost 15 cols.), “Liberation Theologies” (16 cols.), “The Bible and Music,” (28 cols.). Special attention is given to the various disciplines engaged in the study of the Bible, such as archaeology, Assyriology, Egyptology, lexicography, geography (“Maps of the Biblical World”), mythology, sociology, theology; or of the procedures of biblical interpretation, such as form-, literary-, narrative-, redaction-, and rhetorical criticism, as well as structuralism and deconstruction, and textual criticism. The bulk of the work consists in a spectacular array of individual notices dedicated to biblical interpreters from the second to the twentieth century, including some contemporary scholars.

For the patristic period, a few general articles are joined to the individual notices: “Alexandrian School,” “Antiochene School,” etc. Nowhere is the distinctive contribution of the 20th century to the millennia of biblical interpretation better exemplified and documented than in this dictionary.

VI. *DICTIONNAIRE CRITIQUE DE THÉOLOGIE (DCT)*

Edited by J.-P. Lacoste, Paris, 1998, the *Dictionnaire critique de théologie* includes only three articles relevant for the Handbook:

“Exégèse: juive, de l’Église, savante,” A. E. Harvey, pp. 445–49, with a sound evaluation of contemporary issues.

“Sens de l’Écriture,” P. Beauchamp, pp. 1083–89.

“Pères de l’Église,” G. M. de Durand, pp. 893–95.

VII. *DICTIONNAIRE D’ARCHÉOLOGIE CHRÉTIENNE
ET DE LITURGIE (DACL)*

The bulky volumes (vol. 1: 3,274 pages!) of the *DACL* started appearing in fascicles from 1903 on, with F. Cabrol, a Benedictine abbot exiled in Farnborough, England, as editor-in-chief. The first completed volume is dated from 1907. It reached a total of fifteen volumes approximately of the same format. From volume 3, H. Leclercq assisted Cabrol. The last volume, “Smyrne-Zraïa” (1953), was directed by Henri Marrou. The gigantic task, executed by a great number of contributors, can only be compared with the corresponding articles of the *Theologische Realencyclopädie* being published at the end of the twentieth century. A belated study on “The Excavations of the Vatican,” dated Christmas 1952 by H. Marrou was joined to the last volume of the series. For the study of the reception and the interpretation of Scripture in the early church the *DACL* offers extended essays on the archaeological, geographical, iconographic, and liturgical evidence, relevant for biblical notions and themes. Thus the Christian symbolism of wine induces Leclercq to present all known archaeological traces of vineyards, of grape harvests and wine drinking in ancient Christianity (15, 2:3113–3118).

VIII. *DICTIONNAIRE DE LA BIBLE. SUPPLÉMENT (DBSUP)*

The *Dictionnaire de la Bible. Supplément* counted three volumes in 1938, which had been published between 1928 and 1938 under the direction of L. Pirot. During the past five decades (1949 to 1996) nine more volumes have appeared.

In vol. 5 (1957), edited by H. Cazelles, patristic exegesis made a spectacular entry into *DBS* with the lengthy article “Kénose” by P. Henry (“IV. L’exégèse patristique,” col. 56–136!), while in the previous volume directed by A. Robert (vol. 4., 1949), substantial articles on Isaiah, Jeremiah and John,

had remained entangled in the frame of a biblical exegesis which ignored the presence of the Bible in Christian traditions. Also in vol. 5, B. Botte contributed a helpful summary on the Latin versions of the Bible before Jerome, the *Vetus Latina* (col. 334–47); another article, on the Greek manuscripts of the NT (col. 819–35). G. Bardy wrote on Marcion and the Marcionite prologues, but the articles on Luke, Mark and Micah continued to ignore the status of those biblical books in the church. In vol. 6 (1960), J. Daniélou commented on the *Odes of Solomon* (col. 677–84) and the versions of the Bible in Arabic (B. Botte), Armenian (L. Leloir), Coptic (B. Botte), Ethiopian (B. Botte), Georgian (L. Leloir), and Syriac, by far the most important (C. van Puyvelde), received careful attention. One should also note J. Daniélou's study on Origen (col. 884–908). Again the articles on the books of Hosea and Chronicles lack any mention of their Christian reception in conformity with a notion of exegesis excluding such a consideration. Papias, the author of the *Diatessaron*, is discussed in a short notice by M. Jourjon, whereas “Papyrus, bibliques” is treated more extensively by B. Botte (col. 1109–20).

Vol. 7 (1966) opens with a magisterial presentation of the *Pastoral Letters* by C. Spicq (col. 2–73). A surprising contribution, “Pentateuque chez les Pères,” by J.-P. Bouhot (col. 687–708), engages into a historical survey of the Pentateuch's Christian reception, as an introduction to a more elaborate study of its inner structure by H. Cazelles. Philo of Alexandria calls for joint contributions of several experts. Vol. 8 (1972) informs about “Prologues and Summaries of the Bible” (B. Botte). Vol. 9 (1979) at least mentions Jerome's Commentary on Ecclesiastes (col. 671); it includes a survey of rabbinic literature by C. Touati (col. 1019–45), with a detailed enumeration of all items in the six sections of the Mishnah. In vol. 10 (1985), J. Trinquet provides a list of biblical journals, a bibliographic information of high quality (col. 618–644). Vol. 12, edited by J. Briend and E. Cothenet (1996), includes a remarkable synthesis, one of the best available for a French readership, on “Sens de l'Écriture” (col. 424–536), by P.-M. Beaudé. The article “Septante” (LXX), signed by several specialists is of monograph size (col. 536–692). Some essential patristic data are recalled about the Sermon on the Mount (col. 703–707), on which M. Dumais presents a voluminous study with a bibliography (699–938).

IX. DICTIONNAIRE DE SPIRITUALITÉ (DSP)

The *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* was initiated by M. Viller and other French Jesuits, with a first fascicle appearing in 1932, the complete volume 1

published in 1937. Its real start occurred only after World War II when volume 2 appeared in 1953. The *DSp* is a world-wide “Who’s Who” of spiritual authors located through two millennia of the Christian tradition. From volume 3, it also presents very valuable general articles on topics closely linked to patristic exegesis.

- 3 1957 “Démon”: J. Daniélou
 “Discernement des esprits”: G. Bardy
 “Divinisation”: I.-H. Dalmais, G. Bardy
 “Dons de l’Esprit”: G. Bardy
- 4 1959 “Écriture Sainte et spiritualité,” col. 128–247: seventeen contributors.
 “Esprit Saint”: J. Gribomont, P. Smulders
 “Eve”: M. Planque
 “Exode”: R. Le Déaut, J. Lécuyer
 “Extase”: J. Kirchmeyer
 “Ezéchiel”: J. Harvey
- 5 1962 “Fins dernières” (Méditation des): P. Tihon
 “Florilèges spirituels”: H. M. Rochais, M. Richard
 “*Fruitio Dei*”: P. Agaësse (Augustinian “*fruitio*”)
- 6 1967 “Genèse”: J. Guillet
 “Géorgienne (littérature spirituelle): G. Garitte
 “Gloire de Dieu”: P. Deseille
 “Gourmandise et gourmandise spirituelle”: W. Yeoman, A. Derville
- 7, 2 1971 “Hilaire de Poitiers”: C. Kannengiesser
 “Hippolyte de Rome”: M. Richard
 “Homélieaires”: R. Grégoire
 “Homme intérieur”: A. Solignac
 “Humanité du Christ”: C. Kannengiesser, P. Agaësse (Hebrews and Isaiah omitted)
- 8 1974 “Jacob”: P. M. Guillaume
 “Jérémie”: C. Kannengiesser
 “Job” (“Livre de”): C. Kannengiesser
- 9 1976 “*Lectio divina*”: J. Rouse
 “Lumière”: P-T. Camelot
- 10 1980 “Macaire”: M. Canévet
 “Marie”: D. Fernandez
- 12, 1 1984 “Paradis”: P. Miquel
- 12, 2 1986 “Perfection”: G. Couilleau
 “Prière”: A. Méhat, A. Solignac

17 1995 “Tables Générales”: “Allégorie,” with the exclusion of patristic exegesis; no entry “Exégèse”; “Typologie”: J. Daniélou.

With the exception of Daniélou’s helpful contribution on typology, the hermeneutic relevance of the Bible in patristic traditions is for the most part ignored, or at least never considered for what it really was, the most productive source of Christian spirituality during the first millennium c.e. For Genesis, Exodus, Canticle, Jeremiah and Job, a survey of patristic exegesis is provided, but no other biblical books are presented as spiritual nourishment for the patristic era. In the articles “Isaïe” and “Matthieu” a short list of patristic commentaries is added as an appendix with the bibliography of the articles. In the articles “Jean l’Évangéliste,” “Hebreux (Épître),” and “Pierre Apôtre,” the patristic relevance is ignored. Even the article, “Allégorie” omits any mention of patristic exegesis. Thus by its very omissions the *DSp* testifies to the persistent lack, even in the second half of the century, of a scholarly vision that would focus on the centrality of biblical interpretations in the life of early Christian generations. Possibly the very notion of “Spiritualité” as conceived by the founders of *DSp* and its continuing directors through six decades continued to carry on, against any body’s will, something of the routine scholastic distinction between disciplines which prevented them from perceiving the fusion of biblical exegesis and spiritual doctrine in ancient Christianity in its just measure. That would not be the case in the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*.

X. DICTIONNAIRE D’HISTOIRE ET DE GÉOGRAPHIE
ECCLÉSIASTIQUE (DHGE)

The *DHGE*’s vol. 1 came out in 1912, a solid binding of five fascicles published earlier under the direction of A. Baudrillard, a luminary at the Institut Catholique of Paris. It offered a compact text of 1,744 columns of large format. The second volume appeared in 1914 on the eve of World War I. The third volume could only be distributed in 1924. In 1938, the *DHGE*, still nominally directed by Baudrillard, who had in the meantime been promoted to the cardinalate, reached the end of letter B with an article on “Byzance.” Volume 11 was on the market in 1949, again under Baudrillard’s name as founder and director. In reality the work of putting together the many individual collaborations was fulfilled by two professors of Louvain, A. De Meyer and E. Van Cauwenbergh, who had been engaged in that enormous task since 1931.

The pace of publication slowed down with volume 12, out only in 1953,

and volume 13 out in 1956. From vol. 14 (1960), R. Aubert's name replaced that of Baudrillard as chief editor and director, thus decidedly establishing the publication of the *DHGE* in the frame of the university of Louvain, where it is still located today. Aubert not only assumed the direction of the dictionary, but also became one of the most versatile of its contributors. Vol. 26, dating from 1998, treats letter "J." Like medieval cathedrals, such a contemporary achievement of erudition outlives its originators and calls for several generations of gifted and dedicated leaders. The ambitious project of *DHGE* promises to concentrate the efforts of many specialists well into the twenty-first century.

The service of *DHGE* with regard to the study of patristic exegesis is contextual in nature. Many articles describe the countries and the local conditions in which patristic interpreters of Scripture were at work. Doctrinal trends conditioning patristic exegesis are also discussed. In all cases excellent bibliographies are added to the articles. In vol. 24, for instance, the latest historical inquiries on Hilary of Poitiers are reported by R. Aubert, a substantial article is dedicated to Hyppolytus of Rome by V. Saxer, an extended discussion by H. C. Brennecke (col. 932–960) deals with the "Homeans," while another study by A. M. Ritter is devoted to the "Homeousians."

XI. *KIRCHENSCHRIFTSTELLER. VERZEICHNIS UND SIGEL.*

Repertorium scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum saeculo nono antiquiorum siglis adpositis quae in editione Bibliorum Sacrorum iuxta veterem latinam versionem adhibentur, Frede, H. J., 1st ed. 1981; 4th ed., Freiburg, 1995 (*Vetus Latina* I/1)

At the *Vetus Latina* Institute of Beuron and in the frame of the series "*Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel*" (1st ed. by B. Fischer in 1949), H. J. Frede elaborated a complete list of authors, including the pseudonyms and the anonymous writings referred in the Beuron edition of the *Vetus Latina*. Each entry is completed with the title(s) of the patristic writings of significance for that edition. The numbering of these titles in the *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* of E. Dekkers (2nd ed., 1961; 3rd ed., 1995 = suppl. CC) or in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* of M. Geraard is always added. A register of the *Clavis* numbers in both languages is included pp. 581–783; also a list of *Addenda*: "Pro manuscripto (Dezember 1982)." As new data continue to surface concerning the contents or the dating or patristic sources, the *Verzeichnis* needs to be constantly updated, hence a set of "Updated Lists":

Vetus Latina Kirchenschriftsteller. Aktualisierungsheft(e), published by Frede in 1984 and 1988 in Freiburg.

XII. *LEXICON ATHANASIANUM*

G. Müller

In the Preface, Guido Müller explains, in 1952, that he needs to go back at least four decades in order to recapitulate his work. Thousands of his cards were destroyed in World War I. He started again the integral analysis of the Athanasian vocabulary between 1919 and 1939, only to witness another loss of his results in World War II. At least a handwritten version survived. Overcoming despair he went once more through the ordeal of compiling his lexicon. The Academy of Sciences in Berlin had the fairness of publishing the *Lexicon Athanasianum* based on the Migne edition though the fact that “it seemed excluded to adjust it (the *Lexicon*) to the future edition (of Athanasius) provided by the Academy,” *futurae editioni ab Academia paratae vix adaptari posse (Praemonitio)*. That edition was still in the making at the start of the new millennium, whereas the *Lexicon* immediately enriched the study of Athanasius and patristic studies in general.

A first fascicle was issued before the end of World War II in 1944, a second and third in 1949, a fourth in 1950 (J. Lebon’s announcement in *RHE* 45, 1950, 309–311); the complete volume appeared in 1952. Biblical references follow always the biblical names used by Athanasius in his many writings. They are also given each time when a word suggests a verbal or mental link with a biblical background. That such an analysis could be completed single-handedly in the pre-computer age is almost unbelievable. The fact is that the *Lexicon Athanasianum* constitutes to this very day a tool for research without equivalent in the field of Greek patristics.

XIII. *LEXIKON DER ANTIKEN CHRISTLICHEN LITERATUR.*

S. Döpp and W. Geerlings, eds. Freiburg Br., 1998

XIV. *NEW DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATING EARLY CHRISTIANITY*

G. H. R. Horsley

A publication “intended to serve as a preliminary contribution” related with “the Macquarrie-based project to rework Moulton and Milligan” (vol. 3, p. 1).

Vol. 1, "A Review of the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri published in 1976," The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, directed by E. A. Judge, Macquarrie University, North Ryde, NSW, Australia, 1981.

Vol. 2, "A Review...in 1977" (1982)

Vol. 3, "A Review...in 1978" (1983)

Vol. 4, "A Review...in 1979" (1987)

Vol. 5, "Linguistic Essays" (1989)

Vols. 1–5 were published by G. H. R. Horsley.

Vol. 6, "A Review...in 1980–1981" (1992), published by S. R. Llewelyn, with the collaboration of R. A. Kearsley.

Vol. 1 presents papyrological and archeological evidence of biblical and related citations, from Psalms and Isaiah, Luke 16:22, John 13:27, Rom 13:3, 1 Cor 3:6–8.

Vol. 2 discusses at length recently published fragments of LXX, miscellaneous quotations from Psalms, and some recently published NT fragments, with many pointed observations highlighting the social and religious contexts in which the Bible circulated during the first four centuries C.E. in Egypt or elsewhere.

Vol. 3 offers more fragments of the Greek OT and some miscellaneous NT quotations on papyri.

Vol. 4, in addition to "New Fragments of Sirach," miscellaneous OT and NT quotations, and patristic (homiletic and exegetical) texts on papyrus (all abundantly commented on by A. L. Connelly), includes a useful survey of the published works of Didymus, discovered in the papyrus findings of Tura, in 1941.

Vol. 5 presents a strong denial of 'Jewish Greek,' as affirmed by N. Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (Edinburgh, 1965): "Jewish Greek is a ghost language and like all ghosts it needs to be laid to rest" (40). It also engages into a social-linguistic discussion on "Koine or Atticism-A Misleading Discovery" (44–48) which is also relevant for patristic exegesis, as is the "Select Bibliography" (121–34). Added are cumulative indices to vols. 1–5, in particular of "Biblical passages" (153–64) and "words" (165–73).

Vol. 6 includes a fascinating discussion of the still debated issue of "Monastic Orthodoxy and the Papyri of the Nag Hammadi Cartonage" (182–89), by S. R. Llewelyn.

XV. *PATRISTIC GREEK LEXICON*,
G. W. H. Lampe. Oxford, 1961 (*PGL*)

The *PGL*'s object "is primarily to interpret the theological and ecclesiastical vocabulary of the Greek Christian authors from Clement of Rome to Theodore of Studium" (Preface, vii). "Many common words, of no theological importance in themselves have been included because they occur in typological or allegorical interpretations of biblical texts and so may serve as to illustrate patristic methods of biblical exegesis... a few proper names have been included because of their importance in theology or exegesis." The editorial policy was by necessity restricted to "samples of patristic thought and specimens of the way in which biblical words and phrases were interpreted in the homilies and commentaries of the period" (viii). For a full information about any word under scrutiny, "the user of this work is, in fact, assumed to have Liddell and Scott by its side" (ix). The list of "Authors and Works" analyzed in *PGL* covers pp. xi-xlv.

"The project for a Lexicon of Patristic Greek was originally suggested by the Central Society for Sacred Study in the year 1906," as the Preface states at the beginning. Half a century of individual dedication by many responsible scholars and an even greater number of helpers, all of them supported by institutional funding, led to the prestigious publication in 1961 of 1,568 pages of large format, divided in two columns with small print of Greek and English, indeed an invaluable lexical survey. When needed, each entry is appropriately subdivided, and inside each subdivision the quoted samples are placed in chronological order. For instance, the article γραφή—"*writing, written document*" includes thirty subdivisions: A. *Scripture*: 1. use of term: a. in gen.; b. of individual books; c. of particular texts; 2. distinctive epithets; 3. characteristics: a. unity; b. difficulties, intended to lead men to deeper understanding; c. but unimpaired veracity; d. role as a tutor; e. sufficiency; f. canon of Scripture. 4. interpretation of Scripture: a. necessity; b. general rules; c. three-fold sense. 5. authority and inspiration: a. in gen. Scripture to be preserved intact; b. Scripture as rule of faith; c. inspiration, the work of H. Ghost; d. Scripture and tradition. 6. Scripture and spiritual life. 7. use by heretics: a. their methods of interpretation; b. appealed to (esp. by Arians) against conciliar definitions. B. "(royal) *edict*." C. "*indictment, accusation*." D. "*image, picture*." E. "met." (Note that "A" fills up two columns, whereas B, C, D, together occupy only ten lines.)

XVI. *REALLEXIKON FÜR ANTIKE UND CHRISTENTUM (RAC)*

The *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt, was actively prepared under the direction F. J. Dölger from 1935. Amazingly enough, its six first fascicles were published by T. Klauser in 1941–1943, but the seventh fascicle was lost in the burning of Leipzig under the bombardments of 1944. Against all odds, it was re-composed and published in January 1945. In March, more than 500 manuscripts ready for the next fascicle perished by fire in the area of Bonn. Only in 1950 could the publishing task be resumed. Vol. 1 presented contributions to the study of patristic exegesis in appropriately starting with the article, “Abraham” by T. Klauser. Five decades later, the article “Allegorese” by J. C. Joosen and J. H. Waszink remains essential for a comparative study of non-Christian and Christian allegorism in Late Antiquity. Other contributions on “Apokalyptik” and “Apokryphen” mark the limits of the common knowledge on these issues in the years 1945–50.

Vol. 2 (1954) contains “Buch. II,” signed by S. Morenz and J. Leipoldt, richly documented, with a study in depth of the cultural status of sacred books and of their interpreters in Antiquity, joined with insights about the symbolic meaning of “Books.” In Volume 3 (1957) T. Dölger announced the foundation two years earlier at the University of Bonn of a “Franz Joseph Dölger Institut zur Erforschung der Spätantike,” and from 1953 a “Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum” (*JAC*). Thus the institutional frame of a long-lasting enterprise was in place offered to universal acclaim. More than 1,500 subscribers, with new fascicles circulated every three months, secured the rapid growth of the *RAC*: Vol. 4 appeared in 1959, vol. 5 in 1962 (in the third volume of *JAC*. T. Klauser inaugurated “Nachträge,” “Additions,” to the *RAC*. such as “Aphraat,” by A. Voöbus).

In the Preface to vol. 6 (1966) T. Klauser stated “the *Reallexikon* gratefully acknowledges the results of modern biblical sciences. It is eager to find a support in their lexical acquisitions, as they belong to a domain of an outstanding importance for our purposes.” Hence the same vol. 6 included articles on “Esra im Christentum” (W. Schneemelcher), “Evangelium” (O. Michel) and “Exegese, christlich” (W. E. Gerber); vol. 7 (1969), “Exodus, Patristik” (J. Daniélou); vol. 14 (1988), “Heilige Schriften” (C. Colpe), “Hermeneutik” (J. Pépin, K. Hoheisel), “Hesekiel” (E. Dassmann), “Hexaemeron” (J. C. M. van Winden); vol. 15 (1991) “Hieronymus” (H. Hagendahl, J. H. Waszink), “Hiob” (E. Dassmann); vol. 16 (1994) “Hoheslied” (K. S. Frank), “Homilie” (M. Sachot); vol. 17 (1996) “Jeremiah” (E. Dassmann), “Jesaja” (P. Jay), “Jesus Sirach” (M. Gilbert).

In 1985, "Supplement-Lieferung" 1/2 and 3 added articles "Aaron" (G. W. E. Nickelsburg), "Ambrosiaster" (A. Stuiber), "Amos" (E. Dassmann), "Anfang" (H. Görgemanns); in 1986, "Supplement-Lieferung" 4 added "Aphrahat" (A. Vööbus) and "Aponius" (F. Witek). These are only contributions directly aimed at a critical survey of patristic exegesis in the context of the culture of Late Antiquity. One would have to consult many articles on ancient authors and *realia* which are significant for patristic exegesis in order to round up the rich picture of what the *RAC* offers to students of the Bible in ancient Christian traditions.

XVII. THEOLOGISCHE REALENZYKLOPÄDIE (*TRE*)

In the planning since 1967, the first fascicle appeared in 1976. Currently twenty-eight volumes and a few fascicles are available, the alphabetic content having reached the letter "R." It replaces the third edition of the *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche (RE)*, published in 1908. Its ecumenical and international structuring reflects the profound changes in European faith-awareness which occurred at the cost of two World Wars. Its emphasis on the biblical foundations of Christian theology highlights an on-going concern for the exegetical and hermeneutical achievements of early Christian traditions. The reader will easily be aware of how much the present Handbook owes to the authors of *TRE*.

As samples of main entries in *TRE* specially relevant for the study of patristic exegesis in Vol. 1–5, only for letter "A" one may list:

- 1 (1977) "Aphrahat," 625–635; "Africanus, Julius," 635–640;
- 2 (1978) "Alexandrien," 238–264; "Ambrosiaster," 356–362; "Ambrosius von Mailand," 362–386; "Ammonius Sakkas," 463–471.
- 3 (also 1978) "Antike und Christentum," 50–99; "Antiochien," 99–113; "Apokalyptik—Apokalypsen, V. Alte Kirche," 257–280.
- 5 (1980) "Alte Kirche," 257–275; "Apokryphen des Neuen Testaments," 316–362; "Apollinarius von Laodicea," 362–371; "Apologetik I. Alte Kirche," 371–411; "Apostolisches Glaubensbekenntnis," 528–554; "Arianismus," 692–719.

By their broad retrieving of former scholarship as well as their critical originality based on very extensive bibliographies, most of these entries in *TRE* achieve advances in the topics treated.

Other dictionaries are:

Coggins, R. J., and J. L. Houlden, *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (See Chap. 3, 3).

Panimolle, S. A., *Dizionario di spiritualità biblico-patristica. I grandi temi della S. Scrittura per la "Lectio Divina" I*. Rome 1992.

Kazhdan, A. P., *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. Oxford 1991.

Kelly, J. F., *The Concise Dictionary of Early Christianity* 1992.

III
STUDIES ON PATRISTIC EXEGESIS
IN COLLECTIONS OF ESSAYS

I. CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE (THE) (CHB)

- Vol. 1: "From the Beginnings to Jerome," eds., P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans. (Cambridge 1970), v. "The Bible in the Early Church" (412–586, bibliography 595):
13. R. P. C. Hanson, "Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church" (412–453).
 14. M. F. Wiles, "Origen as Biblical Scholar" (454–488).
 15. M. F. Wiles, "Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School" (489–509).
 16. H. F. D. Sparks, "Jerome as Biblical Scholar" (510–540).
 17. G. Bonner, "Augustine as Biblical Scholar" (541–562).
 18. J. H. Lamb, "The Place of the Bible in the Liturgy" (563–586).
- Vol. 2: "The West from the Fathers to the Reformation," G. W. H. Lampe, ed. (Cambridge 1969):
- i. B. J. Roberts, "The OT: Manuscripts, Text and Versions" (1–26).
 - ii. C. S. C. Williams, "The History of the Text and Canon of the NT to Jerome" (27–53).
 - iii. T. C. Skeat, "Early Christian Book-Production: Papyri and Manuscripts" (54–79).
 - iv. E. F. Sutcliffe, "Jerome" (80–101).
 - v. R. Loewe, "The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate" (102–105).
 - vi. "The Exposition and Exegesis of Scripture"
 1. G. W. H. Lampe, "To Gregory the Great" (155–182).
 2. D. Leclercq, "From Gregory the Great to St. Bernard" (183–196).
 3. B. Smalley, "The Bible in the Medieval Schools" (197–219).
 4. S. J. P. van Dijk, "The Bible in Liturgical Use" (220–251).
 5. E. I. J. Rosenthal, "The Study of the Bible in Medieval Judaism" (252–279).

Four other chapters in Vol. 2 are dedicated to the text and reception of Scripture until Erasmus.

II. PATRISTISCHE TEXTE UND STUDIEN (PTS)

- The series was initially edited by K. Aland and W. Schneemelcher.
- Vol. 13, W. A. Bienert, *“Allegorie” und “Anagoge” bei Didymos dem Blinden von Alexandria* 1972.
- Vol. 14, D. Hagedorn, ed., *Der Hiobkommentar des Arianers Julian* 1973.
- Vol. 19, E. Mühlenberg, *Psalmenkommentare aus der Ketenenüberlieferung*, 3 vols. 1975–78.
- Vol. 24, U. u. D. Hagedorn, eds., *Olympiodor, Diakon von Alexandria, Kommentar zu Hiob* 1984.
- Vol. 28, K. Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen’s Exegesis* 1986.

III. STUDIA PATRISTICA (StPATR)

Studia Patristica I–II, K. Aland and F. L. Cross, eds., Akademie-Verlag, Berlin, 1957, published the “Papers presented to the Second International Conference on Patristic Studies held at Christ Church, Oxford” in the summer of 1955. The first such Conference at Christ Church, Oxford from the 24th to the 28th September, 1951, had been “un succès au-delà de toute attente,” “a success beyond anyone’s expectations.” (*RHE* 47 [1952]: 445). Thanks to F. L. Cross, then the Librarian of Christ Church, whose inspired initiative in founding the Conferences was motivated as much by ecumenical concerns as by patristic scholarship, the “unexpected” success continued from decade to decade. The international gatherings of patristic scholars every fourth year played a central role in the spectacular flourishing of patristics for the rest of the century. From one Conference to the other, the regular publication of hundreds of papers represented a powerful river of erudition irrigating the many fields and levels of studies related to the historical retrieving of ancient Christian traditions.

The first two volumes of StPatr included twenty-one papers explicitly dealing with patristic exegesis. Four other volumes, StPatr III–VI, with a total of almost 2,000 pages, were not too much for publishing the papers of the next Conference, held in 1959; they were made available at remarkable speed in 1961 and 1962. Already A. Mandouze was alarmed by what he called “Mesure et démesure de la Patristique” (StPatr III, 3–19), denouncing the “excessiveness” of patristics. Yet at the same time he seized the opportunity to express specific reactions, representative of secular academics, in what had been a predominantly clerical domain of studies. The secularizing of patristic

studies from the late 1950s introduced new contributors, men and women, in a field which they quickly and methodologically reshaped and enriched in line with their own scientific interests. The phenomenon was nowhere more visible than at the Oxford Conferences, and it became specially beneficial for the study of patristic exegesis. Thirty-three titles in StPatr III–VI announce essays related to the interpretation of the Bible.

The Conference of 1963 resulted in the three volumes of StPatr VII–IX published in 1966, thanks to E. A. Livingstone, the editorial assistant of an aging Dr. Cross. The section “Biblica” in StPatr VII numbers sixteen titles, of which eight deal with the patristic interpretation of isolated passages from Scripture, a trend still in favor among the experts at that time which later on would lead to more comprehensive surveys of patristic exegesis.

After the death of Dr. Cross in December 1968, Elizabeth Livingstone published StPatr X and XI in 1970, with one hundred and twenty-five papers from the Conference of 1967, among which only ten could be located under the rubric “Biblica.” Published in 1975, StPatr XII–XIV collected the papers of the Conference held in 1971, with fourteen contributions under the rubric “Biblica”; StPatr XV–XVI offered a selection of papers from the Conference of 1975, but these two volumes became available only in 1984 and 1985. This marked the end of StPatr in TU. It is worth observing that all ten papers under “Biblica” in StPatr XV handled topics which called on a comprehensive idea of the history of patristic exegesis: J. S. Alexander discusses “Aspects of Donatist Scriptural Interpretation at the Conference of Carthage of 411” (125–30), as understood in particular “against the background of earlier African exegesis” (130). “The Hermeneutic Approach of Theodoret of Cyrrhus to the OT” (131–35) is best clarified, according to G. W. Ashby, by a comparison with Alexandrian and Antiochene hermeneutics. M. J. Delage examines the significance of the First Letter of John in the sermons of Caesarius of Arles (140–46) in keeping in view the whole patristic tradition behind these sermons. G. Dorival offers a rich survey over the “history of exegetical patristic catenae on the Psalter (5th–14th c.)” and a study of Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Commentary on the Psalms* (146–76). G. Sfameni Gasparro considers Origen’s comments on the parable of the Good Samaritan in the light of “dualisti medievali” (177–84). V. Messina examines “the biblical figures of Abel and Cain in Ambrose and Augustine” against the background of patristic tropology (185–95) etc.

IV. TEXTE UND UNTERSUCHUNGEN (TU)

As a series parallel to GCS, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, provides commentaries and additional studies. The series was launched by O. von Gebhardt and A. Harnack in 1882 at the University of Berlin. Interrupted from 1941 to 1951, by the end of the 1990s the reborn series included more than twenty volumes offering a special interest for the study of patristic exegesis. In addition, TU hosted *Studia Patristica I–XVI*, from 1957 to 1985, discussed above. The relevant monographs, or collections of essays with their numbers in the series are:

52. A. Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche bis zum Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts*, Lfg. III 2, 1–2 (1952).
61. J. Reuss, *Matthäus Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*. Aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben (1957).
65. H. Köster, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern* (1957).
66. E. Amand de Mendieta et S. Y. Rudberg, *Eustathius*. Ancienne version latine des neuf homélies sur l'Hexaéméron de Basile de Césarée. Édition critique avec prolégomènes et tables (1958).
77. Kommission für spätantike Religionsgeschichte, ed., *Studien zum Neuen Testament und zur Patristik*, Fs. E. Klostermann, 2 vols. (1961).
83. G. Glockmann, ed., *Berthold Altaner. Kleine Patristische Schriften* (1967).
89. J. Reuss, *Johannes-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*. Aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben (1966).
99. H. Rathke, *Ignatius von Antiochien und die Paulusbrieve* (1967).
100. A. P. O'Hagan, *Material Re-Creation in the Apostolic Fathers* (1968).
109. F. Hintze und H.-M. Schenke, *Die Berliner Handschrift der Sahidischen Apostelgeschichte (P. 15 926)* bearbeitet und herausgegeben (1970).
- 113–114. F. Petit, *L'ancienne version latine des Questions sur la Genèse de Philon d'Alexandrie*. I. Édition critique; II. Commentaire (1973).
118. C. Wolff, *Jeremia im Frühjudentum und Urchristentum* (1976).
121. A. Strobel, *Ursprung und Geschichte des frühchristlichen Osterkalenders* (1977).
122. K. Zelzer, *Die alten lateinischen Thomasakten* (1977).
123. E. Amand de Mendieta et S. Y. Rudberg, *Basile de Césarée. La tra-*

- dition manuscrite directe des neuf Homélie sur l'Hexaéméron. Étude philologique* (1980).
124. K. Treu, ed., *Studia Codicologica* (1977).
125. F. Paschke, ed., *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (1981).
127. H.-M. Schenke, ed., *Das Matthäusevangelium im Mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen (Codex Scheide)* (1981).
130. J. Reuss, *Lukas-Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche. Aus Katenenhandschriften gesammelt und herausgegeben* (1984).
131. A. F. J. Klijn, ed., *Der lateinische Text der Apokalypse des Esra. Mit einem Index grammaticus* von C. Mussies (1983).
133. J. Dummer, ed., *Texte und Textkritik. Eine Aufsatzsammlung* (1987). Vols. 124, 125 and 133 represent a Festschrift which became a Memorial for Marcel Richard after his death in 1976.
137. H.-M. Schenke, ed., *Apostelgeschichte 1, 1–15, 3 im mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen (Codex Glazier)* (1991)
139. H. G. Thümmel, *Die Frühgeschichte der ostkirchlichen Bilderlehre. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Zeit vor dem Bilderstreit* (1992).

The monumental contribution of TU to twentieth-century patristics not only fixed high standards for generations of scholars, but achieved in a large measure the complex integration and inner cohesion of the discipline itself. The characteristic move of twentieth century patristics from the status of an auxiliary science for biblical scholars and church historians to the autonomy of a consistent field of historical studies was strongly promoted by TU. TU's own self-imposed limitation was due to the fact that its main editors never made a clear-cut difference between the study of NT writings and the study of the patristic legacy in their "history of early Christian literature," hence they welcomed massive volumes of "Studia Evangelica" papers from Oxford conferences. Kurt Aland, who was the prominent force among the editorial team of TU after World War II, was also in the process of producing the twentieth century edition of the NT, presenting a critical apparatus with all the significant readings of the NT text noted in patristic literature. That highly promising junction of exegetical and patristic inquiries on the level of NT text criticism was a clear signal for the future: professional exegetes of both Testaments became increasingly aware of the needed complementarity of patristics, at the same time that patristic scholars began to pay more attention to exegetical methodologies. As K. Aland was at that time the editor of TU, one easily sees why the Berlin series of TU welcomed the Oxford series of "Studia Evangelica."

As the French saying goes, "Qui trop embrasse mal étirent." Because

of the overwhelming abundance of material to be published, unacceptable delays were imposed on some of the volumes, and the “*Studia Patristica*,” chronologically conditioned by the Patristic Conferences held at Oxford every four years, had to find another editorial frame after 1985.

V. TRADITIO EXEGETICA GRAECA (TEG)

- 1–4. F. Petit, *La chaîne sur la Genèse*. Édition intégrale. 1991–96.
5. J. Friesman and L. Van Rompay, *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*. A Collection of Essays. 1997.
6. R. B. ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress*. The Use of Greek, Hebrew and Syriac Biblical Texts in Eusebius of Emesa’s Commentary on Genesis. 1997.
7. D. J. Bingham, *Irenaeus’ Use of Matthew’s Gospel in Adversus Haereses*. 1997.
8. M. De Groote, *Oecumenii commentarius in apocalypsin*. 1998.

VI. VERBA SENIORUM

COLLANA DI TESTI PATRISTICI E MEDIEVALI, ROME, 1961 (VS)

A first series, begun in 1954 in Alba, had no scientific aims as such. In 1961 a new series was begun in Rome by the directors M. Pellegrino (d. 1986) and G. Lazzati (d. 1986), focusing on the patristic era and offering scientific monographs. Vol. 11 of the new series (1992): F. Cocchini, *Il Paolo di Origene*. Contributo alla storia della receptione delle epistole paoline nel III secolo.

IV
JOURNALS

I. SOME FIFTY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

For a wide-ranging study of patristic exegesis in the light of the world-wide research of the second half of the twentieth century the following journals have proven most helpful. The list is not exhaustive and is only indicative of sources of information readily available in the field, even though articles concerning the history of patristic exegesis may appear in all sorts of other periodicals:

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|-------------------|---|
| <i>AnBoll</i> | <i>Analecta Bollandiana</i> . Brussels 1882. |
| <i>ASE</i> | <i>Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi</i> . Bologna 1994. |
| <i>Augustinus</i> | <i>Augustinus</i> . Madrid 1956. |
| <i>Bib</i> | <i>Biblica</i> . Rome 1920. |
| <i>BLE</i> | <i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique</i> . Toulouse 1899. |
| <i>CNS</i> | <i>Cristianesimo nella Storia</i> . Milan 1980. |
| <i>ECS</i> | <i>Early Christian Studies</i> . Baltimore, MD 1991. |
| <i>EThL</i> | <i>Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses</i> . Louvain 1924. |
| <i>IZBG</i> | <i>Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete</i> . Düsseldorf 1951/52. |
| <i>JAC</i> | <i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i> . Münster 1958. |
| <i>JThS</i> | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> . Oxford 1899, n.s. 1950. |
| <i>MSR</i> | <i>Mélanges de science religieuse</i> . Lille 1944. |
| <i>Mus</i> | <i>Muséon. Revue d'études orientales</i> . Louvain 1882. |
| <i>OCP</i> | <i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i> . Rome 1935. |
| <i>RechAug</i> | <i>Recherches augustiniennes</i> . Paris 1958. |
| <i>RBen</i> | <i>Revue bénédictine de critique, d'histoire et de littérature religieuses</i> .
Maredsous 1890. |
| <i>RHE</i> | <i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i> . Louvain 1900. |
| <i>RHPr</i> | <i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i> . Strasbourg 1921. |
| <i>RHT</i> | <i>Revue d'histoire des textes</i> . Paris 1971. |
| <i>REA</i> | <i>Revue des études anciennes</i> . Bordeaux 1899. |
| <i>REAug</i> | <i>Revue des études augustiniennes</i> . Paris 1955. |
| <i>REG</i> | <i>Revue des études grecques</i> . Paris 1888. |
| <i>REL</i> | <i>Revue des études latines</i> . Paris 1923. |
| <i>RevSr</i> | <i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i> . Strasbourg 1921. |
| <i>RSR</i> | <i>Recherches de science religieuse</i> . Paris 1910. |
| <i>RTL</i> | <i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i> . Louvain 1970. |

<i>SacEr</i>	<i>Sacris Erudiri</i> . Jaarboek voor godsdienstwetenschappen. Steenbrugge 1948.
<i>Schol</i>	<i>Scholastik</i> Freiburg, Br. 1926–1965.
<i>SecCen</i>	<i>Second Century</i> Dallas 1981–1992.
<i>ThPh</i>	<i>Theologie und Philosophie</i> . Freiburg, Br. 1966.
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i> . Tübingen 1918.
<i>Tr</i>	<i>Traditio</i> . New York 1943.
<i>TRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i> . Münster 1902.
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i> . Woodstock, MD 1940.
<i>VetChr</i>	<i>Vetera Christianorum</i> . Bari 1964.
<i>VigChr</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> . Amsterdam 1947.
<i>WSt</i>	<i>Wiener Studien</i> . Vienna 1897, n.s. 1967.
<i>ZKG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i> . Stuttgart 1877.
<i>ZKT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie</i> . Vienna 1876.
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i> . Berlin 1900.
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i> . Tübingen 1891.

II. COMMENTS ON SELECTED JOURNALS

Annali di Storia dell' Esegesi (ASE)

The *Annali di Storia dell' Esegesi* was launched in Bologna only in 1994. The journal illustrates both the growing need and the rich promises of a comprehensive study of the history of biblical exegesis. Several attempts to cover the whole patristic period in order to highlight the commentary and the many uses of the Bible in ancient Christianity were made since 1945.

Cristianesimo nella Storia (CNS)

Launched in Bologna under the direction of G. Alberigo, with P. C. Bori as chief editor and an international group of collaborators, *Cristianesimo nella Storia's* interdisciplinary orientation with a strong ecclesiological focus was announced by the sub-title: "Ricerche storiche, esegetiche, teologiche." For studies relevant to the history of patristic exegesis one notes in vol. 3 (1982): M. Pesce, "L'apostolo di fronte alla crescita pneumatologica dei Corinti (1 Cor 12–14), Tentativo di un' analisi storica della funzione apostolica."

Journal of Early Christian Studies (JECS)

Launched as the journal of the flourishing North American Patristics Society in 1993, with E. A. Clark and E. Ferguson as editors, the *JECS*

began its career by merging with a slightly older American publication, *The Second Century*, also edited by E. Ferguson since 1981 with the subtitle "Early Christian Studies." The *J ECS* deserves a special mention in the present Handbook: it illustrates, or at least suggests, the end of a certain idea of patristics, which traditionally included theological concerns, and consequently sought to retrieve early Christian exegesis. Since its first issue in Spring 1993, the journal has included only five essays on the patristic reception of Scripture. Significantly, the first, by L. Painchaud, discussed "The Use of Scripture in Gnostic Literature," vol. 4 (1996) 129–46; another, by J. A. Draper, examined the use of Zechariah 14:5 in the *Didache*. Only two other articles investigate instances of biblical reception, in vol. 5 (1997) D. Krueger, "Typological Figuration in Theodoret of Cyrrhus's *Religious History* and the Art of Postbiblical Narrative," 393–419; and R. C. Hill, "The Spirituality of Chrysostom's *Commentary on the Psalms*," 569–579; and a third in vol. 6 (1998) N. Koltun-Fromm, "Psalm 22's Christological Interpretive Tradition in Light of Christian Anti-Jewish Polemics." Contextual studies, determined by social history and/or feminism, prevail in *J SEC*. The result is a lively, often unusual picture of ancient society in the process of being Christianized, though by its omission of theology the journal ignores the foundational role of the Bible in that historic process.

In *The Second Century* each volume and almost each issue included essays on the reception of the Bible in the church. On the contrary, *J ECS* emphasizes that "early Christian studies" are no longer necessarily "patristic" in a theological and reception-historical sense. Against the overwhelming interest in such traditional studies demonstrated on an international scale, the strictly secular agenda of the journal offers a valuable challenge inside the field of patristic studies, calling for a clear-minded reformulation of these studies. As already noted elsewhere, the exploration of Christian origins represents a complex operation. No critical methodology should be excluded from such a retrieving, and no particular methodology can operate in isolation.

Similar to *J ECS*, but in the field of biblical studies, a recent shift of concerns has resulted in the creation of *Biblical Interpretation. A Journal of Contemporary Approaches*, published since 1993 by J. Cheryl Exum (Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass.) and M. G. Brett (Whitley College, University of Melbourne, Australia). The journal is directly concerned with the reception of Scripture but its focus is exclusively decided by postmodernism: vol. 1 (1993) M. Bal, "The Elders and Susanna"; vol. 2 (1994) R. M. Jensen, "The Offering of Isaac in Jewish and Christian Tradition. Image and Text"; vol. 4 (1996) R. Kimelman, "The Seduction of Eve and the Exegetical Politics of Gender."

Journal of Theological Studies (JThS)

A venerable monument of Christian scholarship in the British academia, the *JThS* started its career in 1900 with C. H. Turner as first editor, assisted by W. E. Barnes and a "Committee of Direction" of eleven Rev. Drs., all distinguished scholars in the fields of biblical, patristic, liturgical and historical studies. In vol. 1, C. H. Turner himself, in addition to "Chronicle: Patristica" exclusively discussing recent critical editions, published a substantial study on "The Early Episcopal Lists" (181–200, 529–553), and a set of learned "Notes" on ancient Latin manuscripts, biblical and others, or on problems dealing with text criticism. In the same line of research, F. C. Burkitt offered seven contributions, K. Lake three. The stage was set for a brilliant competition with Continental, mainly German, scholars, and the orientation of *JThS* was clearly of a historical and text-critical nature.

When the "New Series" was launched in 1950, the editor of *JThS* was the biblical scholar R. H. Lightfoot, assisted by a committee of seven members. As imposed by extreme circumstances during World War II, the journal was programmed henceforward to appear twice yearly, without reducing the output of its quarterly publication from before the War. "Articles" proper to patristics were extremely rare. In the first volumes of the New Series, some of the "Notes and Studies," dealing with patristics, preferred text critical problems in works of the Fathers. Such was the case with the pointed remark about 1 Thes 3:3 made by H. Chadwick in vol. 1. Thirty years later, from 1980 to 1985, it was Chadwick who edited *JThS*, with happy patristic scholars finding more breathing space in the prestigious journal: of the eight "Articles" of 1982/1, for instance, five were dedicated to the early church (19–133) and so were five of the nine "Notes and Studies" in the same issue. In 1982/2 again, two of the four "Articles" focus on patristics, more precisely on Augustinian topics.

In her "Index," N. S. Vols. 1–30 (1950–1979), E. A. Livingstone lists sixteen contributions and more than 150 book reviews by H. Chadwick. In the Syriac domain, notes and reviews by S. P. Brock prevail. The offerings on Origen equal in number and substance those on Augustine. In the recent past many essays on patristic exegesis were published as "Articles": D. G. Hunter "The Paradise of Patriarchy: Ambroster on Women as (not) God's Image" (43, 1992, 447–469); four "Articles" in 44/1, two of three "Articles" in 44/2 (1993); again two of four in 45/1 as well as in 45/2 (1994); only one of five in 46/1, but once more two or four in 46/2 (1995); three of four in 47/1, two or four in 47/2 (1996); three of five in 48/2 (1997); four of four in 49/1, one of three in 49/2 (1998), a total of twenty-seven contributions in less than ten years on sources and historical data relevant for studying the use of Scrip-

ture in the early church, a result confirming the priority given now to such issues.

Recherches de Science Religieuse, "Bulletin."

A short "Bulletin de Littérature Patristique" signed by J. Lebreton commented on four new publications in the *RSR* of 1946. In 1947, the same author restricted his review in the "Bulletin" to one single title. A new inspiration was needed. It came with an ebullient Jean Daniélou who started in 1948 his "Bulletin d'Histoire des Origines Chrésiennes" in presenting seventeen new publications, five of them under the subtitle "Exégèse patristique." In 1949, twenty-five new works were reviewed; twelve in 1950; twenty-two in 1951–52, six of them under the sub-title "Exégèse et typologie" which signals the lively discussions of those years among French-speaking experts about patristic hermeneutics; twenty-one in 1953, and so on. In 1959, the section "Exégèse patristique" echoes the same lively discussions on patristic hermeneutics. Still in 1966 a final section of the "Bulletin" is devoted to "Typologie et symbolisme" (Vol. 54, 317–332).

With Daniélou's replacement by C. Kannengiesser in 1970, the book reviews, now entitled "Bulletin de Théologie Patristique," maintained their yearly issues with hundreds of publications analyzed and discussed. In 1981, for instance, the section "Bible des Pères" presented a critical survey of works by Van der Horst, Merkel, Cantalamessa, Mees, Rius-Camps, Meinhold, Hilhorst, Hellholm, Stylianopoulos, Ibanez Ibanez, Mendoza Ruiz, Holl and Lattke, enough to give an indication of the high tide of publications in the field. In 1982, again, a special section announced sixteen new works on "Exégèse biblique." In 1984 not less than fifty-two recent publications were included in the survey, with a section "Alexandrie chrésiienne" devoted to discussing questions related to patristic exegesis.

In 1985, another set of twenty-one titles was presented to the readers of the "Bulletin de Théologie Patristique." Among those titles figured several new editions of exegetical sources. As early as 1976, a special feature of the "Bulletin" was an extensive account of the monumental publication by W. Haase of *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* for which each volume was examined with regard to its relevance for patristics, and in particular for patristic exegesis. In 1986, the first section on "Bible des Pères" examined the latest publications of Mondésert, Fontaine, Piétri, La Bonnardière (the last three volumes belonging to the series *Bible de Tous les Temps* created by C. Kannengiesser), Rondeau, Kürzinger, Poffet, Y.-M. Duval, Canévet and Guinot, the prevailing number of French authors reflecting the French leadership in the field in the 1970s and early 1980s.

In 1988, B. Sesboüé took over the “Bulletin,” in giving it the title “Bulletin de Théologie Patristique Grecque.” In addition to many other titles dealing with patristic exegesis, a special section, “La Bible des Pères,” presented publications by Massaux, Bodenmann, Ko Ha Fong, and “*autori varii*.” A “Bulletin de Patrologie Latine” by Y.-M. Duval followed in 1989. Only in 1992 did B. Sesboüé survey recent works representative of Greek patristics. Though limited to an enumeration of sixty-one new publications, the impressive bulk of the new works themselves perfectly well illustrates the on-going dynamism of scientific research in the field, section VI dealing with “La Bible des Pères.”

A same subtitle was included in the next “Bulletin de Théologie Grecque” of 1994, co-signed by B. Sesboüé and M. Fédou. Two years later, in 1996, Y.-M. Duval secured again a survey of Latin patristics, and another “Bulletin de Patristique Grecque” appeared in 1997. The slow pace of the Greek “Bulletin” and the diversified redaction of the whole Bulletin by three different authors clearly shows how difficult it had become to survey the world-wide production of patristic studies. This is especially true for the present Handbook, since by the end of the twentieth century the strongest current of patristic studies deals with the reception of the Bible in ancient Christianity.

Traditio. Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought and Religion (Tr)

Traditio was launched in 1943 by J. Quasten and S. Kuttner, both teaching at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. From its very first issue, the journal has regularly included contributions dealing with patristic exegesis.

Theological Studies (TS)

The Jesuit journal of theology in the U.S.A, existing since 1940, did not remain indifferent to the patristic revival after World War II. In his intervention of 1950, “Current Patristic Projects,” “On Early Christian Exegesis,” W. J. Burghardt presented to an American readership the lively European controversy around the notions of “allegory” and “typology” in the early church.

Vetera Christianorum (VetChr)

The journal of the “Istituto di Letteratura Cristiana Antica” at the University of Bari in southern Italy owed its creation in 1964 to the initiative of Antonio Quacquarelli, who in the past three decades became also one of its most prolific contributors. In a close linkage with classical studies and archeology the journal offers a rich amount of essays related with style and

rhetorics in patristic literature. The liturgical setting of patristic exegesis has always been explored in *VetChr* with a special interest. Since the start of the journal, G. Lomiento was instrumental not only as secretary of redaction, but in particular for the substantial bibliography added to each fascicle. As early as 1966, a series of *Quaderni di 'Vetera Christianorum'* started its career, with a total of twenty-four volumes thirty years later, when the “Acts of the Second Seminar of Christian Antiquity” at the University of Bari appeared under the title *Retorica ed esegesi biblica. Il rilievo dei contenuti attraverso le forme*. With regular contributions by S. Leanza, V. Loi, G. Lomiento, A. Quacquarelli, M. Simonetti, and others, *VetChr* firmly established Italian scholarship as one of the most promising resources for the future development of studies on patristic exegesis.

Vigiliae Christianae. A Review of Early Christian Life and Language (*VigChr*)

Launched in 1947, with C. Mohrmann, G. Quispel, W. C. van Unnik, and J. H. Waszink as its first editors-in-chief, the Dutch Journal from the start took on an international board of associate editors, and published articles in several Western languages. With its special stress on language and on society, *VigChr* quickly gained a first rank authority among the experts. Its extensive book reviews were often signed by distinguished specialists. Gnostic literature became the object of a collective fascination after the discovery of Nag Hammadi; it remained for many years a priority in *VigChr* under the enthusiastic leadership of G. Quispel. The various links between Christian life and late-antique culture formed another focus in the journal, keeping it in line with contemporary research on Antiquity and Christianity. In the diversity and openness of its horizons *VigChr* produced a valuable, though limited, contribution to the study of patristic exegesis ranging from text criticism to monographic essays on the reception of Scripture in the early church.

Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft (ZNW)

The ZNW was founded in 1900. It issued its fiftieth annual volume in 1960, with ten volumes missing because of two World Wars. Vol. 42 opened in 1949 with a moving salute to its dead collaborators, among them M. Dibelius, G. Kittel, and R. Abramowski. W. Eltester remained its editor-in-chief from that date until 1971. In 1951, the journal could resume its pre-war practice of adding an annual review of theological journals outside of Germany. That review communicated much helpful information in form of authors and titles listed in those foreign journals, including material helpful for the study of patristic exegesis.

V

BIBLIOGRAPHIC TOOLS

I. ANNÉE PHILOLOGIQUE (*ANPHIL*)

Issued by the Department of Classical Studies at the Sorbonne in 1926, the *AnPhil* was the creation of J. Marouzeau, “Administrateur de la Société de bibliographie classique” and a distinguished Hellenist. The same scholar supervised the laborious new start of the “Bibliographie critique et analytique de l’Antiquité gréco-latine,” with a foreword dated from 1948. The volume (XVII), presenting the bibliography for 1945–1946, was published only in 1962. The editor actually responsible for volume XVII was Juliette Ernst, her work consisting in the thorough analysis of 342 learned journals and periodicals. The number of these journals and periodicals increased over the years to more than 1,000, with reviews of books added as well. Ernst enlarged her team of collaborators, but continued to supervise the gigantic compilation until 1990, with vol. LXII, published in 1993, numbering 1,112 pages with 15,665 entries, many of which had additional small summaries of the works registered.

In the first part of each volume, ancient authors are documented in alphabetic order. From the beginning the list included “Patres” and “Testamenta.” In the second part, different “fields and disciplines” are covered, among them the “Littérature judéo-chrétienne,” later “Littérature chrétienne” in the section “Histoire littéraire” and the “Religion judéo-chrétienne,” later “Religion chrétienne,” in the section “Histoire.” Even with a limited selection of patristic titles, the *AnPhil* succeeds in presenting data unnoticed elsewhere.

A closer look at the rubrics “Patres” and “Testamenta” confirms the picture of an increasingly fast-flowing current after World War II for the study of patristic exegesis. The bibliography of 1948, with complements from earlier years, was published in 1950 (vol. XIX). It presents a lexical analysis of *Basileia tou theou, basileia Christou*, by G. W. H. Lampe, who was then working on his epoch-making *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (see *JThS* 1948, 58–73); also of H. Dörrie’s, “Die Bibel im ältesten Mönchtum,” and of R. M. Grant’s, *The Bible in the Church* (1948). In 1951 (vol. XX), the bibliography for the year 1949, under the rubric “Patres,” is more generous with at least six titles directly relevant for patristic exegesis: P. Courcelle, “Fragments patristiques (exegetical) de Fleury-sur-Loire”; J. Daniélou, “Traversée de la Mer Rouge et baptême aux premiers siècles”; H. Karpp, *Biblische Anthropologie und philosophische Psychologie bei den Kirchenvätern des III. Jahrhunderts* (diss.); J. Klevinghaus, *Die theologische Stellung der apostolischen Väter zur*

alttestamentlichen Offenbarung; I. Koep, *Das Buch des Lebens. Weiterleben einer biblischen Metapher in der patristischen Literatur* (diss.); G. M. Perrella, “La nozione dell’ ispirazione scritturale secondo i primitivi documenti cristiani.”

In addition to the recovery of unknown sources, the research on patristic exegesis as registered in *AnPhil* in the late 1940s remained biased by heavy theological assumptions and without a hermeneutical theory of its own (a popular study by H. Rost, *Die Bibel in den ersten Jahrhunderten*, appears under the rubric “Testamenta”). This was about to change. The bibliography of 1950, published in 1952 (vol. XXI) included M. E. Boismard, “Critique textuelle et citations patristiques, as well as the significant introduction for American readers by W. J. Burghardt, “On Early Christian Exegesis” (*TS* 1950, 78–116). In the bibliography for 1951 (vol. XXII, 1953), specific studies on patristic exegesis started multiplying among the titles compiled in *AnPhil*: L. Brun, on Rom 7:7–25; P. Colli, on Eph 5; 32; J. Coppens, on Gen 3; J. Daniélou, on “La théologie biblique des sacrements et des fêtes d’après les Pères de l’Église,” “Abraham dans la tradition chrétienne”; J. Hild, on Exodus; G. Kittel, on James. Under the rubric “Testamenta” J. Daniélou appears again, with two books, *Sacramentum futuri* and *Bible et liturgie* of 1950 and 1951, both of which would enjoy a great popularity. With R. Bultmann’s work on “Typologie” and J. Guillet’s highly celebrated *Thèmes bibliques* the links between the exegetical advances of the time and the new interest in early Christian exegesis were clearly in evidence. More and more, Patristic scholars would approach the interpretation of the Bible in the early church with descriptive categories applied in contemporary biblical exegesis.

In 1954 (vol. XXIII), the rubric “Patres” in the bibliography for 1952 jumps from covering half a page to almost three pages, with new essays on the inspiration of the LXX (P. Auvray), or even on “L’inspiration des Pères de l’Église” (G. Bardy, *RSR* 40, 1952, 7–26); J. Pirot, *Paraboles et allégories évangéliques*; P. B. Rebstock, *Gedanken zum Johannes-Evangelium im Geist der Heiligen Väter*. On-going work on the history of biblical interpretation in patristic sources continued to be analyzed under the rubric “Testamenta,” with major studies by J. Coppens, *Vom christlichen Verständnis des Alten Testaments*, and “Les harmonies des deux Testaments. En étudiant les divers sens des Écritures”; R. M. Grant, “The Bible in the Ancient Church” (1946). Added to these was the question of the biblical canon published by H. Diem and J. Ruwet.

The bibliography for 1953 (vol. XXIV, 1955) contains under “Patres” an example of Tissot’s collections of quotations, *Les Pères vous parlent de l’Évangile*. It also includes A. Hamman, *Le Pater expliqué par les Pères*, and

L. Bouyer, "Gnosis. Le sens orthodoxe de l'expression jusqu'aux Pères alexandrins," an inadequate image of the state of patristic research of the day, and far behind the intense critical debate concerning a proper theory of patristic hermeneutics. That image was hardly corrected, under "Testamenta" by the mention of F. A. Seisdedos, "La 'teoria' antioquena" and P. T. Ternant, "La *theôria* d'Antioche dans le cadre des sens de l'Écriture." In the bibliography for 1955 (vol. XXVI, 1956), under "Patres," J. Enciso, "Observaciones acerca del sentido pleno" hardly fills the lack of information about patristic hermeneutics, but, under "Testamenta," one notes with satisfaction R. E. Brown, *The sensus plenior of Sacred Scripture*, next to B. Bischoff's very important *Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter*.

A consistent checking of the rubrics "Patres" and "Testamenta" in the following years allows the tracing of the development of studies on patristic exegesis from one decade to another, with milestones such as the publication of H. de Lubac's *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, I, in 1959, or the presentation of the "Centre d'Analyse et de Documentation patristiques de la Faculté de théologie protestante de Strasbourg" by A. Benoît and P. Prigent in 1966.

II. BIBLIOGRAPHIA PATRISTICA (B Patr)

Typical of the drive of patristic scholars during the 1950s to participate in a major renewal of research in their field was the decision made by a group of German experts at the second Patristic Conference in Oxford 1955, to create a proper patristic bibliography. Under the leadership of W. Schneemelcher and K. Aland, redactional supervisors from Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the USA, secured a world-wide collection of data intending to cover patristic studies in all their diversity. Two parts of the *B Patr* program are of a special relevance here: "II. *Novum Testamentum atque Apocrypha (quoad textum eiusque traditionem et criticam)*," an exegetical bibliography beyond the scope of the present Handbook, but in line with the ambitious policy of TU noted above; "VII. *Patrum Exegesis Veteris et Novi Testamenti*": this final section serves as a recapitulation for the survey of individual authors by repeating the names of ancient authors listed in "III. 2, *Auctores singuli*," and in adding the names of the modern patristic specialists. The *B Patr* also adds "1. *Generalia* (Collections, *Catena*e, *Hermeneutica*)," and "2. *Exegesis auctorum ad singulos libros seu locos seu argumenta sacrae Scripturae pertinens*." Finally

there is an important section IV reserved for “*Cultus*,” in which figure studies concerning the cult of martyrs and saints, together with studies concerning any existing liturgical writings from early Christianity.

To constitute a special inventory of all publications relevant for the study of patristic exegesis is one of the distinctive features of *BPatr*. Another such singular merit is to cover the work done in Russia and in Eastern Europe with an unusual accuracy. The difficulties due to the Cold War and the division of Germany, East and West, challenged the early editors of *BPatr* to the point that their work became a strong and vibrant protest against the destructive aftermath of World War II. *BPatr* was to become the only adequate source of information for Western scholars about the study of patristics, and of patristic exegesis in particular, behind the Iron Curtain. In Vol. I of 1959, presenting the publications of 1956, forty-six titles constitute the section “OT and NT Exegesis of the Fathers.” In vol. II, published only a few months later in 1959, the production of 1957 was analyzed. The pace of the promising *BPatr* seemed to match the rising tide of patristic studies. Again, vol. III followed hardly six months after II, and vols. IV–VII were available at a yearly rate accounting for the production of 1959–1962. In the meantime the redactional team had grown to thirty-three members, representing additional countries: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Poland, Romania, and Russia.

A range of difficulties, mainly due to financial and technical reasons, imposed a longer delay on vol. VIII (1966) for presenting the publications of 1963, but *BPatr* continued its remarkable career until 1995. Vol. XXIV–XXV of 1984 was the last one published under the direction of W. Schneemelcher. It presented the publications of 1979–1980. In 1986, with K. Schäferdick as chief editor, the publications of 1981–1982 were analyzed, but the pace of *BPatr* slowed down. Only in 1989 could the titles of 1984 be made available. The “Foreword” of that vol. XXIX tried to achieve some damage control in observing that *BPatr* intended as one of its main purposes “to constitute a long-lasting bibliographical tool” not submitted to the fast procedures of commercial advertising.” That being so, K. Schäferdick announced in 1996 that vol. XXXII–XXXV for the years 1988–1990 would be the last of the series, due to the “current tensions in public administrations” (“infolge der angespannten Lage der öffentlichen Haushalte”).

During four decades the *BPatr* had chartered its course through the hightide of patristic studies in the second half of the twentieth century. Its closing sounded like a premonitory sign of a possible ebb of patristic scholarship near the end of the century. The initial volume of *BPatr* had counted 103 pages; the final double volume counted 705 pages. In each of the last

two volumes the section “*Gnostica*” overwhelmed the listing of “Patristic Exegesis” in sheer numbers, and the enormous investment of inquiries for the section “*Recensiones*” alone resulted in a dense report covering about a hundred pages. The editors of *BPatr* had reached the limit of their capacity comprehensively to control the field of patristic studies. A future enterprise of that sort would need a more computerized infrastructure. More probably it would need the combination of a variety of bibliographical approaches, keeping in view the whole field of patristics, but focusing on specific aspects, as is the case currently in the *Annali di Storia dell’ Esegese*.

III. BIBLIOTHÈQUE D’INFORMATION BIBLIOGRAPHIQUE EN PATRISTIQUE, BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION BASE IN PATRISTICS (BIBP)

The *BIBP* was created and directed by R.-M. Roberge since 1971 at the Université Laval, Québec (on the Internet: <http://www.bibl.ulaval.ca/bd/bibp/>).

The *BIBP* aims at producing a computerized selection and analyses of patristic publications mainly in periodicals. Festschrifts and other collections of essays, or reports of patristic conferences, are added to the periodicals. *BIBP* began the twenty-first century with approximately 31,000 “documents” (over 3000 for Augustine alone) analyzing articles in 350 periodicals. In addition to articles, special attention is given to book reviews, of which more than 20,000 are either mentioned or, longer than four pages, analyzed as well. Included in the programme of the Base are also editions of primary sources and tools for research, such as concordances.

In all the periodicals under scrutiny, the analysis starts with the first issue and reaches the present day. Special forms with detailed “grids” allow the *BIBP* staff to offer strictly standardized descriptions of the selected items. Thanks to a clear indexation the *BIBP* reaches an unusually high degree of precision in its method of analysis. For instance, the “describer” (“descripteur”) for biblical exegesis counts sixty sub-divisions. In addition to patrology the fields covered are: archaeology, iconography, epigraphy, papyrology, codicology, the history of ancient Christianity, and of theology; the history of councils, of the liturgy, of spirituality and monasticism; specially the history of biblical exegesis and hagiography.

IV. *BULLETIN AIEP*

With the purpose of describing work in process on a strictly informative level, one finds a broad access to recent publications in the *Bulletin d'information et de liaison* of the *Association Internationale d'Études Patristiques (AIEP)*, originally a French initiative due to the creativity of J. Daniélou, J. Fontaine, H. Marrou and others. That initiative became workable thanks to the international gatherings of Oxford where the project was first announced in 1967. Each *Bulletin* by priority signals patristic work "still unpublished or forthcoming," and also recent publications of books and articles by members of *AIEP*. A special section of fasc. 1 included the full text of communications about *Instrumenta studiorum* presented at Oxford; another section described the main centers of patristic research in Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, Ireland and Italy. Soon an *Annuary* of *AIEP*, published by Brepols (Belgium) and distributed freely inside the Association, was joined to the *Bulletin* with approximately 600 members registered in its issue of 1990.

Checking only one issue of the *Bulletin*: Under the title "La Bible et les Pères" and the subtitles "Ouvrages généraux," "Christianisme et Judaïsme," "Ancient Testament," "Nouveau Testament," *Bulletin* 27 (1996) enumerated 105 entries of work in process or recently published of which 82 focused directly on OT—NT. The same fifth section, "La Bible et les Pères," counted also 18 entries concerning "Apocryphes, Pseudépigraphes," and 46 others classified under the subtitle "Gnose, manichéisme, etc.," thereby illustrating the persistent vitality of research on these matters.

V. *ELENCHUS OF BIBLICA*

Such an *Elenchus*, or "Selection," of bibliographic data pertaining to biblical studies was part of the journal *Biblica* since its creation at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in 1920. No mention of patristic exegesis was made in the first issue, in which the last section of the *Elenchus*, under the title *Subsidiaria*, included: *Theologia biblica*, *Apologetica et Dogmatica*, *Historia Veteris Testamenti*, *Historia Novi Testamenti*, *Historia Religionum*, *Geographia biblica*, but no subdivision for the reception of the Bible in Christian traditions. The situation remained unchanged for twelve years. In the *Elenchus* of 1932, more rubrics were added to the *Subsidiaria* of 1920, such as *Archaeologia Biblica*, *Philologia Biblica*, *Talmudica*, *Iudaica*, but still no trace of a retrieving of biblical interpretations in the church. In 1933, the "General Introduction to Both Testaments" included at the end a small section (d), *Historia exegeseos*,

before the *Quaestiones particulares*, with ten titles of a patristic relevance. In 1939, the same disposition of the *Elenchus* counted again a subdivision *Historia exegeseos* with a first paragraph *Aetas antiqua*, calling for eleven titles, some of them followed by a mention of their reviews. The same outline was kept in the poorly documented issue of 1945, with ten patristic titles, mainly of publications issued in Rome itself. The number of such titles grew quickly in the following years: fifteen in 1946, twenty-seven in 1947, forty-one in 1948. In 1949, when P. Nober took over the redaction of *Elenchus* the section dedicated to the “History of Canon” was more developed than the one on the history of exegesis. New subdivisions were introduced under *Hermeneutica*: a) *Generalia*, b) *De Sensu litterali et typico*, c) *De interpretatione litteraria et pneumatica*, d) *De interpretatione authentica (Ecclesiae)*, but there was no more space allowed for *Historia Exegeseos*, neither in 1950.

A new section, *Historia Scientiae Biblicae* of 1951 marked what could be considered as the official beginning, at least in Rome, of the history of patristic exegesis as a discipline in its own right. A laconic remark stressed the fact: “A proper and comprehensive inventory of the history of biblical science is missing” (*Bibl* 32, 32*). In the wake of the then flourishing “kerygmatic theology,” and with a fresh interest in hermeneutical theories, the worksome editor of the *Elenchus* opened his new section with a compact list of publications covering the pages 32* to 107*, of which 32*–65* referred to patristic research.

In 1953, there were 105 titles of *Patristica*; in 1954, 160; in 1959, 258; in 1964, 313. In 1965 the *Elenchus Bibliographicus Biblicus* detached itself from *Biblica*, starting a new career in separate volumes. In 1974, under the editorial direction of Carlo Maria Martini, the volume was introduced by congratulations to the indefatigable P. Nober for his twenty-five years of dedication to the redaction of *Elenchus*. From the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Professor M. H. Groshen-Gottstein expressed the wide-held admiration of scholars: “It is quite incredible that you have managed to build, all by yourself, the most reliable tool for basic research in our field” (7).

In the meantime only small changes had happened, subdividing *Patristica* in *Generalia*, *Themata biblica*, *Auctores aetatis patristicae*, a disposition which lasted until Fr. Nober’s death in 1980. His illness had prevented the publication of the final section of *Elenchus*, vol. 57, including *Patristica*, in 1976: “*propter morbum compilatoris*” (573); as well as in 1977–78, vols. 58–59, with 35000 cards for that section in the waiting. Nober’s successor, R. North, S.J., introduced new subtitles under “History of Exegesis” in 1979: *Generalia*, *Patres apostolici et saeculi II*, *Patres Graeci*, *Augustinus et Latini*, *Patres Orientales*, with a total of 335 titles. With the exception of 1981, where no

Patristica were included, each of the following volumes of *Elenchus* added its share of titles by the hundreds, with only a few more detailed subdivisions of the patristic section. In 1998, the 1995 materials are published in two volumes: the first, with an internet address, is entitled “Exegesis”; it includes only titles dealing directly with biblical books. An index “*Sacra Scriptura*” follows the index of authors.

With the ever-growing tide of these publications, even electronic procedures hardly maintain control of the data. It is essentially on the basis of the *Elenchus* that the bibliography for the present Handbook has been worked out, completed and cross-checked with other bibliographic tools such as the bibliographies of *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique* and of *Année Philologique*, or the *Bibliographia Patristica*, and other resources of that sort.

VI. H. J. SIEBEN, *EXEGESIS PATRUM*

Saggio bibliografico sull' esegesi biblica dei Padri della Chiesa. Rome, 1983

A list of two thousand titles (numbered from 1 to 2000 in the alphabetic order of the authors) of isolated verses, groups of verses, chapters, or even whole books of the Bible, the “Saggio bibliografico,” “Bibliographic Outline,” of H. J. Sieben is intended to cover the twentieth century from its beginning. In addition there are sixteen titles belonging to the nineteenth century, between 1869 (n. 1639) and 1898 (n. 1828). See also n. 175, 193, 772, 774, 779, 1116, 1532, 1676, 1763, 1832, 1848, 1869, 1880, 1890, 1905.

The twentieth century study of the OT in patristic traditions counts 707 titles (identical titles are only counted once). Only approximately 80 titles date from before World War II (under the rubric “*Sacra Scriptura in genere*” it is not always possible to completely differentiate between OT and NT), for the period of seventy years stretching from 1969 to 1939. The Book of Genesis, with 241 titles for its reception in patristic literature counts for only 28 titles dating before World War II, more precisely from 1882 to 1939. Exodus calling on 64 titles, presents only 4 before World War II. The study of the NT in patristic traditions presents an accumulation of 1148 titles, almost twice as many as the study of OT during approximately the same period of time. Under Matthew there are 340 titles of which 47 date from before World War II. Only 3 titles from before 1939 are registered for Mark and Luke. The Gospel of John with a total of 224 titles, presents 15 from before World War II, while the Pauline Letters with a total of 349 titles, count for 36 dating from 1879 to 1939. The Apocalypse of John registers only 29 titles, of which five date from before World War II.

The analysis of Sieben's bibliographical compilation is a striking confirmation of the spectacular new beginning in the scientific study of patristic exegesis after World War II as one of the distinctive trends of a broader revival in the study of early Christianity during the past five decades. The volume ends with a list of abbreviations, another list of modern authors, as well as a list of ancient authors, including Bede. It is notable that Augustine of Hippo probably counts for as many titles as all other Latin authors together. Further investigations in this valuable volume of "Sussidi Patristici," published at the Istituto Patristico Augustinianum, would certainly call for many more interesting conclusions than those already essayed here. Electronic equipment, appropriately applied, would add much more data precisely for collecting what Sieben decided *not* to take into consideration: "capitoli o sezioni riguardanti l'esegesi patristica contenuti in lavori chi perseguono altri scopi," "Chapters or sections concerning patristic exegesis in publications aimed at different goals" (8). The current bibliographic reports of the *Annali di Storia dell' Egesi* are engaged into that more comprehensive task.

VII. REVUE D'HISTOIRE ECCLÉSIASTIQUE (RHE)

Founded in 1900 at the Université Catholique de Louvain/Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven, the *RHE* had always given great care to its bibliographical contribution. Even in extreme circumstances, vol. 40 for 1944–45 kept its regular disposition in that regard, focusing on "Anciennes littératures chrétiennes. Éditions; Critique d'érudition," as a subdivision of "Sources littéraires" in the chapter on "Publications de sources et critique de sources." Only three patristic titles were included in 1945; they were 127 in 1946, 127 also in 1947, 174 in 1948, only (!) 110 in 1949, and 158 in 1950. Always keeping to the same subdivisions in a global bibliography which was soon to become a separate volume, as in the case of *Elenchus*, and cover over 500 pages, 78 patristic titles were introduced in 1975, 84 in 1980, 114 in 1990. Titles of interest for the study of patristic exegesis need to be sorted out in different untitled, but thematic, parts of the section "Anciennes littératures chrétiennes."

Additional information concerning publications or conferences linked with the study of patristic sources can occasionally be found in a lengthy "Chronique" of activities related to historiography under all its aspects, and joined to the bibliography in the annual issues of *RHE*. In 1945, for instance, the "Chronique" for France greeted the start of the series *Sources Chrétiennes* and the "Chronique" for Spain announced the Spanish translation of Altaner's

Patrology. In 1946 *RHE* also emphasized the progress of the series, *Excelsa*, in Spain, with four new volumes: Augustine's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*; John Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Letter to the Romans*, and his *On Priesthood*; *Sermons* of Leo I. In 1950, under the signature of J. Lebon, the "Chronique" for Germany made much of the start of the publication by G. Mueller of his *Lexicon Athanasianum*, as well as of the creation of the *Vetus Latina* edition at the Abbey of Beuron.

VI
CONCLUSION: THE RESEARCH ON
PATRISTIC EXEGESIS SINCE 1945

The enormous amount of work published since 1945 may be evaluated on different levels.

On the level of the patristic sources themselves, critical editions of good quality and accurate translations multiplied, for the most part thanks to the close collaboration between the traditional (very often clerical) experts and new generations of academics working in secular universities or in other institutions of high learning. Public funding of world-famous collections, such as GCS or SC, helped individual scholars to engage into the challenging task of reading manuscripts, collating variants, preparing critical apparatus, and, in many cases, translating into a modern language the original text established by them. Many years of preparation are usually required for the production of such a work. No general pattern can be imposed systematically on that form of activity as any initiative in the field depends on the individual experts. The only constant which seems to condition the critical recovery of ancient sources, in patristic exegesis like elsewhere, is that the scientific quality of an individual work imposes itself as a norm by generating qualitative improvements on a more general level. Hence the contemporary relevance of the image beautifully rendered in the stained glass of Chartres cathedral of the “giants on whose shoulders” experts of later generations attempt to reach their own goals. Thanks to inspiring role models the arduous labor of critical editions is assumed by individuals of very different status. Some of these have in mind their professional promotion as academics, others benefit from the security of scientific public institutions; others again remain established in a monastic frame freed from material concerns, all are certainly dependent on the general level of culture in their social context. The temporary (or permanent) loss of classical languages in secondary education throughout the West results in a dramatic diminution of human resources for the critical study of ancient texts. Unpredictable as the future may be, it is fair to conclude that the second half of the twentieth century marked an unprecedented effort to make patristic sources available for the broader readership. Such an effort had never been conceived nor orchestrated in the Western world on the scale on which it deserves now to be evaluated. Its logical following is not only a continuation of its dynamics in the West, (in spite of a possible diminution of classical studies), but a spilling over into other parts of the world, in particular into Asia.

In Japan for instance, a priority for Christian academics during the whole twentieth century has been to translate key texts of the patristic legacy into Japanese. This has had a spectacular blossoming, one that is full of promise for the cultural and intellectual self-affirmation of the Christian minority in Japanese society. This interest in patristic thought is allied to considerable attention paid to the foundations of Western thought and spirituality in faculties of philosophy and history. In addition to the volumes of Japanese translations mentioned above in Section I, ix, *Studies in Medieval Thought* have been published with contributions concerning patristic exegesis in 1977, 1980, 1982, 1996, 1997:

- Mizuochi, K., "Augustine's Thoughts on Biblical Interpretation in *De Doctrina Christiana*," 19 (1977): 105–14.
 Sakai, M., "The Relation between Bible and Philosophy in St. Augustine's Inquiry—A Consideration according to *De Magistro*," 22 (1980): 73–82.
 Mori, Y., "On Augustine's Interpretation of *imago Dei* in *De Genesi ad Litteram*," 24 (1982): 93–101.
 Kannengiesser, C., "The Meeting between Classical Philosophy and Christian Exegesis in Ancient Alexandria": 38 (1996): 59–72.
 Ogino, H., "The Patristic Tradition of the Exegesis of Genesis": 39 (1997): 102–11.

Other relevant publications appeared in the series *Eikon. Studies in Eastern Christianity (Tokyo)*, vol. 6 (1991): Hiroyuki Ogino, "A Grammar of the Nativity. Gregory Nazianzen's *Third Theological Oration*," pp. 21–33; vol. 8 (1992): Miyako Demura, "How Did Origen Understand 'Creation'? On the Interpretation of Prov 8:22," pp. 30–45; and in the series *Patristica. Proceedings of the Colloquia of the Japanese Society for Patristic Studies*, vol. 2. (1995): Hiroyuki Ogino, "The Question of 'In Principio'. Patristic Tradition of Hexaemeron," pp. 93–132; vol. 4. (1997): Takeshi Odaka, "Origen's Interpretation of the Prologue of the *Johannesevangelium* in Comparison with the Other Greek Fathers" pp. 45–79. Other studies include Y. Arai, "The Structure of *Confessions*: I 1.1 and *invocare*": *Studies in Medieval Thought* 37, 1995 and "The Structure of *clamor* in Augustine": *Kyodai Studies in Mediaeval Philosophy* 13, 1994; H. Ogino, "*Quaerere invocans*. Some Literary Remarks on St. Augustine's *Confessions*, I, i, 1: *Essays and Studies*, 40 (1989) 1–16; "Interior Space of the Human Memory. St. Augustine's Account of Memory in *Confessions*, Book X": *Essays and Studies* 41 (1990): 51–72. In 1997, James Kuyama presented a doctoral thesis at the University of Kyoto on Origen's doctrine on Creation.

In 1981 P. Nemeshegyi, then a professor at Sophia University, Tokyo,

published a detailed survey of patristic studies in Japan, “Études patristiques au Japon,” *REAug* 27, 158–164, in which he emphasized the personal commitment of Japanese scholars in their master-disciple relationship with the patristic authors (159). “Japanese experts engage the study of the Fathers with the freshness of a new view-point enriched by the original resources of a heterogeneous culture, and the eagerness of “disciples” who—like the Fathers—experienced the newness of Christ” (164). He also stressed the decisive role played by K. Ishihara (1882–1976) and T. Ariga (1899–1977) in the development of patristic studies in Japan.

A final evaluation of the scholarly developments over the past fifty years in the field of patristic exegesis may be attempted with the two following criteria in mind: 1. The post-War renewal of biblical studies; 2. The inner structuring of the discipline of patristic exegesis.

I. THE POST-WAR RENEWAL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

The methodology of research on patristic exegesis during the past five decades was conditioned by the post-War renewal of biblical studies. The papal encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* of 1943 had confirmed and liberalized the Catholic exegetes obvious need for collaborating with their colleagues of other confessions in the spirit of modern scholarship. Soon after the end of the War, a growing ecumenical inspiration in the worldwide Council of Churches, contemporaneous with the earliest Patristic Conferences in Oxford, opened the minds for new forms of dialogue among professional exegetes. The renewal in exegetical schools of thought entailed many revisions of the global understanding of Scripture and of its interpretation. New methods, based on “Formgeschichte,” “Redaktionsgeschichte,” “Traditionsgeschichte,” transformed the way of interpreting Scripture.

At the time of the first two Patristic Conferences in Oxford (1951, 1955) a lively debate was sparked concerning the complex interrelation of cultural realities around the links between “Scripture” and “tradition.” Long cherished priorities were challenged: “Tradition comes first!” The social status of sacred Scripture in its very emergence needed reformulation. The debate was open to a hermeneutics of the *reception* of Scripture in Christian traditions, a notion still in its infancy at that time.

The discussion raging around R. Bultmann’s program of de-mythologizing brought to the attention of many patristic scholars the need for exploring more carefully the symbolic thought of the Fathers, in particular in their biblical hermeneutics. J. Daniélou, for instance, relished describing the

sophisticated intricacies of patristic symbols, always rooted in traditional readings of Scripture and molded by a variety of cultural settings. Another scholar who emphasized the symbolic nature of patristic thought was Hugo Rahner in *Symbols of the Church*.

Another school of thought during the 1950s grew out of French exegetical scholarship, centered on the “genres littéraires” of biblical writings. It provided methodological clues applicable in the field of patristic literature.

Very much appreciated after World War II was the notion of “biblical theology,” worked out by exegetes in tune with Von Rad’s classical study, and popularized in reference books like X. Léon-Dufour’s *Vocabulaire de Théologie Biblique*, and in countless articles. Again a valuable model was put at the disposal of patristic scholars interested in similar themes. One of these scholars was Prestige, whose *God in Patristic Thought* exercised a long-lasting influence.

The intensity of the biblical renewal following World War II was symptomatic of the collective hunger for spirituality linked with the many disruptions of the traditional way of life during and after the War. “Biblical” spirituality became the popular aura of biblical scholarship, resulting not only with many new editions of the Bible itself but also with a flood of secondary literature all over the world. The same dynamic of a spiritual “return to the sources” spilled over to patristics where some authors became best sellers and collections of patristic translations multiplied in modern languages. This wide-spread popularizing of the writings of the early church is demonstrated in the 1980s after the collapse of Communism, with the works of John Chrysostom (already studied among nineteenth century social theorists) being sold in Russia’s railway stations. On the academic level, dissertations dedicated to patristic spirituality in its pastoral and liturgical modes proliferated for a number of decades. Significantly, these studies explored mainly the biblical aspects of early Christian spirituality.

II. THE INNER STRUCTURING OF THE DISCIPLINE OF PATRISTIC EXEGESIS

In the early years of the 1950s the study of patristic exegesis was still considered either as an auxiliary to systematic theology or was entirely polarized by the interests of biblical exegetes. On the other hand the late 1950s saw the popularizing of a number of new notions, such as that of “literary genre,” thus expanding the horizon of studies of patristic exegesis beyond the academic requirements of biblical exegetes or of the systematicians. At the same time the discovery of new patristic sources required a more accurate analysis of

their cultural “Sitz im Leben.” Their very cultural rootedness imposed the necessity of identifying them as a special form of biblical exegesis in non-biblical traditions. However even as late as the early 1960s, confessional prejudice occasionally imposed its own agenda when patristic exegesis was at stake, in discussions about ecclesiastical institutions such as the papacy or sacraments. Another characteristic feature of that period was the multiplication of studies devoted to isolated verses of the Bible, when exploring the reception of Scripture in the early church. Both these phenomena demonstrated lingering repercussions of an earlier stage of the discipline.

The main debate of the 1970s turned around the “senses of Scripture,” the grounds for which had been prepared by significant publications of two or three decades previously. At that time the “entry of obligation” into the hermeneutical debate was to address the question of biblical “typology” or “allegory” as understood by the Fathers. The climax of that controversy was reached in Henri de Lubac’s masterpiece *Exégèse Médiévale*. In his passionate advocacy of patristic exegesis, H. de Lubac symbolized a central problem for assessing the work accomplished by patristic scholars since World War II and especially for patristic exegesis. The title, *Exégèse Médiévale*, is in itself highly significant. What was at stake for de Lubac was the securing of the continuity between the Patristic Age and the Latin Middle Ages. Thanks to the enduring prestige of biblical exegesis as conceived by the Fathers, the early Christian way of interpreting Scripture remained in common practice in the monastic culture of the High Middle Ages until the end of the eleventh century. It began to lose its relevance with the emergence of scholasticism. Indeed after Abelard and Peter Lombard the sayings of the Fathers, though still massively invoked, or readily paraphrased, no longer regulated the exercise of biblical exegesis as a vital source of intellectual life. While in the best of cases, exegesis continued to imitate the patristic way of interpreting, more frequently it became an apologetic defense of the Fathers’ exegetical legacy. A careful analysis of H. de Lubac’s magisterial investigation of the achievement of Origen of Alexandria as an interpreter of Scripture, reveals a similar dynamic. While paying an eloquent tribute to the Alexandrian interpreter of the third century and to the exegetical tradition derived from Origen, at the same time the French theologian failed to question the data before him with an openness to the hermeneutics of his own time. De Lubac’s own hermeneutical theory remained enclosed in the *descriptive* analysis of the data under scrutiny, and so could not reach a framing evaluation of patristic exegesis formulated in twentieth century terms. His deliberate reluctance to produce a *critical* assessment of patristic exegesis resting on a positive evaluation of his own modernity, is a testimony to the basic lacuna

in twentieth century patristic studies as a whole, namely the lack of a clear definition for the *present* relevance of patristic exegesis.

The historical retrieving of patristic exegesis during the second half of the twentieth century took advantage of the new formulation of “Late Antiquity.” From the nineteenth century historical model of a “decline” of the Roman Empire, scholars shifted to the notion of a period of transition filled with new energies, and no longer bound to the structures of the imperial past. A proper understanding of the complex process of the metamorphosis of Western Europe in the period now designated as Late Antiquity stretching across half a millennium (from the fourth to the ninth century) called for a daunting amount of scholarly explorations in order to redraw the historical “map”. Some of the volumes of *ANRW* offer a first survey of that vast landscape and cover half of the patristic period in which modern Europe was born.

The interpretation of Scripture in such a period of transition could not remain alien to the social and political transformations of Late Antiquity. Biblical hermeneutics was effected by participating in the general shift within the traditional culture toward its own challenging future. Its study by modern historians has benefited considerably from a better knowledge of the social change which conditioned the exegetes of Late Antiquity. The reading of the Bible as practiced by ancient exegetes became, in the eyes of modern critics, a reading of the society in which the exegetes lived, whether it was Augustine of Hippo explaining the Psalms to African audiences in the early fifth century, Romanos the Melodist, composing poetic sermons in sixth century Constantinople or Gregory the Great telling miracle stories in late seventh century Rome. A social and political agenda is interwoven with the pastoral endeavors of out-spoken church leaders—hence the current development of a social and historical approach to biblical hermeneutics, independent of any form of biblical exegesis in the study of the patristic legacy.

The history of research on patristic exegesis since the end of World War II is the history of a discipline maturing in its self-awareness, that is in its capacity to claim a proper territory for its inquiries, to fix a consistent set of goals for its achievements, and consequently to develop a dynamic of its own among sister disciplines.

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CHAPTER TWO
JUDAISM AND
RHETORICAL CULTURE:
TWO FOUNDATIONAL CONTEXTS
FOR PATRISTIC EXEGESIS

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by Christoph Schäublin

I
FROM THE HEBREW BIBLE
TO THE SEPTUAGINT

In the patristic age the Bible was known only through translations. Jerome's expertise in Hebrew language remained a very isolated phenomenon framed by the world-wide discourse of the Greek and Latin speaking churches in Antiquity. A greater familiarity with Hebrew persisted in Syriac speaking Christianity on the eastern confines of the Empire throughout the patristic centuries, but even there the Bible was read in translations. The Greek translation of Torah was the work of a group of Hellenized Jews, the legendary "Seventy," hence the "Septuagint," the work of the Seventy (LXX) in Alexandria three centuries before the Common Era. The other books of the Bible, following the Torah, or the Pentateuch, the "Five Books," as it was called in Greek, were all translated in Alexandria by anonymous Jewish scholars before the birth of Christianity. No wonder therefore if the earliest Gospel communities knew no other texts of the Bible but the LXX, whose explicit or implicit quotations permeate the whole collection of canonical writings which became known as the New Testament.

"The LXX represents the first large scale attempt to translate an oriental religious text into Greek" (S. P. Brock, *TRE* 6, 161). Other translations of the Bible from Hebrew to Greek were realized during the first three centuries of Christianity. Origen would take them into account for his textual criticism on the LXX as transmitted to him. However the LXX translation remained unparalleled in its reception by the Church. The LXX exercised a pervasive and profound influence on the patristic understanding of Scripture. Greek speaking Christian interpreters of the early centuries and deep into the Middle Ages found themselves constrained to give a reasonable account of a sacred text transmitted in their own language but issuing from a religious culture with which they had nothing in common. Though hellenized to the point of practically losing control over Hebrew language, the Alexandrian Jews, for whom the LXX had been completed in the first place, had received from their religious leaders the needed basic knowledge about the institutions and the history of biblical Israel. For Christian believers, for the most part coming from a pagan background, the "foreign" Greek of the LXX translation was a problem in itself, not only because of the exotic (for them) contents of its narrative but also because of its very wording and its grammar. The clarification of lexical data or the struggle with unfamiliar forms of syntax were a constant duty for anyone expounding Scripture in Christian communities.

Due to the cultural singularity of LXX Greek as an ancient form of the Koine, or “vernacular” Greek used as common idiom since Alexander the Great all over the territories of his conquests, the Greek-speaking churches needed *literal* explanations of the Bible in preaching and in sacramental actions.

In its Christian reception, the LXX is currently the focus of a lively collaboration among specialists, in particular those interested in the innumerable problems of translation with which patristic authors were dealing. By scrutinizing the procedures of patristic exegesis which had built up a whole vision of biblical data and a theology of its own on the basis of problematic renderings of the original Hebrew texts in the LXX, these specialized scholars open for the first time a critical access to the most essential foundation of biblical exegesis in ancient Christianity, the very text of the Bible in its LXX translation.

G. Dorival, M. Harl, O. Munnich, *La Bible grecque des Septante: Du judaïsme hellénistique au christianisme ancien* (Paris, 1982), offers an introduction to the history, the text and the reception of LXX, with bibliography. A translation of the LXX in French, with introductions and extended critical notes is published thanks to the initiative of Marguerite Harl, Professor emeritus at the Sorbonne, *La Bible d’Alexandrie* (Paris, 1986–). The first volumes published or forthcoming are:

1. *La Genèse*, M. Harl, 1986.
2. *L’Exode*, A. Le Boulluec and P. Sandevour, 1989.
3. *Le Lévitique*, P. Harlé and D. Pralon, 1988.
4. *Les Nombres*, G. Dorival, 1994.
5. *Le Deutéronome*, C. Dogniez and M. Harl, 1992.
6. *Jésus (Josué)*, J. Moatti – Fine, 1996.
7. *Les Juges*, P. Harlé.
8. *1 Règnes*, M. Lestienne, et al.
9. *3 Règnes*, P. Lefebvre.
10. *Esdras I*, A. Canessa.

The following are a few major studies on the text of LXX:

- D. Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers d’Aquila* (VT.S 10; Leiden, 1963).
- E. Bickermann, *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (2 vols.; Leiden, 1976, 1980).
- S. P. Brock, “The Phenomenon of Biblical Translation in Antiquity.” Pages 541–571 in S. Jellicoe, *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretation* (New York, 1974).
- C. Dagniczy, *Bibliography of the Septuagint. Bibliographie de la Septante (1970–1993)* (Leiden, 1995).
- A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta-Studien* (1904–1911; 2nd ed., Göttingen, 1965).
- H. B. Sweete, *An Introduction to the OT in Greek* (Cambridge, 1902; reprint 1968).

On the patristic exegesis of the LXX:

- R. Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs grecs de l'Octateuque et des Rois* (Vatican, 1959).
- G. Dorival, "Des commentateurs de l'Écriture aux chaînes," pp. 361–86 in C. Mondésert, ed., *Le monde grec et la Bible* (BTT 1; Paris, 1984).
- FS M. Harl, *Κατὰ τοὺς ο'—Selon les Septante* (Paris, 1995).

II RABBINIC LITERATURE

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Michael A. Signer and Susan L. Graham

INTRODUCTION

Scripture and its interpretation are the center of religious life for the Jewish people. In Neh 8:1–8, Ezra reads from the book of the Law of God, surrounded by the priests who translate and interpret it to the people. These two activities, reading the word of God and interpreting it in the light of the contemporary milieu so that it might be applied to the life of Israel, are the fundamental axioms of biblical studies in Judaism. The dynamic relationship between concern for the sacred character of the words, their transmission to the next generation, and their application to the exigencies of life, has been the source of renewal for Judaism throughout its history. It is also the source of development of biblical interpretation in Judaism. However, the story of Judaism from 70 C.E. on is shaped and told by a single group within Judaism: the rabbinic movement initially centered in Eretz Israel.¹ Because of the central place of Rabbinic literature in Jewish tradition, we have omitted discussion of Jewish Apocrypha, Hellenistic Judaism, and the Dead Sea scrolls.²

1. The strength of this tradition is clear in the earliest assessments of Jewish exegetical history, the *Seder Tannaim we-Amoraim*, commonly thought to date ca. 884 C.E., and the *Iggeret Rab Sherira Gaon*, which is the letter that Sherira, the gaon (leader) of the Babylonian town of Pumbeditha, wrote ca. 987 to answer questions regarding the redaction of the various rabbinic texts (G. Stemmerger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996] 6–7, cf. 192–94).

2. We can say confidently, thanks to recent studies, that the Judaism of the Second Temple period was characterized by great diversity (e.g., the Qumran separatist community, the Alexandrian community, nascent Christianity). Even after the destruction of the Second Temple by Titus in 70 C.E., Judaism maintained a diversity which is manifested in the archaeological record, but not in the texts. (See Simon, *Verus Israel*, 54 and Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 48–49.) The diverse traditions of the late Second Temple period offer great potential for insight into the development of Judaism and Jewish exegesis in the early centuries of the Common Era (Shinan, *World of the Aggadah*), although whether these currents within Judaism affected Rabbinic literary effort has not yet been determined (Stemmerger, *Introduction*, 48). The bibliography at the end of this essay includes some of these authors.

a. Dual Torah

The student of rabbinic Judaism in the period ca. 70–700 C.E. should consider the nature of the canon which constitutes its sacred literature. For the Rabbis, revelation consists of a “dual Torah.” One part is the Written Torah, or “written law,” מִקְרָא (*Miqra*), more generally called simply תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב (*Torah*). The second part is the Oral Torah, or “oral law,” called תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל־פֶּה. Rabbinic tradition holds that the Oral Torah contained a revelation of all possible interpretations of the written Torah to Moses. However, for those who came later, it required discovery:

God said to Moses: “Write these things, for it is by means of these things that I have made a covenant with Israel” [Exod 34:27]. When God was about to give the Torah, He recited it to Moses in proper order, Scriptures, Mishnah, Aggadah, and Talmud, for God spoke all these words [Exod 20:1], even the answers to questions which advanced disciples in the future are destined to ask their teachers did God reveal to Moses! (*Tanuma* Buber (1885), *Ki Tissa* 58b.)

The principal text belonging to the Oral Torah was the Mishnah, which was seminal for subsequent interpretations of Scripture, including the Midrashim and Talmud, as we shall see. The concept of the dual Torah emphasizes that every genre of post-biblical Jewish literature is related to Scripture.

b. Dating the Texts

It is also necessary to consider that the traditions belonging to our period are embedded in later redactions and additions to the texts that the early Rabbis produced. This is in part due to the very nature of the development of the written documents of Rabbinic literature, which are compilations of their opinions and discussions. Rabbinic tradition evolved chiefly in the בֵּית־כְּנֶסֶת (the synagogue), and especially in the disputations which took place in the בֵּית־הַמִּדְרָשׁ (*beit ha-Midrash*), or house of study. Some of these opinions may have been transmitted orally, some in written form. Referring to the context of the original debates serves to clarify many passages which would otherwise remain puzzling. For example, only in the context of disputation does the following passage from the Mishnah regarding the daily recitation of the *Shema* (Deut 6:4) make sense:

One who recited the *Shema* so softly that he could not hear it still fulfilled his obligation.

R. Yose says, “He did not fulfil his obligation.”

[Objection:] If he recited but did not enunciate the letters—.

R. Yose says, “He fulfilled his obligation.”

But R. Judah says, “He did not fulfil his obligation.”

If he One who recited in reverse order does not fulfil his obligation. recited and erred, he should return to the place where he erred [and continue reciting from there to the conclusion].³

The Rabbis' lively scholarly discussions resulted in a proliferation of written texts whose mastery became the dominant intellectual force in later Judaism.

Determining the stages of how Rabbinic texts evolved began as part of an ancient tradition, which identified specific generations of rabbis with the emergence of particular texts. For example, the Mishnah is identified with Rabbi Judah the Patriarch. Furthermore, many texts cite the names of important rabbis in connection with specific opinions. Some modern scholars treat such attributions, e.g., in the Mishnah, Talmud, etc., as historically accurate, and take their attributions at face value. Other modern scholars consider these texts which consider the historical evolution of rabbinic literature as a reconstruction of history or an apologetic by the later rabbinic elite.⁴ Despite the problems involved in historical reconstruction of rabbinic history even up to the eleventh century, it is possible to describe genres of rabbinic literature in their chronological sequence. In order to simplify the discussion we shall assign them to the eras which the medieval rabbis utilized when they described them. The work of Stemberger in the bibliography will provide guidance for the discussions of rabbinic chronology by modern scholars.

c. The "Academies"

Schools, or academies, were the locus of Jewish religious education. The origin of these schools may be discovered in the scriptural commandment to provide religious education for children (Deut 11:19). On the basis of rabbinic literature, we may reconstruct how this commandment was fulfilled in the early period of rabbinic Judaism. A communal tutor met the students

3. *M. Berakhot* 2:3, trans. Neusner, *Mishnah*, 5.

4. The "historical" approach to rabbinic literature would be represented in the writings of S. Safrai ed., *The Literature of the Sages, Part 1*, Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum, section two (Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987). The minimalist approach is taken by the school of Jacob Neusner, "The Use of the Mishnah for the History of Judaism Prior to the Time of the Mishnah: A Methodological Note," *JSJ* 11 (1980): 177-85, and in

in the **בֵּית הַסֵּפֶר** (*beit sefer*, “house of the book”), which seems to have been located in or near the synagogue, to learn the Scriptures. Teaching was by reading and repetition aloud, in a set manner of cantillation (see *b. Megilla* 32a). The students first learned Written Torah, especially the Pentateuch, beginning with the book of Leviticus. Oral Torah would be taught later in the **בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ** (*beit ha-Midrash*), or house of study. The school for the study of the Oral Law might be called a **יְשִׁבָּה** (*yeshiva*, lit. “sitting”) from the third century on in Eretz Israel.

These academies probably consisted of a small number of students who lived near the residence of the rabbi. A pupil would become a disciple of the rabbi, memorizing the traditions taught in the school. Eventually, the goal of the disciple was to acquire the ability to make independent decisions in matters of religious law. The license to make these decision was called **סְמִיכָה** or ordination. This permitted the student to have the title of “Rabbi,” a matter which appears to have required Patriarchal approval.⁵

The academies which gave ordination in Eretz Israel seem to have been more tightly controlled during the first six centuries C.E. than those in Babylonia. In Eretz Israel the word “Rabbi” was utilized increasingly as an indication of professional standing rather than as an honorific form of address during the first two centuries C.E. In Babylonia the title “Rab” was used rather than “Rabbi,” and this may indicate that in the Babylonian schools there was no formal ordination corresponding to that in Eretz Israel.

1. TANNAITIC PERIOD

The earliest group of Sages in rabbinic Judaism are called *Tannaim*. The term *Tanna* (**תַּנָּא**; pl. “Tannaim”) is an Aramaic word associated with the Hebrew root **שָׁנָה** (*shannah*, “repeat,” or “learn”). It is difficult to determine precisely when the Tannaic period begins. In the Mishnah tractate *‘Abot*, the rabbis linked their authority to the “Men of the Great Assembly,” particularly Rabbi

his many books. For a survey of the problem, students may consult the summary, “Handling Rabbinic Texts: The Problem of Method,” in Stemberger, *Introduction*, 45–55. Stemberger provides a *status questionis* discussion of the redaction and textual histories of the major texts of rabbinic Judaism.

5. When the Patriarchate was ended (by 429), rabbinic ordination was replaced by other forms of declaring a scholar’s independence of opinion. See Stemberger, *Introduction*, 8–14.

Simon the Just. Modern scholars date his activity to the Hasmonean period. This would provide a beginning date for the rabbinic teachers toward the end of the second century B.C.E. However, most of the earliest masters cited in the Mishnah begin after the period of Hillel and Shammai, which would place their activity in the first century C.E. Jacob Neusner and many other scholars argue that it is difficult to make any definitive statements about teachings which are prior to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. There seems to have been a significant consolidation of rabbinic Judaism after the destruction of the temple. This is usually described as the Yavneh or Jamnian period. Many scholars raise questions about the accuracy of the traditions associated with Yavneh. Modern scholars ascribe to the post-Bar Kokhba period (135 C.E.) a significant development of the Tannaitic traditions. This period, from 135 to 200, represents the relocation of the academies to the Galilee region. The Mishnah itself defines the end of the Tannaitic period. This would mean that by the mid-third century C.E., the Tannaitic period came to an end.

The third century was a period of unrest. It was a time of crisis throughout the Roman Empire, which the Jewish communities in Eretz Israel experienced in the form of onerous taxation. By the end of the century, there were two geographical centers of rabbinic Judaism. In addition to the rabbis in Eretz Israel, still centered around Galilee, a second center of rabbinic study and exegesis had developed in the long-established Jewish community in Babylon. Rabbis who had fled from Eretz Israel after the destructions of 70 and 135 augmented this community and its academies. The many links, formal and informal, between these communities become clear through an investigation of the interrelationship between the two Talmuds: sayings of Babylonian sages can be found in the Jerusalem Talmud, and elements of the Jerusalem Talmud are found in the Babylonian Talmud.

2. AMORAIC PERIOD

The next period is called “Amoraic,” named after the “*Amoraim*” (אַמֹרָאִים, from the root אָמַר, *amar*, “say,” “name,” or “explain”). The Amoraim were the “interpreters” or commentators on the Mishnah. The compiling of the principal commentaries on the Mishnah, the two Talmud, define the Amoraic period. This definition implies the development of two groups of scholars—in Eretz Israel and Babylonia—and the eventual redaction of the two Talmuds.

The Amoraic period in Eretz Israel follows the contours of the political

developments in the eastern Roman empire. After Constantine's final conquest of the land in 324, Roman legislation became increasingly anti-Jewish, and by the end of the fourth century the Patriarchate and synagogues were principal targets of anti-Jewish laws (see *Codex Theodosianus* 16.8.1, 5, 6, 13, 26, and 16.9.1, 2). In mid-century there was a rebellion, followed by a decline of the capital cities (Tiberias, Sepphoris, Lydda) noted in the archaeological record. Tradition records that many rabbis emigrated to Babylonia at this time, possibly as a result of these events. The Patriarchate was abolished by Roman edict by 429, and in the latter half of the century the academies declined, and, perhaps responding to these political turns, the Jerusalem Talmud (JT) was redacted and the Amoraic period in Erez Israel came to a close ca. 400. In Babylonia, it extends another century, since the Babylonian Talmud (BT) received significant redactions ca. 500, only to assume its final form in the following period.

The Amoraic period in Babylonia extends from the third through the fifth centuries C.E. Relations between the Jewish communities and their non-Jewish rulers there seem to have been more harmonious than in the Roman empire. With the exception of some conflicts with the Sassanian monarchs in the mid-fifth century, the academies of Amoraim continued activity without interference. Modern scholars distinguish between the end of the Amoraic period at the end of the fifth century and the redaction of the Babylonian Talmud, which may have happened under the Islamic rulers in the seventh century.

3. PRINCIPAL NOTIONS OF EXEGESIS AND TEXT

a. Halakah, Haggadah

In order to continue our discussion, it will be helpful to explain the two most significant categories of interpretation found in the Oral Torah: halakah and haggadah. In practice, halakah and haggadah can be difficult to distinguish, since individual passages and even entire works (e.g., the Mishnah) often include examples of both categories, even while subsequent generations of readers would emphasize one category as more significant than the other. For example, some might claim that the Mishnah is exclusively halakah. Both halakah and haggadah are concerned with resolving questions raised by the Written Torah, and by the reality of observing its commandments. Hence the subjects of both categories of interpretation are the same: Sabbaths, festivals, prayer, international relations, education of children, kashrut (dietary

laws), relations between neighbors. They are differentiated by the purpose of the debate and its character (see Avigdor Shinan, *World of the Aggadah*, 117; cf. 114–18).

Halakah (pl. halakot; the term is derived from הלך [*halak*], “walk”) is the easier of the two to define. Halakah focuses on the development of a body of ritual and civil legal practice for the Jewish community, and has prescriptive or normative force in the daily life of the community. Halakot would be determined by a series of considerations, such as majority views, tradition, the opinions of the Tannaim, and so on, to arrive at a conclusion. However, once the rabbis reached their conclusion it was binding. For this reason, it is easy to see the development of halakah as essentially confined to rabbinic disputations in the study-houses. The discussions and dialectical arguments found in the Mishnah and Talmud are most clearly understood in this context. Halakic argument is meant to arrive at a decision. Its purpose determines its history as well. Halakic literature develops in a clearly stratified manner. Each generation of rabbis understands itself as the successor and explainer of the preceding generation. We see this development in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Talmud.

By contrast, *haggadah* (הגדה, pl. *aggadot*; the etymology of the term is not clear), is constituted by narrative material, and develops without any clear strata. This is one of the traits of haggadah which leads scholars to define it negatively, as “not halakah.” Haggadic teachings are not concerned to prescribe behavior or to show what is a right or correct opinion: “One does not teach [about praxis] from the haggadah,” is a maxim often quoted about the authority of the haggadah. In a given haggadah, contradictory sources can be presented together; there is no need to arrive at a decision or practice, so the differing traditions are preserved. Haggadic material has the nature of popular literature. It includes genres of folklore, history, poetry, humor (but not frivolity), medicine, natural science, mathematics, astronomy, theology, and religious philosophy.

Halakah and haggadah are interconnected at their foundations, and represent two sides of the same entity, the literature of the Sages. As such, these two interpretive methods parallel the legal and narrative unity of the Scriptures themselves.

b. Talmud, Gemara

The term Talmud (תלמוד), which means “study” or “learning,” is used to refer to opinions received from predecessors, to a whole body of learning within the Oral Law, or to teaching derived from exegesis of a Scripture text. Most

often, however, it refers to the redacted collections from the Amoraim in Ertze Israel and the Amoraim and Geonim in Babylonia.

When referring to “the Talmud” we mean a written document that consists of the Mishnah and the Gemara. In modern printed texts, these components are structurally separated. However, this was not the case with the manuscripts of the Talmud. *Gemara* in Babylonian Aramaic means “to complete” or “to learn,” and refers to the collection of analyses on Mishnah made by the Amoraim. The Mishnah text was retained as received, with the Gemara loosely attached, following the order of the Mishnah tractate. The Gemara demonstrates the variety of approaches the Rabbis might take to given issues as a result of their continuing concern to relate the precepts of the Scripture to the exigencies of contemporary life. The lines of argument focus on the sources of authority or reasoning in the Mishnah. The Gemara includes material which searches for the biblical warrant for the statement made by one of the Tannaim. There is also material which presents ethical and theological principles.

4. FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS OF RABBINIC LITERATURE

a. Mishnah

The earliest compilation of Oral Torah is called *Mishnah* (משנה), which means “study” and “oral instruction”. This term derives from a common root with the Aramaic term *Tanna*. It is not clear from the Mishnah whether it was intended to be a collection of sources, or a manual of instruction, or a law code. The traditional view that the Mishnah is a legal code was articulated as early as the Amoraic period. In fact, the Mishnah contains all of these elements.

The Mishnah constitutes a seminal collection of the traditions which answered the community’s needs for guidance regarding religious practice, ethics, and social problems. The Mishnah is organized into six divisions, or סדרים (*sedarim*, “orders”). Each *seder* is then divided into מסכתות (*masekhtot*, “tractates”), which are then divided into פרקים (*peraqim*, “chapters”), and, finally, into the smallest unit, which is called משנה (*mishnah*). The first order, *Zeraim* (“Seeds”), focuses on acknowledgement of the Divine (prayer) and, primarily, on the holiness of the land of Israel, which is demonstrated through providing tithes to the temple in Jerusalem. The second order, *Moed* (“Set Festivals”), treats the Sabbath and the festivals of the year. *Neziqin* (“Damages”), the third *seder*, focuses on property and personal injury. Next,

Nashim (“Women”) concentrates on those laws relating to marriage and divorce. The fifth and sixth orders, *Qodashim* (“Holy Things”) and *Tohorot* (“Purities”), present the Tannaitic traditions on the temple cult and priestly activity. The six divisions and the order of the tractates reveal some variation in the manuscript tradition.

Mishnah fully complements Miqra and, therefore, has foundational importance for rabbinic tradition and exegesis. A significant perspective on the genre of Mishnah has been developed by Jacob Neusner, who has described the Mishnah as philosophical in character. He asserts that, in its stress on proper order and right rule, the Mishnah “makes a statement to be classified as philosophy concerning the order of the natural world in its correspondence with the supernatural world.”⁶

b. Tosefta

The most significant literary production of this period, next to the Mishnah, was a collection called the Tosefta, which rabbinic tradition attributed to R. İiyya, (ca. 220–230). The Tosefta (Aramaic תוספתא, meaning “addition”; not to be confused with the much later *Tosafot*) is sometimes considered a “supplement” or “companion” to the Mishnah, and was possibly edited to function in this way. About three times as large as the Mishnah, it consists of a collection of *baraitot* (ברייתות, “statements external to the Mishnah”) which come from the Tannaim, and the earliest generation of the Amoraim. Much of the Tosefta consists of discussion based on citations from the Mishnah. However, approximately one-fifth of the Tosefta includes material which is not treated systematically, or not treated at all, in the Mishnah.

c. Jerusalem Talmud

The literary production which represents the most extensive development of Mishnah commentary in Eretz Israel is the Jerusalem Talmud (also called the “Talmud of the Land of Israel,” and the “Palestinian Talmud”). The JT is composed of the Mishnah and the Gemara by the Amoraim in Eretz Israel. It was redacted earlier than the Babylonian Talmud. JT comments on only the first four orders of Mishnah, and on only one tractate in order Toharot. JT develops the halakah of Mishnah, and augments it with haggadic material and biblical exposition. It is a significant source for the history of Judaism in

6. Neusner, *Introduction to Rabbinic Literature*, 99.

Palestine, and the development of Jewish liturgy. However, in the tradition of rabbinic Judaism, the Babylonian Talmud displaced the JT, even in Eretz Israel, by ca. 750.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF MIDRASHIC LITERATURE

In Eretz Israel concurrent with the development of Mishnah-Gemara literature, another exegetical literature developed. This literature, which provided commentary that followed the order of the biblical text, may be classified in two groups: Targum and midrash.

a. Targum

The earliest example of exegetical literature in the post-biblical period is the Targum. The term תרגום means “translation.” Aramaic was the lingua franca of the Near East until the Hellenistic conquest. It is difficult to fix a date of origin for Targum, but the development of the synagogue liturgy included a public reading from Scripture. The Scripture lection was read aloud with translations given verse by verse. The exegetical work of the Targum seems to have placed greatest emphasis on the paraphrase of texts in the Hebrew Bible. Some of the Targumim follow the biblical text with an attempt at literal translation, while others provide elaborations in order to explain “gaps” in the biblical text. The latter Targumim share a common characteristic with that body of rabbinic literature called midrash.

The Targumim seem to have originated in Eretz Israel, and include early haggadot, some perhaps representing Tannaitic traditions lost from the Mishnah. The earliest known Targum, Targum Onkelos on the Pentateuch, was evidently used in the synagogue liturgies in Eretz Israel in the third century, and from the third century on in the Jewish communities in Babylonia. Likewise, Targum Yonatan (Jonathan) on the Prophets was used in the Babylonian communities in the third or fourth century; however, its origins also can be traced to Eretz Israel. The value of the Targumim can be seen by the comment repeated in the Babylonian Talmud when quoting Targum Yonatan, “Were it not for the Targum of this verse we should not know what it means.” Other Targumim were redacted sometime before the Arab conquest of the Middle East in 657.

b. Midrash

The second group of texts which reflect biblical interpretation dating from the Amoraic period in Eretz Israel is called midrash. The term (מִדְרָשׁ, from שָׂרַשׁ, *darash*, “to seek,” “inquire,” “investigate”) refers to a method of expounding the text and to a collection of such texts. These texts are commentary and elaboration on the Written Torah. The various collections which fall under the head of midrash, however, can focus on deriving rabbinic halakah based on Scripture, or provide elaborations on narrative passages in the Bible. They may be organized according to the order of the biblical text, or arranged as homilies corresponding to the lection on Sabbaths and Holy Days.

In midrash we can discern some of the interrelationship of Judaism and Christianity during the early Christian period. There are some remarkable parallels in hermeneutical method between the midrashim and Greek and Syriac patristic literature. Origen and Jerome are explicitly aware of midrashic traditions. Moreover, in the third century tensions between Jews and Christians (including Origen and Eusebius) living in Eretz Israel rose to a level of confrontation. These debates can be discerned in the pages of midrash from this period, and the development of midrash in Eretz Israel (not in Babylonia) may in part be the result of Jewish efforts to confront their Christian counterparts regarding interpretation of the Scriptures.

An example of rabbinic response to Christianity can be found in *Genesis Rabbah* on the sacrifice of Isaac (the Akedah, Gen 22:1–18). The account begins with the command to Abraham to go to the place he would be told, and sacrifice his son (Gen 22:2). He took two slaves and Isaac on the journey. Then he “saw the place from afar” (Gen 22:4; מָקוֹם (*maqom*), meaning “place” also serves as a euphemism for God. The midrash asks, “What did he see?” “He saw a cloud attached to the mountain”—i.e., a manifestation of the divine presence, which made it clear to him that this mountain was the place which God had commanded as the appropriate place to offer up Isaac.

He [Abraham] said: “It would appear that is the place upon which the Holy one, blessed be He, commanded me to sacrifice my son.” He said to Isaac: “My son, do you see what I do?” He told him, “Yes.” He said to his two young men, “Do you see what I do?” They said to him, “No.” He said: “Since you do not see it, REMAIN HERE WITH THE ASS [Gen 22:5], for you are like the ass [which also does not see].” (*Gen. Rab.* 56.1–2)

We learn from other sources that the Gentiles are “a nation resembling an ass.” Christians and Jews debated vehemently in the third and fourth centuries about the possibility of how, after the destruction of the Second Temple, that

one could verify divine revelation, and whether divine revelation to a non-Jew was possible at all. In the above passage we observe the denigration of the two non-Jewish servants. They do not have any perception of the divine. As non-Jews they are like the ass, a dumb animal incapable of perception. Modern scholars may have some disagreement about whether or not the “people who is like an ass” refers specifically to Christians or more generally to pagans. Nonetheless, there are many passages in midrash literature which focus on the theme of *Verus Israel* and God’s continued covenant with the Jewish people in their exile.

i. Tannaitic Midrashim

The oldest group of midrashim are the so-called Tannaitic midrashim, sometimes called halakic midrashim or מְרִשֵׁי הַלְכָה (*midreshei halakah*, meaning “midrashim of the halakah”). The works included in this subgroup are the *Mekilta d’Rabbi Ishmael* and the *Mekilta de Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai* on Exodus, *Sipra* on Leviticus; and *Sipre* on Numbers and Deuteronomy. The Tannaitic midrashim may be said to form a continuous commentary on the Pentateuch from Exodus to Deuteronomy. In these midrashim there is extensive use of rabbinic hermeneutics to demonstrate how various expansions of the Oral Law are grounded in Scripture. Despite the use of the name halakic midrashim, these collections all contain commentary on narrative passages in their respective biblical books.

ii. Exegetical Midrashim

A second set of midrashim consists of those referred to as “exegetical” and “homiletic.” The “exegetical” midrashim are later than the *midreshei halakah*, but a number were compiled during the fifth century. It is important to remember that the *midreshei halakah* are exegetical, but modern scholars refer to them as “exegetical” because these collections are organized according to the biblical verse order. The term “exegetical midrashim” merely distinguishes them from the next group to be described, which are called “homiletic midrashim.”

Genesis Rabbah explicates the book of Genesis. Scholars postulate that it was redacted in the fifth century. It is considered by some to be the best example of the exegetical midrashim because the rabbis reveal deep layers of meaning within the text. The meanings the rabbis sought in the Scriptures included truths which pertained to their own age. *Genesis Rabbah* provides many examples of rabbinic apologetic against pagan and Christian arguments. In the narratives about the patriarchs and matriarchs, it is possible

to discern their veiled arguments against Christian claims that these biblical figures reached their true fulfillment only in Christ.

In this period exegetical midrashim were also edited on the five books in the Hebrew Bible called the Five Megillot, or “Five Scrolls.” These biblical books were read as part of the synagogue liturgy for the three pilgrimage festivals: Passover (Canticles), Pentecost (Ruth), and Tabernacles (Ecclesiastes); and on Purim (the Feast of Esther) and the Ninth of Ab commemorating the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (Lamentations). The earliest description of the liturgical role for these books is in the Mishnah, tractate *Megillah*.

These midrashim would include *Canticles Rabbah*; *Midrash Ruth* (also called *Ruth Rabbah*); *Lamentations Rabbah*; *Midrash Qoheleth* (also called *Ecclesiastes Rabbah*); and the first half (§§ 1–6) of *Esther Rabbah*.

iii. Homiletic Midrashim

“Homiletic” midrashim are so called because the order of their composition follows the readings for Sabbaths and for special Sabbaths, or Holy Days, in the liturgical year. These collections do not follow the order of the biblical text. Rather, they develop thematically. As we have them, these homilies have sometimes been subjected to abbreviation or other editorial reformulation. The most significant collections dating to the Amoraic period include *Leviticus Rabbah*, containing thirty-seven homilies, which dates to the fifth century (perhaps later); the *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana*, a collection of homilies for feasts and special Sabbaths, redacted in the fifth century, though subject to later additions; and the *Tanhuma* on the Pentateuch, which contains some material from the Amoraic period but was not redacted until the medieval period.

Modern scholarship has concentrated considerable effort on the structure of these homilies, especially the formal conventions for their beginning and conclusion. The *petiah*, which is generally understood to be a kind of proem or introduction to the homilies, is the most common rhetorical form in midrashic literature. *Petiot* aim at artfully leading the hearer from verses in other parts of the Hebrew Bible, such as Psalms or Proverbs, to consider the opening verse(s) of the Pentateuchal reading of the day. The *atimah*, or peroration of the homily, has also been studied. Particularly in the *Pesiqta de Rab Kahana*, and *Tanhuma*, these *atimot* lead to an eschatological teaching which concludes the homily with a message of hope in the messianic deliverance of the Jewish people from the harshness of its exile. These *atimot* may offer students of patristic literature some understanding of the development of early Christian typological exegesis.

6. JUDAISM IN BABYLONIA

Rabbinic tradition marks the beginning of the Amoraic period in Babylonia with the return of Rav from Eretz Israel in 219. During this period, the Jewish community interacted with the successive Persian dynasties (the Sassanian period corresponds to the Babylonian Amoraic period) and its official Zoroastrian clergy. Under the Sassanids, the community no longer had its previous freedom, but it was able to maintain a *modus vivendi* with the Persians. However, in the mid-fifth century there was a power shift, and the Zoroastrian clergy entered on a series of persecutions of the Jewish population which may have weakened the rabbinic leadership of the Jewish people.

Jewish fortunes changed again with the Arab conquest ca. 640 C.E. The location of the first Arab capital was in Damascus, which put Eretz Israel in a position of potential political centrality. However, when the Abbasid Caliphate moved the capital to Baghdad in the eighth century, Babylonian Jews once more found themselves at the center of the empire.

Internally, the Jewish communities in Babylon were governed by an Exilarchate, an office which emerged ca. 200. The Exilarch dominated Jewish communal life, dictating legal and economic practices, and representing Judaism before the Persian monarch. The academies of the Amoraim began to assert their hegemony over the religious life of Babylonian Jewry. Formal gatherings around the Sages, at regular times, in a fixed setting and organization, can be attested for this period. By the beginning of the sixth century, because of the weakened status of Byzantine Jewry and the rise of the Islamic empire, the schools of Babylonia took on greater importance, especially with the decline of the Amoraim in Eretz Israel. With the rise of the Abbasid empire and the network established by the Babylonian academies, the Babylonian Talmud surpassed the Jerusalem Talmud in authority. It was through the literary correspondence of the Geonim, the heads of the Babylonian academies, that the Babylonian Talmud became normative for Jews in the Mediterranean world and, later, in northern Europe.

a. Babylonian Talmud

The thriving (and often competing) academies in Babylonia contributed to lively discussion and an independent approach toward the Mishnah which is reflected in the Babylonian Talmud (BT). The BT differs from the JT in both form and content. The order of tractates differs. While neither Talmud comments on all tractates of the Mishnah, the BT includes commentaries on tractates not treated in the JT.

Although the BT, three times the length of the JT, did not use the JT as a source, sayings and decisions of the rabbis of Eretz Israel are nevertheless found in abundance in it. For example, haggadic material which is included in the midrash literature of Eretz Israel appears in BT. The BT is almost one-third haggadic; by contrast, the JT does not include much haggadic material. Some kinds of haggadic material, for instance angelology, which is absent in JT, is abundant in BT. In contrast to the laconic style of JT, BT has great literary intricacy.

The Babylonian Talmud may have started to crystallize as early as the fifth century. Tradition attributes this redaction to Rav Ashi (ca. 376–427) and the two generations succeeding him: the death of Rabina, the last of these compilers (ca. 499), marks the end of the Amoraic period in Babylonia. Another account sets this *terminus* by the Persian abolition of the Babylonian Jewish Exilarchate in 500. It was further edited together with additions in the following century by the *Saboraim*.

b. Saboraim and Geonim

Saboraim is the name given by the later Geonim to the final editors of the BT. The Aramaic term סְבוּרָאִים (*saboraim*) also appears in the JT (*Qidd.* 2, 63d). The Saboraim completed the ordering of the BT, clarified some of its decisions, introduced additional discussions and explanations of texts, and inserted technical phrases as study aids. Little is known about the history of the Saboraim. The dates of their activity remain a matter of speculation. Most scholars date their work to the period 500–589, but some scholars extend it to 689.

With the Arab conquest the Geonim emerge (sg., Gaon; the term is of indeterminate origin). These were the heads of the principal academies in Babylonia (at Sura and Pumbeditha) in the Abassid empire. In their governance of the Jews as *Dhimmi*, or protected minority under Muslim rule, the Geonim served as the juridical authority for the Jewish communities throughout the Abassid empire. Under their leadership, intellectual and juridical, rabbinic Judaism was consolidated.

The centralized power of the Geonim began to decline together with the Baghdad Caliphate in the tenth century. Although the office remained until at least the end of the twelfth century, its power was severely diminished, and the title Gaon became simply a name for the head of a major talmudic academy in the Islamic world.

7. ERETZ ISRAEL AND THE WESTERN DIASPORA AFTER
THE END OF THE AMORAIC PERIOD: *PIYYUIM*

During the Saboraic period the Byzantine Empire was separated from Rome and Western Christendom (ca. 565–1071). A significant number of Jews continued to live under Byzantine rule. Despite several attempts at legally forcing conversions to Christianity, and persecutions, most notably in the seventh century, the Jews were generally tolerated. During this period some of the major collections of midrashim were redacted. In addition, a significant new genre of rabbinic literature developed, the *piyyu* or religious poem.

During this post-Amoraic period in Eretz Israel, we find the earliest collections of liturgical poetry, called *piyyuim* (פייט, *piyyut*, is derived from Greek ποιητής, *poiêtês*, or poet). The roots of *piyyuim* are found in the synagogue liturgy. They were written to embellish and give variety to the synagogue service by providing an alternative to the set prayers. The earliest examples of these poems belong to the Amoraic period, while the statutory prayers were still developing. They can be found in talmudic sources and in some portions embedded in the texts of the statutory prayers which have been part of the liturgical tradition.

The first poet known to us was Yose ben Yose, dated to the fifth century. Most of his *piyyuim* which have been recovered were composed for the Days of Awe, including *selihot*, or prayers of repentance, and are characterized by a simple style. He also composed a special type of *piyyu*, the long *Avodah* (“worship”), which describes the order of worship for Yom Kippur: a poetic rendering of part of Mishnah tractate *Yoma*. In this poem, the rites for the Day of Atonement are preceded by a long history from creation and culminating in the building of the temple and the worship there on Yom Kippur.

A century after Yose ben Yose, the next poet whose name has come down to us, Yannai, began composing his *piyyuim*. He is principally known for his *kerivot*, a type of *piyyu* which consists of a poetic alternative for the Eighteen Benedictions (*Amidah*). Liturgical poetry flowers after him in the Byzantine period (ca. 565–1071) in Eretz Israel. Rhyme appears, as liturgical poetry becomes more expressive in vocabulary and flowery in style.

Haggadic and halakic material both appear in liturgical poetry. For example, Yose ben Yose includes a haggadah in the *Avodah* the tradition that Jacob’s name was inscribed on the throne of the Holy One and that for his sake the angels ascended and descended the ladder (cf. Gen 28:12–15):

The One who knows him stood above him in his sleeping place,
And said: I am your guard, a shadow on your right hand,

Holy Ones descend and ascend, for his [Jacob's] sake,

To recognize his shape engraved on high.⁷

Yannai includes a unique haggadah on Moses' rod: "He threw it down, and it became three kinds: a viper, a crocodile and a cobra." It is not known whether he invented this image or whether he drew upon previous haggadic traditions. These examples indicate that the thought world of the rabbis cannot be fully understood without including a study of the *piyyuim*.

CONCLUSION

Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmud, midrash, Targum, piyyu: these all constitute genres and texts of rabbinic biblical interpretation. As "classics" they engender a long tradition of interpretation themselves. Subsequent generations of Jewish literature draw upon formal aspects of Talmud and midrash (as the two principal genres) to create their own expositions of Scripture. Exposition of Talmud and the codification of halakic decisions become central genres of rabbinic Judaism.

Two characteristics distinguish the compositions of the classical period. First, they are compilations of the traditions of all the rabbis, rather than the work of a single author. Only the *piyyuim* represent the work of a single author. Second, they have a utopian and atemporal nature. These texts do not emphasize the time or place when something happened. The transcendent presentation of time and space in these texts may have reinforced the rabbis' estimation that Written and Oral Torah were the twin repositories of divine revelation.

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III
THE HISTORY OF GRAECO-ROMAN RHETORICS:
A SHORT OUTLINE.

If Judaism may be called a religion of *the Book*, Christianity shaped its cultural identity as a religion of *many books*! Not only was the collection of writings called “New Testament” joined to the Hebrew Bible and to its complements enclosed in the LXX, but from the first century a literary activity developed in Christian communities which centered on the interpretation of the seventy writings comprising the OT and NT. The culture of the time required a *written* communication of sacred mysteries, and early Christianity proved to be no exception. In fact, Christian writers not only adapted the fashionable trends of literature of their times, Jewish and pagan alike, but also created their own genres of literary works, for instance the genre of the “gospels” themselves. Hence they found themselves immersed in the pervading and rich culture of post-classical rhetorics which surrounded the Mediterranean and gave the Roman Empire a common cultural denominator, just as popular Greek was its *lingua franca* for oral communication. A brief reminder of the history of Greco-Roman rhetorics should suffice as a historical background for the birth of Christian exegesis in which it structured itself for many centuries.

In eighth-century B.C.E. Homer we already find instances of the practice of finding etymologies for names. For instance, the name of Astyanax, son of Hector, he claims, echoed Hector’s name, for Hector was the only efficient defender (ἄναξ) of the city (*Iliad*, 6, 403; 22, 506–507). A similar interest is shown by Hesiod in *The Works and the Days*, or in his *Theogony*.

The fifth century B.C.E. is the time of the first great orators in Greece, Themistocles (533–470), Pericles (494–429), and Cleon, his main opponent. Around 470, Corax and Tisias composed the first Τέχνη, or *Handbook of Rhetoric*, in Sicily and later joined the great Gorgias in Athens. After the long established “tyranny” had come to an end, Greek cities went through a period of intense political and oratorical activity in order to create a state of law. First attempts of structuring theoretically the art of oratory laid down the earliest foundations of rhetoric. The so-called Sophists taught how to handle “commonplaces” of speech, such as the “prologue” (the προοίμιον was initially reserved for poetry) and the “epilogue” (ἐπίλογος), or conventional themes for declamation and the κοινοὶ τόποι, codified elements of a speech such as the expression of literary humility, the eulogy of the ancestors, and others.

Around 420 Gorgias, a celebrated Athenian teacher of eloquence, discovered the importance of oratorical aesthetics for the education of future political leaders, his best pupil being Protagoras. His contemporary and competitor, Isocrates, who achieved an impressive degree of activity between 403 and 353, was the teacher of Eschines and Demosthenes (384–322). He gave his teaching a philosophical orientation, insisting on the clarity of exposition and the pragmatic pedagogy convenient for political life. The style of a speech should always be determined according to the *καιρός*, the challenge of the moment, and the *πρέπον*, what is the most appropriate given the persons and the circumstances at stake. Demosthenes delivered his most famous civil and political pleas, or his harangues (such as the ones against Philip of Macedonia), between 363 and 330. Also in the fourth century B.C.E., Theodore of Byzance taught how to divide a speech into different parts. Prodikos focused on synonymies, and others on the rhythm of sentences, the choice of words, the importance of rhetorical discipline for general education, or again on the art of conciseness and the techniques of dissimulation. School books multiplied, technical terms became more specialized, and the delivery of speeches as a goal in itself became increasingly popular.

Plato created the “Academy” in 387. In a Dialogue entitled *Phaedros* he denounced “Sophistry” as artificial, misleading, mercenary, and incompetent for reaching the ground of the matters debated. For him, oratory should intend to serve as a “psychology,” a “guidance for the soul”; hence he urged the need to complete the art of declamation with the study of more philosophical matters. The lasting distinction between rhetoric and philosophy derives from Plato’s work. In the dialogue *Gorgias*, named after his famous predecessor, Plato opposed demagogy, claiming that the education of the king could be secured by a philosopher. Thus his most gifted disciple, Aristotle, became the educator of Alexander the Great. In *Cratylus*, Plato taught that names are not in nature, but given by human agencies, therefore they may be wrong or incorrect.

Aristotle remained a student of Plato until the latter’s death in 348/347. After having served as the preceptor of Alexander, he founded the “Lycaeuum” in Athens soon after the death of Alexander’s father, Philip of Macedonia in 335. He died in exile in 322. His treatise *On the Art of Rhetoric*, *Τέχνης ῥητορικῆς*, written ca. 330, starts with the statement, “Rhetoric [public speech] is a counterpart [*ἀντίστροφος*] of dialectic [philosophy]” (1354a), but contrary to philosophy it is a purely formal discipline; not a science, but a *τέχνη* (a “method”) relevant for any matter. It requires much knowledge and a full education, including psychology, political and social science, etc.: “Rhetoric is the capacity of discovering what, in each case, is the most

convincing” (1355b). Hence it calls essentially for the epideictic genre of discourse which intends to convince (such as would be the discourse of Christian faith).

There are three main methods of discourse: *περὶ τὰ δημηγορικά* or *συμβουλευτικός*, “deliberative”; *περὶ τὰ δικανικά*, *δικανικός*, “forensic”; and *ἐπιδεικτικός*, “epideictic” or “demonstrative.” The orator’s sense of values should activate appropriate feelings (*πάθη*) in his audience; his arguments should always be real, not artificial. Aristotle elaborated the theory of the “enthymems,” arguments in form of syllogisms based on probability (I ii, 22–24). He focused on four basic principles of the art of oratory: “invention,” “elocution,” “order,” and “disposition.” The rhythm of a speech should be consistent with our senses and passions, hence the “composition” is very important.

Theophrastes replaced Aristotle as head of the Lycaeum. He concentrated on the aesthetics of speech. He distinguished between different styles, for instance the “grand” and the “ordinary.” He stressed the importance of oratorical “action” (gestures, posture, looks, etc.). From that same Aristotelian school derived the oldest known treatise *On Interpretation*, *περὶ ἑρμηνείας*, dealing with punctuation, divisions, and different styles of speeches. The work circulated under the name of Demetrios of Phaleron, a political leader and orator in fourth century B.C.E. Athens, but it probably dates only from the beginning of the Common Era.

In the third and second centuries B.C.E., Platonists and Aristotelians entertained lively discussions about the links between rhetorics and philosophy; these led to the production of many handbooks. In the first century B.C.E., Cicero took the lead with *De oratore*, *Brutus*, and *Orator: Is est enim eloquens, qui et humilia subtiliter et magna graviter et mediocra temperate potest dicere*: “An eloquent man is the one who is capable of saying humble things with discretion, great things with solemnity, and what is average with measure. The goal of all speeches is to teach, to entertain, and to move,” *docere, delectare, movere* (*De oratore* 21, 69). Quintilian (*Institutio oratoria*) greatly admired Cicero in the first century C.E., and even overshadows him as a theoretician of rhetorics. He would inculcate Cicero’s threefold purpose of speeches with much emphasis.

All along the classical traditions “commentaries” were produced such as *scientific* commentaries (Galen interpreting Hippocrates; or grammarians commenting on questions of grammar); *juridical* commentaries, specially in Rome, between Augustus and Diocletian; or *philosophical* ones. Philosophical commentaries started in the ancient Stoa, with Cleanthes and his four volumes of *Interpretations of Heraclitus* (ca. 264 B.C.E.), and

with Zeno (362–264), writing on *Explanation of the Sayings of Empedocles*. Platonic commentaries started in the third century with Crantor, who wrote on Timaeus (cf. *Timaios*). They continued with Posidonius (135–51 B.C.E.) and Plutarch (1st c. C.E.), Numenius and Albinus, in the so-called Middle-Platonism; finally, with Porphyry (233–304 C.E.), Iamblichus (d. ca. 306 C.E.: the consistent unity of a work is its focus, ὁ σκοπός) and Proclus (412–485 C.E.) in Neo-Platonism. Aristotelism had its own tradition of commentators, from the first century B.C.E. on: Andronicus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ammonius Simplicius, Macrobius, Calcidius, Marius Victorinus (who became a Christian), and Boethius.

In juridical matters, official interpreters of questions related to the cult were known from the fourth century B.C.E. on. Specific interpretations of Solon circulated. Casuistics had its Chaldaean charlatans. In Rome functioned the *Collegium* of the *pontifices*, the official interpreters in religious matters, from whom derive the *Libri pontificum*. Add the *Auguri*, or interpreters of natural science; the interpreters of the Sibyll's Oracles, and astrologists. The science of civil law was indispensable for orators, as Cicero insisted on. Under Justinian, *Digests* were elaborated: collections of jurisprudence.

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IV
THE CONTRIBUTION OF RHETORICS
TO CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS.

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Christoph Schäublin

Surprisingly, the Christians of the early centuries rested largely content with the pagan system of education which they found already in existence, and never really attempted to challenge it or replace it with one of their own that was in some measure “confessionally” based.⁸ How little they could imagine that the current methods of instruction in the imperial period required any fundamental renovation is shown by their angry reaction to the Emperor Julian’s attempt, in his notorious edict concerning grammarians and rhetoricians, to exclude them more or less openly from it—we need only recall Gregory of Nazianzus’s *Oratio* 4 (4–6, 100–109).⁹ The pagan curriculum which was apparently so irreplaceable, however, reached its culmination in the rhetorical schooling of the young man. He was to acquire under the rhetor (the teacher of rhetoric) a wide and solid knowledge of the great (prose) literature of the past—poetic composition was handled, on a lower level, by the grammaticus (in modern terminology; the philologist)—and especially to gain the faculty of being able himself to write or speak on any given subject in an appropriate form, i.e. effectively and with elegance.

From the point of view of the earliest theorists (since the end of the fifth century B.C.E.) rhetoric was of course in the first place something altogether functional and answering to a purpose.¹⁰ Thanks to its rules, it was thought, the speaker is put in a position to set out his case successfully and defend

8. Cf. H. I. Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité* (6th ed.; Paris, 1965) 456ff.; E. Pack, “Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte des Fehlens einer ‘christlichen’ Schule in der römischen Kaiserzeit,” in: *Religion und Gesellschaft in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Kolloquium zu Ehren von F. Vittinghoff*, ed. W. Eck (Cologne/Vienna, 1989), 185–263.

9. Cf. L'Empereur Julien, *Oeuvres complètes I 2: Lettres et fragments*, texte revu et traduit par J. Bidez (Paris, 1960) 72ff. (No. 61); also A. Kurmann, *Gregor von Nazianz: Oratio 4 Gegen Julian. Ein Kommentar* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 19; Basel, 1988) 48ff.; Pack, op. cit. 253ff.

10. On the beginnings of rhetoric cf. T. Cole, *The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); U. Schindel, “Ursprung und Grundlegung der Rhetorik in der Antike,” in: *Die Macht des Wortes. Aspekte gegenwärtiger*

it on any occasion that may present itself, that is, to speak “convincingly,” be it before a court, before a (political) assembly of the people, or before some other gathering, especially of a festal nature. The “classical” three-part division of rhetoric, first developed by Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1.3), relates to these diverse occasions: there is a “forensic” eloquence (γένος δικανικόν = *genus iudiciale*), a “political” (γένος συμβουλευτικόν = *genus deliberativum*), and an “epideictic” γένος ἐπιδεικτικόν = *genus demonstrativum*). Two things in particular are probably characteristic for the way which rhetoric was then to travel in Hellenism and in the early imperial period. On the one hand, it developed into a comprehensive system, increasingly refined and with many ramifications; on the other, in rivalry with philosophy, it more and more emphatically raised the claim that it ultimately communicated the insights, the knowledge, and the ways of thinking that characterized the truly educated man, well qualified to meet the claims of everyday life.¹¹ In this it was successful: in the conflict over the education of the young, the Attic orator Isocrates with his program of a φιλοσοφία based on rhetorical principles, which made people capable of right speech and action, long carried off the victory and overcame his opponent and contemporary Plato;¹² the general school was apparently not the appropriate place for the latter’s vision of a scientifically led effort towards absolute truth.

What one has ultimately to think of under the mature rhetoric, in its best formulation, is impressively set before us in Latin in Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* (12 books, end of 1st cent. A.D.). Despite similar circumstances, there is nothing of equal weight in the Greek East to match this master work by the first professor of rhetoric in Rome to be salaried by the state. It is in

Rhetorikforschung, ed. C. J. Classen and H.-J. Müllenbrock (*Ars Rhetorica* 4; Marburg, 1992) 9–27. G. Kennedy has set out the history of rhetoric in various books: *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, 1963); *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton, 1972); *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (London, 1980); *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton, 1983).

11. For this H. von Arnim, *Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa* (Berlin, 1898) 4ff. (“Sophistik, Rhetorik, Philosophie in ihrem Kampf um die Jugend-bildung”) is still fundamental. Cf. also B. Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford, 1988) 83ff. (“Plato’s Attack on Rhetoric”) and 148ff. (“Territorial Disputes: Philosophy versus Rhetoric”).

12. On the role of Isocrates cf. T. Gelzer, “Klassizismus, Attizismus und Asianismus,” in *Le classicisme à Rome aux 1^{ers} siècles avant et après J.-C.* (Entretiens sur l’antiquité classique 25; Geneva, 1979) 1ff., esp. 19ff.

the first place an invaluable witness for the rhetorical—and in general literary—classicism which took its orientation from Cicero. But there is more to be added: Quintilian does communicate in a frankly perfect manner the technical system which formed the “art of persuasion,”¹³ but he goes far beyond this in that he understands rhetoric as a power which determines the intellectual development of a man almost from the cradle to the grave. The *Institutio* reached the pinnacle of its influence in the early modern period (Luther’s avowal may stand for many others);¹⁴ nevertheless it was already read and used by experts in late antiquity—and not least in the Christian camp.¹⁵ For the Christians it was altogether important, from several aspects, to be rhetorically trained. In quite general terms, an education in harmony with the spirit of the times—and therefore rhetorical—expedited the overcoming of their low social status, which was in the long term necessary; further, it placed in their hands the means by which they could in the widest sense become “capable of communication,” and so were able both to defend their doctrine and to present it powerfully to outsiders (apologies) and also within the church to elucidate and establish it (homilies); and finally what they learned from (the grammarian and) the rhetor also opened up for them a sure methodical approach to their Holy Scriptures.

In fact, the insights and rules of rhetoric could be put to service in two directions: for one thing—and this was beyond question the “original” sense—they led anyone who wished or had to express himself somehow in speech, in whatever circumstances, to reach his public in the best possible

13. H. Lausberg (*Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*; 2 vols. [Munich, 2nd ed., 1973]) has reconstructed the “system” and at the same time projected it on to a timeless level. This indispensable work is of especial interest from a hermeneutical point of view because it is written from the outset for the benefit of the literary interpreter and not from the standpoint of the teacher of rhetoric. R. Volkmann, *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer in systematischer Übersicht* (Leipzig, 2nd ed. 1885; repr. Hildesheim, 1963), is still important because of its combination of a systematic arrangement and a historical method of treatment.

14. *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Briefwechsel*, vol. 1 (Weimar, 1930; repr. Graz, 1969) No. 222 (pp. 562f.): *Quintilianus vero unus sit, qui optimos reddat adulescentes, immo viros. . . . Ego prorsus Quintilianum fere omnibus auctoribus praefero. Qui simul & instituit, simul quoque eloquentiam ministrat, id est verbo & re docet quam fidelissime.*

15. Cf. only J. Cousin, *Recherches sur Quintilien: Manuscrits et éditions* (Paris, 1975) 1f., where reference is made to further literature. For Jerome in particular cf. H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics* (Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia 3; Göteborg, 1958) passim.

manner. On the other side it is naturally the case that the more profoundly a public is for its part familiar with the means and methods employed, the more clearly it will see what a speaker is aiming at, and the more thoughtfully (and critically) it will be able to appreciate his “art”. That means: the principles of rhetoric do not only serve the one who speaks, and do not only promote a judicious *production* in terms of language; rather, at least in a second phase, they are also in principle at the disposal of the one who listens, and assist him to a more conscious *reception*, or at any rate to an appropriation which also brings into consideration the mode of composition and the specific means by which the “communication” operates.

Admittedly, a speaker who for the moment is seeking to win a crowd of people for his point of view, or before a court to prove the innocence of his client, will frankly build upon the fact that the majority of his hearers will follow him blindly, and hope that they will not notice all that he inserts in order to influence them; he attains his goal when his “art” is quite directly effective, i.e. without being perceived as such. On the other hand, “rhetorical analyses” presuppose a certain distance, they require a longer and repeated preoccupation with the work in question, and for this its committal to writing is fundamentally necessary. When for example the above-mentioned Isocrates—according to his own account—from time to time revised, improved, even “interpreted” his speeches together with his pupils, this work can only have been done on the basis of a text lying before them, as emerges quite clearly from the two scenes in the final part of the *Panathenaios*.¹⁶ In these the discussion relates above all to the content and purpose of what had been heard (or read). This may in a sense be atypical, for as a rule the first and most eager attention of the critical hearer or reader was doubtless given to the style, its methods and possibilities. On the other hand, the conscious concern with language is a mark of literary expression generally, so that with time rhetorical treatments of style were quite logically extended to any kind of prose and even to poetry. This development can be readily seen, for example, from the fact that the most important ancient treatises which concerned themselves with questions of style (“Demetrios,” Περὶ ἑρμηνείας [late hellenistic?] and “Longinos,” Περὶ ὕψους [1st cent. A.D.]¹⁷) in the first place show in fact an expressly descriptive and interpretative element, and further draw their illustrative material from the whole of the literary tradi-

16. Cf. C. Schäublin, “Selbstinterpretation im ‘Panathenaios’ des Isokrates?” *Museum helveticum* 39 (1982): 165–78.

17. Cf. A. Dihle, *Die griechische und lateinische Literatur der Kaiserzeit* (Munich, 1989): 81–83.

tion—not only the rhetorical.¹⁸ So they are in the end to be reckoned as testimonies of literary criticism in the widest sense, and to some extent reflect the “rhetoricizing” which in general marks the literary life of the imperial period, both in relation to production and also to reception. Altogether, the longer rhetoric prevailed the more decisively it regarded itself as the highest court for all questions of literary form.

Philology (in ancient terminology: grammar) as the science which collects and catalogues literary texts, and moreover methodically edits and explains them, originated in hellenistic Alexandria.¹⁹ At least at the beginning, rhetorical points of view evidently played no role for it. As to the question whether in the course of time a certain “rhetoricizing” of grammatical work was stimulated in particular by the “Stoic school” in Pergamum, or whether it was only the general tendency of literary life, just mentioned, which found expression therein, no complete agreement appears to have been reached.²⁰ It is nonetheless a fact that “grammatical” commentaries which were written or arranged and edited in the imperial period (the so-called “Scholia” on Homer and other poets, Servius’ exposition of the whole of Virgil) contain a large number of rhetorical observations and comments. These relate above all to stylistic phenomena, and as a matter of course such a manner of treatment also obtained in public instruction. To this a reference by Augustine in his “Hermeneutics” (*De doctrina christiana*) bears witness: after a brief mention of the rhetorical tools indispensable to the interpreter, he feels entitled to call a halt, since one might learn that sort of thing *from the grammarian*.²¹

18. In these circumstances even the Greek Old Testament—the Septuagint—could find admission into the general rhetorical and literary discussion, precisely in “Longinos” (9.9): ταύτη καὶ ὁ τῶν Ἰουδαίων θεσμοθέτης, οὐχ ὁ τυχῶν ἀνὴρ, ἐπειδὴ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμιν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐχώρησε κατέφηεν, εὐθὺς ἐν τῇ εἰσβολῇ γράψας τῶν νόμων “εἶπεν ὁ θεός,” φησί – τί; “γενέσθω φῶς, καὶ ἐγένετο. γενέσθω γῆ, καὶ ἐγένετο.” On the manifold problems which this passage raises, cf. D. A. Russell, “Longinos,” *On the Sublime* (Oxford, 1964) 92–94.

19. Cf. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968) 87ff.

20. Cf. B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 18; Basel, 1987) 218f.

21. Augustine, *De doct. christ.* 3.39.40: *quos tamen tropos, qui noverunt, agnoscunt in litteris sanctis eorumque scientia ad eas intelligendas aliquantum adiuvantur. sed hic eos ignaris tradere non decet, ne artem grammaticam docere videamur. extra sane ut discantur, admoneo...* Strictly speaking, the grammarian as a rule confines himself to the treatment of figures of diction and *tropoi*, while the teaching of the figures of sense remains reserved to the rhetor; on this see U. Schindel, *Die*

At the root of such a development lay the assumption—whether expressed or not—that the ancient poets and authors in the course of their composition had actually applied the rules of rhetoric. Even if it was not suggested that they already had a developed “system” at their disposal, one could at any rate appeal to the fact that ultimately rhetoric had only codified what operates as it were “naturally” in any linguistic utterance.²² Homer especially, the father of Greek poetry, indeed quite simply the father of Greek wisdom and science, seemed already to have drawn in such sovereign fashion upon the whole range of rhetoric that people thought they could without more ado even see in him its inventor.²³ In consequence the later authors of handbooks on figures and tropes readily drew their examples from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*²⁴ (the Latins correspondingly from the poems of Virgil).²⁵ As for the interpreters, what mattered in the first place was that Homer could properly understood only by one who knew the rules of rhetoric, according to which the poet himself had worked. This way of thinking was

lateinischen Figurenlehren des 5. bis 7. Jahrhunderts und Donats Vergilkommentar (Abh. Ak. der Wissenschaften in Göttingen; Göttingen, 1975), esp. 12f.

22. Thus especially in regard to the different ‘tropes’: Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1404b32ff. (metaphor); Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 8.3.86 (emphasis); 8.6.4 (metaphor); 8.6.21 (synecdoche); 8.6.51 (allegory); 8.6.75 (hyperbole); Augustine, *De doctr. christ.* 3.39.40: *quamvis paene omnes hi tropi, qui liberali dicuntur arte cognosci, etiam in eorum reperiantur loquellis, qui nullos grammaticos audierunt et eo, quo vulgus utitur, sermone contenti sunt. quis enim non dicit “sic floreas”? qui tropus metafora vocatur. quis non dicit ‘piscinam’, etiam quae non habet pisces nec facta est propter pisces et tamen a piscibus nomen accepit? qui tropus catachresis dicitur.* Cf. also Vickers, op. cit., 299ff.

23. This way of thinking comes to the fore especially in the pseudo-plutarchian treatise *De Homero* (on the stylistic methods and forms of style, chs. 15–73); on this see M. Hillgruber, *Die pseudoplutarchische Schrift De Homero. Teil 1: Einleitung und Kommentar zu den Kapiteln 1–73* (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 57; Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1994).

24. Cf. the treatises Περὶ σχημάτων and Περὶ τρόπων contained in L. Spengel’s *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3 (Leipzig, 1856).

25. Schindel, op. cit. (above n. 23), could even show that the authors of the “Latin handbooks on figures” in finding their examples essentially plundered the commentary of Donatus on Virgil (today lost). Schindel’s comment (p. 183) is worth consideration: “Donatus’ diagnoses of the figures serve primarily for precise understanding of the text, they are not misused as interpretative artifices, such as may easily be found among Christian exegetes.” Cf. also Schindel, “Ein unedierter lateinischer Figurentraktat—karolingische Neuschöpfung oder antike Theorie?” *Philologus* 138 (1994): 335–48.

additionally furthered by the fact that, from the early imperial period, the poets for their part very consciously pressed rhetoric in all its aspects more and more into service.

For the Christians' dealings with the Bible several important points result from these general considerations: 1. Anyone who wishes to read a text in a "scientifically" responsible fashion must make himself familiar with the "rules" which the author himself followed. On this presupposition it is immediately understandable that Tyconius, the first author of a Christian "Hermeneutics" in Latin, did not really develop principles of interpretation, but—conversely—asked about the "rules" which had guided the Holy Spirit, as "author," in the composition of the Bible.²⁶ 2. In school the Christians learned to know rhetoric as a theoretical "system of rules"; further, it was there said to them that authors whose works were to enjoy a higher claim (thus including poets!) had always conducted themselves according to these "rules." Because of this these "rules" formed an appropriate set of tools, with the aid of which it would be possible to unlock any given text. 3. If this was correct—and nobody seriously disputed it—it was inconceivable that for the Bible and its authors any other presuppositions could ever have been valid. For the "rules" of rhetoric affected in the first place not the substance of what was said but the strategies of argumentation and especially the ways and means of communication in speech: i.e., they describe conditions to which ultimately every "author"—consciously or unconsciously—is subject, and possibilities, the use of which is denied to no one.²⁷ 4. This manner of treatment was indeed to begin with, on various grounds, not entirely without its

26. Cf. P. Bright, *The Book of Rules of Tyconius: Its Purpose and Inner Logic* (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 2; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988); C. Kannengiesser and P. Bright, *A Conflict of Christian Hermeneutics in Roman Africa: Tyconius and Augustine* (Center for Hermeneutical Studies: Protocol of the Fifty-Eighth Colloquy; Berkeley, 1980).

27. Cf. Augustine, *De doctr. christ.* 3.39.40: *sciunt autem litterati modis omnibus locutionis, quos grammatici graeco nomine tropos vocant, auctores nostros usos fuisse, et multiplicius atque copiosius, quam possunt existimare vel credere, qui nesciunt eos et in aliis ista didicerunt.* 4.6.10: *possem quidem, si vacaret, omnes virtutes et ornamenta eloquentiae, de quibus inflantur isti, qui linguam suam nostrorum auctorum linguae non magnitudine sed tumore praepouunt, ostendere in istorum litteris sacris, quos nobis erudiendis et ab hoc saeculo pravo in beatum saeculum transferendis providentia divina providit.* Theodore of Mopsuestia finds impressive turns of phrase in the Psalms, and comments as follows on his findings (*In Ps.* 73.12a, p. 495 Devreesse): εἰ γὰρ καὶ μὴ ἔχρηζεν τούτων ὁ θεός, ἀλλὰ τῷ προλέγοντι προφήτῃ ἀναγκαῖον ἦν ἐκ πάντων κοσμεῖν τὸν λόγον.

problems (was the Bible not really due to the Holy Spirit?); yet the Christians basically held firmly to it, even when they proclaimed (or conceded) that the biblical books ought not to be (or could not be) measured by the formal requirements which had been set in the realm of pagan literature. A rhetorical approach was all the less called in question where it was believed that even in a formal respect the Bible had nothing to be ashamed of: Augustine's analyses of biblical texts in the fourth book of *De doctrina christiana* testify to this;²⁸ and in the handbooks—at the latest from the early Middle Ages—examples from the Bible are brought in to supplement those from the poems of Homer and Virgil.²⁹

As a matter of course, not all areas of rhetoric were of equal importance for the Christians. Thus the theorists distinguished in the widest sense between the *res*, i.e. the subject that was to be spoken about, and the *verba*, i.e. its communication in speech.³⁰ So far as the *res* was concerned, the Christians believed that they knew in essentials how the divine message ran: they did not need to carry out all over again the “research” which the Holy Spirit had undertaken in his time. One probably cannot express more concisely and compactly than Augustine what it all amounted to: an interpreter is always on the right track when—whatever the text—he comes upon the double love commandment (love to God and to one's neighbor, Matt 22:37–40) as the summa of the whole, even if in the process he may fail to grasp the exact intention of the biblical author in question.³¹

28. Augustine, *De doctr. christ.* 4.7.11–21.

29. The Venerable Bede even works exclusively with biblical illustrations in his *Liber de schematibus et tropis*; cf. *Rhetores Latini Minores*, ed. C. Halm (Leipzig, 1863) 607–18.

30. Cf. Cicero, *De oratore* 3.19: *nam cum omnis ex re atque verbis constet oratio, neque verba sedem habere possunt, si rem subtraxeris, neque res lumen, si verba semoveris*. Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 3.3.1: *omnis vero sermo, quo quidem voluntas aliqua enuntiatur, habeat necesse est rem et verba*.

31. Augustine, *De doctr. christ.* 1.35.39: *omnium igitur, quae dicta sunt, ex quo de rebus tractamus [Book 1], haec summa est, ut intellegatur legis et omnium divinarum scripturarum plenitudo et finis esse dilectio rei, qua fruendum est [God], et rei, quae nobiscum ea re frui potest [one's neighbor]*. 1.36.40 *quisquis igitur scripturas divinas vel quamlibet earum partem intellexisse sibi videtur ita, ut eo intellectu non aedificet istam geminam caritatem dei et proximi, nondum intellexit. quisquis vero talem inde sententiam duxerit, ut huic aedificandae caritati sit utilis, nec tamen hoc dixerit, quod ille quem legit eo loco sensisse probabitur, non perniciose fallitur nec omnino mentitur*. For all that: he who fails to grasp the sententia of the author must still be called to order (1.36.41 *corrigenus est*).

What was at issue was accordingly above all else the peculiar linguistic envelope in which the divine salvation had come down to the Christians, for all too often they had to admit that the surface wording of the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, by no means seemed to contain the one eternal truth which they thought they must expect in almost every sentence.³² It was thus for them in the first place a question of assuring themselves of the methods which the biblical authors had employed in order to say what their commission commanded them to say in all circumstances. If one knew these methods, then it was possible to let the process of the origin of the “texts” run as it were backwards, until the statement which God had intended for men, unquestionably determined from the beginning and—for whatever reason—so strangely “disguised” by the authors, became once again openly manifest. For all that: although the difficulties of the Holy Scripture, rhetorically considered, are chiefly caused through the *verba*, not through the *res*, Augustine sets precisely this distinction at the base of his hermeneutic, which he develops in the first three books of *De doctrina christiana*, admittedly with an unequal weighting when it comes to their treatment: Book 1 is devoted to the *res* to be found in the Bible (condensed, as already said, into the twofold love commandment); Books 2 and 3, on the other hand, are concerned with the representation in language, i.e. with the *verba*. In that Augustine accords to everything linguistic so to speak a “sign character” (in Books 2 and 3, he says, he will be dealing with the *signa*),³³ he takes up a point of view which

32. Cf. Origen, *De princ.* 4.2.2: αἰτίαι δὲ πᾶσι τοῖς προειρημένοις ψευδοδοξῶν καὶ ἀσβεβειῶν ἢ ἰδιωτικῶν λόγων οὐκ ἄλλη τις εἶναι δοκεῖ ἢ ἡ γραφή κατὰ τὰ πνευματικά μὴ νενοημένα, ἀλλ’ ὡς πρὸς τὸ ψιλὸν γράμμα ἐξελημμένη. Whence does the exegete know what “truth” he has to find, or when a particular interpretation is “false”? Certainly in the last resort from the Bible itself, yet its “right” understanding appears in any case to be given from the outset, so that in the end the “hermeneutical circle” is to some extent elevated into a principle. What is decisive is the disposition of the reader, who must continually keep in view the fact that Holy Scripture derives from divine inspiration (*De princ.* 4.1), and that anything incompatible with this origin cannot be intended from the outset: that the essential statements rather lie hidden behind the wording (the ψιλὸν γράμμα) and that in the finding—the rediscovery—of the intended meaning one has to be guided τοῦ κανόνος τῆς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ διαδοχὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐρανοῦ ἐκκλησίας (*De princ.* 4.2.2).

33. Augustine, *De doct. christ.* 1.2.2: *omnis doctrina vel rerum est vel signorum, sed res per signa discuntur.* 1.40.44: *propterea de rebus continentibus fidem, quantum pro tempore satis esse arbitratus sum, dicere volui, quia in aliis voluminibus sive per alios sive per nos multa iam dicta sunt. modus itaque sit iste libri huius* (Book 1). *cetera de signis, quantum dominus dederit, disseremus* (Books 2 and 3).

rhetorical theory had already thrown up at least in outline.³⁴ And the art of the interpreter, according to his conviction, proves sound especially in view of the question whether a “sign” is to be understood in its direct “proper” sense or whether it is to be given a “transferred” meaning, i.e. whether the manner of speech is “tropical” or “figurative” (correspondingly he concerns himself in Book 2 with the *ignota signa* as *propria* and as *translata*, in Book 3 with the *ambigua signa* as *propria* and as *translata*).³⁵

The origin of a “speech” extends over several stages, and accordingly rhetoric was divided into various “parts” or “areas” (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, pronuntiatio, actio*).³⁶ Hermeneutically important are naturally only *inventio*, to a smaller extent *dispositio*, and then in particular *elocutio*. *Inventio* admittedly occupies a certain unique position, in that the Christians—as already said—soon believed that they knew what *res* the Holy Spirit had “discovered” for them, so that they were really relieved of the labor of tracing the way back and themselves once again seeking and “finding” what had long been “found.” Their proper task—almost the goal of their hermeneutics as a whole—was rather to read the individual books, clause by clause, in such a way that the result was an agreement between the often somewhat recalcitrant wording (the *verba*) and the truth necessary to salvation that was undoubtedly contained therein (the *res*). For this it might on occasion prove to be useful if one paid careful attention to the “order” which prevailed in a text: if one reconstructed the *dispositio* which the author of set purpose had laid beneath his statements. This was especially helpful when the information given followed a temporal or logical sequence which did not seem to correspond to expectations. Thus the commentators on biblical books again and again remark that the text to be expounded shows a faultless order and sequence (τάξις, ἀκολουθία), or should occasion arise that some disturbance or some problem is only apparently present: all joins harmoniously together

34. Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 3.5.1: *omnis autem oratio constat aut ex iis quae significantur aut ex iis quae significant, id est rebus et verbis.*

35. Augustine, *De doct. christ.* 2.10.15: *duabus autem causis non intellegitur, quae scripta sunt: si aut ignotis aut ambiguis signis obteguntur. sunt autem signa vel propria vel translata.* On *De doctrina christiana* cf. Chr. Schäublin, “De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture?” in *De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture* (ed. Arnold and P. Birght; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 47–67.

36. Cf., for example, Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 3.3.1: *omnis autem orandi ratio, ut plurimi maxime auctores tradiderunt, quinque partibus constat: inventione, dispositione, elocutione, memoria, pronuntiatione sive actione (utroque enim modo dicitur).*

as soon as one simply recognises the disposition, which the author chose for good reasons.³⁷

Elocutio finally has to do with the linguistic and stylistic shaping of a text in the narrow and the wider sense. It was for many (educated) Christians at first an offence, because from a formal point of view the biblical books—of the Old Testament as of the New, in Greek as in Latin—apparently could not at all stand comparison with the master works of pagan literature, and therefore continually drew upon themselves the mockery of their opponents.³⁸ On the other hand the stylistic-critical tools which had been developed by rhetoric positively offered themselves for service; in school, as already stated, people had been fruitfully exercised in making use of them in the analysis of literary texts, so that renunciation of these tools was ultimately never brought into consideration—whether the biblical texts were to rank as standing high stylistically or not. And indeed such a procedure was defensible without much ado; for even without having each gone to serve apprenticeship with a rhetor the biblical authors had manifestly allowed many of the “figures” (of word arrangement and of thought) and the “tropes” (metaphorical expressions of various kinds) to flow into their manner of expression and made use of them—and it was exactly the proper classification of these that formed a major part of the teaching of elocutio. Such findings could scarcely be assailed, however one interpreted them. On a lower level it was then a question of recognizing as possibilities of biblical “style” certain mechanisms, which were almost given with the language itself, making use of this insight for interpretative purposes—and perhaps even calling the phenomena thus demonstrated by their correct names.

So far as the “figures of diction” are concerned, it might come about that a sentence had a thoroughly objectionable effect, and even seemed contrary to sense, when one observed strictly the apparently normal syntactical relationships. A remedy was provided in such cases by the explanation that the biblical author—for metrical or other reasons—had cleverly altered the expected sequence of the words, i.e., he had introduced an “inversion” (a “hyperbaton”)³⁹ or a double or even manifold coordination of a single

37. Cf. Neuschäfer, *op. cit.* (above, n. 20) 239f.; Chr. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der Antiochenischen Exegese* (Theophaneia 23; Cologne/Bonn, 1974), 143ff.

38. Cf. for example H. Fuchs, “Bildung,” *RAC* (1954) 2:351ff.; G. Q. A. Meershoek, *Le latin biblique d'après Saint Jérôme* (Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva 20; Utrecht, 1966).

39. Cf. Neuschäfer, *op. cit.*, 230–32; Schäublin, *op. cit.*, 136–38.

part of a sentence (a “zeugma”).⁴⁰ On the other hand a given context not infrequently suggested the occurrence of a “trope,” for instance that a part might actually describe a whole (a single tribe standing for the whole people of Israel); in view of this, why should one not reckon with a “synecdoche” (specifically: with a *pars pro toto*), and why should one not make use of the knowledge thus gained in the explanation of other passages?⁴¹ Generally it could be pleaded that the “tropus” in question was quite naturally familiar to the biblical authors, or that it was to be interpreted as a peculiarity of the Hebrew language. In similar fashion, means were also found for elegantly setting aside those irksome anthropomorphic features which sometimes adhered to the Old Testament portrayal of God. The interpreter, for example, explained the “eye of God” as “God’s surveillance” (ἐποπτικόν), but also as “what comes about thanks to his providence” (τὸ ἐπὶ... προνοίᾳ... γινόμενον), his “hand” as “effective power” (ἐνέργεια), his “right hand” as “aid or help” (βοήθεια), i.e., he reckoned with “qualitative shifts” (the “instrument” stands for the “product” or for the “power” which lies within itself), and from this discovery read off, in a manner of speaking, the “rule” that in the Bible generally “metonymies” could appear, and also some of another kind.⁴² All this proved to be beyond reproach and beneficial and was probably soon generally recognized, right across the exegetical field. It should not however be concealed that, in consequence of this helpful assumption that the biblical books were shot through with rhetorical figures and tropes, sometimes a certain artificiality, and indeed arbitrariness, threatened to spread abroad in Christian exegesis.⁴³

The point on which opinions were divided, as is well known, was now the really cardinal question, to what extent the Bible had been composed in a “tropical” and/or “figurative” manner—hence in such a way that the interpreter according to circumstances had to put into reverse a certain “transposition” in order to lay bare what was actually alone (or at least in essence) intended. Basically indeed no one who had attentively read the Psalms for example could have any doubt of the abundant presence of “metaphors” and “similes,”⁴⁴ or in general of “tropes” of various kinds (for this very reason

40. Cf. Neuschäfer, *op. cit.*, 232; Schäublin, *op. cit.*, 133–35.

41. Cf. Neuschäfer, *op. cit.*, 224f.; Schäublin, *op. cit.*, 111f.

42. Cf. Neuschäfer, *op. cit.*, 225; Schäublin, *op. cit.*, 113f.

43. Cf. Schindel’s remark, quoted above, n. 27.

44. Rhetorical theory explained “metaphor” as an abbreviated comparison (without the comparative word “as”): Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 8.6.8f.: *in totum autem metaphora*

alone the Psalms proved to be as it were a “hermeneutical touchstone,” especially from a “rhetorical” point of view!). The only question was: when exactly is the interpreter obliged to look aside from the “proper” meaning of a text, which confronts him directly in his reading, and assume a *translatio* for its right understanding? Has he at his disposal in this respect criteria which can be considered more or less secure? That a great problem lay precisely here can be seen from Augustine’s detailed treatment of the *signa translata*, and especially of the *ambigua translata* in Book 3 of *De doctrina christiana*.⁴⁵

However, anyone who once began to raise such questions was unexpectedly confronted with a whole range of further difficulties. These have to do in the first place with the quantitative determination of the “transpositions”: can a metaphor as it were shine out from its own narrow setting upon its surroundings and influence them, in such a way that a comprehensive “allegory” results (the rhetors defined “allegory” as “continued metaphor”)?⁴⁶ Is it even necessary to read whole books—such as the Song of Songs—as allegories through and through? Moreover there was need for clarification as to whether under some circumstances a particular passage—now considered “vertically”—might or should be read both in its “proper” and in its “transferred” meaning at the same time, or whether the two ways of handling it were mutually exclusive.⁴⁷ In the case of a double significance people wanted to know how the material “pictorial level” (the level of the foreground “literal sense”) related to the spiritual “essential level” (the level of the hidden divine truth). Indeed, how many levels of understanding does a text in the end show? Thus Origen—at least in theory—set on top of the “corporeal” not only a “psychic” but also a “pneumatic” sense.⁴⁸ Even the Antiochenes, who rejected allegorical interpretation altogether and recognized only typology, were not spared some problems: how must the representation of an

brevior est similitudo eoque distat, quod illa comparatur rei, quam volumus exprimere, haec pro ipsa re dicitur. Cf. Schäublin, op. cit. 115ff.

45. Cf., e.g., Augustine, *De doct. christ.* 3.5.9: *sed verborum translatorum ambiguitates, de quibus deinceps loquendum est, non mediocrem curam industriamque desiderant. nam in principio cavendum est, ne figuratam locutionem ad litteram accipias.* 3.10.14: *huic autem observationi, qua cavemus figuratam locutionem, id est translata, quasi propriam sequi, adiungenda etiam illa est, ne propriam quasi figuratam velimus accipere* 3.24.34: *maxime itaque investigandum est, utrum propria sit an figurata locutio, quam intellegere conamur.*

46. Cf. Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 9.2.46: ἀλληγορίαν *facit continua* μεταφορά.

47. For Origen (*De princ.* 4.2.5) εἰσὶ τινες γραφαὶ τὸ σωματικὸν οὐδαμῶς ἔχουσαι.

48. Origen, *De princ.* 4.2.4.

Old Testament type be effected, in order that the specific wording may also be applied to its New Testament fulfillment? For this Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia—characteristically—find a rhetorical solution. They say that the formulations in question were always so chosen that in relation to the Old Testament event they sounded “hyperbolic” (thus surpassing the reality), whereas in relation to what happened in the New Testament they corresponded perfectly with the reality.⁴⁹

Certainly, such points of view go far beyond the frame set out by rhetoric; in particular the allegorical understanding of the Bible, which was for centuries so influential, or even the doctrine of the manifold senses of Scripture, could not be traced back solely, and perhaps not even in essence, to rhetorical roots. Much that was important and pioneering had long been prepared through pagan (philosophical) interpretation and introduced into the exegesis of the Old Testament at the latest by Philo of Alexandria.⁵⁰ Yet it must be beyond dispute that a rhetorically oriented thinking was particularly responsive to such methods of treatment; for amid all the profundity at which it aimed it was still always in the first place a matter of perceiving how a text had been prepared, which was basically a rhetorical concern, and then making a methodical use of this insight. To put it in another way: when the Christians encountered the term “allegory” in Paul⁵¹—which served as an impulse to and confirmation of their own dealings with Holy Scripture—they could not in the first place understand it otherwise than as the rhetor (or perhaps already the grammarian) had taught them in the school.

Undoubtedly the “rules” of rhetoric, if one employs them “backwards,” also serve as “rules” for exegesis. However, the orators themselves were often faced with the necessity of interpreting a “text”—a law or a testament—and for this case also a whole system of “rules” had been prepared. These are brought together in the manuals under the heading of the so-called *status legales* (νομικαὶ στάσεις)⁵² and allow us to recognize a considerable amount of interpretative skill, and what is more, of methodical reflection. They positively invited transference to other kinds of text, and hence it must have been

49. Cf. Schäublin, op. cit., 166–70.

50. On pagan allegorizing cf. W. Bernard, *Spätantike Dichtungstheorien. Untersuchungen zu Proklos, Herakleitos und Plutarch* (Stuttgart, 1990). Bernard distinguishes between a “stoic-substitutive” and a “Platonic-diaeretic” allegory, and seems to be inclined to attach at least the allegorizing of Origen to the “diaeretic” (65 n. 140).

51. Gal. 4.24: ἄτινά ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα. Actually Paul’s interpretation of the “two sons of Abraham” here proves to be typology.

52. Cf. Lausberg, op. cit. (above, n. 15), 109–23 (§§ 198–223).

ultimately from the rhetorical schoolroom that there came the fundamental insight—highly important for all the future—that a difficult passage must be explained from its immediate context and/or from the totality of the work in question—in concrete terms: the Bible solely from the Bible itself (just as Homer from Homer).⁵³ From the rhetors one might further learn, for example, that according to circumstances a legal order might be specifically formulated, but intended generally, or generally formulated but to be applied specifically. Significantly Tyconius with reference to his fourth “rule,” the title of which echoes such reflections (*de specie et genere*), expressly distances himself from rhetoric and states that he does not wish to say anything thereon “according to the rhetoric of human wisdom” (*secundum artem rhetoricam humanae sapientiae*).⁵⁴

Like their contemporaries, the early Christians were deeply imbued with the “spirit of rhetoric.” It may not exactly have winged them to their most original ideas. Yet this at least they owed to it—and it was no small thing: a developed literary sensitivity and a considerable assurance in dealing with “texts” of every kind: both were in their time to be obtained almost solely from rhetoric, and both stood them in good stead in their efforts not to approach the biblical writings in an uncontrolled and arbitrary fashion, but as it were to do justice to them in a methodical manner. That the chosen methods for their part carried the germs of arbitrariness within them—that is another story.

53. Cf. Chr. Schäublin, “Homerum ex Homero,” *Museum Helveticum* 34 (1977) 221–27; Neuschäfer, op. cit., 276ff.

54. Cf. Chr. Schäublin, “Zur paganen Prägung der christlichen Exegese,” in *Christliche Exegese zwischen Nicaea und Chalcedon* (ed. J. van Ort and U. Wickert; Kampen, 1992), 148ff., esp. 166–68.

CHAPTER THREE

PATRISTIC HERMENEUTICS

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I

THE LITERAL MEANING OF SCRIPTURE

“Meaning” (ἡ σημασία—*sensus*) was not elaborated conceptually in ancient rhetorics as it is in modern semantics but was discussed strictly in its textual application. In describing five different functions of *sensus*, Quintilian, *Inst.*, is already testifying to very old school traditions:

- 1) it keeps hidden the secret significance disclosed by words, *quae verbis aperte oculos sensus habent* (6.3.48);
- 2) it allows allegories to say one thing but to “mean” another: ἀλληγορία—*aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendit* (9.3.24);
- 3) it occasionally explains “ambiguity” *verba duos sensus significantia* (8.6.44);
- 4) it introduces logical divisions: *sensus omnis habet suum finem, poscitque naturale intervallum, quo a sequentis initio dividatur*, “each sense has its own limit; it calls for a normal interval by which it separates from the beginning from the next one” (7.10.16);
- 5) last, but not least, it knits propositions of a given text into an organic structure which unifies them into a “body”: *qui (sensus) non modo ut sint ordine collacati, elaborandum est, sed ut inter se iuncti atqui ita cohaentes, ne commissura pelluceat corpus sit, non membra* (11.2.20).

Already in the third century Victorinus of Poetovio (d. ca. 303) emphasized the structuring effect of the *sensus* as essential for explaining Revelation: *interpretatio sequentium dictorum in eo constabit, ut non ordo lectionis sed rationis intellegatur*, “interpreting the sequence of words means understanding the order of their logic more than the order of the words read” (*In Apoc* 11,5; M. Dulaey, SC 423, 99).

Origen himself had introduced his synthesis *On First Principles* with the aim of producing a true *corpus*, “body” of Christian teaching, that is, a coherent and condensed exposition of Christian truth: *et unum ut diximus corpus efficiat exemplis et affirmationibus*, (*PA*, Preface 10). Thus, when Origen urges his readers to follow the injunction of Jn 5:39 “Study the Scriptures diligently,” ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς, at the core of his plea for the “spiritual sense” (*PA* IV 3.5), his primary concern is to teach where such a sense is required. It is significant that the very first case he cites is when “the logical sequence of the sentence is unthinkable on the literal level”—ἀδύνατος μὲν ὁ ὡς πρὸς τὸ ῥητὸν εἶμός. The Stoic notion of being “bound together,” that is, linked sequentially, already employed by Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria for interpretive purposes, allows Origen to emphasize the normal function

of the literal sense, that is, that the text as it is written present an obvious coherency at first sight.

I. THE SACRED TEXT IN FOCUS

1. The Biblical "Letter"

As God's message to humankind, the Bible made sense by its very *words*. Hence for its ancient readers the literal meaning, integral to the very letter of its stories and utterances, demanded a full and careful treatment. At first sight, the task seemed an easy one, for God had spoken in order to be understood, and his human instruments, the authors of biblical texts had faithfully put the divine message into written form. Hence narratives of Genesis, the genealogies of patriarchs, the utterances of prophets, psalms and wisdom sayings, all were communicated in a clear way. In most cases, the literal meaning of biblical statements, or the ῥητόν—*littera*, as ancient interpreters called it, was obvious. One of these, a contemporary of Ambrose of Milan, observed in passing: "This can be understood from the words as read, for the story is not concealed by literary artifice" *Ex verbis hoc ipsius lectionis potest colligi, quia non est litterarum arte velata historia* (Ambrosiaster, *Quaestiones* 5, 1).

For the ancient interpreters, the transparency of the sacred text was as much part of the *divine* nature of Scripture, as was its more obscure revelation. With that in mind they paid very special attention to the biblical *littera*. In their intense scrutinizing of the literal texture of sacred Scripture they did not need secular models, not even the well known commentaries on ancient poets like Homer. For the Christian interpreter, a first principle of the literal meaning of the Bible, underscored again and again in patristic exegesis is that *the biblical "letter" as understood by patristic interpreters had its own status, originating from a divine source in a supernatural way; therefore it admitted no neutral reading devoid of the appropriate kind of religious faith*. For the exegetes of the early church the correct interpretation of the *littera* was in itself a *spiritual* exercise, because for them the materiality of the written text itself was filled with divine mysteries.

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2. The Foreign "Letter"

In the Bible the written message from God was born of an ancient tradition and for that very reason the literal content of the Bible needed explanation for later generations. Though patristic commentators were not motivated by our modern awareness of history and culture, their rhetorical training kept their attention turned to the grammatical and stylistic features of the *littera* they so carefully scrutinized. The oldest Latin theory of biblical interpretation by the African exegete, Tyconius in the *Book of Rules* illustrates that attitude very well. For ancient critics the biblical text was mediatory of God's message through the intricacies of a specific language that called for the skills of a translator. Communicated in the Greek of the LXX, biblical passages reflected a whole world of thought and discourse that was alien to the late Hellenistic culture of the patristic interpreters themselves. In most cases biblical names of people or of locations were simply transliterated from the original Hebrew, while the grammatical constructions in the LXX very often reduplicated the Hebraic syntax. The biblical syntax had its own way of repeating given statements for reinforcement. For the patristic readers sometimes the Bible used verbal forms in a way which seemed to confuse past and future tenses. From one proposition to another logical links seemed to be missing; juxtaposed sentences begged for more explicit correlation. In his *Homilies on Exodus* (On Ex 12:37), Origen of Alexandria notes that Paul was afraid that the Books of the Law would seem "foreign" to Christians and that these readers would not know "the principles of interpretation": "for this reason he himself gives us some examples of interpretation that we might

observe similar things in other passages” (cited by R. L. Wilken, “*In Dominico Eloquio Learning the Lord’s Style of Language*”: *Communio* 24 (1997) 852); Wilken adds such “other passages” noted by Origen himself, *Hom. in Ex.* 5, 1, and by Gregory of Nyssa *Hom. on the Song of Songs*. In short, for patristic exegesis the *littera* called for a constant attention because the divine message was delivered through cultural differences which made it look like an alien discourse, a foreign product in need of being inculturated.

3. The Missing or Obscure “Letter”

In some rare cases the divinely inspired *littera* could deceive even well trained readers. They declared the “letter” unable to make any sense, and called the lack of an acceptable interpretation a “missing” *littera*. For Origen such cases, rare as they may be, are a direct invitation to search for an allegorical comment: How would you literally apply Ex 21:24, “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, when a new born (without teeth!) is murdered? or how could you take Jesus by his word: “Don’t greet anybody on your way” (Lk 10:4)? Would it be possible to avoid a gross anthropomorphism in holding to the “letter” of Gn 3:8: “God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze”? (De Lubac, 1950, “Le sens littéral” 92–138). Many generations after Origen, John Chrysostom would express the common understanding about such cases: “We interpret some passages by the letter, others with a meaning different from the literal, others again as literal and figurative” (*In Ps* 9, 4).

Though commonly presenting an obvious sense, often the *littera* was perceived as “obscure,” or as hiding something under the apparent surface of its content. Sometimes the obscurity was due to grammatical forms or rhetorical twists which a more experienced interpreter would clarify at once. As Augustine observed it was often the lack of the appropriate knowledge of a given language which made it impossible to understand what was written in that language. Another cause of obscurity noted by patristic commentators was due to the fact that some words could be used with different meanings. Only the vigilance of the reader avoided misunderstandings in such cases: “As far as words make sense in various ways, questions are raised... Take note therefore that one and the same phrase may not always keep the same meaning” *Per id quod multimodam rationem habent verba, faciunt quaestiones... vides ergo quia unus atque idem sermo non eadem semper significat* (Ambrosiaster, *Quaestio* 9, 1). “For rather frequently Scripture expressed in short some things which it wants to keep implicit for a given reason” *Nam aliqua compendio loquitur scriptura, quae subintelligi vult ex proposita ratione*

(*ibid.*, 16, 2). Elsewhere the same author repeats the same observation: “For Scripture deliberately keeps many things implicit, to avoid that the meaning gained from the words does not oppose sound piety” (26, 1).

The most challenging form of “obscurity” results from the supernatural status of the biblical *littera*. The preamble of Tyconius’s *Liber Regularum* says it all: “For there are certain mystic rules which obtain in the inner recesses of the entire Law and keep the rich treasures of the truth hidden from some people” (trans. W. S. Babcock, 3).

Bullinger, E. U., *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated* (1898):

Grand Rapids reprint 1968 (1104 pages!).

Cotter, A. C. “The Obscurity of Scripture”: *CBQ* 9 (1947): 453–64.

4. The Reinvented “Letter”

Though the biblical text was “obvious” to the patristic interpreters from a faith perspective, because of the cultural peculiarities of the Scriptures, the biblical statements engaged these interpreters into rewriting Scripture in paraphrases of their own invention, with words and grammatical constructions familiar in Common Greek, the *koinè* of their time. In doing so, interpreters not only explained words or names but often they thereby commented on the story behind the story narrated in the biblical passages. Here and there they made suggestions about the psychological and the circumstantial motivation of biblical personages, or again they noted reminders on similar characters and comparable circumstance elsewhere in the Bible.

In actuality, by their candid and rhetorical way of perceiving the proper meaning of the *littera*, patristic interpreters “re-invented” the letter. In the very process of interpreting “literally” they actually re-articulated the literal contents with the logic and the tone of their own cultural voice. In the end, by rewriting of those narratives in the process of their interpretations, they imprinted on biblical narratives what they called the *historia* of their own mental re-enactment. In short, ancient commentators, Jews and Christian alike, could only perceive the stories of the patriarchs in Genesis as an exemplary *historia* illustrating values and goals of a virtuous life as they propounded it. In other words, for patristic interpreters, the very *littera* of the sacred text carried a potential *historia* which allowed them to actualize the content of Scripture in line with their own interpretive interests. Thomas Aquinas summarizes patristic teaching in speaking of the *sensus historicus, vel litteralis* (*Summa Theologica* I i.x.c.). As R. Williams (1991) observes perceptively: “Christian interpretation is unavoidably engaged in ‘dramatic’

modes of reading: We are invited to identify ourselves in the story being contemplated to re appropriate who we are now, and who we shall or can be in terms of the story. *Its* movements, transactions, transformations, become *ours*; we take responsibility for this or that position within the narrative” (125).

5. The Metaphorical “Letter”

The literal sense admits *explicit* meanings which may include *implicit* ones. In the phrase “the Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14), while the explicit statement equals: “The Son of God became man,” “flesh” implicitly includes a human soul. In addition, the literal sense can carry an implied distinction between the *proper* literal meaning and the *metaphorical* (or *improper*) literal meaning. It is *proper* when the biblical statement says at once all that it means (“Lord, hear my prayer,” Ps 143:1), while it is *metaphorical* (*improper*) when the statement calls on the reader’s imagination in order to supplement what is said (“Blessed is the Lord, my rock,” Ps 144:1). “Indeed the definition of ‘metaphor’ is: ‘Application of a name or descriptive term to an object to which it is not literally applicable’. But in interpreting Scripture, we use these terms in a somewhat different way. We apply the term ‘literal’ to the sense of Scripture intended by the sacred writer, whether the words are to be taken in the proper or ordinary sense (without metaphor), or metaphorically. Thus ‘literal’ and ‘metaphorical’ of common parlance are both included under the literal sense of scripture” (R. C. Fuller 1953, 54).

A strong sense for the metaphorical *littera* is shown by Diodore of Tarsus, who certainly was not inclined to confuse it with allegorical exegesis. In his commentary on Psalm 1, from verse to verse, he clarifies one metaphor after another:

- 1b, “ὁδόν—‘way’ is the name he (the psalmist) gives to behavior—τὴν πράξιν.”
- 2a, “He uses θέλημα—‘will’, instead of his eagerness, his concern, or his diligence.”
- 3a-c, “As the tree (τὸ ξύλον)...so may be the person (ὁ ἄνθρωπος).”
- 3d, “He shifts from the illustration (ἀπὸ τοῦ παραδείγματος) to the reality (ἐπὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα).”
- 4, “‘Chaff’ means the evanescent”—τὸ ἐξίτηλον καὶ ἀνυπόστατον· χνοῦς γάρ... .
- 6a, ὁδός—‘way’, as in verse 1b serves for τὰς πράξεις—‘the behavior.’
- 6b, ὁδός indicates “the way of life,” τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα. Verse by verse the poetic images are turned into the prosaic, an exegesis that is no longer

metaphorical at all, but, as Diodore terms it, “moralizing—ἠθικός (Diodore, *In Psalmos*, ed. J. M. Olivier, C. C. Gr, 6).

In the Antiochene school, Diodore’s practice resulted in opposing the *theoria* of the metaphorical “letter” to Alexandrian allegorism (Bate, 1923, 62–63; Guillet, 1947). When a prophet expresses his intuition of things present or future, he articulates his ecstatic vision with such strength—ἐνέργεια, that his words become “hyperbolic” and “typical” beyond contemporary circumstances. He expresses “the forms and causes of higher realities” in prophetic utterances without straying from the biblical story (ἱστορία—*historia*), as Julian of Eclanum would define *theoria* in his translation of Diodore: *theoria est autem, ut eruditus placuit*—not only Theodore and his colleagues, but also their rhetorical masters in Antioch—in *brevibus plerumque aut formis aut causis earum rerum quae potiores sunt considerata perceptio* (PL 21, 971B).

Bate, H. N., “Some Technical Terms of Greek Exegesis”: *JThS* 24 (1923): 59–66.

Blumenberg, H., *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie*. Bonn, 1960.

Estrada, B., “La metáfora en la parábola”: Aranda, G., *al.*, eds., *Biblia, exégesis y cultura*. FS J. M. Caseiario, 65–75. Pamplona, 1994.

Guillet, J., “Les exégèses d’Alexandrie et d’Antioche, Conflit ou malentendu?”: *RSR* 34 (1947): 257–302.

Nazzaro, A. V., “Parafrasi biblica,” *DPAC* 2179–82.

Trudinger, F., “Biblical Metaphors and Symbols: Handle With Care!”: *Faith and Freedom* 46 (1993): 45–49.

Watt, J. G. van der, “‘Metaphoric’ in Joh 15:1–8: *BZ* 38 (1994): 67–80.

6. Literary Genres and the “Letter”

The notion of literary genres became popular in modern times, in particular during the second half of the twentieth century. In patristic exegesis the notion plays a modest role.

Alonso Schökel, L., “Literary Genres, Biblical”: *NCE* 8, 803–809. NY, 1968.

Gribomont, J., “I generi litterari nel monachesimo primitivo”: *Koinonia* 10 (Naples, 1986) 7–28.

Munoz Iglesias, S., *Los géneros literarios y la interpretación de la Biblia* Madrid, 1968.

Musurillo, H., “Literary Genres, Pagan and Christian”: *NCE* 8, 809–16. NY, 1967.

7. The Intrinsic Value of the “Letter”

Born out of a divine disposition and canonized in the long process of a tradition which itself was considered a divine “economy,” the biblical *littera*

was for patristic interpreters pregnant of an equally divine message. In their unanimous conviction, God's message could not be better registered than in the very "letter" of the Bible. Even when the most learned among them applied the rules and principles of a philological analysis to the sacred text, their first instinct was to approach the literality of the biblical text as gifted in itself with supernatural power. "The meaning deserves to be explored because divine scripture says nothing that would be useless or out of consideration," *investigandus est sensus, quia non otiose aliquid aut improvide divino loquitur scriptura* (Ambrosiaster, *Quaestiones* 10, 1).

Though there might be divergence from one school of thought to another in their evaluation of the power attached to the *littera* of the Bible, no ancient commentator would ever deny that power either in their presuppositions or in their exegetical conclusions. Thus a constant and universal canon of patristic interpretation is the insistence on the intimate connection between the *littera* and any "spiritual" comments generated by it. While modern critics would separate the literal meaning of the Bible, and its possible interpretation, from "spiritual" viewpoints into two completely different registers of knowledge, patristic interpreters kept both closely together because of the very notion that they had of the *littera* itself. Even more so, it was the *littera* as such that induced them to what modern readers would dismiss as fantastic etymologies or irrelevant allegories. Indeed a misleading *littera*, based on wrong translations, for instance, could only end in false speculations, but paradoxically, in such cases, the hermeneutical mistakes of ancient interpreters confirm their indisputable respect for the literal contents of the sacred text. Hence when dealing with patristic authors, the intrinsic value accorded to the "letter" demonstrates a consistent interpretation of the Bible in its many genres and modes of writings that can never be overestimated.

One only needs to pin-point what the literal statements of Scripture really meant in the common understanding of the ancient church for revealing modern prejudice. The Jewish precedent which served as a model for generations of Christian exegetes, Philo of Alexandria, and his lengthy Commentary on Torah, dating from the first century C.E., seems conclusive. In hundreds of occurrences, Philo clearly distinguished between the literal and the spiritual sense of the verses on which his Commentary focused, but not a single time did he depreciate the *littera*. A closer look would even demonstrate that in his system of interpretation, Philo was as much concerned about the correct sense of the literal contents as he was about their allegorical explanation. Origen took over essential features of Philo's hermeneutic, in particular his unconditional respect for the biblical *littera*, thereby decisively structuring mainstream Christian exegesis for centuries to come.

A historical survey, based on research published during the past fifty

years, amply confirms the fundamental value of literal contents of Scripture in patristic exegesis. Here follow a few significant data, first concerning Philo, then about Christian interpreters.

II. PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE BIBLICAL "LETTER"

The editors and translators of *Les oeuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie*, published under the patronage of Sources Chrétiennes between 1961 and 1993, never tired of stressing the sacred values of Scripture's literal content for the first century C.E. Jewish interpreter. In fact the literal value of Torah was of such importance for Philo that it induced him to rethink the very notion of allegory.

Having noted that allegorism starts in Philo's Commentary *On the Making of the World* only with the creation of Adam and Eve, R. Arnaldez (1961) observes that "the biblical form of the narrative does not vanish in its allegorical transposition.... If it was the achievement of Israelite thought to let a historical vision of the world prevail over the metaphysical ones proper to Greece, Philo, as early as in *De opificio mundi*, remained true to the fundamental intuitions of his people" (122). Arnaldez adds: "The story of Abraham... is a succession of temporal events, its interpretation (by Philo) remains enclosed in temporalities as one is supposed to contemplate in it images of successive states and experiences proper to the human soul." (123). The whole treatise *De opificio mundi* is best understood as "the foundation which casts light on the use of allegory" in the complementary treatise *Legum allegoriae* (125). C. Mondésert (1962) quotes E. Bréhier concerning the letter: "The allegorical method is not for him (Philo) what it was for most of his precursors, an artificial means of retrieving philosophical ideas in venerated classics as in Homer.... What he looks for in Genesis, far from being such or such a truth is the complete description of the soul's reactions in regard to God.... For Philo the allegorical method... is an indispensable tool for analyzing the interior life" (*Études de philosophie antique*, 212. Paris, 1955).

Introducing *De cherubim*, J. Gorez (1963) noted that "Philo's method consists in shifting from grammatical remarks to the quest of what we would call today "spirituality." Thus the preposition *dia* in Gn 4:1 should be understood as *hypo* or *para* in order to avoid presenting God as only an intermediary" (56). He emphasized how Philo ends the treatise in celebrating the *real* cosmos united in universal love (109–112). In *De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini* A. Méasson (1966) found Philo attached to the "inspired" words of LXX by scrutinizing their choice and their place in each sentence. For instance, the

Jewish commentator fills 1–10 with a discussion on προσέθηκε, “he added” (Gn 4:2a), a wrong LXX translation of the Hebrew for which Philo considered God as the subject when it should have been Eve. By verbal association, Philo adds commentaries on Gn 25:8, 49:33, 35:29, because προστίθεται occurs in those passages, the Bible explaining the Bible by such associative mirrors of the letter and the preconceived notion of a divine pedagogy at work in Scripture inciting the commentator to quote certain passages which help to understand others.

Again, concerning *De posteritate Caini* R. Arnaldez (1972) concluded: “In the chain of generations, stretching from the first man to Moses, allegory and history remain inseparable, and the more one progresses, the more the human types under investigation are embodied by people who really lived, so that finally, Moses is without a doubt for Philo a historical character more than an allegorical figure” (15–16). In *De posteritate* Philo’s attention focuses on etymologies of Hebrew names, an exercise for which he explores the Greek *littera* with the sole help of a Greek manual, since he was unable to read the Hebrew, and did not even avoid misreading of the Greek itself. At least his very defections illustrate his high esteem for the literal inspiration of LXX. “For once, like in a literal commentary, Philo follows closely the word for word order of the Bible,” stated A. Mosès (1963), about *De gigantibus—Quod Deus sit immutabilis* (11).

In the symbolic interpretation of Gn 9:20–21, where Noah is introduced as a farmer, Philo observes that most people do not know the nature of things and therefore they inevitably miss giving them their right names, his own symbolic interpretation never losing track of the letter in *De agricultura* (J. Pouilloux, 1991). Pouilloux also described Philo at work in *De plantatione* (1963): “He (Philo) took his first inspiration from Plato, but then, what a change! Under an apparent disarray, in an apparent incoherency (of his exposition), in reality, Philo signifies the incompleteness and imperfection of human existence, the journey needed for humankind in order to walk towards God” (11). A realistic perception of destiny, resting on the literal reading of Scripture continues to inspire Philo throughout his allegoristic commentary. In *De confusione linguarum* J. G. Kahn (1963) stated that “the story told by Philo parallels the biblical narrative... though he completely neglects the concrete chronological and spatial frame of the events on which he relies” (19). In par. 190, Philo “honestly admits that the literal method is true in its own right as he shares the view of ‘those who keep only the apparent meaning, affordable for everyone’ (ἐμφανέσι καὶ προχείρος μόνον).”

M. Harl (1966) claimed that in *Quis rerum divinarum heres sit*, on Gn 15, Philo’s commentary is based on the literal content on Scripture: “The

beginning and end of that dissertation (par. 130–133, 207–225) are explicitly linked with the biblical text” (35). More explicitly E. Starobinski-Safran, introducing *De fuga et inventione* (1970), described Philo’s exegesis as resting on two principles: 1) The sacred text possesses a unity of its own which calls for a constant combination of verses; 2) “Each fragment of the text supports a proper interpretation as each phrase, each word is rich of one or more meanings. The slightest nuance of the text, even its silences, take on a specific meaning. The minute care with which Scripture, or more exactly, the LXX, has been written calls for an equally minute concern for its details on the side of those who read the sacred text” (34). “The literal explanation of the precept concerning the delay of the return of fugitives creates a difficulty (par. 106–108),...but that same prescription engages into the literal interpretation of the *Special Laws* (III, par. 131–133) which are part of the *Exposition of the Law* (48). Finally, “In (Philo’s) biblical exegesis...allegorism usually helps to deepen the understanding of passages whose immediate meaning is perfectly acceptable” (50). When Philo becomes critical of literalists in *De somniis* (P. Savinel, 1966), it is not against the ‘letter’ that he turns but against the fanatics of the letter, or as he describes them, individuals “of small towns with limited horizons” (I, par. 39), “professors with doctoral concern who prefer the literal sense” (par. 102). In analyzing *De Decalogo* Y. Nikiprowetzky (1965) emphasizes “the heuristic function of scripture in Philo’s mind” (18) and concludes: “The Bible remains the driving force of the philosophical invention, and also determines in large measure, the detail of the exposition. For, one could say, that without the Bible Philo’s thought has no more than a virtual existence” (19). Literalism and allegory are intertwined in *De Decalogo* (27–29): Philo “admitted an equal value and even an indispensable role to the legal practice or *halakhah* as supporting ‘philosophy’, and the ‘philosophy’ as the completion of *halakhah*” (21). In *De specialibus legibus* III–IV, A. Mosès (1970) observed: “the total identity of *Nomos* and *Logos*, the perfect unity of the letter and the spirit” in Philo’s view (13). “Philo tries to handle the scriptural text in its integrity always essential for him” (19); here his exegesis reaches even “the extreme and exceptional form of a literalism usually more temperate” (21). In *De virtutibus* one finds no allegorism at all. In *De praemiis et poenis. De exsecrationibus* A. Beckaert (1961) found that “moralism is here rather practical, following quite closely the letter of the Bible mainly in regard to punishments” (12).

Philo’s own distinction between the literal and the spiritual sense of Scripture represents a systematic feature of his *Quaestiones in Genesisim*: “in the literal sense ‘paradise’ needs no explanation,” (in the Latin translation from the Armenian by Aucher) *Paradisus ad litteram nihil opus habet solutio-*

nis expressivae (I, 6); “the literal sense is clear” (I, 25); “thus the letter presents an acceptable statement” (I, 46); “the letter is obvious as proven by what we see” (I, 48)—“of course, one may laugh at the letter, considering how gross it was to fabricate the garments” (I, 48); Again in reference to Gn 6: 7, “here is what the letter means” (I, 94), Philo goes on analyzing the logic of the whole proposition. He does the same in *Quaestiones* II, 9. In II, 18 “the letter is obvious,” the same in II, 20 (*liquet*), 23 (*nota*), 25 (*manifesta*), 40 (*manifesta*), 57 (*talis est*), 60, 65, 70 (*sic se habet*), 71 (*haec sonat*), 72 (*evidens*), 73 (*nimis nota*), 76 (*patet*). In III, 1 *littera manifesta est*; in III, 15, *littera patet*. In III, 22 “(Scripture) wants to express the simple truth of facts. *Haec littera sonat* (in Gn 16:4).” The “letter” is again obvious in III, 25 (*manifesta*); “The letter needs no explanation because it is extremely clear, *littera nihil opus habet expositionis, nimis enim clara est* (Gn 16:8), in III, 28. It is “clear” also in III, 30 (*liqueat*); immediately clear twice in III, 42; “clear” again in III, 45 and dispensing from any comments, *littera adeo clara est, ut nulla opus habeat declaratione sermo*; and “manifest” in III, 50, *satis evidens* in IV, 1; *evidens*, in IV, 9; *patet expressionis* in IV, 11; *manifesta* again in IV, 13; *liquet* in IV, 15; *patet* in IV, 26; *nimis clara* in IV, 26; *manifestius exponit* in IV, 38. In IV, 44 *littera talis est*, followed by Gn 19:16 explained for what it meant for those involved in it and by calling for a general reason of nature, *verbo naturali*. In IV, 62 *littera manifesta patet*; the “letter” is *manifesta ac nota* in V, 75; *facilis captu* in V, 77; *manifesta* in V, 85 and 89.

Occasionally “the letter presents a real difficulty and a thought worth examining,” *Profecto haesitationem dubii, atque consilium consideratione dignum habet littera* (V, 88). Its “meaning is obvious,” *evidens est significatum litterae*, in V, 94; “easy to catch,” *facilis intellectu*, in V, 111; it “engages into,” *innuit*, making a more explicit statement in V, 122; *patet* in V, 126; “what it enunciates is clear,” *quod littera enunciat manifestum est* (V, 129). Its symbolism is clear, *textus evidentis symboli est*, about Gn 24:59, in V, 134. It is again *evidens* in V, 149; “not questionable,” *nullam includit quaestionem* in V, 152. In VI, 154 the literal reason of convenience for Gn 25: 20 is broadly exposed; in VI, 158 the literal sense is also amplified; in VI, 168 the letter is only laughable for “unqualified and uneducated people whose inner vision is blinded or deteriorated, and who also content themselves with simple stories,” *imperiti, ineruditi et indocti oculis animae obcaecati, vel caecutientes, supra litteras tantum insidunt*, “for they listen only to the words as spoken out, but are unable to look inside forgetting a glance at spiritual realities,” *impingentes adhaerentesque solis nominibus et verbis prolatis, intus vero perspicere nequeunt ad intuendo intelligibilia*. In VI, 176 the letter *evidenter demonstrat*; in VI, 177 *manifestum est verbum, nihil obscurum vel occultum continens in*

se (Gn 26; 2); in VI, 179 the literal texture reflects the coherency of divine oracles: *Connexionem ordinemque harmoniae demonstrat inter se invicem apte conciliatas in divinis oraculis*, “it shows that harmonious connection and order are well adapted to each other in the divine oracles”; in VI, 182 “the letter makes clear the proper statement of the law,” *littera patefacit propriam legis sententiam*; In VI, 183 “the letter is as symbolic as it is clear,” *littera tam symbolica, quam manifesta est*; the letter is *manifesta* as well in VI, 190, or *nota* is 197, *evidens insignisque*, “obvious and significant” in 203, with its own “appropriate explanation” *habet littera tam congruam responsionem* in 207; “the letter gives no cause to doubt, being very clear in its symbolism and accuracy” *Dubium nullum praesefert littera, ut valde manifesta per symbolum et congruitatem* in 220. Again the letter is *evidens* in VI, 225; with an “obvious meaning,” *manifestae significationis*, in VI, 239; *patens*, “obvious,” in 240; *facilis intellectu*, “easy to understand” in 243.

Philo’s unconditional submission to the written text of Scripture as read in the LXX was essential and unshakable as his dedication to the Law. He never expresses the slightest remark devaluing the letter of the sacred writings. Before any commentary of a speculative nature, he always starts by recognizing the value of the literal content that is relevant to his interpretation. When he becomes polemical about the letter, as is *De somnis* I, 39, or in *Quaestiones in Genesim* VI, 168, we noted that his protest addresses certain “literalists” not the letter itself; he fights against their narrow mindedness in defense of the letter whose proper qualities he extols endlessly. For the “letter” as such materialized the inner logic of biblical statements (*Qu. Gn* I, 94; II, 9; VI, 179, 182, 220), in some cases it has a symbolic value of its own (*Qu. Gn* V, 134; VI, 183, 207), and by its obvious dynamic it induces interpreters to understand the Law beyond its literal statements (*Qu. Gn* VI, 168). Almost universally, the letter has the merit of being “obvious,” “easy to catch”; only once does the commentator of Genesis doubt about the transparency of the letter, in *Qu. Gn* V, 88 where Gn 24:3 seems to make no sense. By his consistent appreciation of the biblical *littera*, if not more than by his allegorism, Philo fixed a permanent standard for interpreters of the Bible in the patristic age.

Similar observations result from an analysis of Philo’s *Quaestiones in Exodum* I–II, whose recent (and first) critical edition with translation in a modern language constitutes a landmark in Philonian studies (A. Terian, *Les Oeuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie*, vol. 34C. Paris, 1992). In its original extension the work included six books of which J. R. Royse, “The Original Structure of Philo’s *Quaestiones*,” *Studia Philonica* 4 (1976–77), 41–78, specially 61–62,

convincingly demonstrated that they followed the eight Babylonian divisions of Exodus, the first and fifth being omitted:

- Book I Ex 6:21–9:35
- II Ex 10:1–13:16
- III Ex 13:17–17:16
- IV Ex 20:25b–24:18
- V Ex 25:1–27:19
- VI Ex 27:20–30:10 (see A. Terian, 1992, 21).

What the Armenian version preserved is reduced to two books commenting on:

1. Ex 12:2–23 = *Qu. Ex I*, 1–23 (half of Babylonian division II)
2. Ex 20:25–24:18 = *Qu. Ex II*, 1–49 (Babyl. div. IV complete)
3. Ex 25:1–27:3 = *Qu. Ex II*, 50–102 (Babyl. div. V almost complete)
4. Ex 27:20–28:38 = *Qu. Ex II*, 103–124 (Babyl. div. VI incomplete)

In (1) (that is in *Qu. Ex I*), 14 of the 23 sections are built around the distinction *haec ad litteram* (or equivalent phrases)... *ad mentem vero* (2–5, 7, 11–13, 15, 17, 19–23), where the literal commentary sometimes exceeds in length the subsequent allegorical one for given verses of Exodus, as in section 2, 3, 4, 7. In other sections (5, 15, 19, 23) the allegorical commentary prevails. More remarkable are the sections of *Qu. Ex I* presenting only a *literal* explanation: section 1 is a dissertation on seasons and months, about “the first month” in Ex 12:2; section 6 offers reasons of convenience for the literal meaning of Ex 12:4b; so does section 9 for Ex 12:6b. A long historical comment on Ex 12:6c in section 10 shows the appropriateness of that verse in the literal sense. Other reasons of convenience fill sections 14, 18 and 20. It is clear that what Philo calls *littera* (*passim*), or *litterae sensus* (I, 11), in opposition to *ad mentem*, means much more than the immediate enunciation of the verse; it has a content which needs to be explicated, and occasionally it presents an intricate multiplicity of meaning calling for clarification. Only in *Qu. Ex I*, 16 does he omit the literal meaning: Ex 12:9a forbidding the eating of “raw meat” makes no sense at all, as by definition (in Philo’s mind!) humans never eat raw meat. Therefore he concludes: *id ergo totum sub allegoria videtur exponere*, “the whole sentence should be explained allegorically,” where *sub allegoria* keeps its elementary non-technical sense “as speaking about something else.” In a more technical sense, the fourteen occurrences of *ad mentem* signal considerations inspired by the Philonian notion of the human intellect.

In the 124 sections of *Qu. Ex II* more than thirty expand once more on the literal meaning alone of the Exodus verses, whereas the other sections

discuss verses on both levels of meaning, the literal and the non-literal. In the case of the double-level exegesis, a closer look highlights a different perception of the literal sense as an approach to the text contrasted with the interpretation *ad mentem*. That form of exegesis prevails in *Qu. Ex II*, 1–49, discussing the chapters of Exodus in the Babylonian division IV (*Qu. Ex II*, 3, 7, 12, 15, 19, 21–23, 25, 31, 34, 38, 44, 47), whereas in the rest of *Qu. Ex II* only sections 51, 53, 54 continue that series. In sections 100 and 107, the double mention *littera...ad mentem* seems to be a sort of distraction, coupled with *symbolica* or *symbolum*, more accurately. Indeed a striking difference in Philo's perceptions of the literal meaning is again apparent depending on how he announces his non-literal comments. Where he uses *ad mentem* he regularly engages into what "allegory" technically means for him, namely, an insight in the noetic structure of the human being whose transcendence calls for the spiritual journey of the intellect. In all other cases, where he goes beyond the *littera* by linking it with the contemplation of the cosmos or with evaluations of an ethical order, he speaks about "symbols" and "symbolic" relevance. In addition, in contrast to *ad mentem* the *littera* is descriptive and convenient. Its explanation amplifies what is said in the verses, or shows reasons of convenience justifying them. In the case of a "symbolic" relevance, the *littera* itself becomes figurative, which is increasingly the case as Philo advances in his *Quaestiones*.

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III. CHRISTIAN INTERPRETERS OF THE "LETTER"

In Christian tradition the status of the biblical "letter" changes dramatically. Instead of remaining venerated as "obvious" and only explained as a key for catching the coherence of given sentences, as Philo ruled, the literal content of Scripture becomes problematic and a source of polemics in the nascent church. The risky exodus of the Greek version of the LXX from the rabbinic Diaspora into newly formed Christian communities, if it did not immediately impose translations of Scripture into foreign languages, created a deeply changed environment for its faithful reception. The NT exemplified the paradigmatic shift with striking eloquence. Explicit citations and innumerable allusions called in the NT on LXX verses in very unusual ways, the authors of the NT taking it for granted that such verses could serve for their preaching of the gospel. The "letter" of the LXX was put to the service of a spiritual renewal which radicalized many traditional views of the Pharisaic interpreters and added its own hermeneutics. When Paul claimed "the letter kills" (2 Cor 3:6), he referred to an age-old conviction inside the interpretive school of Pharisaism, according to which the written Torah needed an oral or spiritual complement; but he also made the unheard of claim that only the "Spirit gives life," and not the Law as such.

Near the end of the first century and in early second century Rabbi Aqiba taught that each written sign of Torah is in need of an explanation, because it is mysterious and divine. Rabbi Ishmael responded that one should not attach too much importance to details, because "Torah speaks in human terms." The conflict of interpretations in early rabbinic Judaism was between a hermeneutic limited to *peshat*, the obvious and immediate sense, and *midrash*, the spiritual commentary. From a scholastic exercise familiar to rabbinic scholarship the interpretation of the biblical "letter" became the vital necessity for Christian believers transformed by the spiritual power of the gospel-event, neither *peshat* nor *targum*, but *kerygma*, the "proclamation" of faith.

The popular teaching in "parables," presented by the gospel writers as a characteristic of Jesus' public ministry, illustrated a symbolic form of discourse in which the salvific announcement of the future Kingdom was filled with biblical resonance. Jesus' birth and childhood, his miracles and mystic experiences, such as his "transfiguration" at the top of a mountain, but also his death and resurrection, were related in narratives saturated with elements from the LXX which had been rethought and carefully accommodated to their new context. The highly sophisticated symphony of doctrinal themes and liturgical projections in the Letter to the Hebrews was another example

of a creative rewriting by which the old biblical “letter” regained a new life in the earliest Christian communities. The preaching behind the so-called First Letter of Peter rested essentially on a retrieving of well known situations and events in biblical Israel, now actualized in the church community: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, and a people claimed by God for his own” (2:9). The overwhelming evidence of the Spirit whose gifts gave life to the emerging Christian movement was now more significant for these believers of a new kind than was the sacred “letter” for a devoted and learned Jew like Philo. Any story of the ancient Scriptures could take on a new meaning, as for example the story of Sarah and Hagar’s childbearing in Genesis 16 and 21, and be interpreted as what Paul called “an allegory”: “This is an allegory. The two women stand for two covenants” (Gal 4:24). Commenting on Sarah’s miraculous pregnancy with its historic consequences, Paul stated: “Those words”—namely Gn 15:6—“were written not for Abraham’s sake alone, but for our sake too” (Rom 4:23). The ancient story remained unchanged, but its literal content was now covered with layers of new meanings. Thus the Christian reception of the LXX made its very “letter” problematic, because of the life-giving “Spirit” which opened a new career for biblical citations in church awareness but excluded thereby any other interpretations of the Bible.

1. *The Polemical Level*

Henceforth in a Christian focus, the biblical *littera* stood on a polemical ground. The figure of Jesus as worked out by the gospel writers eloquently demonstrated the polemical value of the biblical *littera* in the unavoidable disputes between Christian teachers and Rabbis. A literary genre that was pointedly anti-Judaic soon developed, consisting in “proofs” of Christian beliefs which were wordings from the LXX cited without any comments, but collected selectively, and assembled without any regard for their original contexts. The “proofs” were supposed to demonstrate the failure of the Jews and the success of the church in catching the full meaning of the passages quoted. Among the oldest forms of Christian literature, these so-called *Testimonia*, endured as a proper literary genre for centuries, first illustrated by Pseudo-Barnabas’s *Letter* and by Justin of Rome in the second century, then by Cyprian of Carthage in the third, and still perpetuated in the Constantinian era by church leaders like Eusebius of Caesarea and Athanasius of Alexandria.

On the side of Christian authors, the growing antagonism between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity resulted an aggressive response as soon as a

rabbinic opinion was in direct concern about the biblical *littera*. The enduring survival of Jewish communities, let alone their economic prosperity in the main cities of the Empire, was in itself a scandal for Christian authorities. Actualizing the Bible for the benefit of their own religious ideology, these authorities too easily assimilated their Jewish contemporaries with those Jews whom they found in the foreground of the gospel narratives calling for the political liquidation of Jesus. Patristic authors rarely missed an opportunity to use the literal content of both Testaments for denouncing and refuting the Judaism of their own time, seen through the spectrum of biblical Judaism. Paradoxically, however they paid tribute to rabbinic scholarship when they needed an access to Hebrew language or when their own LXX copies showed deficiencies which could only be remedied by checking the original Hebrew, as was the case for Origen of Alexandria and Jerome. Textual criticism called for inter-religious dialogue despite the fatal gap between patristic Christianity and rabbinic Judaism.

Another polemical level on which the very letter of Scripture became a burning issue for Christian churches was imposed by the confrontation between Gnostic trends and mainstream Christianity during the second and the third centuries. The scholarly exegesis of biblical texts started with Gnostic teachers like Heracleon of Alexandria (fl. 2nd half of 2nd c.). The systematic discussion of a standard collection, a “canon” of NT writings was first conducted by Marcion (fl. 150–160). Though the result of Marcion’s efforts to delimit a set of such writings was almost immediately opposed and vehemently rejected by mainstream churches, the Marcionite enterprise had a long-lasting influence, not the least in urging the creation of a consensus in the late second century church communities about a scriptural canon acceptable for all of them. More commonly the use of Scripture in Christian-Gnostic circles highlighted biblical elements usually ignored in other parts of Christianity. It also produced an original introduction of the biblical *littera* into a literary subculture where Christian thought met with strange forms of religious syncretism.

A last level of polemic concentration on the literal contents of Scripture was imposed by heresy. Doctrinal disputes originated within the inner dynamic of the church. The more philosophical notions entered the Christian discourse, the more it became difficult to keep a serene unanimity among teachers and leaders of the church communities. “Heresy,” as a different way of thinking, proliferated in like measure to the consolidation of a fixed body of doctrines, together with the claims of an established teaching authority inside main churches. Using original presuppositions based on their own philosophical culture, and appropriate hermeneutical devices, “heretics”

played an essential role in the building of Christian dogmatics. Their clashes with established church authorities entailed broad controversies which in turn produced an impressive amount of pamphlets and treatises.

At the core of patristic “heresies” the biblical text, quoted and commented on, was of strategic importance. Many of the literal contents of Scripture, reproduced and discussed at length in patristic writings throughout Late Antiquity, were imposed on Christian authors in the heat of some anti-heretical reaction. Together with the more peaceful practice of liturgical readings, which also conditioned choices of biblical texts during that period, polemical dossiers of anti-heretical literature transmit most parts of OT-NT effectively quoted by the Fathers. Like the fight against real or imagined Jewish interpretations, the refutation of heretical opinions implied that a Christian identity necessarily rests on a given understanding of the very “letter” of Scripture. To clarify the understanding called for a proper scrutinizing of the “letter,” like the Gnostics, the great “heretics” in their turn occasioned a lively scholarship on given parts of the biblical texts, and in these cases the attention given to the “letter” of Scripture remained of a polemical nature.

2. *The Philological Level*

A true “love for the letter” (“*philo-logia*”) of the Bible animated early Christian interpreters independently from any polemics.

Attention to the “letter”

The qualitative distinctiveness of the patristic attention to the sacred text represents in itself a serious challenge for modern critics. The latter would far too quickly be inclined to link interpretation with the subjective disposition of the interpreter, whereas patristic exegesis derived essentially from the objective sacredness of the text to be interpreted. Scripture was not a “classic” for ancient Jewish or Christian commentators, analogous to what Homer represented for pagan scholars in contemporary Alexandria. It was the living voice of divine revelation in its timeless, or better, ever-present and actual expression. For patristic interpreters the written materiality of that expression was a gift from heaven. It implied for them paying tribute to all elements of the text, not only to those preferred by human logic. Modern exegetes would dismiss such prejudice, their perception of the biblical letter itself being not involved in the latter’s sacredness. But to retrieve the inner dynamic of patristic exegesis with any sense of fairness, it is essential to understand on what preconceived notion of the letter that exegesis rested.

For a comparison between the patristic attention to the “letter” and the historical critical method of modern exegetes, the following titles are suggested:

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The Spiritual Dynamic of the NT “Letter”

Early Christian interpreters found in the NT an impressive demonstration of what a loving assimilation of the LXX could produce as a new kind of biblical rewriting. Not only did they read in it sporadic examples of allegories relating to the eventual realization of ancient prophecies in Jesus’ life and death, but they found in the NT a consistent narrative rich in decisive teachings for the whole Christian life on the basis of assimilated OT texts. The spiritual dynamics of the NT bound patristic authors to the OT text, the main source of their faith persuasion. It was that dynamic that called them to a creative actualizing of Scripture through the work they performed for the communities to which they belonged. Thus the very text of both Testaments, the “Old” and the “New” being implicated in each other, served as a constant reference for the patristic discourse, *literally* contributing to the self-definition of believers who could only secure their needed quest for a still undefined identity through such an original texture of the biblical *littera*.

The Literal sense

First of all, the “literal sense” represented for patristic interpreters the “ordinary” meaning, or the “immediate” content of biblical utterances, that is what everyone understood at first sight. In Cyril of Alexandria’s exegesis of the NT the literal sense applies only to objects of sensorial perception, “τὰ αἰσθητὰ—namely realities that are perceived by the senses especially those of sight and hearing,” and “τὰ ἀνθρώπινα—namely, traits and activities characteristic of man both as an individual and as a member of various human groups” (Kerrigan 1957, 356; see also Kerrigan 1952, 243–363). Such was the respect for the “letter” resulting from the presupposed divine inspiration of all Scripture, that the smallest biblical notations, including punctuation, were significant for patristic readers. Hence the latter’s need to give a coherent account of all the details of biblical narratives, a task contemporary rabbis were trying to assume for the same reasons.

Far from enjoying historical mind-set of their modern counterparts, ancient interpreters ignored the originating contexts (*Sitz im Leben*) of written “forms” (*Formgeschichte*), nor did they invoke secular history and secular literature for explaining the cultural diversity of biblical writings. They absolutized the Bible as providing its own necessary and sufficient context, a notion which they took over from Alexandrian philology (Schäublin 1977). Again such a principle induced them to make sense of the *whole* literal content.

The Challenges of the “Letter”

Patristic interpreters constantly found themselves embroiled in a tangle of urgent questions. The literal or immediate content of biblical passages challenged them again and again with cultural data needing an explanation. Informative as it was supposed to be by divine inspiration, the “letter” of Scripture constituted for patristic authors a labyrinth of cultural differences which they had to face with the tools provided to them by their secular education. Names needed to be etymologized, translations verified, places located on a map, past events dated, ancient customs explained. Most statements of biblical agents, divine utterance included, needed to be rewritten so that their immediate meaning became clear. In short, by definition the “literal sense” was for patristic interpreters problematic. It was their duty to solve the problems bound to the lexical data and the syntax of the biblical passage on which they commented, and to show the nature of the links between those passages and their immediate contexts, anterior or posterior. The “literal sense” was problematic because of the unknown data which were carried in the text itself. Biblical utterances were problematic because

of the persons making them or the moment when they were made, or again because of the purpose for which they were made. The school training of patristic interpreters in rhetorics and other forms of knowledge was hardly sufficient for preparing them for the task of giving an adequate account of the “letter” of Scripture, Augustine strongly emphasizing the extent of that concern in *On Christian Doctrine*.

For patristic exegesis it was in the logic of such a devoted attention to the “letter” of Scripture to become erudite and systematic on the level of the literal sense itself. In addition to the lists of *Etymologies* mentioned above other tools were soon devised by Christian interpreters eager to learn from the experience of pagan scholars who had elaborated sophisticated methods for interpreting Homer and other poets. Two striking examples illustrate that tendency, Philo again serving as a paradigm for future Christian interpreters. Cases of fanciful etymologies and of exercises in symbolic numerology are usually catalogued among the eccentricities of ancient allegorism. Indeed they belong there, because of their dreamlike logic with all the irrelevant projections, alien to commented Scripture passages, which they produced. We shall meet them again, when focusing on allegory. However it would be a mistake not to consider such a practice as part of the labor imposed on ancient interpreters by the very letter of the sacred text. It was their deeply held conviction that they were dealing with a divinely inspired content which led patristic exegetes to presuppose “mysteries,” secret treasures, deliberate “recesses,” in that content itself, in their scrutinizing of the meaning of biblical names and numbers. The curiosity of interpreters engaged in such inquiries shows that the text in its immediacy, independently from the story related in it, challenged these exegetes. They ended in considering allegory as a requirement of the letter itself. As it was assumed by the early Christian exegetes, the task of interpreting that sacred letter was indeed a complex one.

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IV. HERMENEIA

The Task of Interpreting the "Letter" in Early Christianity

1. Introductory Remarks: A Historic Achievement

The cultural appropriation of the OT-NT canon by Christian interpreters during half a millennium of patristic creativity represents the most important event in the history of Western Christianity during its five centuries. Nothing comparable has happened since then in any of the Christian traditions up to the end of the twentieth century. Latin Medieval and Byzantine scholarship

only perpetuated the doctrinal legacy of biblical hermeneutics elaborated in ancient Christianity. One or the other part of that legacy might have been favored here and there at given times but its cultural foundation was never questioned, nor did the Latin and Byzantine Middle Ages even conceive new hermeneutical models in replacement of the patristic system. The life and death challenge presently imposed on all churches near the end of Modernity is indeed to face the fundamental need for a hermeneutical newness which would take into account the interpretive tradition of the past two millennia, and create its own systematic principles and rules. As an acknowledgment of the depth of the present challenge, the patristic experiment as a whole deserves an accurate interpretation. The growing awareness throughout the churches of an epochal movement into a Christian self-understanding of a new type calls for a fresh approach to the past, and foremost in this fresh approach is the call to a renewed understanding of the scriptural exegesis of the past, obsolete as its methodologies may be today. "While qualifications have been advocated along the lines of history as understood and portrayed by the scriptural account rather than objective history, the category of historicity in general still remains a problem for typological thought; more over, the place and function of symbolic language must be integrated," J. E. Alsup, *Anchor Bible Commentary* 6 (1992), "Typology," 685. Though a *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis* does not seem to be the right place for exploring the systematic theories which currently announce future developments of Christian thought, it is certainly the appropriate occasion for critically evaluating the hermeneutical legacy of ancient Christianity contemplated in the light of contemporary questions.

2. The Ancient Art of "Interpreting"

Divine *Hermes* (in Latin "Mercury") served as an "interpreter" of the gods in ancient Greek mythology. His name led to the formation of words like *hermeneus*, "interpreter" (mainly of oracles), *hermeneuein*, "to interpret," or *hermeneutikè*, the "art of interpreting." Note that the Latin *interpres* itself derives from the same root as the Sanscrit *prath*, "to spread abroad." A late editor gave the title *Peri hermeneias, On Interpretation*, to one of Aristotle's tractates (which deals with other matters). The oldest use of *hermeneutikè*, as "art of interpreting," can be found in Plato's, *Epin* 975c 4–8. In Plato's *Banquet*, 202e 2–3, *hermeneuein* also means "to communicate," in this case to communicate a divine revelation. This meaning developed into the Neoplatonic notion of Plotinus's *psychè hermeneutikè*, the "interpretive World Soul"

mediating between the terrestrial and the intelligible orders of reality. In First Corinthians the apostle Paul is the first to use the term *hermeneia* with the specific meaning of “interpretation,” “explanation”: “Another has the gift of ecstatic utterances of different kinds, and another the ability to interpret them—ἔρμηνεία γλωσσῶν” (12:10). Christian authors would take up the Pauline usage, for example, Melito of Sardis in *On the Pasch*, 41: “Hence the model (*typos*) was precious before the reality and the parable admirable before the interpretation (*hermeneias*)”; or Justin of Rome in *Dialogue with Trypho*, 124, 4: “The interpretation (ἡ ἔρμηνεία) of the psalm (Ps 81/82:1) as you ask for”; or again Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against the Heresies* I, 3, 6: “Perverting the ‘interpretations’ (τὰς ἐρμηνείας) and tampering with the explanations (τὰς ἐξηγήσεις)”; and later on Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History* V, 27, 1: “Many works of orthodox and ecclesiastical authors came to us, each of them showing their interpretation of divine Scripture (τῆς θείας γραφῆς ἐρμηνεία)”; or Theodoret of Cyrus, mentioning a lost “commentary on the Gospels” (τῶν θείων εὐαγγελίων τὴν ἐρμηνείαν) authored by a certain Theodore, a “learned man” (ἐλλόγισμος), whom the party of Eusebius of Nicomedia hired in 337 after Athanasius’ return from Trier. Even as late as the seventh century, the anonymous author of the *Trophies of Damaskus* allows his Christian interlocutor ask the Jew: “What then? Do you know and accept Scripture according to the letter, or according to the spiritual interpretation (κατὰ τὸ γράμμα...ἢ κατὰ ἀναγωγὴν καὶ ἐρμηνείαν)?” (PO 15, 1927, 223).

On biblical commentary, see articles by B. A. Anderson, T. E. Fretheim, E. Krentz, *Interpretation* 36 (1982); in *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden eds. London-Philadelphia 1990, with one hundred and fifty contributors, see: F. Young, “Alexandrian Interpretation,” “Literal Meaning,” “Rhetoric,” and “Spiritual Meaning”; A. Louth, “Allegorical Interpretation”; A. Jørgen Bjørndalen; R. A. Norris, “Antiochene Interpretation”; J. Barton, “Canon” and “Eisegesis”; J. L. Houlden, “Commentary NT”; R. P. Carroll, “Commentary OT”; M. Davis, “Exegesis”; D. F. Middleton, “Feminist Interpretation”; J. M. Soskice, “Figures of Speech” and “Metaphor”; J. I. H. McDonald “Hermeneutical Circle”; W. G. Jeanrond, “Hermeneutics”; R. J. Coggins, “Holy Book”; J. F. A. Sawyer, “History of Interpretation” and “Semantics”; R. P. R. Murray, “Jewish Christianity”; G. J. Brooke, “Peshet”; B. McNeil, “*Sensus Plenior*” and “Typology”; S. P. Brock, “Syriac Tradition”; B. Lindars, “*Testimonia*”; J. Neville Birdsall, “Text of the Bible”; J. L. North, “Vulgate.”

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3. Christian Translators and Interpreters

In the Greek-Speaking Churches

Clement of Alexandria calls Moses, who was a true "theologian and prophet," the "interpreter" (ἑρμηνεύς) of divine laws (*Strom* 1.22, 150.4; CGS 15, 93.12; PG 8, 896a; SC 2, 153). He attributes the same function to Paul, "The interpreter of the divine voice"—ἑρμηνεύς γίνεται τῆς θείας φωνῆς (CGS, Cl. Al. 1, 65.16; PG 8, 200a; SC 2, 154). But ἑρμηνεία and ἑρμηνεύω are also the only technical terms used by Clement when telling the story of the seventy elders sent from Jerusalem to King Ptolemy and who translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek. Finally Clement calls the assistants of Peter his "interpreters," τοῦ Πέτρου ἑρμηνεῖα (*Strom* 7, 17; GCS, Cl. Al. III, 75.16; PG 9, 549a). The same title was given to Origen by his disciple Gregory Thaumaturgos: He was "an interpreter of divine utterances for humankind," ἑρμηνεύς εἶναι τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγων πρὸς ἀνθρώπους (*Pan. Or* 15.181; PG 10, 1096a; SC 146, 170). Dionysius of Alexandria gave Christ himself the title of "interpreter" as the revealer of the Father (Ath., *Dion* 23; Opitz 64.2; PG 25, 516a), as does Eusebius of Caesarea, *Eccl Theol* 2.22 (οἱ δι' ἑρμηνέως GCS Eusebius 4, 132, 12). Athanasius of Alexandria uses a phrase of Clement in calling Paul the "interpreter of divine and true piety" (PG 25, 40a ὁ τῆς θείας καὶ ἀληθῶς εὐσεβείας ἑρμηνεύς) in quoting Rm 1:21–24. The use of ἑρμηνεύω with the meaning "to translate" is common to Athanasius (*De synodis* 9), Socrates, *Hist eccl* 2, 37.17, and others.

In the fifth century Theodoret of Cyrus would still use ἑρμηνεύω with both meanings "to interpret" and "to translate." He starts his *Commentary on*

the *Psalms* by observing that his true intention was to interpret (ἐρμηνεύσαι) the “prophecies of David” before all other books of the Bible (*In Ps*, Preface: ἐρμηνεύσας τὴν προφητείαν PG 80, 857a, 860b). With the same meaning he claims in the preface of his *Commentary on Kings*: “Having explained (ἐρμηνεύσαμεν),...let us go over to Kings, not without admitting that former “interpreters” (ἐρμηνεύσαντας) had created some obscurity by too literal an understanding of the text (τοὺς ἐρμηνεύσαντας περὶ ποδὰ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ποιήσασθαι PG 80, 529a). Finally, Theodoret admits to having used a glossary of Hebrew names for finding the correct “translation” (ἐρμηνεύμενον) of *neasar* (συνεχόμενος—“held together”) (PG 80, *In I Reg*, Introduction 54, 576d); or the etymology of “Nabal” (*quaest.* 59, 584c), where he calls the glossary—τῆς τῶν ἑβραϊκῶν ὀνομάτων ἐρμηνείας ὁ βιβλος (584c), “the book of the interpretation (= etymology) of Hebrew names” (584c). He uses ἐρμηνεύω with the sense of “translating” in *Com Ps* 1:6; 2:1; and elsewhere.

In the Latin Churches

Tertullian uses *interpretatio* in the sense of “explanation,” when accusing Marcion: *Sic et paenitentiam apud illum prave interpretaris, quasi proinde mobilitate vel improvidentia*, “in the same way you wrongly interpret repentance in him (God) as if it was due to his change of mind or lack of providence.” (*Adv. Marcionem* II, 24. 1; SC 368, 141, R. Braun); or in the sense of “exegesis”: *allegorica interpretatio in Christum et ecclesiam* (III, 24.1.1).

Augustine alludes to the Greek origin of the word: “In Greek, because of Hermes the word or the *interpretatio* fitting perfectly with it is called *hermeneia*” (*City of God* 7, 14). Centuries before, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had given a more precise definition: “An interpretation without the repeating the word reintegrates it, but in changing the statement with another word having the same meaning” (IV, 28.33). In the first century C.E. Quintilian kept to that definition when he claimed that an *interpretatio* is to render a Latin word or phrase by another Latin word or phrase (X, 5.5; see also III, 6.58). Again Augustine uses *interpretatio*, in *De Genesi ad litteram* 12, 9, with another of its oldest meanings, close to *divinatio*, namely the interpretation of dreams or of natural phenomena supposedly mysterious. In that case he calls it a “prophecy,” and he illustrates it with the story of Joseph explaining the dream of Pharaoh (Gn 41:1–32), and of Daniel explaining other dreams in Babylon (Dn 2:21–45, 4:16–24). The same use was familiar to older classical writers such as Tacitus in the *Annals* 14, 12, 2.; Pliny, in *Letter* 10, 80, and others.

More basically, in his so-called *Peri hermeneias*, Aristotle had identified

hermeneia with language itself when he stated that any word or sentence which could be true or false was in fact an interpretation of reality. Around 540 C.E., Boethius produced two commentaries, one simplified in two books, another more sophisticated in six books, of Aristotle's treatise *On Interpretation* (PL 64, 293–640), each of them starting with an introduction in which the very notion of *hermeneia*, *interpretatio* in thoroughly analyzed. In the second commentary he reached a final conclusion: *Concurrentibus igitur his tribus, linguae percussione, articulato vocis sonitu, imaginatione aliqua proferendi, fit interpretatio. Interpretatio namque est vox articulata per seipsam significans*. Hence the concurrence of these three factors, a percussion of the tongue, an articulated sound of the voice, and some thought to be expressed, produces an interpretation, for an interpretation is an articulated voice meaningful by itself" (PL 64, 394b).

Bluntly considered, from Aristotle to Boethius, *hermeneia*—*interpretatio* is a keystone of ancient rhetorical culture, one of those central notions ensuring the stability of that culture for more than half a millennium before and after Christ. In particular that notion played a fundamental role in the historic encounter between Greek and Latin languages, and became the most challenging and fruitful process at the core of ancient culture as experienced by the first Christian generations. First of all, understood as *translatio*, "translation," it constituted a decisive issue for Christian faith in the cultural frame of the early church. From Hebrew to Greek, and from Greek to Latin, the message of the church rested entirely on the intimate metamorphosis of its discourse conditioned by the work of translators. If theories of interpreting sacred Scripture were developed later on by intellectually gifted leaders like Origen, Augustine and Jerome, it was first of all because of the constant struggle of earlier Christian generations which translated Scripture into their mother tongues. By itself the task of translating Scripture included a multiplicity of procedures out of which Christian interpreters structured their "spiritual" understanding of the text.

Translations

In the Latin world, translations of earlier Greek versions of the Bible were the rule, just as for the modern reader. A Latin translation of biblical books (*libri et epistolae Pauli viri iusti*) was in the hands of Speratus, one of the eight martyrs of Scilli in Africa, beheaded on July 17, 180 (ed., J. A. Robinson, TS 1, 1891).

The earliest Christian authors in Roman Africa and elsewhere felt free to secure their own translations of LXX, if they were bi-lingual like Tertullian,

not without calling sometimes on other versions. Cyprian in the third, and Tyconius in the fourth century seem less eclectic, but there was never an authorized Old Latin version. Too many so-called “Old Latin” (*Vetus Latina*) translations of LXX circulated in Africa during the third and fourth centuries, as Augustine complains in *De doctrina christiana* II, 11, 16. In 383 Pope Damasus ordered Jerome to revise those versions, an Herculean task whose final result became the *Vulgata*, the official Latin text of the Bible for all centuries to come. The Letters of Paul were re-worked by Rufinus the Syrian on behalf of Jerome ca. 400 and first quoted in their new translation by Pelagius. Only in the seventh century was the *Vetus Latina* for the OT definitely replaced by the *Vulgata*, and even then the Book of Psalms remained unchanged in the Ambrosian, Mozarabic and Roman liturgical usage. The so-called *Psalterium Gallicum* is a revision of the Psalms based on Origen’s *Hexapla*.

In its final stage before Jerome’s *Vulgata* the Old Latin version which prevailed was called *Itala*, or *Italica*, because of its privileged use in Italy. With some variants it circulated among African authors as the “*Afra*” version. Augustine, Cassiodorus, and Gregory the Great used *Vetus Latina* and *Vulgata* side by side. The oldest editions of the *Vulgata* were mingled with lessons from the *Vetus Latina*, in Italy and elsewhere, specially in Ireland (*Book of Armagh*). Eventually, the Irish text spilled over the whole Continent.

Jerome’s Experiment

As early as 380, during a visit to Constantinople, Jerome wrote a preface to his translation of Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Chronicle*, a preface that was actually a brilliant essay on the proper task of *interpretatio*, or more specifically, on the ordeal of any attempt to translate a Greek text into Latin. Nobody was better informed in the matter than the thirty-two year old Christian rhetor, now eager to serve as a translator. In his Preface to *Chronicle* the personal commitment of the convert to asceticism from ten years before expresses itself with a dramatic sincerity: “In a translation it is difficult to keep the quality of what has been well expressed in a foreign language (Jerome could have had fellow feeling with the second century B.C.E. author of the preface to Sirach: “For it is impossible to find precise equivalents for the original Hebrew in another language”). Something may be said by way of a single word, but I have no equivalent term; should I try to complete the sentence, my periphrase would miss the concise phrasing of the original. On top of this, one must take into account circumlocutions with transposed words, differences in declensions, the diversity of figures of speech, in short the type

of vernacular. If I translate word by word it sounds absurd; if by necessity I change the order or the content, I seem to betray my duty as a translator.... The historical narrative is complex (*historia multiplex est*), with alien names (*barbara nomina*), with realities unknown to Latin people, numbers that cannot be explained, critical marks interposed between these realities and the numbers, so that it is almost more difficult to become acquainted with the order in which to read, than to engage into reading itself" (PL 27, 34–37). Much later, in a passionate letter written during Jerome's violent quarrel with Rufinus in 401–402 about the Latin version of Origen's *Peri Archon*, the erudite monk of Bethlehem was exceedingly abrupt and partisan in treating problems of translation.

Not only was the choice of appropriate words difficult for a correct translation, but even the order of the words created problems in regard to their original meaning. Punctuation itself might effect that meaning in the translated text. In all events, the innate music and the rhythm of Greek language was lost in Latin. Worse, the very vocabulary was missing, when no equivalent term matched the Greek original, a situation often leading to extended paraphrases alien to the conciseness of the original passage. These difficulties were not exclusively met in rendering Greek sources into Latin; they were the same for experts who tried to produce Greek translations of the Hebrew Bible.

In exposing the whole range of these problems in his Preface on Eusebius's *Chronicle*, Jerome only has one term in mind and under his pen, *interpretatio*, our modern "translation." Today's scholar can never overestimate the essential role of translators in the foundations of theoretical hermeneutics during the early centuries of Christianity.

In his many Letters, Jerome multiplied references to *interpretare* with the meaning "to translate." In *Letter 20, 3* to Pope Damasus (a fictional letter composed after Damasus' death in December 384: Nautin, *TRE* 15, 305), he explains diverse interpretations of Ps 117, but finds that "Symmachus was consonant with the translation of all interpreters," *cum omnium interpretatione consenserat* (CSEL 54, 106.18). In *Letter 57, 5.2* to Pammachius, "*On the Best Way to Translate*" *de optimo genere interpretandi*, a bold statement occurs: *ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor me in interpretatione Graecorum absque scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est, non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu*, "For myself, not only do I admit, but with a clear voice I am declaring that in the translation of Greek sources, with the exception of sacred Scriptures where even the order of words is a mystery, I do not express a word by another word but rather meaning for meaning" (Courcelle 1948, 42–45). Thus even a literal translating

had for Christians its proper challenges, as they attributed a special value to canonical writings. They were used to consider *sensus* immediately in regard to *verbum*, but for lack of *verbum* equivalencies they sometimes translated only according to the *sensus* of the *verbum* which they could not render as such. The constant shift between *verbum* and *sensus* opened in the translators' view a free space for their own lexical initiatives. In other words, translating itself was for them a spiritual exercise, their own creativity replacing when necessary the one of the translated authors (in the same Letter 57, see also 5.5). In the extended *Letter* 112, dating from 402, the now world famous monk of Bethlehem speaks down to Augustine, the "young man," a bishop in Africa from whom he had received no less than three letters, one in particular protesting against his interpretation of Gal 2:7–8 where Paul accused Peter of dissimulation through fear of the Jews. Jerome tenaciously holds to his own opinion: Peter did not lie in dissimulation! He adds some more trivial remarks about Augustine's "silly" questions, concerning his translations: "What you are asking me in your other letters, why my first translation of canonical books has asterisks and commas, and then why another translation follows without these signs (I say it to keep you in peace!), you do not seem to understand your own question as the first translation is the work of the Seventy," *Quod autem in aliis quaeris epistolis, cur prior mea in libris canonicis interpretatio asteriscos habeat et virgulas praenotatas et postea aliam translationem absque his signis ediderim—pace tua dixerim—, viseris mihi non intelligere, quod quaesisti. illa enim interpretatio septuaginta interpretum est*" (19; CSEL 55, 1996, 389).

Obviously, the young African dignitary had no knowledge of the LXX nor of Origen's *Hexapla*. Jerome gives him a condescending lesson. Interestingly enough, here Jerome alternates *interpretatio* with *translatio*, and he uses *interpretatio* as well with the meaning of "commentary," but in adding *explanatio*: *maxime in explanatione psalmorum, quos apud Graecos interpretati sunt multis voluminibus primus Origenes, secundus Eusebius Caesariensis*, etc. "Mainly in the explanation of the psalms which first Origen, secondly Eusebius of Caesarea interpreted in many volumes." The listing of translators continues until Hilary and Ambrose, Jerome's contemporary, ending with the not so candid request: "Could Your Prudence explain to me why after so many and so distinguished translators you imagine that you have something original to say in explaining the meaning of the psalms?" *respondeat mihi prudentia tua, quare post tantos et talis interpretes in explanatione psalmorum diversa senseris* (20; 390, 4–14). As understood by Jerome, the combined use of *interpretatio*, *translatio*, *explanatio*, and *sensus*, illustrates the complexity of rendering the Greek originals into Latin.

In other cases Jerome's use of *interpretatio* acquires a more modern connotation as an equivalent for "commentary," a continuous and explicit clarification of translated sources, in the first place of sacred Scripture itself. Thus in *Letter 5* to Florentinus, written shortly after his voluntary exile in the Syrian desert, he begs for "Hilary's *Commentary on the Psalms of David* and his very extended work *On Synods*," *interpretationem quoque psalmorum Davidicorum et prolixum valde de synodis librum sancti Hilarii*, (CSEL 54, 1996, 22.8–9). He juxtaposes *commentarius* and *interpretatio* as synonyms in ending the *prologus* of his *Commentary on the Prophet Malachi*: "Of other commentaries of this prophet I have no notion of having read them with the exception of Apollinaris's booklet which should not be called an interpretation but an interpretative outline," *alios commentarios in hunc prophetam legisse me nescio: excepto Apollinaris brevi libello, cuius non tam interpretatio quam interpretationis puncta dicenda sunt* (PL 25, 1544a). The *commentarius* includes the *interpretatio* and eventually is assimilated to it.

Writing to Fabiola ca. 402 (*Letter 64*; CSLC 54, 1996, 586–615) a short tractate on OT exegesis, Jerome stresses the non-problematic *interpretatio* of Ps 109/110: 4, "You are a priest forever, in the succession of Melchizedek," whose "exegesis in regard to the Lord is much easier," *facilior est super dominum interpretatio* (594, 3). In the fictional *Letter 21, 2* to Damasus he makes a similar observation about the older son of Luke 15:25, identified by "many" as simply personifying "all the saints": *et de sanctis quidem non difficilis interpretatio est in eo, quod dicitur 'numquam mandatum tuum praeterivi'* (Luke 15:29), "an exegesis in regard to the saints is easy given the fact that he says 'I never once disobeyed your orders.'" In *Letter 48* to Pammachius (347–350) Jerome uses *interpretatio* at once as "translation" and as a given style when he states: *ecclesiastica interpretatio, etiam si habet eloquii venustatem dissimulare eam debet et fugere, ut non otiosis philosophorum scholis paucisque discipulis, sed universo loquatur hominum generi* (350, 1–4), "Christian translating, should it show sweetness of speech, must dissimulate and hide it, so that it does not address philosophical circles and their few pupils, but humankind all over the world," a statement full of apologetic background about the paradox of a universal message delivered by uneducated apostles. One may well guess that in its ecclesiastical status *interpretatio* found itself enhanced through theological motifs. This become clear in Jerome's adulatory *Letter 15* to Damasus, recently installed in Rome despite civil unrest, in which Jerome takes on a more dogmatic tone: he would only by express order speak of "three hypostases with their interpretations," *tres hypostases cum interpretationibus suis* (66, 13–14), preferring by far the Latin terminology of "one substance" and "three persons."

Augustine shares with Jerome the common and basic use of *interpretatio* as “translation,” when he laments: “In all sorts of codices the Latin translations of the Scriptures are so different, that it is hardly bearable.” He dedicates a large portion *De doctrina christiana*, II, to problems of “translation.” He also admits that certain words used in biblical interjections, are best not translated at all, such as *hosanna* or *racha* (*DDC* II, 11.16; Green, 35). In his *Letter* 82 to Jerome, he discusses the latter’s *interpretatio de septuaginta* (34). But Augustine uses *interpretatio* in the modern sense of “explanation” of “exegesis” more frequently. In *De Genesi ad literam* 9, 12, he claims that the *prophetica significatio* keeps the space of interpreting open for a *confirmata figurae interpretatio* (*CSEL* 28, 1, 281.20–21).

In his preached commentary on Ps 134:19, Augustine calls vehemently on the attention of his auditors: *Audite, audite nomina haec, interpretatione typica et sapientia plena*, “Listen, but listen to these names (of Egypt and Pharaoh), for they are full of a typical interpretation and of wisdom.” The *typica interpretatio* means “typological significance,” hence the fullness of wisdom. In other words, *interpretatio* is uplifted by Augustine to the level of hermeneutical theory. The same happens in the *City of God*, where Augustine rejects the *interpretationes physicas* of mythological divinities (7, 5) or their accommodation to present mores through “natural interpretations,” *naturalibus interpretationibus* (7, 18). He knows as well the popular “interpretations” by etymologies: “Galaad has its own interpretive voice and great mystery, as it is translated ‘Heap of testimony,’” *Galaad habet interpretationis suae vocem et magni sacramenti: interpretatur enim Acervus testimonii* (*Enarratio in Ps 59: 9*).

We can hear the continuity of thought in Caesarius of Arles in calling on what he considers the original meaning of a word: “In order to interpret correctly the term (“holy”), one must check the Greek. In Greek God is called *aius* (*hagios*), which means ‘non-terrestrial’. If we are more concerned by heavenly realities than by the earthly ones, we deserve to be called holy” (*Sermo* 1, 19; *CCSL* 103, 15; C. Vogel, *Césaire d’Arles*, 1964, 75; A. Blaise, *Saint Césaire d’Arles*, 1962, 47).

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4. Etymologies

A special case of literal “mystery” was imposed on ancient Christian interpreters by Hebrew names, only meaningful when their semantic roots were exposed. The Christian authors consulted lists of *Etymologies*, or they constructed their own lists in order to make sense of such names in their writings. For *meaning* there was in such names, as in all elements of the sacred texts. Well explained, these names might signal the significance of a whole passage in Scripture, or they might even mark the interpretation of entire books of the Bible. Their etymologies, in most cases built around an image or a symbolic action, gave room for allegories beyond the literal level to which they belonged and tended to divert the exegetes’ attention towards a spiritual interpretation. For the use of that interpretive device Philo of Alexandria had opened the way and all commentators of the Bible in the Greek and Latin speaking churches would follow his lead.

The literal fascination with names of persons or things goes back to Homer and Hesiod. A given name signified a specific power. The power attributed to a divine or mythical being explained its name, in such a case etymology fusing with etiology, the study of the causes. Thus the name “Aphrodites” meant “born from the ἀφρός,” the foam of the waves; “Pandora” meant “Giving all sorts of gifts” (*doreai*). Plato wrote the *Cratylus* with a central theme, the “correctness of names” (ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων) in which he refused to understand names as imposed by nature—φύσει (against the Sophists who supported an arbitrary origin of names imposed by nature), but only as given by convention of language—νόμος, which itself imitates reality.

In Stoicism the science called ἐτυμολογία—“etymology” stated the true nature (ἔτυμον) of things as a being defined according to its *physis* and its *thesis*. Chrysippus, a disciple of Zeno wrote the first *Etymologikon*. Independently from philosophical trends Alexandrian grammarians studied etymologies for deciding about the choice and orthography of words. They discussed the etymologies of names of gods, countries, cities, tribes, professions, religions, animals, plants, stones. Etymology played an essential role

in the development of allegorism, because the etymology of divine names helped to spiritualize the divine beings themselves. “Zeus” was derived from ζῆν—“to live,” as the life-giving god. “Chronos” was calling on *chronos*, “time.” “Apollo” evoked the sun which rises ἀπ’ ἄλλων, “here or there.” “Dionysius” also referred to the sun which “crosses”—διανύει—the whole sky. Such etymologies were transmitted in particular by Cicero, *De natura deorum*; Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*; Varro, *De lingua Latina* (lost); M. Verrius Flaccus, *De verborum significatu* (only excerpts survive). Virgil was particularly fond of etymologies. In the Bible, mainly the so-called Yahwist parts of Genesis are filled with etymologies (Opelt 1966).

Origen of Alexandria considered it his duty as an interpreter of Scripture to clarify the original significance of Hebrew names though he does not seem to have composed a proper “Book of Names,” *Onomastikon*, as Jerome suggested. Collections of etymologies are reflected in the works of Lactantius and Ambrose. Among patristic authors Jerome composed the first known *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, a list arranged according to the books of OT-NT and deriving from a lost Greek source. Before 434 C.E. Eucherius of Lyon included a similar list in the *Instructiones*, vol. 2, which he addressed to Salonius, but he no longer followed an alphabetical order though being partly dependent on Jerome. *Origines* (rather than *Etymologiae*), the etymological encyclopedia of Isidore of Seville, in twenty volumes, marks the closure of that trend of patristic scholarship (Opelt 1966, 831–832).

Among Latin authors only a few more examples may illustrate the etymological practice. Tertullian, for instance, knew that *deus*, or *theos*, derives from *thein* (*Ad Nationes* 2, 4.1), as Basil of Caesarea would repeat two centuries later in *Letter* I, 8 (PG 32, 265a). Tertullian also states: *Christianos vero, quantum interpretatio est, de unctioe deducitur*, “In regard to the meaning (of the word), ‘Christian’ derives from ‘ointment’ (in Greek: *chrisma*)” (*Apol.* 3, 5).

Tertullian, in *Adversus Marcionem* III, 12, 2 notes: “To the name Emmanuel is joined its translation: God with us,” *subiuncta est enim et interpretatio Emmanuhelis: Nobiscum Deus*, in referring to Isaiah 8: 8 or 10; Matthew 1:23. That linguistic data is significant as Tertullian continues his sentence, *uti non solum sonum nominis spectes, sed et sensum. Sonus enim Hebraicus, quod est Emmanuhel, suae gentis est; sensus autem eius, quod est ‘Deus nobiscum’, ex interpretatione communis est*, “So that one registers not only the phonetic aspect (*sonum*) of the name, but also its semantic relevance (*sensum*). For phonetically ‘Emmanuel’ is a Hebrew word, belonging to its people, but semantically ‘God with us’ is common language, thanks to the translation.” The very “translation,” *interpretatio*, universalizes the meaning of the Hebrew

name, and therefore engages the Christian commentator into a christological exegesis.

Pseudo-Cyprian, *De montibus Sina et Sion*, 7, claims to be capable of demonstrating *per scripturarum fidem*, “in accordance with Scripture,” that the previous people (the biblical Israel) is rejected by God, *secundum interpretationem montis Sina dicentis ‘temptatio aeterna et odium’*; “according to the translation of Mount Sinai meaning ‘eternal temptation and aversion.’ Mount Sion translates ‘temptation of exacerbation and spying out.’ That very Latin translation points to the sacred wood of the Passion, as Solomon refers to the same Passion of the Lord in Wis 2:19–22.” Again it is the Latin translation which gives the Latin interpreter the christological key for his exegesis.

Lactantius also proceeds by an etymological argument: *Hystaspes quoque, qui fuit Medorum rex antiquissimus, a quo amnis nomen accepit qui nunc Hydaspes dicitur, admirabile somnium sub interpretatione vaticinantis pueri ad memoriam posteris tradidit*—“Hystaspes also, who was a very ancient king of the Medes, from whom the river which is now called Hydaspes received its name, handed down to the memory of posterity a wonderful dream upon the interpretation of a boy...” (*Div. inst.* VII, 15. 19; transl. ANF 7, 213 W. Fletcher).

Hilary notes concerning Psalm 51:3 that *Abimeleck, interpretatione verbi, ‘fratris mei imperium’ significat*, “Abimeleck, according to the etymology of the word, means ‘power of my brother.’” On Ps 67:14 he comments by reminding his readers that *Selmon interpretatio pacis est*; and on Ps 134:20, by stating: *Seon infructuosae arboris interpretatio est*. Curiously, he seems to operate an inversion of subject and attribute, *Selmon* becoming the Hebrew “translation,” *interpretatio*, of what is commonly called “peace”; *Seon*, the Hebrew *interpretatio* of what “for us” (*nobiscum*) means “fruitless tree.” He adds more explanations based on etymologies: “Jacob exults and Israel rejoices...for, because he grasped with his hand the heel of his brother at their birth, he is called Jacob; and Genesis explains the meaning of the translation (*interpretationis virtutem*) in calling him Jacob, because he is the overthrower of his brother” (cp. Gn 27:36).

Ambrose, *De Ioseph* 3, 14, asks a rhetorical question: “What translation has the name of Joseph, if not to signify divine grace and a manifestation of the supreme God?” *quid interpretationis habet nomen Ioseph nisi quod divinam gratiam significet et expressionem dei summi?*—“what kind of a translation has the name Joseph, if not to signify divine grace and a mark of the supreme deity?,” which leads instantly to identify Joseph as prefiguring Christ. The *latina interpretatio*, he continues, by itself (as he had learned from Tertullian) declares the universal significance of the “Ismaelites” who bought Joseph:

Ismaelitae, qui significantur latina interpretatione, odio habentes Deum suum (CSEL 32.2, 81; PL 14, 647a); they mean “people who hate their God.”

In the Prologue of his prolific commentary on Ps 118, Ambrose introduces a general observation which could be applied to the whole technique of etymologies: *Ipsa quoque litterarum elementa, ut omnia Hebraea nomina, non sunt rationabilis interpretationis vacua atque immunia, quorum significationes locis suis aperiemus*, “The very elements of the letters (namely the letters of the Hebrew alphabet dividing Ps 118 into 22 strophes of eight verses), like all Hebrew names, do not lack a consistent translation, whose different meanings we shall explain in their proper place.” For the Latin author it is properly the Latin “translation” (*interpretatio*) of etymologies that opens an access to the “significance” (*significationes*) of the Hebrew text.

Fontaine, J., *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique*, 2 vols., Paris 1959.

Nelson, H. L. W., *Etymologiae van Isidorus van Sevilla*. Leiden 1954.

Opelt, I., “Etymologie”: *RAC* (1966): 6:826–43.

More titles on etymology can be found in Part B under specific authors, such as Gregory the Great.

II SPIRITUAL EXEGESIS

I. THE NATURE OF THE SPIRITUAL SENSE

A typically hierarchical mode of thought inclined ancient interpreters of the “senses” of Scripture towards metaphors of spatiality more than to metaphors of chronology. A scriptural “sense” was always placed in its spatial relevance, for instance, the literal sense was said to be “lower” or “closer,” and immediately available (ἐπίχειρος) to the reader, whereas the spiritual sense was thought to be “higher” or “deeper” or “more remote.” The literal sense was anchored precisely within the limits of biblical narrations or precepts, whereas the spiritual sense was always ready to soar into divine transcendence. By its very nature the spiritual truth “overarches” its written expression, whereas the literal sense is precisely “conformed” to what is written. The semantic space of the literal sense was conditioned by what was written with divine authority, whereas the space of spiritual significance was proper to God’s thoughts when authorizing the written, and therefore it transcends the letter of the text. The same divine author who breathed vitality and logic into the literal content of Scripture also produced in Scripture a symbolic expression of the uncreated mind.

With such theological representations at work in writing *Peri Archon* IV, 1, Origen of Alexandria perceived a fundamental analogy between a Christian anthropomorphism (which he relentlessly combated in his church community) and a form of biblical literalism, common to “unbelieving Jews,” sectarian Marcionites and uneducated church members, against all of whom he had already protested in earlier chapters of *Peri Archon* (*PA*). It was this polemical context that imposed on Origen *not* to reject the letter itself but rather to denounce the absolutized value given to the letter by those who lacked any openness to the scriptural Spirit. For Origen, anthropomorphism was unacceptable because it rested on a representation of God in bodily terms (*PA* I, 1–2) which led to a misunderstanding of the biblical mode of communication, and ultimately to the betrayal of the salvific message itself.

Origen’s immediate reaction was to build up a theological anthropology capable of a positive response to the challenges of the Spirit-inspired text. In that regard Book I and IV of *PA* present a perfectly symmetrical focus: in Book I, Origen elaborates a notion of divinity freed from anthropomorphic representations, thanks to a critical reshaping of the human components which he calls intellect, psyche and body. In Book IV, the whole purpose of Origen’s hermeneutical exposition is to elaborate a well-founded notion of

the senses of Scripture on the basis on the same three components of human nature, the body being compared with the “bare letter,” the psyche seen as a limited perception of spiritual values in Scripture, and the intellect, or *noûs*, contemplated as the true recipient of the “noetic” or spiritual message of that same Scripture. A faithful reading of Scripture, with full awareness of its spiritual sense, makes a spontaneous distinction between the “flesh” or “letter” of Scripture, its “soul” or the elementary lessons of the biblical narratives, and its “intellect” the supernatural *noûs* of Scripture introducing the reader into divine mysteries.

With this anthropological scheme in place, Origen sought to clarify what was at the core of the spiritual identity of Christian believers and the philosophical implications of that scheme remained at the back of his mind even when he was preaching to an uneducated congregation. However, another scheme prevailed in his scriptural comments, homiletic or literary, a scheme based on Origen’s familiarity with the NT when applying the biblical texts to the actual faith experience of Christians. The dialectic nature of the links between both Testaments called for a “spiritual” interpretation, namely for a Christ-centered reading of all biblical texts. The “spiritual” sense of Scripture, thinkable only inside the church, was the core perspective of Origen’s allegorism, at once christological and ecclesiological. H. de Lubac emphasized the Pauline source of Origen’s christo-ecclesiological focus in the spiritual reading of Scripture (De Lubac 1950, 69–76; 1959, II 373–383). He convincingly demonstrated that the theological center found in Paul’s thought gave Origen a properly Christian system of hermeneutics for the interpretation of Scripture. His openness to non-Christian culture, either Jewish in the case of Philo, or pagan in the case of the many authors and doctrines enumerated by Porphyry as being part of Origen’s scholarship, enabled Origen to incorporate the cultural allegorism of his time in Alexandria and elsewhere. Nonetheless, he was totally structured and focused in his interpretative initiatives by the inner resources of his christo-ecclesiological vision. Without claiming to find in the whole patristic interpretation of Scripture a constant and explicit testimony of such a vision, it seems that the “spiritual exegesis” of ancient Christian exegetes was essentially consonant with that christo-ecclesiological perspective.

The nature and inner structuring of spiritual exegesis in *patristic* culture imposes on the modern mind two essential distinctions:

1. Any definition of cultural and pagan allegorism either as a spiritualizing explanation of ancient myths, or as a moralizing comment on shameful stories needs to be clearly distinguished from the hermeneutical purpose

of early Christians interpreting the OT. The primary concern of the Christian interpreters was to identify themselves as the spiritual heirs of the OT legacy, of its revelation in divine matters and its sacred teaching on the human condition. Their inventiveness as interpreters of the OT responded to one essential need, which was to better understand their *own* position and responsibility in the world of their spiritual experience. Therefore they claimed that ancient stories had been stored in Scripture for *their* instruction or that many significant figures of the OT were simply anticipating the Messiah in whom *they* believed, or again that the whole of biblical Israel found only *now* in *their* community of faith its final *raison d'être*. The actualizing instinct in which such claims were deeply rooted was absolutely central and distinctive in the interpretive approach of Scripture familiar to early Christians, because the OT itself led them to it. In the circle of the interpreter's needs and the OT textual offerings, the early Christian readers of the OT inevitably actualized the latter for the interpretive community of believers to which they belonged.

2. Another distinction indispensable for stating the proper nature of "spiritual exegesis" in the case of patristic interpreters of Scripture has been recently discussed by Christoph Jacob (Jacob 1990, 1992). The hermeneutical system of ancient Christian interpreters calls on "allegory" as its most efficient procedure on two distinct levels: one is properly *hermeneutical* and it defines itself in theological terms best illustrated by Pauline statements as H. de Lubac had observed; the other is *rhetorical*, which is hardly surprising, patristic hermeneutics being part of a rhetorical culture. On the rhetorical level patristic allegory assumes some traditional functions of non-Christian allegorism: "Verschlössende Redeweise (Allegorie) und dekodierende Interpretation (Allegorese) sind überhaupt im Charakteristicum des kulturellen Klimas der Kaiserzeit," "The codified formulation (allegory) and the interpretive deciphering of codes (allegorism) are basic characteristics of the cultural climate at the time of the Empire" (Jacob 1992, 146). "The allegorical reception of Homer and Philo's allegorizing use of Scripture serve as models for Christian interpreters in so far as allegorism helps them to construct a spiritual cosmos whereby they contemplate the Bible like a crystal constantly reflecting new light" (149). Rhetorical allegorism tends to ornament the style, and at the same time to keep it secretive and suggestive of new insights. "In modern evaluations of patristic interpretations of Scripture one data seems to be always missed: it is possible for interpreters to expose the outcome of their allegorism itself being once more sealed up (wiederum allegorisch verschlüsselt)" (152–153). In any case a clear distinction between the literary

forms and the theological function of Christian allegorism helps to focus more accurately on the latter's contribution to the spiritual sense."

This kind of theological "actualizing" found in the allegorical vision of reality the appropriate means for universalizing the biblical message. Thereby the exegetes opened a space without limits of time and space other than the confines of God's redeemed universe. With an explicit affirmation about the *actual* truth of any biblical revelation as its scope, and a cultural ability to express that truth through the multi-faceted mirror of significant analogies, the "spiritual sense" was for early Christian interpreters more than just a rhetorical strategy, it was their proper approach to the divine mystery contained in the sacred words of Scripture. This is why common to all of them, beyond their different languages and cultures, or their local school traditions. Greek or Syriac or Latin alike, belonging to the so-called schools of Alexandria or of Antioch, reaching fame in second century Roman Africa or in sixth century Constantinople, was a shared "spiritual sense" of Scripture, at once rooted in Scripture itself, and in a millennium-old trend of poetic imagination.

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II. THE PROBLEM OF “SENSES” AS METHODS OF EXEGESIS

After 1945, a passionate discussion concerning Bultmannian propositions and the invention of new hermeneutical theories in Continental philosophy indirectly contributed to the study of patristic hermeneutics. At the same time the inner transformation of biblical exegesis, particularly at the cost of a severe crisis in the historical-critical methods, infused some experts with a new interest for patristic methodologies. In addition, a broader knowledge of cultural hermeneutics in Late Antiquity favored a more rigorous approach in the historical definition of patristic methods. Indeed it is foremost as a set of *methods* that spiritual exegesis during the patristic age that defined the scholarly investigations since the end of World War II. Contemplated in themselves, or in their Late Antique setting, or again contrasted with the medieval or modern procedures of biblical exegeses, the patristic methods of spiritual exegesis were submitted to a comprehensive scrutiny which helped to eliminate prejudices and to clarify basic hermeneutical categories such as *typos* and *allegoria*. The “senses of Scripture,” carrying spiritual values on the different semantic levels of the scriptural text were again perceived in their diversity and complementarity. Finally, towards the end of the century some tentative attempts appeared in an effort to reconcile certain forms of allegorism with the post-modern mind.

ALLEGORY AND HISTORY

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Thomas Böhm

a. *Introduction*

The terms history, literal sense, typology, allegory,¹ *theoria*, and *anagoge* are the most commonly used with respect to the methods of interpretation by the Fathers. The origin of the different notions and conceptions connected with these terms have already been discussed to such a degree that it would go beyond the framework of this study if the author even attempted to survey the main contributions. Above all, it must be stressed that these notions cannot be separated from each other in a clear and satisfactory way.² W. A. Bienert is right in calling for precise research into *each* of the different terms in respect to the variety of the notions *and* in respect to every single author.³ It is thus impossible to start with a clarification of the notions (in the sense of a *definition*).

Moreover, the different aspects to be taken into account have already been explored in the context of a whole range of Fathers. Depending on the patristic author, the exegesis is oriented more towards the literal or towards the allegorical sense.⁴ The results of this long research need not be repeated, as I do not intend to present a study of an individual author in this paper.⁵ A different approach has been chosen here, one which B. Studer has described in an exemplary way for the fourth century by the motto “from *historia* to *theoria*.”⁶ The task, therefore, is to explicate the necessary relationship between history and allegory in a systematic way. In other words, in which

1. In the sense of *Allegorie* and *Allegorese*.

2. Cf., e.g., W. A. Bienert, ‘*Allegoria*’ und ‘*Anagoge*’ bei Didymos dem Blinden von Alexandria (Berlin, 1972), 51–57.

3. Cf. Bienert, ‘*Allegoria*’ und ‘*Anagoge*’, 57.

4. Cf., e.g., M. Simonetti, *Lettera e/o Allegoria: Un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome, 1985)—with references to the Fathers.

5. The enumeration and the context of these themes can easily be found in the relevant essays: cf., e.g., J. C. Joosen and J. H. Waszink, “Allegorese,” *RAC* 1:283–93; W. E. Gerber, “Exegese III (NT u. Alte Kirche),” *RAC* 6:1211–29; H.-J. Horn, “Allegorese außerchristlicher Texte I,” *TRE* 2:276–83, here 278–82.

6. Cf. B. Studer, “Der geschichtliche Hintergrund des ersten Buches *Contra Eunomium* Gregors von Nyssa,” in B. Studer, *Dominus Salvator. Studien zur Christologie und Exegese der Kirchenväter* (Rome, 1992), 463–98, here 492.

respect was it necessary for allegory to rely on history in order to explicate a deeper (superior) meaning of Scripture? Such a step is necessary only if a number of presuppositions of a philosophical nature are admitted—e.g., the presupposition of a Platonic or Neoplatonic description of reality as image; such a view of reality implies also an ascent of the soul as being made like God so that one can interpret the Scripture as leading (*anagogé*) to a superior realm—in parallel to the hierarchical reality of being. This systematic orientation underlying the relationship between history and allegory will be clarified by way of examples in the exegesis of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Gregory of Nyssa.

b. *Two notions: History and Allegory*

i. *The Systematic Place of the Two Notions*

The development which can be detected in respect to the different conceptions regarding the sense of Scripture are summed up by a motto of the 13th century introduced by Augustine of Denmark: *Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia*.⁷ The first thing that can be stated in this context is that the so-called literal interpretation of Scripture stresses the history of God with men; in contrast to this sense, allegory as a form of symbolic language, is the basis of every meaning of Scripture different from the literal one.⁸ In this regard the authors of the Early Church differentiated some non-literal senses of Scripture, but they showed no consistent interest in a clear-cut definition of the non-historical senses.⁹

However, one has to bear in mind that despite all the differences of both historical and allegorical interpretation there is some common ground; this is evident if one compares Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus on one hand and Origen on the other hand as “typical” representatives of

7. Cf. C. Dohmen, “Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn—Möglichkeiten und Grenzen neuerer Zugänge zu biblischen Texten,” in *Neue Formen der Schriftauslegung?* (ed. T. Sternberg; Freiburg, 1992), 13–74, here 17.

8. Cf. Dohmen, “Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn,” 17; also H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture*, vol. 1.2 (Paris, 1959), 425–681; W. Kern and F.-J. Niemann, *Theologische Erkenntnislehre* (Düsseldorf, 1981), 69–78.

9. Cf. C. Jacob, “Allegorese: Rhetorik, Ästhetik, Theologie,” in *Neue Formen der Schriftauslegung?* (ed. T. Sternberg; Freiburg, 1992), 131–63, here 133. Cf. e.g., Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant Prol* (GNO VI; 5, 6–8 Langerbeck); cf. F. Dünzl, *Braut und Bräutigam. Die Auslegung des Canticum durch Gregor von Nyssa* (Tübingen, 1993), 57f.

these methods of interpretation: both lines of thought are influenced by the rhetorical-grammatical tradition and thus they stand on the same ground.¹⁰ C. Schäublin emphasizes correctly that, in the last resort, every philology is based upon a philosophical mindset,¹¹ and this is also true for the methods of interpretation of the Bible in the rhetorical-grammatical tradition. Two levels can thus be differentiated for history and allegory: a rhetorical-grammatical and a philosophical one. Both are related to each other within the interpretation of Scripture and both are to be presupposed for a theological integration of these methods.

As to a definition of the notions used in the field of rhetoric, two aspects have to be considered: 1) It is striking that for Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia history has a priority; however, the notion itself (ἱστορικόν) is not clearly defined by either author; their view of history can primarily be seen as a delimitation against an allegorical interpretation.¹² 2) Despite this, contrary to the first aspect (ἱστορικόν) a clear definition of the notion ‘allegory’ for different authors—e.g., Philo of Alexandria and Origen—is evident. In this respect I. Christiansen has rightly pointed out that the definition of allegory by the rhetorician Heraclitus and by Cocondrius is most important for an understanding of allegory as used by Philo of Alexandria and Origen. This is because Philo emphasizes the difference between language and thought: Symbols exist within words which can only be grasped by thoughts.¹³ Similarly, Cocondrius who, after Heraclitus, is most influential for Philo and the Fathers, writes: ἀλληγορία ἐστὶ φράσις ἕτερον μὲν δηλοῦσα κυρίως, ἑτέραν δὲ ἔννοιαν παριστώσα (allegory is an expression which properly shows another “thing,” but which has presented another notion).¹⁴ If there is a difference, however, between ἕτερον and

10. Cf. C. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese* (Cologne, 1974); B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Basel, 1987). On the exegetical practice of Origen see also H. Karpp, *Schrift, Geist und Wort Gottes. Geltung und Wirkung der Bibel in der Geschichte der Kirche—von der Alten Kirche bis zum Ausgang der Reformationszeit* (Darmstadt, 1992), 39; M. Canévet, “La Bible et les Pères: jeunesse et impatience,” *NRT* 116 (1994): 48–60.

11. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 30.

12. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 156; for Diodorus cf. the important study of G. Rinaldi, “Diodoro di Tarso, Antiochia e le regioni della polemica antiallegorista,” *Augustinianum* 33 (1993): 407–30.

13. Cf. Philo, *De Abrahamo* 119 (Cohn/Wendland 27, 16ff.); *Leg. all.* II 15 (Cohn/Wendland 93, 25ff.).

14. Cocondrius, *Περὶ τρόπων* (Spengel 234, 28f.); similarly Heraclitus, *Quaest. Hom.* 5, 15–6, 1 (Oelmann); cf. I. Christiansen, *Die Technik der allegorischen*

ἕτερον (“the other” and “the other”), the homogeneousness of the things compared (language and thought) is implied as there is no contrast between the one and the other. Instead, otherness is already expressed in the first ἕτερον. Both parts of the definition correspond as they show the same contrast to something different which is according to the rhetorician Heraclitus the ἕν.¹⁵ The context of this principle, namely a definition of allegory which stresses the difference between the “other” and a “point of relation” (the ἕν), and which is taken over from the rhetorical tradition, set the idea that something is shown by the allegory which transcends the expression (φράσις) itself. Hence, allegory implies that further and beyond those aspects which seem to be hidden at first sight, the text or parts of it may well lead to yet another level of meaning.

For the time being, the *philosophical implications* need to be separated from the rhetorical insights described. Both for the philosophical foundation as well as for the philosophical implications of a philological explanation of a text, it is not necessary to think in terms of a one-sided confrontation of Aristotelianism and Platonism,¹⁶ as if Aristotelianism would necessarily and exclusively stress the presence of forms in the world, whereas Platonism would lead to a vertical view of the world with the ideas at the top. That the difference between Aristotelianism and Platonism had informed the dichotomy between literal and historically oriented interpretation on the one hand and allegorical interpretation on the other hand,¹⁷ (quite apart from the influence of the Stoa, which should not be neglected), is at very least a one-sided and problematic conclusion. It follows that Theodore of Mopsuestia should not be seen as devoting himself to Aristotelianism and interpreting the Scriptures in this respect, but rather engaging into rejecting, modifying, or harmonizing the Platonic assumptions with Biblical views (e.g., moral conceptions).¹⁸

Auslegungswissenschaft bei Philon von Alexandria (Tübingen, 1969), 135; Bienert, ‘Allegoria’ und ‘Anagoge,’ 52f.; J. Pépin, *Mythe et allégorie. Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes* (2d ed.; Paris, 1976), 88.

15. Cf. Heraclitus, *Quaest. Hom.* 100,5ff. (Oelmann).

16. E.g., A. von Harnack, C. Raven, L. Patterson, etc.: cf. R. A. Norris, *Manhood and Christ* (Oxford, 1963), 250–52. Similarly H. N. Bate, “Some Technical Terms of Greek Exegesis,” *JThS* 24 (1923): 59–66, here, e.g., 59.

17. This is also the tendency of Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 30, 33, 59f.

18. Cf. F. M. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon; A Guide to the Literature and its Background* (2d ed. London, 1988), 207; R. A. Norris, *Manhood*, 123–234.

At this point, I therefore propose the following *hypothesis*: The allegorical interpretation¹⁹ seems to presuppose a much stronger philosophical thrust than the so-called historical (ἱστορικόν).²⁰

Such a tendency can be shown in the classical interpretation of texts, e.g., the exegesis of Homer. There the classical philologists emphasize that Homer has to be interpreted by himself.²¹ All the enigmas, contradictions and the immoral, anthropomorphical character of the statements of Homer, e.g., about the Gods, are, according to this interpretation, not the result of the author's carelessness; instead they represent a conscious encoding of his thoughts. It is thus the task of the interpreter to unveil the hidden.²² With respect to allegory, there are close affinities of this interpretation with the principle of Cocondrius. All that Homer has explicated narratively within the sensual realm, refers by itself to the noetic realm.²³ The basic intention of the exegesis of Homer reveals that the critique of Homer (e.g., by Xenophanes) and his "rehabilitation" are connected; and both can only be understood (as critique) against the background of a fundamental attitude motivated by theology and philosophy. On the one hand, this leads to a position where Homer must be explained by Homer, on the other hand, the interpreters tried to use other resources for explaining the text (e.g., the context of Homer, etc.).

If one attempts to conceive the reference of explications of a text with regard to the intelligible more accurately, the shape of a manifold meaning of Scripture proves to be implicitly determined by philosophical categories,²⁴ in part at least by Platonic philosophy. The (philosophical) allegory is primarily interested in how the problem is set, and this can be the philosophical and theological thought respectively, or the truth of reality in the poetry of Homer and the Platonic myths.²⁵ One of the central aspects of (neo-) Platonic philosophy can be described as the presence of the prototype in the image.

19. In respect to the allegorical interpretation one has to differentiate between a pure rhetorical allegory as a medium of style and the allegory which is of a philosophical-theological nature; for this difference cf. C. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 120; C. Jacob, "Allegorese," 139, 148.

20. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 36.

21. Cf. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 276–85.

22. F. Buffière, *Les Mythes d'Homère et la Pensée Grecque* (Paris, 1973), 25–31.

23. Buffière, *Mythes d'Homère*, 32–44, 48f.; also H. Dörrie, "Zur Methodik antiker Exegese," *ZNW* 65 (1974): 121–38, here 124.

24. Cf. Dohmen, "Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn," 22.

25. W. Beierwaltes, *Denken des Einen: Studien zur neuplatonischen Philosophie und ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte* (Frankfurt, 1985), 297.

Therefore, one can draw a conclusion from the image to the prototype or source because of an analogous structure: If the prototype causes something, the prototype must be present in the thing caused in some sense and, therefore, identical with it in some respect. However, the thing established by causation must also be different from the cause, so that analogy implies identity *and* difference at the same time. Thus, the sensual can be thought of as an effective sign of the intelligible, and the intelligible again as a sign of the transcending reality as such, because of the presence which had already been established *within* the intelligible: this is the structure in which the function of language and the theory of allegorical understanding can be seen in the context of a Platonizing thought.²⁶ The referential character of language which relies on a source (already established within the intelligible) is not maintained or intended by the treatment of texts in the sense of history. Thus, allegory has a more philosophical thrust (implied *inter alia* through its origin from the exegesis of Homer) through all the “instruments” (*instrumentarium*) and through its aim to relate the sensual to the noetic realm. As far as the philosophical aspect is concerned, the greatest difference between history and allegory in interpreting Scripture lies here.²⁷

ii. *Some Examples of the Interpretation of History and Allegory*²⁸

The above hypothesis of the (philosophically conditioned) origin of the difference between history and allegory (together with the common basis of the rhetorical-grammatical tradition) can be expanded: both methods of interpretation are also similar in respect to their structure; both begin with the historical action of God; both try to explicate the “Sitz im Leben” of the Holy Scripture; and, moreover, both intend to play down the distance between Scripture and the community which is made necessary by the contemplation of history. This is done by referring to the problems of local communities.

If the so-called historical or literal interpretation tries to reject the view of reality and language which is mediated by the Platonic philosophy, it primarily allows a view of history in terms of its own dynamic. Such a concentration on the interpretation of Scripture combined with an interest

26. Cf. Beierwaltes, *Denken des Einen*, 307.

27. Cf. Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 207 (for Theodore of Mopsuestia).

28. I do not cite the antique authors extensively because it is not intended to explicate special aspects of every single theologian, but to find out the fundamental lines of disparate thoughts.

in history can be shown in the case of Theodore of Mopsuestia.²⁹ Theodore begins his argumentation with the manifestation of God in history; therefore, God's specific actions and men's reactions have to be contemplated within the different historical contexts.³⁰ This is true as well where Christ prays the Psalms of David on the cross, because the historical circumstances of these Psalms have to be taken into consideration. The prophets have spoken to men of *their* time.³¹

Theodore chooses this basic historical viewpoint also for the interpretation of the NT: there he also carefully attends to the respective grammatical background of the different expressions, the problems of the text, and "dark" passages, or he tries to explain the point of departure of a narrative³²—thus the rhetorical scope influences his own exegetical theology as well as the theology of those who use allegory.³³ If, in contrast to this position, allegory interprets the expressions of the OT in a prefigurative way (messianic-christological, typological etc.), it undermines (in Theodore's eyes) the newness of the revelation in Christ through whom God wanted to establish a new beginning exceeding the OT.³⁴ Consequently, where such a view of revelation is introduced to exegesis, it leads to a doctrine of two ages³⁵ which tries to grasp Old and New Testament as two moments, with their own historical situations, and which conceives each as a unity. But a historical development always produces a distance in time because the "thing" contemplated is looked at as such.³⁶

Theodore of Mopsuestia knows that some expressions of Scripture should not be taken literally. He tries to integrate a typology into his view

29. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 168; R. Bultmann, *Die Exegese des Theodor von Mopsuestia* (posthumous ed. by H. Feld and K. H. Schelkle; Stuttgart, 1984), 99–102. Cf. also M. F. Wiles, *Theodore of Mopsuestia as Representative of the Antiochene School* (Cambridge History of the Bible 1; Cambridge, 1970), 489–510.

30. Cf., e.g., *In Ps* 32 Praef (PG 66,668CD).

31. Cf., e.g., *In Ps* 72 (PG 66,692D–693A); see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 204f.

32. Cf., e.g., Comm. in Joh (4f. Vosté); see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 206.

33. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 170.

34. Cf. *Cat. Hom* I 118f. (Mingana); see Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 200, 205.

35. Cf., e.g., *Cat. Hom* VIII 11 (203 Tonneau); *In I^{um} ad Thess.* V 4 (II 33 Swete); see Norris, *Manhood*, 160–172; Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 200; B. Studer, *La riflessione teologica nella Chiesa imperiale (sec. IV e V)* (Rome, 1989), 25, 171.

36. It is nevertheless not meant that an antique author must necessarily have had such an objective view as is deduced from a modern hermeneutical perspective.

of history which he understands as being an image of future things, namely the events of the Christian period;³⁷ the history of Israel in its development points towards Christianity. Everything has its meaning in terms of the future which now becomes present. Thus a past event shows a similarity or relationship with the present time.³⁸ A text can, therefore, have a double meaning: the historical sense and that of a *typos*, which is the prerogative of that time corresponding to the text in regard to its recorded circumstances, *and* the sense related to the present time evolving out of the already established future. The *typos* is, nevertheless, subject to a number of criteria, that is, it is subject to disparate contexts of different times³⁹ and to the fact that the past has to burst its own scope (ὑπερβολή).⁴⁰ Only because the past is not restricted to itself, but has a meaning which is important for another perspective of time, a narrative of the OT can be seen as *typos* of another event.

The OT is related to the NT by the term *typos* from an historical point of view. By the same token, Scripture as a whole is meant to be of *use* for people by extolling examples according to the classical principle *delectare et prodesse* (to enjoy and to be of use).⁴¹ We are to be educated by instruction and consolation and so the interpretation of Scripture is—in the sense of Theodore—incorporated into a Christian pastoral understanding.⁴² A biblical text also opens itself up through *exemplary* application to an actual situation, not in the sense of modern actualizing tendencies, so much as it provides a context for the history of salvation.⁴³ *History* can, therefore, be seen (e.g., in respect to Theodore of Mopsuestia) under three aspects which are interwoven: as an event in the past (in the sense of *historisch*), as a historical (*geschichtlich*) development, and as pastoral (exemplary) practice. It is situated against a rhetorical background which assumes certain philosophical premises (rejection or modification of Platonic assumptions) and theologi-

37. Cf., e.g., *In Rom* 3,12 (PG 66,793 B); see Bultmann, *Exegese*, 105f.; Simonetti, *Lettera*, 168.

38. Cf. *In Joel* 2,28ff. (159 Wegnern).

39. Cf. *In Mich* 4,1–3 (343 Wegnern); *In Jon* Praef (279 Wegnern).

40. Cf. *In Joel* 2,28ff. (156 Wegnern); see Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 165f.; Bultmann, *Exegese*, 107; Simonetti, *Lettera*, 172; Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 205.

41. Cf. B. Studer, “*Delectare et prodesse*: Zu einem Schlüsselwort der patristischen Exegese,” in Studer, *Dominus Salvator*, 431–61; also Simonetti, *Lettera*, 173 for Theodore.

42. Cf. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen*, 162–65.

43. Cf. Dohmen, “Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn,” 20.

cal reflections.⁴⁴ In the case of Theodore these theological reflections are primarily about christology and theology of revelation.⁴⁵

Similarly one can state for Gregory of Nyssa that his exegetical efforts are not only dominated by the striving towards a pure interpretation of a biblical text. They are accompanied by a protreptic aspect and the intention to fertilize Scripture, as can be shown in *De vita Moysis*⁴⁶ or the *Homilies on the Canticle*.⁴⁷ Although he works with similar prerequisites—protreptic and pastoral intention respectively as well as with a broad agreement of the rhetorical thrust⁴⁸—Gregory tries to understand Scripture in the sense of *theoria* / *allegoria*.⁴⁹ This should not be seen as exaggerated speculation, for in the *Vita Moysis* Gregory refers again and again to history in order to find a superior sense in a second step.⁵⁰ This tendency cannot simply be dismissed by arguing that, in general, Gregory only tries to find prefigurations of Christ in the OT. His view of *theoria*, which is at the basis of his interpretation, is connected *also* with ontology.

Gregory of Nyssa thought of the difference between the created and the uncreated as a basic distinction beneath that of the sensual and the intelligible.⁵¹ Reality in its entirety is laid out in space and time, thus being characterized by distance (διάστημα and διάστασις). Everything which is constituted by distance or extension differs necessarily from anything else

44. Cf. C. Kannengiesser, "Die Bibel, wie sie in der frühen Kirche gelesen wurde: Die patristische Exegese und ihre Voraussetzungen," *Conc(D)* 27 (1991): 25–30, here 30; Jacob, "Allegorese," 157.

45. Cf., e.g., R. A. Greer, *Theodore of Mopsuestia. Exegete and Theologian* (London 1961), 112–31; Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*, 207f.

46. Cf. *VMoys* I 8–15 (4,16–7,3 Musurillo).

47. Cf. *Cant Prol* (3,1–13,21 Langerbeck).

48. Cf., e.g., A. Spira, "Rhetorik und Theologie in den Grabreden Gregors von Nyssa," *StPatr* 9 (1966): 106–14; C. Klock, *Untersuchungen zu Stil und Rhythmus bei Gregor von Nyssa: Ein Beitrag zum Rhetorikverständnis der griechischen Väter* (Frankfurt, 1987); H. M. Meissner, *Rhetorik und Theologie. Der Dialog Gregors von Nyssa De Anima et Resurrectione* (Frankfurt, 1991).

49. Cf. *VMoys* II 43 (45,11f. Musurillo); on the whole problem cf., e.g., G.-I. Gargano, *La Teoria di Gregorio di Nissa sul Cantico dei Cantici. Indagine su alcune indicazioni di metodo esegetico* (Rome, 1981), 95–244.

50. Cf., e.g., *VMoys* II 42f (45,1–13 Musurillo); *VMoys* II 51 (47,21–48,4 Musurillo).

51. Cf., e.g., *Eun* I 273f (106,12–23 Jaeger); on this aspect cf. A. A. Mosshammer, "The Created and the Uncreated in Gregory of Nyssa *Contra Eunomium* 1,105–113," in *El Contra Eunomium I en la producción literaria de Gregorio de Nisa* (ed. L. F. Mateo-Seco and J.L. Bastero; Pamplona, 1988), 353–79.

in order to be existent and recognizable as the same entity.⁵² This is in clear distinction from God for whom, as the Uncreated, one cannot assume any extension because then he would have to be different in himself according to his nature. As God is seen by Gregory as ἀδιάστατον⁵³ and infinite,⁵⁴ being made like God can only be described as perpetual progress for human beings,⁵⁵ but not as union in the Plotinian sense.⁵⁶

The linguistic level corresponds to this basic ontological structure adopted by Gregory: language based on its own διάστημα has physical aspects which depend on the form of the sound (in accordance to the Stoic theory).⁵⁷ It can only *inadequately* express thoughts because they do not have a similar extension even though they are different in themselves. As everything created, including the (created) intelligible realm, is characterized by difference, language has its meaning in terms of making the description of difference possible; in this sense it characterizes the created order as a whole in respect to its being differentiated.⁵⁸

As language (and therefore also the biblical text)⁵⁹ can only describe reality as a whole, but not the uncreated without διάστημα, language only

52. Cf. T. P. Verghese, “ΔΙΑΣΤΗΜΑ and ΔΙΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ in Gregory of Nyssa: Introduction to a concept and the posing of a problem,” in *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie* (ed. H. Dörrie, M. Altenburger, and U. Schramm; Leiden, 1976), 243–60 (with the references to Gregory).

53. Cf. *Eun* I 176 (79,5f. Jaeger).

54. Cf., e.g., *VMoys* I 7 (4,8 Musurillo); esp. E. Mühlberg has pointed to the problems of the infinity of God deducing this conception esp. from *Contra Eunomium* (cf. E. Mühlberg, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa: Gregors Kritik am Gottesbegriff der klassischen Metaphysik* [Göttingen, 1966]). I cannot discuss his position here; some critical remarks can be found, e.g., in W. Ullmann, “Der logische und der theologische Sinn des Unendlichkeitsbegriffes in der Gotteslehre Gregors von Nyssa, *Bijdragen* 48 (1987): 150–71.

55. Cf. *VMoys* II 237–39 (116,3–23 Musurillo).

56. On Plotinus cf., e.g., W. Beierwaltes, “Plotins philosophische Mystik,” in *Grundfragen christlicher Mystik* (ed. M. Schmidt and D. R. Bauer; Stuttgart, 1987), 39–49, here 43–47 (with references to Plotinus).

57. Cf., e.g., *Eun* II 207–209 (285,17–286,6 Jaeger); see T. Kobusch, “Name und Sein: Zu den sprachphilosophischen Grundlagen in der Schrift *Contra Eunomium* des Gregor von Nyssa,” in *El Contra Eunomium I en la producción literaria de Gregorio de Nisa* (ed. L. F. Mateo-Seco and J. L. Bastero; Pamplona, 1988), 247–68, here 256f.

58. Cf. A. A. Mosshammer, “Disclosing but not Disclosed: Gregory of Nyssa as Deconstructionist,” in *Studien zu Gregor von Nyssa und der christlichen Spätantike* (ed. H. R. Drobner and C. Klock; Leiden, 1990), 99–123, here 106f.

59. Cf. Mosshammer, “Disclosing,” 117–19.

enables us to grasp the infinite being, God, in terms of difference. For Gregory, being made like God and participation in God mean that the aim must be to reach the original state of humankind before the Fall and, thus, attain to the closest possible proximity to God,⁶⁰ whilst the distance to God can never be overcome⁶¹ it is necessary for us to strive towards the intelligible by discarding all that is alien.⁶² This movement towards God is particularly founded in Neoplatonism.⁶³ It was assimilated in a Christian context by Gregory of Nyssa. The tendency of approximation towards the intelligible beyond the sensual is mediated by the linguistic form: by using the language of difference one should ultimately be able to transcend the difference. According to Gregory, keeping silent before the mystery of God (infinity) would be the most meaningful response as language constantly remains within the limits of difference.⁶⁴ In order to make the Christian message plausible and accessible for us,⁶⁵ the human being (here the teacher who is qualified for the task)⁶⁶ is invited to speak about God within his or her limits even though this will always remain inadequate. Although the events in the history of salvation are differentiated within themselves (*as* events) all human beings should try to overcome the differentiation and to imitate the unity of God himself. Gregory thus frequently uses the image of taking off one's clothes (shoes),⁶⁷ when he refers to the transcendence of the sensual, in order to show a superior sense of Scripture as analogical ascent. Within the movement towards God, the metaphor (e.g., the metaphor of light) is the

60. Cf. H. Merki, 'OMOIΩΣΙΣ ΘΕΩΙ: Von der platonischen Angleichung an Gott zur Göttlichkeit bei Gregor von Nyssa (Freiburg i. Ue., 1952), e.g., 94–124.

61. Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Cant* 5 (158,12–19 Langerbeck); see M.-B. v. Stritzky, *Zum Problem der Erkenntnis bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Münster, 1973), 97.

62. Cf. *VMoys* II 201 (103,4–12 Musurillo); see G. Watson, "Gregory of Nyssa's Use of Philosophy in the Life of Moses," *IThQ* 53 (1987): 100–112, here 101f.

63. Cf. G. Watson, "Gregory," 101f.; W. Beierwaltes, *Selbsterkenntnis und Erfahrung der Einheit. Plotins Enneade V 3: Text, Übersetzung, Interpretation, Erläuterungen* (Frankfurt, 1991), 251.

64. Cf. *Eccl* 7 (416,7f. Alexander); see D. Carabine, "Gregory of Nyssa on the Incomprehensibility of God," in *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity* (ed. T. Finan and V. Twomey; Dublin, 1992), 79–99, here 94; A. Meredith, "Homily I," in *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on Ecclesiastes: An English Version with Supporting Studies* (ed. S. G. Hall; Berlin, 1993), 145–58, here 154.

65. Cf. *Or Cat* 32 (117,7f. Srawley); see Meissner, *Rhetorik*, 150.

66. Cf. Meissner, *Rhetorik*, 35–42 and—based upon this study—E. Peroli, *Il Platonismo e l'antropologia filosofica di Gregorio di Nisa. Con particolare riferimento agli influssi di Platone, Plotino e Porfirio* (Milan, 1993), 60–65.

67. Cf. *VMoys* II 201 (103,4–12 Musurillo).

appropriate, although still inadequate, possibility one has to speak of being made like God. Transcending the sensual, metaphor and analogy are also the essential elements to develop the *historia* (of God) as *theoria/allegoria* for human beings.⁶⁸

Thus, it is evident that Gregory of Nyssa and Theodore of Mopsuestia make two basic assumptions which can be interpreted as common ground: 1) The foundation of every interpretation of Scripture is *history*; 2) Scripture is to be related to the community of the believers. Despite the common rhetorical-grammatical tradition, the difference lies primarily in *how* and *by which* theological-philosophical *methods* history is related to the readers—a history which for the first time confronts the believers with a clear distance. This is done through the term *typos* and a modified attitude towards Platonism (Theodore) or by the implementation and conscious integration (χρησις)⁶⁹ of *allegory*, which (despite the Stoic influences) has to be understood in terms of its Platonic presuppositions. It follows that an exegesis which tries to integrate the actual situation of believers begins with history, but the mediation of history is structured by a second element, thus leading to a sense of Scripture which follows necessarily from history, but is different from it.

c. *Synchronic and Diachronic Reading of the Bible: An Outlook*

The different attempts to understand the Bible converge in that God has acted in history, and therefore events of the past are told which have really taken place—from a perspective of distance.⁷⁰ But Scripture does not only derive meaning because it informs a reader of past events; it does not only supersede historical facts and mediate a glorified picture of the past for a community which relies on an inspired book. This cannot be true because it seems to be very problematic to speak of *facts* which can be contemplated within themselves and which should be isolated as *bruta facta*. Such a view would be realized only if historical events did not depend on the interpreter as well. History is, therefore, always an interpreted history (in the sense of *Geschichte*): It is true for canonical reception that the Bible and the church never existed separately. Hence for someone in antiquity, Scripture has its

68. Cf. M. N. Esper, *Allegorie und Analogie bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Bonn, 1979), 28–36, 59–84.

69. Cf. C. Gnllka, *XPHΣΙΣ: Die Methode der Kirchenväter im Umgang mit der antiken Kultur I: Der Begriff des "rechten Gebrauchs"* (Basel, 1984); C. Gnllka, *XPHΣΙΣ: Die Methode der Kirchenväter im Umgang mit der antiken Kultur II: Kultur und Conversion* (Basel, 1993).

70. Cf. Kern and Niemann, *Theologische Erkenntnislehre*, 72f.

proper sense only if it is interpreted in the church and for the church,⁷¹ situated in a comprehensive history of salvation.⁷²

In this context, the literal sense of Scripture can be seen as the meaning of the text, i.e., to receive something from Scripture within a comprehensible process. "Literal" need not mean only that real history must be told step by step, but that the text stretched out so to speak "in space" includes metaphors and leads to the idea of God in movement within the time of human biography. A synchronic reading which understands "literal" only in a fundamentalistic sense cannot be true because meanings are not mediated ahistorically.⁷³ Rather, it is the history of groups (communities) and single persons which is confronted—in a diachronic step because of the continuity of the *Wirkungsgeschichte* (history of reception) in time—with the presence of the text of Scripture without Scripture itself being reduced to a static icon of our own (emotional) behavior. Narratives, in the sense of histories, are being told in a new way for a new historical context (e.g., the different gospels with their pastoral situations); therefore, a diachronic reading necessarily belongs to the text itself, and it seems plausible for the reading of Scripture to represent the text under changing conditions in diachronic time, for example, in the liturgy.⁷⁴ The approach to the Bible as *historia and allegoria*, can be seen under socio-cultural conditions: The single believer who wants to find his/her identity⁷⁵ within the presence of the history of salvation is a part of a synchronic community of faith which is again part of a diachronic community of faith.⁷⁶ Thus, a text can *also* be understood from the standpoint of a (pastoral) history of reception *and* the interest in the original setting of the text.⁷⁷

71. Cf. Kannengiesser, "Bibel," 26, 28; Dohmen, "Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn," 20; Jacob, "Allegorese," 152, 157–160.

72. Cf. on a comprehensive, systematic context F. Mildenerger, *Biblische Dogmatik: Eine biblische Theologie in dogmatischer Perspektive*. Vol. 1: *Prolegomena: Verstehen und Geltung der Bibel* (Stuttgart, 1991), 62–71.

73. Cf. R. D. Williams, "The Literal Sense of Scripture," *Modern Theology* 7 (1991) 121–34, here 123–25.

74. Cf. Williams, "Literal Sense," 126–29; D. Monshouwer, "The Reading of the Scriptures in the Early Church," *Bijdragen* 54 (1993): 57–71.

75. Cf. E. Runggaldier, "Personen und diachrone Identität," *PhJ* 99 (1992): 262–86; L. Honnefelder, "Der Streit um die Person in der Ethik," in *Jahres- und Tagungsbericht der Görresgesellschaft 1992* (Paderborn, 1992), 46–68, here 58.

76. Cf. Dohmen, "Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn," 24f.

77. Cf. Dohmen, "Vom vielfachen Schriftsinn," 36, 54, 62; cf. also R. Warning, *Rezeptionsästhetik: Theorie und Praxis* (2d ed.; Munich, 1979); H. Link,

Because the diachronic interpretation, as shown according to Theodore of Mopsuestia and Gregory of Nyssa, makes implicit or explicit philosophical assumptions, the level of interpretation can be seen as a contextualized and contextualizing reference⁷⁸ to Scripture. Thus, the theoretical status of philosophy is not just an external application to a “pure” biblical text. Philosophy has an original function for conceptions within an adequate interpretation extended within time.⁷⁹ In this sense *historia* and *allegoria* are situated in the texture of the rhetorical-grammatical tradition, of philosophy and theology, embedded in a diachronic pastoral practice of the history of salvation. This does not imply, in our view, a return to a precritical time of exegesis,⁸⁰ but an understanding of the exegesis of different contexts and *their* respective conditions.

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78. On this differentiation cf. P. Beer, *Kontextuelle Theologie: Überlegungen zu ihrer systematischen Grundlegung* (BÖT 26; Paderborn, 1995).
79. Cf. A. J. Bucher, “Heideggers Metaphysikkritik als Nihilismus-Therapie oder: Das Ende der Metaphysik als Anfang sinnvollen Seinsverständnisses,” in *Metaphysik in un-metaphysischer Zeit* (ed. E. Coreth; Düsseldorf, 1989), 45–68, here 64f. (der Philosophie kommt für eine adäquate, zeit-extensive Interpretation eine originäre Konzeptionsfunktion zu). Cf. also M. Frank, *Das individuelle Allgemeine. Textstrukturierung und -interpretation nach Schleiermacher* (Frankfurt, 1985); R. Palmer, “Allegorical, Philological, and Philosophical Hermeneutics: Three Modes in a Complex Heritage,” in St. Kresic (Ed.), *Contemporary Literary Hermeneutics and Interpretation of Classical Texts* (ed. S. Kresic; Ottawa, 1981), 15–32.
80. Cf. Kannengiesser, “Bibel,” 30; A. M. Ritter stresses this point correctly against C. Jacob (cf. A. M. Ritter, review of C. Jacob, “*Arkandisziplin*,” *Allegorese, Mystagogie. Ein neuer Zugang zur Theologie des Ambrosius von Mailand* [Frankfurt, 1990] in *TLZ* 119 [1994]: 250–52, here 252 against Jacob, “*Arkandisziplin*,” 191); on the problem see U. H. J. Körtner, “Schrift und Geist: Über Legitimität und Grenzen allegorischer Schriftauslegung,” *NZStH* 36 (1994): 1–17.

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T. Böhm's special contribution strongly emphasizes the inner cohesion of the principles which made exegesis "spiritual" for patristic interpreters. At the core of their hermeneutical construct, those interpreters secured first of all a perception of history, proper to the realm of biblical spirituality. History's becoming "biblical" demanded the proper order of succession and the intimate connaturality of OT and NT. As the very source of their experience of faith, the NT turned the believers towards a creative re-writing of the OT. The more they assimilated the story of Jesus as narrated by the NT the more they discovered that the NT was already announced, or better, "immanent" in the OT. Hence the scriptural canon of the churches consolidated in such a way that interpreters had no more to wonder *whether* the Scriptures combined OT and NT but only *how* they best combined for delivering their message of salvation.

In the liturgical celebrations of their communities, or in their doctrinal thought in general, the earliest Christian communities found themselves without a proper legacy to construct an adequate discourse to articulate what was most original in their biblical hermeneutics. They did not proceed from book to book and from interpreter to interpreter, like the rabbis of their time, nor could they exactly reduplicate the approach of Philo. Needless to say they abhorred the symbolic reading of ancient myths by their pagan contemporaries. Over time they gradually learned how to build up their own hermeneutical system by reacting to all these circumstantial contexts, but without losing sight of their original and unalienable focus in faith. They may have imaged Jesus through more and more extravagant comparisons, but their touchstone remained what they called the "rule of faith."

With the recognition of the importance of a renewed understanding of the "spiritual sense" of Scripture, the study of "typology" and "allegory" as the two prominent aspects of patristic exegesis moved to center stage in the scholarship in the five decades following World War II.

III. TYPOLOGY: THE INTERPRETIVE UNITY OF BOTH TESTAMENTS

1. Type: τύπος, *typus*, *figura*, (*imago*, *forma*, *efficies*)

A "type" originally meant a "blow" (τύπος, *percutio*), as an oracle transmitted by Herodotus, *Histories* I 67, 4; or the "mark" of a blow, as in a Pythagorean rule repeated by Plutarch, *De gloria Atheniensium* 13, 49 (583c): τοὺς τύπους τῶν πληγῶν, "the marks of the blows," a meaning still preserved in John 20:

25, “the mark of the nails”—τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων (seen by Thomas on the hands of the risen Christ). It gained a more general relevance as “figure,” “image,” in Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes* 488; Sophocles, Euripides; also as “draft” or “outline,” in Plato, *Rep* II 377b, III 403e, VI 491c, *Crat* 432e; and Aristotle, *Eth Nic* II 2; as “approximate content” of a writing, in the LXX (1 Mc 15:2) and the NT (Acts 23:25), later in Jamblichus, *Vit Pyth* 23, 105; 35, 259. The nineteen occurrences of *typos* in NT bear no consistent technical significance. The notion has a theological connotation only in Rm 5:14, “Adam who is a type.” Philo makes frequent use τύπος in the general sense of “model,” “form.” The rabbis use it in the same way.

For the earliest church believers, “types” were biblical *facts* long before they became specific issues for Christian exegetes. The originality, efficiency, and obvious relevance of “types” was first encountered in baptismal initiations, in eucharistic liturgies, and in the communitarian sharing of Scripture. Therefore “types” were more proclaimed than discussed, more repeated in affirmative and hymnic modes than embedded in argumentative utterances. Casual or solemn, such affirmations covered the whole economy of OT because the spiritual relevance of “types” extended to all generations of believers. On the horizon of Israel’s history, Adam as well as Abraham, Eve as much as Sarah, when declared “types” by Christian interpreters, gave a meaning to that entire history.

In other words, no “types” at all would have emerged in Christian thought had Christians not inherited a specific idea of history from the biblical tradition. It was a perspective that rested on the Israelite understanding of a living tradition bound to the Law, a tradition in which the Almighty and his chosen people interacted. Ultimately that interaction, pushed to its logical limits, exploded in what we call the Gospel event, a hermeneutical event of radical reinterpretation. The *Christian* reception of OT “types” is one of the many side effects of the Gospel event, transforming the believing identity of Saul/Paul and of some other religious Jews. On the broader level of late Antique culture, Christian typology, issuing from the crucible of the Gospel event, is a genuinely historical perception in line with classical historiography according to which past people and events were accorded exemplar status, a procedure very different from the scientific objectivity espoused by modern historians. In the ancient notion of history an event was not the cause of the one that follows, but it was its prefiguration (Farrer, 1956).

In the vision of “history” defined by ancestral bonds between Israel and its God symbolic values were more intensified than anywhere else because of the biblical certitude that the divine activity favoring the chosen people was leading somewhere, namely to the ultimate fulfillment of ancient promises and prophecies. That expectation was decisive for NT believers. For them

“types” were at the same time the warrants *and* the verifications of the expected fulfillment: the figure of Christ “recapitulated” the figure of Adam, for Christ, like Adam, signified for humanity a vital beginning. The very existence of Adam was not something to be proven, but rather the Adamic “type” was confirmed as embodied in Christ. Nothing similar happened anywhere else outside of the Christian movement. For instance in Philo’s exegesis the figures of Adam, Abraham, Jacob and others are thoroughly allegorized as symbols of faithful attitudes and virtues, but they are not understood as “types.”

The full meaning of the term in patristic thought benefits from that long history: according to patristic interpreters a biblical “type” is a person, an event or an institution with a lasting significance which enables that person, event or institution to signify someone or something in God’s future acting in history. In any case, a “type,” as perceived by patristic authors, refers to *real and objective data*. It does not include allegorical elements with imaginative aspects imposed by commentators. “If by typology we understand that besides the literal meaning a second meaning is connoted and intended by the divine Author of Scripture, and if allegory implies the complete loss of the literal sense, then there is in Paul very much typological exegesis, and hardly the case of the allegorical.” (P. Bläser, “St. Paul’s Use of the $\sigma\tau$,” *Theology Digest* 2 [1954]: 49–52; 51 [quoted by Brown 1955, 36]).

In Tertullian’s thought, “typology studies the hidden meaning of the $\sigma\tau$ in *figurae* and *sacramenta* whose secrets are revealed to those baptized into the death of Christ.” Tertullian’s “central hermeneutical term” is *figura*; “a *figura* must have a basis in history in order to prefigure something” (Osborne 1997, 152, 161). As Eichrodt, quoted by Smart puts it: “Typology is distinguished from allegory by the fact that it fastens onto the historical reality of the event, where allegory disregards the historical reality and draws out a contemporary meaning that has nothing to do with the original event” (Eichrodt 1956, 642; Smart 1961, 123). In the wake of the legacy of Origen of Alexandria, patristic authors never spoke about “types” when commenting on virtues or religious feelings, the whole realm of the subjective experience being reserved by them for allegorism.

In addition, it is important to note that patristic recognition of “types” rests on a *strictly literary basis*: Adam or any other $\sigma\tau$ figure, male or female, could be taken at face value according to the literal statement made about them, as signifying something important for readers of the NT. Hence “types” confirm and gratify the attention given to the *littera*, far from distracting that attention. Keeping the typological data of Scripture as biblical authors had narrated them in their own time and context, patristic interpreters saw this data in a perspective which unexpectedly enlarged its relevance: “types”

were understood inside the dynamic of a unified biblical history. In reflecting on the significance of Melchisedek, Ambrose comments, *De David* 11: “He [Melchisedek] as a type, Christ as the truth; for the type is to be a shadow of the truth,” *ille* [Melchisedek] *in typo*, *hic* [Christ] *in veritate: typus autem sit umbra veritatis*. For Augustine, *Sermo* 133, 2, *typice* meant “figurative” or “symbolic”; and for Arator 2, 74 *typicus* equaled “symbolic”: *typicae documenta figurae*, “proofs of the symbolic figure.”

In actual fact, “typological” relevance had started to make sense long before Christianity, when biblical history began to be considered as a continuous sequence of events, covering many centuries and possessing an inner logic of its own. As a prelude to such a powerful hermeneutical vision, typology was already at work in the OT, for example in Deutero-Isaiah where a new exodus is proclaimed (Is 43:18–21); or in 2 Sm 7:12; or again in Is 11: 1, calling on the future King of salvation; or in Dt 18:18, speaking of the Prophet of the end-times. (Beauchamp 1975). Therefore the early church interpreted the OT and NT as complementary parts of a continuous narration of salvation history (Goppelt; von Rad 1952; Beauchamp 1992).

It is the founding initiative of NT hermeneutics to have imposed a christological focus on the whole Christian reading of Scripture. In such a reading, OT figures not only *precede* the Gospel event, they *anticipate* it symbolically, exactly as the author of Hebrews expresses it in the term *antitypa* “models of true realities in the future” (Heb 9:24). Thus a prophetic value was included in “types.” They were not properly considered as prophecies, but as a significant linkage between past divine interventions (embodied in people or institutions of Israel) and the consummation of God’s salvific presence in the Gospel event. They were prophetic in signifying that consummation in advance, thereby confirming the hermeneutical construct of NT and of the patristic interpreters, and supplying them with unshakable foundations on which to base their message of salvation (Blenkinsopp 1967). The phrase ἀντίτυπα (in the neutral plural) τῶν ἀληθινῶν, parallel to τὰ ἐπουράνια, “the heavenly realities” in 9:23, is introduced in Heb 9:24 for evoking the NT realities fulfilling OT types in their ultimate truth, a NT ἀντίτυπος being the replica, but also the full realization of an OT figure such as Abraham or Isaac, or of an OT institution such as the Temple or its liturgy.

In Jesus, the charismatic man Paul proclaimed as Messiah, the apostle implicitly identified a new “Adam” when he called “Adam the type of the One to come” (Rm 5:14). “Here *typos* is the ‘cast’ or ‘hollow form’ which, as molding pattern, contains in itself both sides of the image” (J. E. Alsup 1992, 683). While the archetypal figure of Adam (as common father of us all) remained unchanged, its typological meaning in regard to Christ is a

declaration of Paul's faith. Through the typological relevance given to Adam, Christ as revelation of God's decisive acting in history becomes a universal figure recapitulating the whole history of humankind and transcending historical times. Because of faith in Christ the whole NT awareness of a new "covenant" (Gal 4:24) becomes typological. This is best illustrated by Heb 8:5 actualizing Ex 25:40, and by Heb 9:24, within the elaborate framework of Heb 8:1–10:18.

To speak about "typology" in the NT sounds almost pleonastic, a verbal redundancy, since by definition, the NT in its very existence and message is typological. It is no surprise that in his *Patristic Greek Lexicon* G. W. H. Lampe presents two of his longest entries under τύπος and τυπώω; and one can only agree with J. Daniélou's criticism of H. de Lubac's emphasis on "allegory," when the former insists that the fundamental category of "typos" had priority over all other hermeneutical notions in the patristic mind.

2. Typology Discussed by Biblical Scholars

A review of the biblical studies on typology documented in the abundant literature since the late nineteenth century is revealing of the way most elements of the typological thought characteristic of patristic sources found their entry into the discussions of modern biblical scholars. The term "typology" itself was coined by J. S. Semler as late in the 1770s, but the procedure covered by it was of such a prominence in the patristic legacy inherited by medieval and modern exegesis that not even the hermeneutical shifts of the Reformation could eliminate it from the exegetical debate. Here follows only a short bibliography with a few annotations, the scope of the Handbook necessarily imposing severe restrictions on the analysis of such a richly documented topic.

With regard to the study of patristic exegesis during the second half of the twentieth century, it is worth noting the very fact that typology became a *central* issue for biblical scholars. Encyclopedia entries gained in sharpness and critical substance (Alsup, Blenkinsopp, Fascher, Kittel, Moorhead, Müller, Schunack, Osborne, compared with the earlier works of Calmet and Lambert). A renewed interest in the historical continuity of OT traditions as a reaction against Bultmann's "existentialist" exegesis (Bultmann 1950) found reason enough, in the analysis of "types," for clinging to the widely debated notion of "salvation history" (Beauchamp, Drane, Eichrodt, Fulkes, Fritsch 1946–1947; Levie, Smart 1965, Uhlig, von Rad, Wolff; Goppelt with studies dating from before World War II was highly appreciated in the post-war period). Students of patristic traditions eagerly focused on this issue in

showing that the biblical history of salvation was at the core of catechesis and preaching in the early church.

Special attention was given by biblical experts to the links between OT and NT as illustrated by “types” (Anderson, Alkinson, Balentine, Barr, Black, Bozzo, Caldecott, Coppens, Davis, Ellis, France, Fritsch 1966, Goulder, Kaiser, Lee, Lindars, Lys 1966, Larcher, Moo, Sahlin, Sailer, Smith, Spicq, Stendahl, Wilkinson). The crucial notions of the “unity” or the “authority” of OT (and of the Bible as such) were at stake in the debate around the nature of “types” (Bright, Dodd 1960, Hebert 1947, Richardson 1948, Rowley). The early Christian use of “types” in biblical hermeneutics, explored on a broader level by biblical scholars (Aune, Baker, Charlier, Ellis 1978), directly engaged them into widening their inquiry into patristic data (Woollcombe 1957). Hence, in those same years, the study of patristic typology was privileged by historians of early Christian hermeneutics. Even Philo and the Rabbis were witnesses to the importance of typology seen in post-biblical generations as an essential device of biblical thought (Borgen, Davis, Le Déaut, Williamson). Some OT figures like Abraham and Isaac played a special role in exemplifying biblical typology (Leenhardt, Lerch), the same figures who were orchestrated as typological paradigms by patristic experts.

In the heat of the debate around typology critical statements about its significance for twentieth-century Christianity multiplied. The modern quest for a renewed theological identity, so dramatically affirmed by Bultmann and his school of thought, challenged biblical scholars, forcing them to reconsider the relevance of the debate itself (Amsler, Berkhof, Campbell, Childs, Dentan, Grelot, Hasel, Marcus, Reventlow, Richardson 1963, Stek, Takamori).

Roman Catholic exegetes were specially concerned by the logical connection between literal sense and typology. They invented the phrase *sensus plenior*, or “fuller sense,” which enjoyed their favor for a while. The notion rested on the classical doctrine of divine revelation, communicated through inspired Scripture, in calling on precise ideas about the mental state and prophetic awareness of the biblical authors (Brown, in line with A. Fernandez, “Hermeneutica,” *Institutiones Biblicae* [2d ed.; Rome, 1927]; Fernandez 1953, Gribomont, Moo 1986, Sutcliffe, Temino Saiz, Vawter).

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3. Patristic Typology

At first glance the following remark seems to understate the obvious: "The development of typological thinking into the patristic period and beyond is marked by considerable excess, most notably in the link to allegory" (Alsup, 684). Within the boundaries drawn within patristic literature itself, this undeniable "excess" represents a spectacular amplification of hints read in NT writings: the mention of OT "types" led the Fathers to argue in polemical contexts offering them many opportunities for developing theological insights about biblical Israel and the church. Patristic typology proliferated on the thematic level; it structured literary genres in poetry as well as in prose. In short, it constituted the ideological infrastructure as the warrant for the consistency of Christian thought throughout the patristic age.

There is no doubt that its intimate link with allegory is a proper mark of patristic typology. By playing on both registers, the typological and the allegorical, the expositors of patristic exegesis succeeded in producing symphonic masterpieces of biblical interpretation. The richness of the interplay of these motifs may occasionally sound confusing for unprepared modern listeners, but in their own time these creative interpreters were in most cases addressing popular audiences. It is worth trying to clarify some of their basic principles.

"Types" functioned in patristic exegesis as first (or founding) principles

of Christian thought. They were *not* perceived as a product of that thought issuing from a venerable church tradition as was the case for the creedal definition of synods in a later period. “Types” were *a priori* evidence included in the primal Gospel event.

One is not surprised to observe that the “types” in patristic typology derived from “types” already identified in the NT. Such was the case for Adam in Rm 5:14–21; the rivalry between Sarah and Hagar (Gn 21:9–10), in Gal 4:21–31; the priesthood of Melchisedek (Gn 14:17–20), in Heb 7. The events in the book of Exodus were all declared τύποι in 1 Cor 10:1–6: the OT Passover (Ex 12:46 as prefiguration of Jesus’ Passion in Jn 19:23–36); in particular the interdict against breaking the bones of the paschal lamb (Ex 12:46 in Jn 19:31); the bronze serpent of Nm 21:4–9 prefigured Jesus on the cross in Jn 3:14; the water of Jacob’s well in Jn 4:10 and the Feast of Booths Jn 7:37–39; the manna, in Jn 6:32; the death of the one “pierced” (Zec 12:10), in Jn 19:37. From the NT also, Cyril of Jerusalem borrowed αντίτυπος, “replica,” whose semantic ambit he boldly enlarged in considering Christ’s Passion itself to be the “type” replicated by Christian baptism (*Mystagogical Instructions* II 6, 6); or the Holy Spirit to be the “type” whose “replica” the newly baptized are bearing (III 1, 7.14); or again “the bread and wine which you are savoring” to be “the antitype” of the body and blood of Christ” (V 20, 6), a way of speaking which he could have learned from the older tradition preserved in Hippolytus’s *Apostolic Tradition* 23: “the bishop blesses the bread as a replica called in Greek antitype of Christ’s body,” *in exemplum quod dicit graecus antitypum corporis Christi*. An enthusiastic citation of Heb 9:24 focusing on αντίτυπος occurs in Athanasius of Alexandria, *Discourse Against the Arians* II 41 (97a 7).

In patristic exegesis, “types” were one among a number of biblical notions which experienced a new hermeneutical florescence. Part B of the Handbook offers ample evidence of the key role played by typology in patristic exegesis of Scripture. From Melito of Sardis or Irenaeus of Lyon to Maximus Confessor or John of Damascus, from the Syrian Ephrem of Edessa to Isidore of Seville in Visigothic Spain, through diverse cultures and long centuries, biblical “types” inflamed the Christian imagination, fueling again and again the actualizing process by which believers identified themselves with the Gospel event in keeping their tradition of faith alive.

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4. Numerology

A special application of typological hermeneutics belongs to the patristic interpretation of biblical numbers. In ancient cultures, all over the planet, numbers had a symbolic significance. For good or bad they notified something otherwise secret. They marked given circumstances in ominous ways or in other cases warranted an expected success. Religious and metaphysical ideas attached to the numbers giving them an important role in liturgies and rituals. "Seven" was specially in honor among Semitic tribes. It reached its climax of sanctity in the Jewish "Seventh Day," the Sabbath. According to Zec 4: 10, Yahweh has seven eyes; the celebration of Pasch or of the Feast of Tabernacles lasts for seven days, etc. Jesus urging his disciples to forgive declares: "I do not say seven times, I say seventy times seven" (Mt 18:22). In the Johannine Apocalypse "seven" is used more often than any other symbolic number, in stark contrast with "666," the fearsome number of Antichrist mentioned only once.

The significance of patristic numerology should not be underestimated.

On one side ancient interpreters of the Bible in the church shared with their contemporaries a sense for numeral symbolism which was vulnerable to extravagant calculations. On the other side they were intent on accounting for all that is written in Scripture, and this imposed on these interpreters the necessity of explaining the meaning of the many and sometimes mysterious numbers they had to comment on in the sacred books. The “days” of the Creation story in Genesis, like the days and times expressly noted in the gospels, were for them as many imperatives challenging their symbolic numerology. In fact the interpretation of the “six days” of Creation became something of a literary genre in its own right—the *hexaemeron* found among the commentaries and homilies on Genesis of major authors of the Greek and Latin churches.

The fourth Book of Torah, bearing in the Hebrew Bible the appropriate title “In the Wilderness” which is a phrase found in the initial verse of the book, had been entitled Ἀριθμοί, *Numbers*, in the LXX, the Greek translators of Torah emphasizing the various censuses and the precise numbering which characterized the work. A similar awareness of the symbolic value of numbers was still at work in the Jewish mind of the Alexandrian author of *The Wisdom of Solomon*, a book added to the LXX in the second century B.C.E. at the time of a prodigious revival of Pythagorism in Greek culture (Ghyka 1971). Wisdom 11:20 states, “Thou (God) hast ordered all things by measure and numbers and weight,” echoing Pythagoras himself (580–500 B.C.E.) who claimed that “According to number, all has been made”—ἀριθμῶ δέ τε πάντ’ ἐπέοικεν. Hence it is not surprising to notice how Philo of Alexandria in his commentary on Torah never misses an opportunity to exercise his expertise in commenting on symbolic numerology. While the special treatise *On Numbers* written by Philo is lost (Stahle 11–18), there is ample evidence of the attention he gives to numerology in other works. In *De opificio mundi* 89–119, the “seventh day” and “the ten periods of seven years” which constitute the human life span, together with the seven planetary circles of the universe, give space for a sophisticated speculation on divine creativity and human psychology. In *De congressu eruditionis gratia* 89–122 and in *Quaestiones in Genesim* IV 110, number ten is declared proper to the deity, in strict conformity with Pythagorean tradition. In *Quis rerum divinarum heres sit* 131–136, the symbolic value of number three engages Philo into exploring essential links between the divine Logos, the intelligible world and the human intellect, the same number three being at the center of a similar exposition in *Quaest. Gen* IV 8. Abraham’s age of seventy-five in leaving Haran (Gn 12:4), in *De migratione Abrahami* 198–210, inspires the commentator to compose a series of digressions, with elaborate numerical

symbolism. For Philo it was an appropriate way to invite his fellow Jews to faithfully submit to the Law, and to celebrate the Law in the context of the Alexandrian culture of his day.

Philo's example was to inspire patristic and medieval commentators of Scripture. From the very start, Christian interpreters found themselves confronted in OT with an impressive amount of different kinds of numbers, sometimes precise, sometimes "rounded off," sometimes small and sometimes immense "numbers." (Friberg). In 393, *Letter 49 to Pammachius*, Jerome felt obliged to justify his interest in "uneven (*impares*) numerals": "So let me then enumerate those in the Church who wrote on uneven numerals: Clement, Hyppolytus, Origen, Dionysius, Eusebius, Didymus, and among the Latin authors, Tertullian, Cyprian, Victorinus, Lactantius, Hilary" (CSEL 54, 1996, 384). He deliberately omitted Ambrose and he could not yet mention Augustine. Had he considered symbolic comments on any numerals, his list of patristic authorities probably would have reached no end. Indeed the more Christian authors developed a systematic concern for an exhaustive interpretation for the *littera*, the more they built a symbolic numerology proper to patristic hermeneutics.

It would be worth analyzing in depth the process by which the widespread symbolism of certain numbers in pagan culture was taken over by early interpreters of Scripture for their own purposes. Non-Christian numerology reflected religious beliefs since the stone-ages, it was an integral part of social and magical practices in all ancient cultures (Schimmel, Hasenfuss). The Christian interpreters of Scripture began by focusing on the "six days" of Creation and on the "seventh day" in the wake of Philo. They soon added their own perspective on the "eighth day", the day of Christ's Resurrection which became Sunday. They speculated on the "seven" gifts of the Spirit, the "seven" seals of the heavenly book in Revelation, the "twelve" apostles etc., in all cases stressing the symbolic value of numbers in regard to God's salvific economy. Even when projecting epochs of world history or describing the different ages of the human being, their focus remained *heilsgeschichtlich*, determined by their typological interpretation of Scripture. Therefore it is fair to conclude that patristic numerology in its essential purpose is nothing but a particular case of patristic typology.

For lack of a comprehensive study (strangely missing in the bibliographies consulted since World War II) only a very scanty information is provided here. For Origen, Crouzel's *Bibliographie critique* (1971), in addition to the still unsurpassed report by Harnack, *Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes*, TU 42, 3-4 (1919) and to a few addi-

tional remarks by R. B. Tollington in the introduction to *Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen* (1929), only mentions a short passage on Origen's symbolic numerology in K. H. Schwarte, *Die Vorgeschichte der augustinischen Weltalterlehre* (Bonn 1966). Not a single study concerning the numerology in Origen's works is signaled in the two supplementary volumes updating Crouzel's bibliography in 1982 and 1996.

A number of significant studies have been devoted to numerology in the Greek tradition. Basil of Caesarea ends his second homily on the six days of Creation with a vibrant explanation of the transcendent meaning of "day" in Gn 1:4. In particular, the "eighth" day provides a sure access to eternal life. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 43, goes further in stating that the "eighth" day is also the "first." Creation and salvation are ultimately recapitulated as they were conceived in the initial transcendence of God's work. In his Homily on Ps 6, Gregory of Nyssa reminds the congregation: "You know very well the mystery of the Octave," the biblical sequence of eight days which is the conflation of the Genesis report with the gospel narratives on Christ's resurrection. The theme of the "seven" and "eight" days would be resonant in all major exegetical trends of Greek patristics (Dölger 165–67).

The Latins were enthusiastic inheritors of the exegetical tradition of commenting on the symbolism of the biblical "days." A whole chapter in V. Hahn, *Das Wahre Gesetz*, "The Law in the Light of Numeral Mysticism" (1968), examines "Das Gesetz in der Zahlenmystik" (68–97). Having referred to one or two general studies (Sauer, Forstner), and insisted on the influence of Plato in citing Hoffmann, the author mentions Daniélou's *Sacramentum futuri*, which in fact deals with typology. Hahn's analysis highlights the symbolic riches of "seven" and "eight" in Ambrose's exegesis compared with Philo's remarks: the typological dynamics uniting $\alpha\tau$ and $\alpha\tau$ in the bishop's mind generates new theological insights about the Days of Creation and the ages of the cosmos. It results in a form of numerology which conveys at once a substantial teaching on moral values and a condensed vision of the history of salvation.

Before Ambrose, Hilary had repeatedly called on the symbolism of number eight in Christian exegesis as a well-known topic (*Tract. Ps* 12 and 116). After Ambrose, Jerome, *Breviarium in psalmos*: Ps 6 (PL 26, 833) and *Com in Aggaei proph* 1, and Augustine, *De sermone domini* I 12 (PL 34, 1235), *Ep.* 55, 13, 23; 55, 15, 28, add their own comments on the "eighth" day. The enduring tradition on this theme would be collected and summarized by Cassiodorus, *Expositio in psalterium: Expositio in Ps 6* (PL 70, 59) (Dölger 168–182).

Tyconius, the fourth century African author of the *Liber regularum*, *The*

Book of Rules, which influenced Augustine's biblical exegesis, especially with regard to the "thousand years of the saints," draws a distinction between two different ways of resolving perplexities arising from biblical "quantities" of time—*temporis quantitas* (LR 55, 1). The first is the "mystical trope, synecdoche" that is, when the part represents the whole, or the whole the part. In the discussion of the fifth "rule" *De temporibus*, Tyconius pays careful attention to questions like the computation of the 430 years (Ex 12:40) of the Jewish sojourn in Egypt or Jesus' three days in the tomb. The second kind of time quantity concerns the biblical use of "fixed" or "specific numbers" (Babcock, 97) like seven, ten and twelve or their multiples—*Ex legitimis numeris sunt septenarius, denarius, duodenarius. Idem autem est numerus et cum multiplicatur*. According to Tyconius, these are not literal time quantities but indicators that the passage is to be "spiritually" interpreted, that is to be interpreted in the context of the church. These indicators, like the "seventy" years in Babylon, and the "ten days" of the Book of Revelation (Rv 2:10) are not definite quantitative periods, but indications of the "time" of the church. In discussing multiples of "four," ("forty days of the Lord's fast, and Moses' and Elijah's") he notes that certain numbers are "signs" rather than numerical equivalencies—*Cetera vero numeri pro locis intellegendi sunt; signa sunt enim, non manifestae definitiones* (Bright, 76–79).

For a fine analysis of Augustine's interpretation of numbers in his *Tractatus in Iohannem*, see M. Comeau, *Saint Augustin, exégète du quatrième évangile*. Paris 2nd ed. 1930, 127–42, and M. Pontet 1946, 569–573. In *CHB* 1, G. Bonner adds to his citation of numeral annotations in Augustine's *In Iohannem*: "This numeral interpretation represents Augustine at his most extravagant, and most readers will recoil before an exegetical ingenuity so subtle and fecund and, withal, so labored and unconvincing. It would be unrealistic and even disingenuous to dismiss it as uncharacteristic—on the contrary, it reflects Augustine's taste and that of his age all too faithfully—but there is another, and more appealing, side to Augustine's allegory, when he interprets scripture typologically" (560). The British critic rightly emphasizes that symbolic numerology was like second nature for Augustine's imagination, and that he was more "subtle and fecund" than most of his contemporaries in playing with it. Rather than opposing Augustine's symbolism of numbers to "when he interprets scripture typologically" (560), Bonner would possibly have been more accurate in his remarks had he stressed the typological ground on which the bishop of Hippo played with numbers.

All mention of numbers in OT and NT, from "one" to "one million," are conveniently listed *Concordance de la Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible—TOB*.

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More titles on symbolic numerology can be found in Part B under specific authors, for instance, Augustine.

IV. ALLEGORISM

1. Cultural Origin and Practice

In Greek Antiquity, "allegory" (ἡ ἀλληγορία), a Hellenistic term derived from ἄλλα ἀγορεύειν, "to say something else in public speech," is a form of discourse as old as discourse itself. The notion attracted critical attention from the day when written texts were suspected of hiding a deeper meaning. The oldest testimony to that hermeneutical suspicion dates from the fourth century B.C.E. and is produced by "The Orphic Papyrus of Derveni" ("Der orphische Papyrus von Derveni," *ZPE* 1, 1967, 21–32), which comments on an Orphic theogony dating from the sixth century B.C.E. where "Zeus" is called "all things" with the comment: "This verse has a derived (= hidden) meaning, τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος πα[ρα]γωγὸν πεποιήται; it is obscure for the many, but crystal clear for those who have the right insight—καὶ το[ῖς μ]ὲν πολλοῖς ἄδηλόν ἐστιν, τοῖς δὲ ὀρθῶς γινώσκουσιν εἶδηλον, col. 19 (R. Merkelbach 1967).

Attempts of a proper form of allegorizing go back, according to the tradition of Greek grammarians, to Hecates and Theagenes of Rhegium (6th c. B.C.E.), for whom the battle of the gods (*Iliad* 20) signified the fight of the elements, a first instance of φυσικὴ ἀλληγορία, or “cosmological allegorism.” In that line of interpretation Agamemnon was assimilated to ether, Achilles identified as the sun, Helen as the earth, Paris as the air, Hector as the moon: a procedure simply called ὑπονοία, “conjecture,” or “symbolic identification.” Anaxagoras (5th c. B.C.E.) and his disciples (among them possibly Socrates) inaugurated “ethical allegorism”: Homer’s poetry was “about virtue and justice” (Diogenes Laertius 2, 3, 11). Plato (428–348) refused to allegorize ancient myths, preferring his dialectics. But the Stoics, starting with their founder Zeno (ca. 335–ca. 264), adopted cosmological allegorism and positioned it at the core of their system. For instance the Titans were the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, the “founding elements of cosmos.” For later Stoics, such as Cleanthes and Chrysippus (ca. 281–ca. 205), Zeus symbolized ether, and Rhea, earth. Through centuries commentators produced an increasingly allegorical interpretation of Homer and Hesiod.

Later authors recapitulated the allegorical tradition. Philodemos of Gadara was the first to use ἀλληγορία as a technical term in school rhetoric, ca. 60 B.C.E. (*Volumina rhetorica* I, ed. Sudhaus, Teubner, 1892, p. 164, 22; 181, 25–26; 174, 24). Cornutus, another Stoic philosopher authored a *Theologiae Graeciae compendium*; Heraclides of Pontus, a grammarian, collected *allegoriae Homericae*, still known in the patristic period by Strabo and Pseudo-Plutarch. Plutarch himself, in *On Reading Poets, De audiendis poetis* noted how the contemporary usage had shifted from the traditional and more common term ὑπονοία to the new technical term ἀλληγορία: “In the past one said ‘deep thoughts’ but now ‘allegories’” —ταῖς πάλαι μὲν ὑπονοίας, ἀλληγορίαις δὲ νῦν λεγομέναις, 19e. The Neo-Platonists, with the notable exception of Plotinus, also favored allegorism, for instance, Porphyry in Ὀμηρικὰ ζητήματα and *The Cave of the Nymphs in the Odyssey* (Arethusa Monographs 1, SUNY 1969).

In the Latin tradition the very term “allegoria” was first used by Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.). From Varro, *Antiquitates divinae* to Horace and Virgil, the use of allegorism became standard. Quintilian (1st c. C.E.) called it a *metaphora continua* (*Inst*) VIII 6, 44). As a literary device for interpreting texts which carried on religious or philosophical messages, a consistent “transfer of meaning” (*translatio* equaled the Latin *metaphora*) opened original perspectives far beyond the literal contents of the texts under scrutiny. Symbolic thinking favored such a metaphorical technique of interpretation. Interpreters had to operate in conformity with well defined rules when they spoke of written

sources with analogies of their own. Otherwise allegorism was doomed to become artificial and abusive, a trend which all too soon attracted its proponents.

In Hellenistic Judaism, traces of allegorism are visible, first in the writing of Aristobulos (mid 2nd c. B.C.E.; see the fragments of his *Commentary on Pentateuch* in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Praeparatio evangelica* 8.10, 12.12); then in the *Letter of Aristeas* (early 2nd c. B.C.E.; A. Pelletier, SC 89), the Book of Wisdom and the interpretation of Canticle. Philo of Alexandria (d. 45 C.E.) inherited the cosmological *and* ethical allegorizing of the Stoics. He adapted it to his own Platonic vision of reality and brought it to a climax in his *Commentary on Torah*, creating thereby a hermeneutical model which would inspire Clement and Origen of Alexandria. In the most spectacular illustration of the allegorical method in Late Antiquity, Philo used to isolate one precise notion in chosen biblical quotations. He emphasized the symbolic relevance of that notion in regards to another one of his choice in basing himself on similitudes between both of them, which he points out with the help of the ten Aristotelian categories (substance—οὐσία, quantity—ποσόν, quality—ποιόν, relation—πρός τι, location—ποῦ, time—ποτέ, context—κεῖσθαι, disposition—ἔχειν, action—ποιεῖν, passivity—πασχεῖν). Thus an “allegorical” comment was justified “in following the rules of allegorism” ἐπόμενοι τοῖς ἀλληγορίας νόμοις (*De somnis* I 102). A luminous analysis of Philo's procedure has been worked out by I. Christiansen (1969), whose final definition of Philonian allegorism announces the deep impact Philo would have on patristic exegesis: “Allegorism (‘Allegorese’ in German) is a form of interpretation thanks to which a core idea (‘Ideeneinheit’), implicitly included in the ‘letter’ is explicated, a notion equivalent to the written expression but of a broader significance being joined to it” (134). A frequent recourse to the etymologies of Hebrew names was part of Philo's allegorical method. Rabbi Aqiba (d. 135 C.E.) conceived a strictly allegorical interpretation of Canticle in order to celebrate the mystical bonds between God and Israel.

One may wonder why allegorism was so pervasive within the literary legacy of classical Antiquity. One can only reflect on how allegory perfectly fitted the Greek mind-set for over a millennium of cultural traditions in the same way in which Greek statuary maintained its canonical standards from the smiling proto-classic to the ornate post-classic figures of Late Antiquity. Just as the plastic arts projected the perennial image stereotyped as an aesthetic paradigm of the human form, so within literature, cultural allegorism was a vehicle for the humanistic values and actualized an idealized past. In the dominant culture of Hellenistic Alexandria these different forms of representation remained a driving force beneath the social and spiritual

re-modeling of the late antique identity shared by Greeks, Jews and Christians alike (Dawson 1992).

Pagan allegorism with its mythological background was utterly rejected by Christian authors (G. L. Ellspermann, *The Attitude of the Early Christian Latin Writers toward Pagan Literature and Learning*. Diss. Cath. Univ. of America. Patristic Studies 82. Washington 1949).

2. Patristic Allegorism and Typology

In NT allegorism and typology are not yet differentiated, cp. Gal 4:24–26, on Hagar and Sarah, and 1 Cor 9:9, quoting Dt 25:4. The same is the case in the *Letter* of Pseudo-Barnabas. In Gnostic schools of thought allegorical interpretations of Valentinus and Basilides faced strong opposition by church leaders like Irenaeus and Tertullian. The allegorical exegesis of Heracleon commenting on the Gospel of John was severely criticized by Origen. Allegorism prevailed in Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* and *On Canticle*, the latter's explanation following Rabbi Aqiba. Clement of Alexandria borrowed from Philo the allegories of Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Rebecca, Hagar in *Stromates* I 30–32; he borrowed from other sources as well in chapter 6 of *Stromates* V, on the Tabernacle and the robe of the High priest (Méhat 1966, 201–202).

Origen also read Philo, but he became in his own right the first systematic theoretician of Christian allegorism. He presented a “pneumatic” or “mystic” interpretation of Scripture essentially based on allegorical procedures. His hermeneutics transmitted by Alexandrian church tradition and adopted by famous Christian interpreters of Scripture in the East, such as Gregory of Nyssa in his *Homilies on Canticle* and Cyril of Alexandria in his exegesis of the OT, spread over Western Christianity through the works of Hilary, Ambrose (more dependent on Philo's allegorism). Jerome (who later repudiated it) and above all Augustine, to the point of impregnating most exegetical achievements of the Latin Middle Ages until the Reformation.

Much has been published as a descriptive analysis of that legacy, and much more needs to be done in this regard. Here it would be useless to reduplicate all bibliographic data related with allegorical techniques as applied by patristic authors examined further on in Part B of the Handbook. Only some general studies deserve an immediate mention at the end of the present chapter.

Since World War II the most influential study of early Christian allegorism was that of Henri de Lubac (1896–1991), whose thought became controversial among historians of patristic exegesis from the 1950s down to the

present day in a manner and to an extent only comparable with the uproar caused by R. Bultmann's theories in Continental circles of biblical scholars. The main difference between both intellectual leaders was that the French Jesuit, brilliant as he was in his apologetics, seemed to propound a return to pre-critical hermeneutics of the Fathers, whereas the Lutheran professor of Marburg not only questioned the relevance of patristic exegesis by his "demythologizing," but destabilized all biblical exegesis in its conventional status. H. de Lubac was the outstanding representative of an elitist theological avant-garde drawn to the public arena in France through the difficult circumstances of World War II, specifically the French "Resistance" in which he played an active role. His programmatic *Catholicisme* (1948) as well as his role in the creation of the series "Sources Chrétiennes" inspired younger generations in Europe and elsewhere. At the Council of Vatican II, de Lubac, like Yves Congar, was rehabilitated after having been reduced to silence for a few years by members of the Roman Curia during the pontificate of Pius XII. His first major publication on patristic hermeneutics discussed the basic notions of "typology" and "allegorism" (Lubac 1947). The author presented his understanding of the two notions in reaction to an article of a younger fellow Jesuit, Jean Daniélou, "Traversée de la mer Rouge et baptême aux premiers siècles," in *RSR* 33 (1946): 402–430. Daniélou had stated that only "typology" was genuinely Christian, allegory being taken over by Christian interpreters from Philo and the Greeks. De Lubac rightly questioned such clear-cut distinctions. "Far from opposing both notions, one should rather admit that the allegorical interpretation, in its traditional meaning, implied first of all a discernment of the types or figures which announced Christ in biblical Israel. The whole of Israel announced the whole Christ. That interpretation established links between figure and truth, letter and spirit, between the old and the new. It showed how what is in the written text, having happened τυπικῶς, needs always to be understood and experienced πνευματικῶς" (185).

Thus H. de Lubac downplayed the importance of typology, but not without shifting much of its meaning over into the notion of allegory: "Allegory is essentially what the Rev. Daniélou and others call, as opposed to it, typology" (200). Beyond the verbal dispute (now after many decades sounding at times like a frivolous pretext for a show of patristic erudition) the biblical notion of "types" remained unshaken, but the notion of "allegory" gained in semantic density. In essence, in the technical Christian sense, "allegorizing," for de Lubac, meant to formulate the relevance of OT data in the light of the NT by using a figurative language which was able to describe the contents of Christian beliefs and the Christian way of life with images and com-

parisons borrowed from both Testaments. Ancient authors, as often noted, were very rarely formal theoreticians of their own hermeneutical practice. They interchanged technical terms with little concern. Therefore de Lubac stated that it is the more important to focus on their “spiritual” motivation. In Origen’s case, for instance, he declared that “his spiritual sense, in regard to the *anima in ecclesia*, interiorizes the Christian mystery according to the logic of that mystery and leads us to a region far away from the one where one finds Philo’s exegesis as well as the ancient Greek exegesis” (220). De Lubac insists that Christian allegory has its proper theological relevance with a central focus which is Christ, and is experienced by Christians along their inner journey as church members. Thus he rightly interprets the theological focus of Origen’s allegorism as typology (F. Bolgiani, M. Pesce).

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3. Tropology: Figurative Exegesis and Human Behavior

A τρόπος is a "turn" of words, manners, or events. Its complex meaning refers to any mode of existence, divine or human; or to the character and moral attitude of specific persons. In Origen, the term was mainly used for indicating "turns of speech" (usually inadequate) when speaking about God. In this usage, "Tropikoi," in Athanasius' *Letters to Serapion* were people accused of twisting their discourse when arguing about the Holy Spirit: They imagined changing "modes of being" in deity itself! "Tropology," meaning the use of figurative expressions and of figures of speech, was common practice among patristic authors as attested by Eusebius, Didymus, John of Damascus. In reference to Scripture it equaled "allegorical" or "spiritual" speech for Justin, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa (Lampe), s. v. 1415. In hermeneutical terms, "tropology" was hardly differentiated from "typology." Encyclopedias and dictionaries usually ignore it.

The leading Antiochene exegetes, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, gave it a more technical sense: the literal content of some OT prophecies needs an explanation κατὰ τρόπον, "according to a change of meaning," namely the change which opened the prophet's mind in the very act of prophesying beyond the letter of his utterances; the prophet anticipated their future application in Israel (see Part B chapt. 9).

In common use, "a 'trophe' was a 'figure' (Philo, *De conf. ling.* 38, 190), a 'mode' (Augustine, *De trin.* XV ix 15; Isidore, *Etym.* I xxxvii 1), a 'turn' of language (*tropos*, 'conversio'), by which one turned a phrase so that it indicated an object other than the one which it would normally mean" (de Lubac, *Ex.*

méd. 2, 551). The technical “turning” of that sort focused on τροπολογία as a form of figurative language and mainly served for the application of scriptural phrases to human behavior.

The Latin Middle Ages were pervaded by this same understanding which it had inherited from ancient Christianity. The exemplaristic truth of history at work in Scripture was not only concentrated in “types” but it was most common in OT stories. At any moment Scripture as divinely inspired narration could offer a helpful advice to believers, if only the believers knew how to unlock the secret of its manifold meanings. More was said in biblical stories than what their literal content reported. The interpreter needed to search for the motivation and the afterthoughts of the divine Spirit behind the latter: Which lessons were delivered by the literal narrative? What kind of divine pedagogy determined biblical history in its details, for instance as narrated in the Books of Samuel or Kings? Determined by God and commemorated in Scripture by the prophetic spirit, people in ancient Israel acted in order to prefigure under the Law and ultimately to direct the actual embodiment of Christian identity in the church. For patristic interpreters it was obvious that lessons from the OT were, by definition, destined to let Christians catch more profoundly the lessons of the NT. With regard to ethical principles and in view of moral predication the basic structure of spiritual exegesis required the same Christological focus on the level of tropology as was noted earlier at the theological core of allegory.

Again a few general studies are mentioned here, whereas the tropological contributions of individual patristic authors shall be registered in Part B of the Handbook.

Daniélou, J., “Le Bon Samaritain”

Gögler, R., *Zur Theologie des biblischen Wortes bei Origenes*. Düsseldorf, 1963, 357–80.

Lampe, *PGL*, 1415–16.

Lubac, H. de, *Exégèse Médiévale* II. Paris, 1959, 551–57.

Scorza Barcellona, F., “‘Oro e incenso e mirra’ (Mt 2, 11)”: ASE 3 (1986): “ii. Le interpretazioni morali” 227–45.

4. Anagogy: Figurative Exegesis and the Beyond

The “uplifting” (ἡ ἀναγωγή) from the literal to the spiritual sense in the interpreter’s mind was the most essential procedure of patristic exegesis. The whole verbal family ἀνάγω—ἀναγωγεύς—ἀναγωγή—ἀναγωγικός—

ἀναγωγικῶς was in use for expressing the “upwards” (ἀνα-) transfer of meaning beyond literalism.

Because of its general significance, anagogical interpreting was indifferently assimilated to allegory or typology: for instance to allegory by Origen, *On John* 1. 1 (GCS 33, 23; PG 14, 72c; SC 120: I, 180), or by Epiphanius, *Haer.* 66, 56; to typology by Origen, *Princ* 4, 7. 7, and Methodius, *The Banquet* 3, 4; or basically to the spiritual sense as such for Origen, *On John* 13:12–15 (GCS 444, 24; PG 14, 772a; SC 120: XXXII, 132). For Epiphanius, *Exp fid* 4 (GCS 500, 13; PG 42, 780c); Gregory of Nyssa, *On Canticle, proem.*; and, centuries later, for Andrew of Caesarea, *On Apoc, proem.* (PG 106, 217c), it was synonymous with “theoria.” For the author of a scholia on Maximus Confessor, it signified a “harmonizing of the literal story with the spirit of theoria” (*Quaest. Thalassium* 55; PG 90, 560a).

Generally called “mystic” (Origen, *Princ* 4, 3. 6), or “spiritual”), *pneumatikè* (Methodius, *The Banquet* 7, 4), it was frequently juxtaposed with *historia* and *littera*, occasionally explaining and justifying the need for explanations “higher” than the literal: Origen, *On the Witch of Endor* 2; Methodius, *The Banquet* 3, 2; Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses* (PG 44, 373a; SC 1, 77); John Chrysostom, *In Ps.* 46: 1 (PG 55, 208d), even helping interpreters to overcome “contradictions” between the four Gospels: Origen, *On John* 10:2 (GCS 172, 25; PG 14, 309b; SC 157, 386). Thus anagogy was a hermeneutical device of central importance for the christological exegesis of Origen (*Homilies on Jeremiah* 1, 12), or for that of Cyril of Alexandria (*On Ps* 9:4).

It acquired a more specific meaning later in the patristic era. “Anagogy” served for the contemplation of celestial things to come. It focused on the final stage of the spiritual journey, as fulfilled on the individual or on the cosmic level (de Lubac 1959, 621–633). In the Greek speaking world, Pseudo-Dionysius gave it a new theological relevance as a technical term with Neoplatonic connotations, meaning the “return” of spiritual beings “up” to the heavenly hierarchies. The Pseudo-Dionysian legacy was to play a major role in the Latin Middle Ages, being quoted by Thomas Aquinas more often than Augustine himself (Roques 1954). In the Latin patristic world, Cassian was one of the first to promote the eschatological use of “anagogy”: “Anagogy leads from spiritual mysteries to more sublime and more sacred secrets of heavens,” *Anagogia vero de spiritalibus mysteriis ad sublimiora quaedam et sacratoria caelorum secreta conscendens* (*Collatio* 14, c. VIII; SC 54, 190) with a reference to Gal 4:26–27, on the “heavenly Jerusalem.”

The thought of the final, or supreme achievement of salvation had galvanized Christian hopes from the very beginning. It constantly nourished Christian beliefs in a meaningful afterlife, and thereby inspired many patristic

representations of the transit from earthly realities to a “heavenly” condition, for, as Gregory the Great said, the promises of the eternal kingdom are “secret sources of joy for the interior life,” *secreta gaudia interioris vitae* (*In Ezechielem* II, hom. 10, 5: PL 76, 1060c).

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CHAPTER FOUR
PATRISTIC EXEGESIS OF THE
BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by David L. Balás and D. Jeffrey Bingham

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I

INTRODUCTION

Most articles on patristic exegesis address the approaches used by the Fathers through the progressive periods of the patristic era or in the regions or languages (East, West; Greek, Latin) associated with particular groups of Fathers. Others treat them according to whether the Father or group employed a method basically allegorical (Alexandrian) or literal (Antiochian). This article acknowledges and to some degree reflects the value of such approaches, but its interest is different. In a manner complementary to a commentary on the Bible it seeks to do two things. First, it provides for most books of the Bible an orientation to extant patristic commentaries and homilies in both critical editions and English translations when available. The reader will find a primary bibliography of these works after each discussion of the main divisions of biblical books within the canon, for example "Pentateuch," "Gospels and Acts." Second, this essay treats how the Fathers received, interpreted, and taught most books or corpora of the Bible. It provides selective insight into how Christians of the first six hundred years interpreted the Bible in their journey to understand God and their world, to worship God, to develop true doctrine, and to love God and neighbor. Through the Fathers' commentaries, homilies, theological treatises, and correspondence this article sets forth for the reader an idea of how Christians in a milieu other than our own read the very same text in a similar manner and yet also in a manner quite different. In this way it demonstrates historically how Christian interpretation, though it shows elements of discontinuity among differing cultures, also reveals elements of continuity and permanence. It is hoped that these glimpses into patristic exegesis of biblical books will further the reader's understanding of the sacred text.

Some books (Leviticus, Ruth, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Micah, Nahum, Tobit, Judith, additions to Esther and Daniel, Letter of Jeremiah, 2 Peter, and Jude) were not treated due to space limitations within this essay and the more limited role of these books in the development of early Christian thought.

At the end of this introduction, the reader will find a brief bibliography on patristic exegesis of the Bible. For helpful orientations and bibliographies to the development and history of patristic exegesis the reader will want to consult Denis Farkasfalvy's essay, "Interpretation of the Bible," in the *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd ed., edited by Everett Ferguson (Garland, Tex., 1997) and M. Simonetti's essay, "Exegesis, Patristic," in the

Encyclopedia of the Early Church, edited by Angelo Di Berardino (Oxford, 1992). Further primary listings of the Fathers' sermons and homilies on the NT may be found in H. J. Sieben, *Kirchenväterhomilien zum Neuen Testament*, Instrumenta Patristica, 22 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff International, 1991). For further secondary literature, the following sources may be consulted: H. J. Sieben, *Exegesis Patrum*, Sussidi Patristici, 2 (Rome: Istituto Patristico Augustinianum, 1983); *Bibliographia Patristica*, 32 vols., edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher and Knut Schäferdiek (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1959–94). Brief comments on liturgical perspective were greatly informed by J. P. Lang's *Dictionary of the Liturgy* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing, 1989). The authors wish to express their gratitude to Professor Pamela Bright and Professor Charles Kannengiesser for information they provided on the patristic interpretation of several OT books. The authors also acknowledge their debt to John Brown, David Dickinson, Robert Judge, Bryan Litfin, Peter Martens, Beth Motley, and Jonathan Yates for their contributions to the completion of this essay.

II ABBREVIATIONS

- ACW *Ancient Christian Writers*. New York: Newman, 1946–.
- ANFa *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson. Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885–1896; repr. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994.
- CCSG *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1977–.
- CCSL *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–.
- CSCO *Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium*, ed. I. B. Chabot et al. Paris: Republicae; Leipzig: Harrasowitz; Louvain: Peeters, 1902–.
- CSEL *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*. Vienna: Geroldi, 1866–.
- FaCh *Fathers of the Church*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947–.
- GCS *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller*. Berlin: Akademie, 1897–.
- GNO *Gregorii Nysseni opera*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960–.
- LoF *Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, ed. E. B. Pusey, J. Keble, and J. H. Newman. Oxford, 1838–88.
- NPNF *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. P. Schaff et al. 2 series. New York: Christian Literature, 1887–1894; repr. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994.
- PG *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857–1866.
- PL *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1844–1864.
- PLS *Patrologiae Latinae Supplementum*, ed. A. Hamman. Paris, 1957–1971.
- PTA *Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen*. Bonn: Habelt, 1968–.
- PTS *Patristische Texte und Studien*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1964–.
- PO *Patrologia Orientalis*, ed. R. Graffin, F. Nau, et al. Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1907–.
- SC *Sources chrétiennes*, ed. H. deLubac. J. Daniélou, et al. Paris: Cerf, 1942–.
- TU *Texte und Untersuchungen*. Berlin: Akademie, 1883–.
- ZNW *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*.

III GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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IV
PENTATEUCH.

GENESIS

The earliest Christian treatments of the Genesis material appear to have been commentaries and homilies on the first chapter's account of creation within six days. These works, *Hexaemera*, could be devotional, in praise of and wonder at God's creative majesty, or technical in explanation of the procedure of God's creative act. They were written by Melito of Sardis, Rhodo, Candidus, Apion, Maximus, Hippolytus, Victorinus of Pettau, Severian of Gabala, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, and John Philoponos (Eusebius of Caesarea, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.26.2; 5.13.8; 5.27; Jerome, *Epistle* 84.7; *Lives of Illustrious Men* 61). Unfortunately, all but the last five and a fragment from Victorinus have been lost.

Exegetes of the early Church also produced several commentaries and homilies on the other material within Genesis. Among the Greek Fathers, in addition to comments on the *Hexaemeron*, Hippolytus also treated the later narrative of Genesis, of that only fragments remain. Origen's thirteen books on Genesis are lost, but some fragments in *catenae* survive as do sixteen of his homilies. The commentaries of Eusebius of Emesa and Diodore of Tarsus are extant only in *catenae* fragments, but due to a fortunate discovery of papyri at Tura in 1941 Didymus of Alexandria's commentary is now known. In addition to providing his own interpretation Didymus presents and adheres to Origen's reading of chs. 1–3. The allegory is there along with the dualistic anthropology derived from the differing accounts of Adam's creation (Genesis 1, 2), and Adam and Eve before and after the Fall (Genesis 3). Two series of homilies on Genesis by John Chrysostom are extant: nine homilies preached in Lent of 386 and sixty-seven delivered during 388. The latter series provides almost a comprehensive commentary on the book. Of Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on Genesis, for the most part only selections of his reading of the first three chapters survive in fragmentary form. Cyril of Alexandria's seven books of *Elegant Comments (Glaphyra)* on Genesis offer a christological interpretation of chosen passages, where he employs a spiritual (typological) reading but also presents a literal one. Theodoret's commentary on the Octateuch (Pentateuch with Joshua, Judges, Ruth) is extant, while Gennadius's commentary on Genesis and Procopius' commentary on the Octateuch survive only in fragments.

The commentaries of the Greek Fathers are complemented by the works of the Latin Fathers, Jerome and Augustine, and the Syrian father, Ephraem.

Jerome wrote a commentary that employed Origen's *Hexapla* and was informed by Hebraic issues and traditions. Augustine's three treatments evidence somewhat differing approaches. The first commentary, written against the Manichaean objections to the teachings and language of Genesis, was highly allegorical. The second, while still polemically focused against the Manichaean objections, was an attempt at literal exegesis. He only reached Gen 1:26 before abandoning the project in 393. From 401 to 415 he composed his final work on Genesis, a twelve-book composition exegetically treating the text up to Gen 3:24 with substantial theological explanation. This third commentary sought to be literal, but did entertain the allegorical sense. Augustine also addressed troublesome material in Genesis in his *Locutions on Genesis* and in the *Questions on Genesis*. Ephraem's commentary treats the early chapters of Genesis more extensively than the later ones, evidences connections to Rabbinic traditions, focuses attention on the theological question of free will, and is not slavishly typological.

Other interpretations of Genesis in addition to the *Hexamera*, commentaries, and homilies included specific works on events and persons within the narrative. Hippolytus expounded on Jacob's blessing of his sons in Genesis 49. Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Caesarea (or Pseudo-Basil) both addressed the creation of humanity. Ambrose produced homilies and treatises on Paradise and the Fall, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and the Patriarchs. Rufinus of Aquileia also composed a commentary on Genesis 49, the blessings of the patriarchs.

The more common motifs taken by the Fathers from Genesis include: God as Creator in prayer and confession; the salvation of Noah from the flood in baptismal liturgy; the development of Adam in parallel and yet contradistinction to Christ; the redemptive hope of humanity through the seed of Eve (Gen 3:15); and the patriarchs as types of Christ, Christians, and their faith as anticipatory models of the Church's faith.

In addition to these categories the reader may find the following patristic interpretations of Genesis valuable (see Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, translated by Wulstan Hibberd [Westminster, Md: Newman, 1960], 11–149). Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Gregory of Nyssa saw the Church as the anti-type of the Paradise of Genesis 2–3. From this Paradise (Church) unredeemed humanity is exiled, but baptized, spirit-indwelt humanity re-enters it (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.10.1; Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 2.4; Cyril, *Procatechesis* 15, 16; Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Baptism of Christ*).

The early Church saw the sacrifice of Isaac as a type of the sacrifice of Christ (Gen 22:1–14). As Isaac is the only first born son, greatly loved, so

too is Christ. As Isaac carries the wood for the sacrificial fire, so Christ is suspended from the tree (cross), nailed to the wood. As Isaac is delivered over by his faith, so too is Christ. And, as a lamb (ram) in the end is offered for Isaac, Christ, the spiritual lamb is offered for the world (Gregory of Nyssa, *Homily on the Resurrection* 1; John Chrysostom, *Homily on Genesis* 47.3).

Some of the language of Genesis becomes quite important in doctrinal formulation. For Athanasius, Gen 1:26, “let *us* make humankind,” shows that the Son was always with the Father in accordance with the Word’s presence with God the Father in the beginning (John 1:1). It also shows that the Father through the Son created all things, all creatures (*Against the Arians* 2.31; 3.29). These ideas of the (eternal) presence of the Son with the Father and the Son as the Father’s agent in creation counter the Arian thesis of the Son’s creation. The First Sirmian Creed (351), though not in favor of Athanasius’ return to his bishop’s office in Alexandria and void of any mention of the Son being of the same substance (*homoousios*) as the Father, mentions Gen 1:26 in a way similar to Athanasius’s language. According to Athanasius, if anyone denies that in this text the Father addresses the Son or if anyone (Marcellus of Ancyra?) assumes that in this text God is but speaking to himself, that one is anathema (Athanasius, *On the Councils* 27.14). Germinius, who once sided with the Arians then moved doctrinally away, though he never confessed Nicaea, gave a different emphasis to Gen 1:26. He concentrated on the phrase “according to *our* image,” pointing out that the wording is “our,” not “my” or “your.” This means, then, that any difference between the Son’s and the Father’s divinity is precluded (Hilary of Poitiers, *Historical Fragments* B V. VI. 1–2).

Genesis 19:24 would also receive attention: “the Lord rained . . . brimstone and fire from the Lord . . .” because of the reference to two Lords, thought to be the Father and the Son. Athanasius cites it in order to show that already in the OT, before his resurrected exaltation, the pre-incarnate Son, Christ, was already everlastingly Lord and King (*Against Arians* 2.13). Again the First Sirmian Creed cites it to teach that the two Lords are the Father and Son. It proclaims anathema upon anyone who believes God rained down judgment from himself (Athanasius, *On the Councils* 27.17). This interpretive distinction between Father and Son and the appellation of the title “Lord” to each seems to arise as early as Justin (*Dialogue with Trypho* 127.5). Both Irenaeus and Tertullian carry forward the tradition of distinction between Father and Son with common title (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.6.1; Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* 16.2). Eventually in Gregory of Nazianzus it will be used in specific support of the claim that the Father was never without the Word (Son) and therefore was always Father (*Theological Oration* 3.17 [*Oration* 29.17]).

Genesis is read during Lent, at the Easter Vigil, at Pentecost, Corpus Christi, in Ordinary time, and at Masses for baptism and marriage. It instructs believers about their dependence on God for life through creation, and redemption through Covenant.

EXODUS

From the beginning the Fathers devoted great attention to the book of Exodus. (Many of the following insights are indebted to Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*. Translated by Wulstan Hibberd [Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1960] 153–226.). Clement of Rome (1 *Clem.* 40–43, 53), *Barn.* (4.12.14–15), Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* and Irenaeus's *Adv. Haer.* (4.30–31) all initiated and anticipated the extensive typological interpretation of the persons, events, and themes of Exodus as fulfilled particularly in Christ and the Church. In this regard the Fathers received the exegetical mantle from the Hebrew prophets and NT writers themselves, the former who anticipated a new Exodus while in exile, the latter who understood the incarnation of the Son and the gift of the Holy Spirit as the fulfillment of this new Exodus. christological, ecclesiological, and moral interpretations of Exodus dominate.

For many of the Fathers Jesus was understood to be the second, or new Moses, a theme already evident in Matthew's gospel. Eusebius, for instance, developed this interpretation (*Dem. Ev.* 3.2), understanding Christ as the supreme legislator. Christ ushered in new life and delivered believers from the idolatrous world into heaven, as typified in the new law he dispensed in the Sermon on the Mount. This paralleled the first Moses who was also a legislator (having received the law on Mount Sinai) and who delivered the Hebrews from the idolatry of Egypt to the promised land. Other parallels between Jesus and Moses seen by the Fathers included the following: as Moses fasted for forty days, so Jesus fasted in the wilderness; as God provided the miracle of the manna, so Jesus multiplied loaves; as Moses commanded the sea at the Exodus, so Jesus stilled the sea by his command; as the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea, so Jesus walked on the waters; as Moses' face shone after his encounter with God on Sinai, so was Jesus visibly glorified at his transfiguration on a high mountain; as twelve spies were commissioned, so were twelve apostles appointed; and as Moses called Joshua to assume the leadership of Israel, so Jesus called Simon Peter to lead the Church. To this extensive catalogue of comparisons one can add the powerful and prevalent typology of Moses praying with his hands extended in the battle with Amalek

as a type of Jesus' cross with its extended arms (see, for example, *Barn.* 12.2; Justin, *Dial.* 90.4; Cyprian, *Testimonies* 2.21; 89; Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3.18; Origen, *Homilies on Exodus* 11.4; Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses*, 2: 147–151, 153).

The apostle Paul's spiritual interpretation of the Exodus in 1 Corinthians 10:1–4 included reference to Christ, the rock. In Exodus (17:6) Moses struck the rock at Horeb with his staff and water poured forth. For the Fathers the events of the Exodus bore a remarkable affinity to events in the life of Christ. For instance, when Christ the rock was pierced with the spear while on the cross, water too poured forth (cf. John 7:37; Cyprian, *Epistles* 63.8; Gregory of Elvira, *Tractate* 15). Another typology was the incident at Marah and its bitter waters (Exodus 15:25) and the sweetening of the water by throwing in the wood, which was seen as a type of baptism. The emphasis here differed from the baptism that had as its type the crossing of the Red Sea. The "Marah" baptism emphasized the giving of life whereas at the "Red Sea" baptism the water was a symbol of judgment from which the baptized escape. Tertullian (*On Baptism* 9), Didymus (*On the Trinity* 2.14), and Ambrose (*On the Mysteries* 3.14) all comment on the Marah incident.

It comes as little surprise that the pivotal salvific incident in the Exodus, the Hebrew nation's passing through the Red Sea, became the dominant source for the Fathers' water-baptism typology, yet many of the Fathers' interpretations of baptism went beyond what the NT taught was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They asserted a day-to-day fulfillment of the Exodus in the life of the Church, that is, in baptism and the Eucharist (drawn from the crossing of the Red Sea and the eating of manna). The crossing through the Red Sea was a type of baptism (see Paul above) which the Fathers associated with redemption—what God did once with water, God does in the life of the Church with water (Tertullian, *Bapt.* 8.9; Didymus, *Trin.* 2.14). In Didymus' work Egypt represented the world, the waters represented salvation and baptism, and Pharaoh and his soldiers were the Devil and his forces (also see Zeno of Verona, *Homily* 7). Other exegetes would emphasize the superiority of the Christian sacraments over the types of the Exodus (Ambrose, *On the Mysteries* 3.13; *On the Sacraments* 1.4.12; Basil of Caesarea, *Treatise on the Holy Spirit* 14). For a wonderful catalogue of the extensive typological exegesis of the events surrounding the Exodus from Egypt see Augustine, *Against Faustus* (12.29–30).

A final theme for consideration is the moral, mystic, and ascetic interpretations that Exodus invited. Prominent here is Gregory of Nyssa's, *Life of Moses*, which typologically illustrated the continual journey of the Christian soul toward perfection based on patterns and events in the life of Moses.

Gregory interpreted Exodus 20:21 (describing Moses' approach to God who was enshrouded in darkness) in terms of the soul's progress toward a vision of the enshrouded, inaccessible God through understanding (*Life of Moses* 2.162–169). With John Cassian, the book of Exodus became a symbol for the monastic life as the way that led to God (*Conferences* 24.24–25): it provided examples of the monastic lifestyle (*Confer.* 3.3–4), admonitions against temptation (3.7), and spiritual combat (5. 14–16). Increasingly the events of the Exodus came to be seen as a pattern for the spiritual life (see Gregory the Great's *Moral Discourses on Job*, and Caesarius of Arles' *Sermons* 95–116).

The book of Exodus is used extensively in the Roman Missal, notably at the Easter Vigil and at Pentecost, on Trinity Sunday and the third Sunday of Lent. In the Liturgy of the Hours it is likewise used in the first three weeks of Lent. The events of the Passover point toward Jesus, the new and great Passover lamb who has delivered his people from the bondage of sin.

NUMBERS

The book of Numbers was not used by the Fathers as frequently as other books of the Pentateuch. However, Origen (*Homilies on Numbers*), Augustine (*Questions on Numbers*), Cyril of Alexandria (*Glaphyra on Numbers*), Theodoret (*On Numbers*), and Procopius of Gaza (*Commentaries on Numbers*) have all left behind substantial contributions.

There was also a handful of notable people and events frequently commented on. Balaam's fourth oracle, and especially Num 24:17, was to many of the Fathers a source of both inspiration and perplexity, because Balaam was thought to have played the role of both prophet (Num 24:17 and the rising star from Jacob, a prophecy of the incarnation) and villain (Numbers 25, leading Israel into immorality at Baal Peor). Numbers 24:17 was a crucial passage for the Fathers: "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near—a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel." From the earliest of the Church writings this verse was interpreted as a prediction of the incarnation of Christ. Justin (*Dial.* 106; 126) mentioned the verse, but not the name of Balaam who uttered the prophecy. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.9.2) saw the verse as christological, and both Athanasius (*Incarnation of the Word* 33) and Lactantius (*Divine Institutes* 4.13) attributed this verse not to Balaam, but to Moses. Cyprian (*Treatise* 12.2.10) and Augustine (*On Diverse Questions to Simplicius*, 2), however, mentioned Balaam as uttering the prophecy. The christological typology of this oracle functioned because of the connection made between "stars." That is, most of the Fathers thought

the star that guided the magi who had come to visit the infant Jesus had been predicted by Balaam and his “star of Jacob” (although Augustine distanced himself from such an interpretation). Origen went so far as to attribute to Balaam the beginnings of the magi sect, including those who had come to see the infant Jesus (see Origen *Hom.in Num.* 13.7, 15.4; *Against Celsus* 1.59,60). Some of the Fathers argued for Balaam’s conversion as a type of the future Gentile conversion. His cry, “Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his” (Num 23:10) was thought to signal his salvation—both Origen and Jerome saw in Balaam a model of Gentile salvation (Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 6).

In addition to the figure of Balaam, the incident with the bronze snake in Num 21:4–9 elicited the Fathers’ response. Ignatius interpreted this event christologically (cf. John 3:14). For him, the Word was raised up as the serpent was in the wilderness (*Smyrn.* 2). The same connection is made in the *Barn.* (12) where the bronze serpent was seen as a type of Christ; the sinner would be restored by hope and belief in him. Tertullian also interprets this event as a foreshadowing of the passion of Christ, but with a different understanding. Moses hung a serpent on a tree as an instrument of healing for Israel. This was a prediction of the Lord’s cross on which the devil (as serpent) was displayed so that everyone hurt by the serpent could turn to it and receive salvation (*Answer to the Jews* 10).

Another passage of frequent recourse to the Fathers was Num 12:1–10 which served as a dual paraenesis: both Moses’ humility and the attempted schism of Aaron and Miriam served as moral guides to the Church, the one positive, the other negative. The faithfulness of Moses, his humility in particular, drew great emphasis. *1 Clement* 43 spoke of Moses as the faithful one in all of God’s house, and Ignatius (*Eph.* 1; *Magn.* 12), Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.6.5), Cyprian (*Epistles* 51.16), the *Apostolic Constitutions* (7.1.7), and Gregory of Nazianzus (*To Cledonius*) all repeated this exhortation to be humble as Moses had been God’s humble servant.

Miriam’s illness that resulted from the attempted schism was noted by, among others, Irenaeus (frag. 31) and the *Apostolic Constitutions* (6.1.1) which likewise highlighted that those who create schisms are punished, as had been the case with Miriam. The other notable schism in Numbers (Ch. 16), the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their attempted usurpation of the priestly roles, served as a warning of the consequences of schism for the life and worship of the early Church. This incident was frequently referred to in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (2.3.10; 2.4.27; 3.1.11; 6.1.1; 7.1.10), and was discussed by Ambrose (*Ep.* 63.52–55) and Augustine (*On Baptism* 1.8–10; 2.9; 3.24).

Scenes depicting events in the life of Aaron and Miriam drawn from the Book of Numbers find expression in the paintings of the Dura Synagogue. In the liturgy, passages from Numbers are read in the Roman Missal in Ordinary Time and in the third week of Advent, fifth week of Lent, and on several feasts including Triumph of the Cross. Numbers is also read in the Liturgy of the Hours during the fourth week of Lent. The meaning of the book is that God's power and majesty are the focal points of believers' lives. Believers are not to wander away from God as the Israelites did.

DEUTERONOMY

The book of Deuteronomy did not exercise the attention of the early Church Fathers, at least when the references to Deuteronomy were juxtaposed to another book of the Pentateuch such as Genesis. Yet this is not to say that Deuteronomy was entirely neglected. Deuteronomy 30:15 was a favorite passage in the early Church ("See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity"); this message of choosing good as opposed to evil was associated with the similar theme in Genesis 2 expressed in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Both Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 5.11) and Tertullian (*Exhortation to Chastity* 2.3) connected Genesis 2:9 with Deuteronomy 30:15.

Certain texts from Deuteronomy did find their way into christological discussions. The Shema of Israel, Deut 6:4, was a text used by the Arians to show how the Father alone was truly God in opposition to the Son who was subordinated to his Father. While Prov 8:22 was perhaps the most significant verse in the Arian controversies, the Arians found the declaration of God's unity in Deuteronomy 6:4 compelling. So, according to Athanasius, did the Arian argument proceed: "Behold, God is said to be one and only and the first, how do you say that the Son is God? For if he was God, he would not say, 'I alone' or 'God is one.'" (*Orations against the Arians* 3.7).

Deuteronomy 6:4 was also important for the Cappadocians who had articulated the existence of the three hypostases (persons) of the Godhead. Unlike the Arians who denied the full divinity of the Son, Basil of Caesarea, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus were charged with abandoning the unity of God, in favor of "three gods." To this criticism, Gregory of Nazianzus repeatedly articulated both the unity of the Godhead and the diversity of persons. Gregory of Nyssa specifically cited Deut 6:4 in his argument for confession of only one God (*On Not Three Gods*).

The christological orientation of Deuteronomy for the Fathers was not

restricted to such dogmatic issues as trinitarian doctrines. For instance, in Eusebius' *Proof of the Gospel* (6.96–101) there were sixteen parallels drawn between the lives of Moses and Jesus, an example of which was Moses' promise of a holy land while Jesus offered the Kingdom of God (also see the fuller treatment of the Moses/Jesus parallel above in *Exodus*).

Today Deuteronomy is frequently used in the liturgy, including several periods in Lent and Ordinary Time. It refers to God's salvation and blessing of the chosen people.

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V
HISTORICAL BOOKS

JOSHUA

Among the Fathers key events in the book of Joshua served as typologies for subsequent realities. Aside from certain events and themes in the book which encouraged these readings, in Greek Jesus and Joshua's names were homonymous, providing obvious lexical resources for the frequent Joshua-Jesus typologies. Tertullian (*Against Marcion* 3.16), Jerome (*Ep.* 53), and Augustine (*Against Faustus* 12.322), among others, drew typological significance from the identical names.

The standard interpretation of Joshua taught the superiority of Jesus and the Gospel over Moses and the Law. As Moses could not lead the Israelites into the Promised Land, and the privilege was granted Joshua, so the Law which was unable to provide salvation was replaced with the Gospel of Jesus that ushered the spiritual Israel into the eternal Promised Land. Such interpretations are found in Origen's *Homily on Joshua* as well as Irenaeus's *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* (40), Cyprian's *Testimonies* (2.21), and both Tertullian's *Against Marcion* (3.15, 18; 4.7) and *Against the Jews* (9, 10). In similar vein Tertullian maintained (*Adv. Jud.* 4) that the seven-day march around Jericho pointed to the transitory status of the Sabbath as a day of rest.

Another typological reading of Joshua drew comparisons between Rahab's house and the scarlet cord hung from her window, treating them as types of the Church and Christ's blood, respectively. Also Clement of Rome (1 *Clem.* 12) and Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 111.3-4) refer to Christ's blood. With Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.20) and Origen (*Homily on Joshua* 3.4-5) the ecclesiological dimension of this type was developed. A common interpretation was that as salvation from the Jewish conquest of Jericho could come from within Rahab's house, so also could salvation come only from those within the Church. Cyprian's interpretation was similar (*On the Unity of the Church* 8) as he quoted Joshua 2:19, which reads, "If any of you go out of the doors of your house into the street, they shall be responsible for their own death." Another interesting typology is that of baptism, which, following Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:2, the Fathers had traditionally associated with the Exodus and the crossing of the Red Sea (see, for example, Tertullian *On Baptism*). But with Origen there is the explicit transformation of this typology, so as to render the Exodus a type not for baptism, but for the entry of the catechumen into Christianity, while crossing the Jordan was a type of baptism

(*Homily on Joshua* 4.1). The subsequent Christian tradition, contrary to Origen, maintained the Exodus-baptism typology, but with Origen it also began to recognize the richness of the Jordan-baptism typology (for example, Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Baptism of Christ*). Along with this ecclesiological reading came the eschatological association of Jericho as a type of the world that would be destroyed, except for the Church (Rahab's house) at the end of the age (Hilary, *On the Mysteries* 2.9–10).

Episodes from the life of Joshua appear in the mosaic in S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, dating from the fifth century: scenes include the crossing of the Jordan, Rahab helping the spies, and the conquests of Jericho and Ai. Joshua is also read in the liturgy in Ordinary Time and on the fourth Sunday of Lent; it teaches the sovereignty of God, as well as the need for active faith, and its expression in prayer, on behalf of believers.

JUDGES

The book of Judges infrequently called forth the attention of later Jewish (Sir 46:11–12) and NT writers (Heb 11:32), and the same can be said for the Fathers. There are, however, certain themes that can be discerned in the early Christian interpretation of Judges. When the Fathers wanted to emphasize Jewish waywardness, and especially the dangers of idolatry, the scenes depicting these recurring sins in Judges were recalled (see Tertullian, *Scorpiace* 3; Cyprian, *Treatise* 12.1.1; *Apostolic Constitutions* 5.2.12). But there were also positive recollections of Judges: for Clement of Alexandria, Jewish history, including the period of the judges, demonstrated the superior antiquity of Hebrew thought even over that of Greek philosophy (*Stromata* 1.21). In the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Jewish piety was commemorated in such figures as Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, Samson, and especially the prophet Deborah who appears to have served as a paragon for deaconesses in the early Church (*Ap. Const.* 7.2.37; 8.1.2; 8.3.20).

The early interpretation of the book of Judges also witnesses to the patristic inclination toward christological exegesis of the OT. One example is Origen's exegesis of Gideon and the sign of the fleece (Judges 6:36–40). For the first sign, in which the dew was only on the fleece, the dew represented the Word of God, the divine law given to the people of Israel, the fleece. For the second sign, in which the dew fell only on the ground, the dew represented the first advent of Christ and the coming of the gospel through the apostles and evangelists to all the world, which was represented by the ground (*Homilies on the Judges* 8.4). Interpreters before Origen, such as

Irenaeus, were already making the distinction between the fleece as Israel and the ground as the rest of the world (*Adv. Haer.* 3.17.3).

The Church Fathers' penchant for moral exegesis can be seen in their reading of Judges. Perhaps the most demanding incident in the book of Judges from the perspective of tropological exegesis was Jephthah's tragic vow resulting in the sacrifice of his own daughter (Judg 11:30–40). Origen, in the sixth book of his *Commentary on John*, reflected on the significance of the deaths of martyrs. While realizing the difficulty of Jephthah's vow, as it suggested a cruel God, Origen concluded that martyrs' deaths, including Jephthah's daughter, in some manner thwarted the powers of evil. In this way their deaths eased the suffering of those believers who escaped martyrdom. This somewhat positive interpretation of Jephthah's action by Origen was challenged by Jerome who condemned the vow as rash (*Against Jovinian* 1.23). Subsequent interpreters took up Jerome's interpretation, but also found praise for Jephthah in that he was at the very least faithful to the vow he had made (cf. Hebrews 11:32; Theodoret, *Investigations on Judges* 20; Ambrose, *On Virginit*y 2.5–3.10).

As the Fathers recognized the faithfulness of God's judges in the face of Israel's disobedience, so the liturgy draws upon the theme of God's faithfulness in the book of Judges, and challenges worshipers to the life of faith in the Holy Spirit. Judges is read in Ordinary Time, as well as on December 19 in the Roman Missal.

1, 2 SAMUEL & 1, 2 KINGS

What are now two books of Samuel was originally one book which was divided by the compilers of the LXX for purposes of convenience because of its length. The same occurred for what is now 1 and 2 Kings. In the LXX all four books were grouped under one title, "Books of the Reigns." These four books contained themes that provided resources not only for the Chronicler, but also for the NT and the early Church's reflection on these books.

While material from Samuel and Kings was frequently used in the early Church, there was seldom specific reference to these books. Nevertheless, patristic writers (not unlike the NT writers), were aware of the strong continuities between such persons as David, Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus. It comes as little surprise, then, that these OT personalities were interpreted allegorically with reference to Jesus. For example, David's anointing, his activity as shepherd, and his defeat of Goliath pointed to Jesus' baptism, his activity as a metaphorical shepherd, and his defeat of sin (extensive reflection on

David can be found in commentaries on the Psalms by Origen, Athanasius of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, Hilary, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustine). Also worthy of mention is the account of the witch of Endor who summoned Samuel from the dead (1 Samuel 28), an event that suggested to Origen that Samuel was a type of Christ, inasmuch as both descended into Hades and made a return (*Second Homily on the Book of Kings* 6–8). Also, during the Donatist controversy (fourth c.), at the Conference of Carthage, the Donatists argued that the “man of God” in 1 Kings 13 supported their position of nonparticipation in the sacraments of sinful priests. Jeroboam’s rival worship, subsequent to the splitting of Israel into two kingdoms, was noted because this “schismatic” worship was not participated in by the “man of God,” nor did he dine with Jeroboam. To the Donatists, even if sin could be cleansed, the OT prophets still would not engage in the sacrifices of those who had committed certain sins—and Jeroboam was considered to be “in schism” (*Acts of the Conference of Carthage* 3.258).

1 Samuel is read in Ordinary Time and on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It points to God’s merciful actions in human history. 2 Samuel is read in Ordinary Time and also on the fourth Sunday of Advent. It speaks of David as God’s anointed king, anticipating Jesus Christ the Messiah who delivers God’s people. First and Second Kings are read in Ordinary Time (2 Kings is also read in the third week of Lent) and both speak to both God’s covenant and God’s sending of prophets as indicators of right conduct.

1, 2 MACCABEES

1 and 2 Maccabees were declared canonical by the councils of Hippo (393), Carthage (397), and, ultimately, Trent (1546). They were widely referenced in the works of early Christian writers such as Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine, and Jerome. Second Maccabees was especially significant in that it contains an explicit scriptural affirmation of creation *ex nihilo* (2 Macc 7:28; Origen *On First Principles* 2.1.5; *Commentary on the Gospel of John* 1.17.103). It also contains a passage concerning prayers for the dead (2 Macc 12:43–45) important to the development and defense of the doctrine of Purgatory. Moreover, the accounts of martyrdom in 2 Maccabees particularly resonated within the persecuted early Church. Gregory of Nazianzus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Augustine, John Chrysostom, Gaudentius, Eusebius of Emesa, and Leo all wrote panegyrics to the Maccabean heroes, and Cyprian (*Exhortation to Martyrdom* 11) as well as Origen (*Exhortation to Martyrdom*

22–27) held these Jewish martyrs as models of fortitude and faithfulness to be imitated by Christians. Some have also seen echoes of 2 Maccabees in Ignatius's discussions of his impending martyrdom. The Maccabean martyrs were later canonized by the Church and a basilica established in their honor at Antioch, the site to which their deaths in Jerusalem had been hagiographically relocated. However, it was the anonymous mother of seven martyred sons who in particular was esteemed by the early Church. Her piety and faithfulness in the face of her septenary sacrifice moved Gregory Nanzianzen to identify her as a prototype of Mary who would also lose a noble son for a righteous cause (*Oratio 15*). The earliest commentary on Maccabees was written by Bellator at the behest of Cassiodorus during the sixth century, but this work is non-extant.

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VI WISDOM AND POETRY

JOB

The book of Job was commented upon by many Fathers of the early Church. Though the book was important for many writers in the late first and second centuries, it is from the time of Clement of Alexandria and Cyprian that the book of Job begins to play an ever-increasing role. The list of its commentators includes Origen (whose commentary is now lost), Athanasius of Alexandria, Didymus of Alexandria, Julian the Arian, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Julian of Eclanum, Hesychius of Jerusalem, and Gregory the Great. Early Christian writers (as well as iconographers) employed the story and persona of Job for both moral and doctrinal instruction. A few brief examples will be noted.

Numerous Fathers draw on Job as an example of humility, patience, kindness, and endurance in the midst of suffering (cf. Basil of Caesarea, *Homily* 20.7 [*Concerning Humility*]; John Chrysostom *Homily on 1 Corinthians* 10.4). So widespread is this moral understanding of Job that Christian iconography depicts him as a figure for major virtues, particularly patience and submission to God's will. Job was frequently portrayed covered with sores and sitting on a dungheap (Job 2:8).

Christian writers such as Tertullian who wrote an entire work on the virtue of patience, develop this moral interpretation of Job. In *Of Patience*, Tertullian declared to his readers that Job's story had been given as a testimony to the Christian community. He exhorted the Church to imitate Job since he was a victorious warrior whose reverence for God had not been undermined by Satan (*Pat.* 14). Ambrose too incorporated this major theme of Job as moral exemplar throughout his work *On the Prayer of Job and David*. For Ambrose, Job was like an athlete who had been judged victorious through suffering. The Lord had even intentionally preserved the life of his wife in order that she might serve as an additional source of temptation to him (Job 2:9–10; *Prayer* 2.4). His victory came as he was declared righteous by the Lord. The most prominent example of this moral interpretation of Job is Gregory the Great's thirty-five book ascetical treatise entitled *Morals on Job*, which both represents and develops the rich exegetical tradition surrounding the figure of Job. Gregory sees Job as a type of Christ; Job's suffering proved to be both cathartic and redemptive. Suffering should be welcomed, Gregory posited, since it purifies one's soul and simultaneously directs and focuses the sufferer on communion with God.

In addition to these largely moral interpretations of Job, the early Church found specific doctrinal significance in Job 14:4–5, 19:25–26, and 41:1. Job 14:4–5 summarizes what is a larger discourse about humanity’s sinfulness, weakness, and mortality. Augustine would appeal to it in order to support the idea of the infestation of all humans, of all ages, with sin and their need for the sacraments (for example, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 4.4; cf. Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus* 8.3.5; *Homilies on Luke* 14.3.5). Job 19:25–26, for the early Church (both in literature and iconography), has Job proclaiming his own bodily resurrection. This passage will be used to teach the future resurrection of the dead (1 *Clem.* 26; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 18.15). Job 41:1, where God questions whether Job can subdue Leviathan, the dragon, becomes for the early Church a passage which teaches redemption through Christ’s defeat of the devil (Origen, *On First Principles* 4.1.5; Gregory the Great, *Morals*, 33.7.14).

Job is used liturgically in Ordinary Time and in the Masses for the Dead and the Anointing of the Sick. The book encourages Christians to bear adversity in trustful submission to God, to acknowledge the finitude of human understanding, and to hope confidently for salvation.

PSALMS

For the authors of the NT, the Psalms is the most frequently cited OT book. During the era of the Fathers, the Psalter lost none of its importance. Prominent interpreters of the Psalms include Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius of Alexandria, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Augustine, Cyril of Alexandria, and Theodoret.

Many of the psalms repeatedly used by the authors of the NT also generated much interest among the Fathers. Key psalms shared by the exegetical traditions of both eras were 2, 22, 34, 51, 104, 110, 118, and 119. The messianic motif was central to the Fathers’ reading of the Psalms.

Several psalms to which the NT frequently referred, including Pss 69, 79, 98, 105 and 106, received relatively little attention in the patristic era. Conversely, other psalms, for example, Pss 1, 45, and 50, were very frequently employed by the Fathers yet received little attention in the NT. Psalm 1 is a case in point. Though the Psalm itself is never cited in the NT, the Fathers almost universally understood the “blessed man” of vv. 1–2 as referring to Christ, and consequently, to all Christians. Furthermore, some, extrapolating from texts such as Rom 5:12–21 and 1 Cor 15:47, also regarded the “wicked

[person]" of vv. 4–6 as referring to Adam, the original sinner (see, for example, Augustine's *Discourses on the Psalms* 21).

In early doctrinal formulation the Psalms would inform pivotal elements of the Church's Christology. Justin validated the dogma of Christ's bodily ascent into heaven by employing Ps 24:7–8. He understood the "gates" of these verses as referring to the gates of heaven and thus to Christ having passed through these gates into heaven (*Apology* 1, 51). Later, for Irenaeus, Ps 132:11 would serve as testimony to Jesus' Davidic heritage, his kingship and his birth from a virgin. Irenaeus employed this verse to complement his reading of Isa. 7:14 (*Adv. Haer.* 3.21.5). Origen used Ps 16:10 to validate the interrelated doctrines of Christ's descent into hell and his resurrection. He reasoned that since Christ was uniquely (virgin) born and since he lived a unique (sinless) life, the phrase "[f]or you do not give me up to Sheol," must be applied to Christ since he was also unique in having been raised from the dead. For Origen it was Christ's uniqueness that prevented him from remaining permanently in Hades (*Commentary on John* 1.220). Although Origen wrote the first commentary on the Psalms, unfortunately only nine homilies on Psalms 36–38 and some fragments survive.

Cyprian of Carthage, in composing an apology for his "son" Quirinus collated portions of Pss 45, 46, 68 and 82 to help support the idea that Christ was fully God. Ps 45, in particular, provided Cyprian with evidence for Christ's divinity. He quotes from vv. 6–7: "Your throne, o God, endures forever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity; you love righteousness and hate wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions" (*Three Books of Testimonies Against the Jews* 2.6).

Cyprian's use of Psalm 45 proved a foreshadowing of this psalm's significance. In the fourth century, Psalm 45 was central to the Arian controversy. The Arians, read vv. 6–7 to "prove" God the Son's subordination to God the Father. The statement that Christ was "anointed" by God combined with the inference that he was thus elevated only because of his virtue and love of righteous conduct surely meant that he was inferior to the Father. Athanasius of Alexandria, among others, provided a rejoinder. In the first of his *Discourses Against the Arians* Athanasius devoted a chapter to rebutting the Arians' understanding of this passage. The rebuttal proceeded by highlighting different elements of v. 6, "Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever," and v. 7, "God, your God." For him these texts made clear that the psalmist is granting eternity to another besides God the Father. Therefore, these verses must be read as a statement that Christ is distinct from originated things (*Discourses* 1.12.46).

Theodore of Mopsuestia, in his own commentary on the Psalms, innovatively divided the Psalter into five broad categories: doctrinal psalms, praise psalms, prophetic psalms, didactic psalms and exhortatory psalms (*Commentary on the Psalms*, Devreese edition, 205–206). Theodore also considered King David to be the author of every one of the canonical psalms, and in contrast to the common christological readings, believed only four psalms (2, 8, 45, 110) to be prophetic of Christ (Devreese edition, 469–470).

Jerome, too, wrote a commentary on the Psalms and employed the Psalter as a basis for many homilies. Two examples from the homilies reflect the ways in which Jerome continued the tradition of using the Psalms for christological and Trinitarian purposes. In *Homily 21*, which was composed using the text of Psalm 92, Jerome understands the line from v. 10 that reads “But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox” as being an allusion to the cross of Jesus through which he both triumphed over the devil and exalted the faithful. In *Homily 22*, on Psalm 94, Jerome understood v. 22 as conclusively refuting the error of the Arians. This verse reads “But the Lord has become my stronghold.” Jerome reasons that since all agree that these words are written in reference to God the Father, and since they attribute to the Father the idea of having been “made” (the very thing that the Arians attributed to God the Son), the Arians’ reasoning is proven to be thoroughly specious. Even Arians would never dream of ascribing anything less than eternity to God the Father.

Augustine, in addition to employing the Psalter as the subject of his longest commentary-like work, *Discourses on the Psalms*, also employed the Psalms as the basis for his public preaching and theological refutations. For example, in his *Treatise Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* (27.4), after having noted his agreement with a passage from Cyprian’s *Testimonies*, Augustine also reminded his readers that Cyprian was an authoritative source for the doctrine of original sin. He followed this statement with a citation of Ps 51:5: “Indeed I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me,” already having noted that it was one of several texts the Pelagians could not adequately answer.

From the beginning of the patristic era, the Psalter figured prominently in the life of the Church. The celebration of the Eucharist, the liturgy of the word, the daily office, wedding ceremonies and funeral services all came to be accompanied by the Psalms. Tradition holds that it was Ignatius of Antioch who introduced the antiphonal singing of psalms. More verifiable is the fact that the Psalms were sung as part of the Church’s worship by the middle of the second century. Clement of Alexandria refers to the psalms being used at feasts (*Exhortation to the Heathen* 12; *Instructor* 2.4). Tertullian

also confirms the presence of the Psalter in his church's worship. He wrote that at his church's love feasts each participant was required to stand up and sing a hymn from the Holy Scriptures (*Apol.* 39). These practices remained normative. At the turn of the fifth century Augustine wrote in order to defend the practice of the singing of psalms at the eucharistic celebration (*Against Hilary* 1, cf. *Retractations* 2.11).

With the rise of the monastic movement, the psalms continued their great significance. It was during this era that the Psalter came to make up the principal part of the daily office. In the West, there evolved three different schemes for using the psalms. Both the Roman (Gregorian) scheme and the Benedictine scheme allowed for the singing of the entire Psalter in one week, while the Ambrosian scheme normally sang all 150 over the course of two weeks. In the Eastern Church, the psalms were normally recited in one week, though they were sung twice through in their entirety during the weeks of Lent.

It is also among the monastics that the psalms came to be used in the right for sacred vows. For example, in the *Rule of Benedict*, Ps 119:116 was included as a key portion of the ceremony through which novices were admitted as monks into the community. In the *RB* the initiate was required to place his written petition on the altar and quote aloud: "Receive me, O Lord, according to your promise, and I will live: and do not disappoint me in my hope" (58). This prayer was then repeated three times by the whole community.

The chanting of the psalms at Christian burials dates back to at least the third century. One of the few psalms employed in this way is Psalm 114. It was used both in the *commendatio animae*, "the commendation of the soul," at the time of an individual's death and as part of the processional chant as the body was moved to the church and from the church to the grave.

By the late Patristic period, memorization of all the psalms became a requirement for ordination. Both the second Canon of the second Council of Nicaea and Gregory the Great made provision for excluding from office anyone who did not know the Psalter thoroughly.

As was also the case with the biblical wisdom literature, the Psalms quickly became a source of moral and ethical guidance for early Christians. In introducing his translation of a portion of Origen's Commentary on Psalms, Rufinus writes that "[Origen's] exposition of the thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth Psalms is ethical in its character, being designed to enforce more correct methods of life; and teaches at one time the way of conversion and repentance, at another that of purification and of progress" (*Rufinus' Preface to the Translation of Origen's Commentary on Psalms* 36, 37, and 38; trans. W. H. Fremantle, *NPNF²*, 3:566).

The psalms are read liturgically more than any other book of the Christian canon. They are present in each Liturgy of the Word, in the Mass, sacraments, vigils, and the Liturgy of Hours. They edify believers through their anticipation of Christ fulfilled in the NT, their constant teachings on faith and hope, and their encouraging reminders of God's providence, compassion, and power. They exemplify prayer, confession, praise, and thanksgiving.

PROVERBS

In patristic literature, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs were considered as a group to form a symposium of Solomonic authorship on the various fields of human learning. The relationship among these three books is reflected upon in Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. The strong moral content of Proverbs provided resources for the Fathers' ethical exhortations but the book as a whole, was infrequently commented on. Much of the exegesis that survives is in fragmentary form or in the *catenae*. Trends in the interpretation of Proverbs tend to correspond to the exegetical approaches of the individual authors—thus the allegorical and spiritual exegesis that Origen furnishes is scarcely surprising. Proverbs 22:20–21 LXX (“Do you portray them threefold in counsel and knowledge, that you might answer words of truth to those who question you”; *First Principles* 4.2.4) provided Origen with a rationale for his hermeneutical approach, particularly his understanding of the Bible. These verses supported the notion of the multiple senses of Scripture: the literal (historical), moral, and spiritual (allegorical). To these corresponded not only his theological anthropology (body/soul/spirit), but also a threefold classification of Christians (the simple/those making progress/the perfect). Most notable of all the patristic writings on Proverbs that have survived, is Basil of Caesarea's *Homilies on the Beginning of the Proverbs*—a highly prized commentary that was also frequently cited in the *catenae*. In his treatment of Prov 1:1–5, Basil's approach, not unlike many preceding him (such as Hippolytus' *On Proverbs*), was to emphasize and revere the moral teachings in the book that he demonstrated in his exposition of these verses.

The Antiochian exegete Theodore of Mopsuestia, while not denying the canonicity of Proverbs, reckoned to it a lower status of inspiration, a position condemned at Constantinople II (553 C.E.). However, Proverbs was to become the battleground for a far more serious and sustained controversy, namely that arising with Arius and his followers who postulated the ontological subordination of the Son to the Father. In Prov 8:22 personified Wisdom

speaks: “The Lord created me at the beginning of his ways for his works” (LXX), and in 8:25 Wisdom again says of herself “[the LORD] brought me forth beyond all the hills.” Justin, Origen, Tertullian and others looked to v. 25 as normative, emphasizing the “begotten-ness” or generation of Wisdom, and viewed v. 22 as expressing a similar idea (and thus downplaying any notion of the “creation” of Wisdom). Prior to Arius’ interpretation then, these verses were used to make a distinction between the Father and Son, and between the Son and the rest of creation. But for Arius v. 22 was decisive, teaching the “created-ness” (and not “begotten-ness”) of Wisdom. Part of the issue here was the NT’s close association of “wisdom” with Christ. References to the *logos* of John and Pauline references to Christ as “the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:24) and the “firstborn of all creation” (Col 1:15) provided impetus for the Arians to conclude that Christ was created, and by implication not eternal with the Father. Epiphanius, in fact, thought that Prov 8:22 was the text that initiated the Arian controversy (*Panarion* 69.12.1).

The first comprehensive rebuttal of this interpretation in the context of Prov 8:22 arose from Athanasius of Alexandria’s theological treatise, *Discourses Against the Arians* (2.18–80). Against the Arians he advanced two possible interpretations: first, the Son was created *only* in the sense of his incarnation; and second, the creation of Wisdom was actually the creation of Wisdom’s image in humans as they were themselves created.

ECCLESIASTES

The book of Ecclesiastes receives no direct citation in the NT, and the references to it by the Apostolic Fathers are sparse. In the third century the book enjoyed greater attention, and the first patristic commentaries were those of Hippolytus and Origen, both of whose works are extant only in fragmentary form. One of Origen’s pupils, Gregory of Thaumaturgos, wrote a paraphrase entitled *A Metaphrase of the Book of Ecclesiastes*, which is the earliest extant, complete work on Ecclesiastes. Gregory’s paraphrase is important because it proposes a novel response to the seemingly heterodox statements in Ecclesiastes, particularly those tending to hedonism on the one hand, but also those expressing skepticism. What characterizes Gregory’s work is a harmonization of these difficult passages, whether through the refashioning of the LXX text for his translation, or through the concession of heterodox statements in the book. Gregory posited that these difficult statements represented either a younger, more foolish Solomon, or a profane interlocutor. This hermeneutic, suggesting the presence of a hypothetical interlocutor, is

called *prosopopeia* and means “dramatization,” or “the putting of speeches into the mouths of characters;” it has furnished many subsequent commentators, even those of modern times, with an interpretive approach to the tensions within Ecclesiastes.

Both Gregory of Nyssa’s *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, and Jerome’s *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* made use of *prosopopeia* to vindicate Solomon of “Epicurean” charges. Towards the end of the sixth century, Gregory of Agrigentum wrote a massive *Explanation of Ecclesiastes* that stands along with Jerome’s as among the best of patristic commentaries on this book. In the prologue Gregory cited Prov 30:33 LXX (“press milk and you will have butter”) and identified milk with a more “obvious,” literal reading of the text, while the butter represents the “secret,” or spiritual sense. Gregory utilized both interpretive approaches, yet he slavishly followed neither (the same could be said of Jerome’s work). While an apologetic and moralizing tenor derived from earlier works (to offset the “hedonistic” teaching) was present in Gregory’s commentary, his proclivity toward a literal reading manifested itself in a greater acceptance of these passages. The other theme that troubled exegetes was Ecclesiastes’ skepticism, which arose prominently in the opening lines of the book: “Vanity of vanities! All is vanity” (1:2). Verses such as this supported a *contemptus mundi*, a “contempt of the world” subsequently appropriated by the Church’s ascetic tradition, and articulated not only by the patristic writers previously mentioned but also by medieval commentators.

SONG OF SONGS

The earliest extant Christian commentary on the Song of Songs comes from Hippolytus. In it we find the beginnings of a long tradition of allegorical interpretation in which Christ is viewed as the bridegroom and the Church as his bride. This nuptial theology, rooted in Ephesians 5, would come to dominate patristic interpretation after Origen’s commentary and homilies on the Song of Songs. Origen sought to eliminate all interpretations which would reflect an earthly or carnal message, though he did not deny the book’s literal meaning as a drama about marriage. For instance, he understood the Song’s, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!” in 1:2 as an appeal for the advent of the Bridegroom which surpasses the revelatory “kisses” of Moses and the prophets (*First Homily on the Canticle of Canticles* 2). Along with his christological and ecclesiastical exegesis, Origen interpreted the Song as a picture of the soul’s ascent toward union with God. Jerome would

affirm Origenian exegesis; it was Jerome who, with Rufinius' translation of the commentaries, preserved Origen's homilies and part of his commentary on the Song.

Allegorical interpretations thus became the norm in the early Church. Often the twin breasts of the bride in 4:5 and 7:8 were seen as representing the Old and New Testament's of salvation history. For Ambrose, the flower of Song 2:1 was Christ who had sprouted from the virgin Mary to bring the fragrance of faith to the whole world (*The Holy Spirit* 25.38). Cyril of Alexandria believed 3:1 described the women who sought the risen Savior on Easter morning, and 5:1 prefigured the Last Supper (*Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles*, respective verses). Gregory of Nyssa, Theodoret, and Aponius all continued the Origenian interpretation of the Church as Bride in their commentaries on the Song. Gregory highlighted the role of the Eucharist in the union between Christ and the Church. In North Africa, Origen's conception of the Church as an "unspotted" bride would give rise to controversy over the true extent of the Church in light of its impurity or capitulation to worldly pressures. The Song was also incorporated into the Church's liturgy.

In marked contrast to other interpreters, Theodore of Mopsuestia took a literal view of the Song of Songs in his commentary. Following Antiochian hermeneutical tendencies, he argued it should not be understood as speaking of Christ and the Church, but was instead to be read in a plain sense as an erotic song. Solomon wrote it in order to boldly extol the beauties of human love in the face of criticism for his marriage to an Egyptian princess. Thus possible use by Christians for edification was minimal. Theodore's view was condemned a century after his death by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553.

SIRACH (ECCLESIASTICUS)

Allusions to this book, also known as Wisdom of Sirach, appear early in the *Didache* (4.5), the *Letter of Barnabas* (19.9), Tertullian (*An Exhortation to Chastity* 2), and in Clement of Alexandria (*Miscellanies* 1.13) who suggested that the work was written by Solomon and had influenced the Hellenic philosopher Heraclitus (*Misc.* 2.5.24). Hippolytus (*On the Psalms* 1.7) and Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* 7.30.14) both quote from Sirach, and in the East it was cited by Christian writers such as Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom. Origen referenced Sirach frequently in his homilies, as did Augustine, especially in his *Expositions on the Books of*

Psalms. Sirach's authority was made explicit by the Councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397, 419) which officially established the book as canonical. In the sixth century Paterius compiled Gregory the Great's numerous references to Sirach into a quasi-commentary that two centuries later inspired similar efforts by Bede. It was not until the ninth century, though, that Rhabanus Maurus produced the first full-length commentary of this book.

WISDOM

Also known as the Wisdom of Solomon, this book was written pseudonymously by a Hellenistic Jew in the first century B.C.E., though many early Christian writers, including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian accepted its self-professed Solomonic authorship. The Book of Wisdom is first alluded to by Clement of Rome (1 *Clem.* 27.5) and possibly soon thereafter by Ignatius (*Magn.* 8.2b) and *Barnabas* (20.2). Other early witnesses include Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.83.3), the Muratorian Canon (68–70), Tertullian (*Against the Valentinians* 2.2), Origen (*Against Celsus* 3.72), and Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catechetical Lectures* 9.15). Cassiodorus records both Ambrose and Augustine preaching on the Book of Wisdom (*On the Institution of Divine Letters* 5), though these homilies are non-extant. Cassiodorus also commissioned Bellator to write a full-length commentary on Wisdom (the eight book *Exposition on Wisdom*), though this sixth century document has also been lost. In the seventh century Paterius compiled Gregory the Great's scattered comments on Sirach and Wisdom, and in the ninth century the Benedictine Rhabanus Maurus wrote the earliest extant full-length commentary on the Book of Wisdom. Though Jerome categorized Wisdom as pseudepigraphic, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine regarded it as canonical, an appraisal officially confirmed by the councils of Sardis (347), Carthage (397), Trullo (692), and Trent (1546).

While the nineteen chapters comprising this work provided a well of wisdom for the Fathers to plumb (Augustine alone refers to Wisdom of Solomon more than eight hundred times), Wis 7:22–8:1 in particular proved to be a favorite text for early Christian writers. In this passage wisdom is personified and characterized by twenty-one attributes, including such theologically provocative statements as “For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness” (Wis 7:26; cf., Heb. 1:3); and, “For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty” (Wis 7:25). On hundreds of occasions early Christian writers linked Wisdom 7 with such christologically significant

NT passages as Col 1:15, 2 Cor 4:4, Heb. 1:4, and John 14:9,10 (for example, Origen, *An Exhortation to Martyrdom* 35). This christological correspondence became especially important in the fourth century with the rise of Arianism, and the Arian debate also raised pneumatological questions to which the Wisdom of Solomon could speak. For example, Ambrose linked Wis 7:22, 23 with 1 Cor 2:6–16 to explain the Holy Spirit's role in dispensing and developing wisdom and discernment within the Church (*On the Holy Spirit* 3.6). The Donatist theologian Tyconius, a contemporary of Ambrose, made this same textual connection as well. Finally, this book was also important to the development of the martyrology of the early Church. The Book of Wisdom linked righteous suffering with the gift of eternal life (Wis 1:12–16; 2:7–5:23; 10:1–19:22), and the author of the *Letter of the Martyrs of Lyon* (177) applied this relationship to Christian martyrs who in their suffering were united with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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VII
MAJOR PROPHETS

ISAIAH

Origen gave the Christian community its first commentary on Isaiah. Unfortunately, this massive production of thirty books is no longer extant. However, nine of Origen's homilies on Isaiah were translated into Latin by Jerome and these still survive. Eusebius of Caesarea, a disciple of Origen, produced the earliest surviving commentary on the prophet. Also extant are the six homilies of John Chrysostom, the commentary of Pseudo-Basil of Caesarea on Isaiah 1–16, Jerome's commentary, Cyril of Alexandria's commentary, the commentary of Theodoret of Cyrus, Hesychius of Jerusalem's *scholia*, and Procopius of Gaza's *catena*.

In general, the commentaries and homilies were composed by Christian minds reading the prophetic texts in light of the Christ-event. (For this insight we acknowledge our debt to R. L. Wilken's essay, "In *novissimis diebus*: Biblical Promises, Jewish Hopes and Early Christian Exegesis," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 [1993]: 1–19.) The messianic age, to which even the Jews frequently believed much of Isaiah's material pointed, had come to pass in Jesus. For the Christians the Jewish messianic expectation contained in the Isaianic phrase "in days to come" (Isa 2:2), was a matter of contemporary experience. The promises of Isa 2:2–4 referred to the times of the Roman empire following Christ, the times of salvation, the times of the universal Church, the new community that brings the gospel to the world.

If early commentators read Isaiah with little interest in the original historical setting it was because a new historical setting now existed. But although the first sense was christological the commentators did treat the historical settings of the prophecies, sometimes extensively, and did use allegory for matters other than christology.

This same Christian newness to history would lead some early Christians to read other passages in Isaiah as prophecies of Jewish unbelief in Jesus. Origen (*Against Celsus* 2.8) and Cyprian (*Treatise* 12.1.3), for example, would read Isa 6:9–10 in this way. Cyprian (*Treat.* 12.1.3) would additionally understand Isa 1:2–4 to apply to the Jews in their misunderstanding of Jesus while Tertullian would apply Isa 1:2 to their unbelief in both Son and Father (*On Prayer* 2). The evangelization of the Gentiles and the misery of Israel after 70 C.E. provided a context for Christian interpretation of the prophet.

Yet in early Christian interpretation the material of Isaiah served a

number of different ends. Isaiah 1:11–14 taught the lasting purity of inner virtues but the end of sacrifices (*Barn.* 2). From Isa 1:16–20 the Christian learned about the need for repentance (1 *Clem.* 8.4) and of the baptism in water that brought remission of sins (Justin, *Apol.* 1, 61). Clement of Rome in his ecclesiological concerns found prophetic warrant for the apostolic appointment of bishops and deacons in Isa 60:17 (1 *Clem.* 42.5), while Cyprian, in his own ecclesiological pressures, found Isa 2:12; 14:13–16 helpful in encouraging humility and the forsaking of *hubris* (*Ep.* 54.3). Of course the passage on the suffering servant, Isa 53:1–12, informed the Church's faith and practice. Clement of Rome would quote the entire passage to teach humility from the example of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 *Clem.* 16). Origen cites almost the entire passage in order to explain the prediction of the Savior's death for sinners, a death that would bring benefit, healing (*Against Celsus* 2.54–55). For Athanasius, too, 53:3–10 was a prophecy of Christ's death, a death of one of divine nature suffered for the salvation of all, and not for his own sake (*On the Incarnation* 34). Gregory of Nazianzus read 53:4, 5 in the sense of 2 Cor 5:21 and Gal 3:13. The Lord was made sin and a curse in the sense that he took them upon himself, bore them, and removed them from sinners (*Ep.* 101). For Augustine 53:7 sets forth the first lowly, hidden, silent coming of Christ to be followed by his exalted, manifested advent (*Tractate on the Gospel of John* 4.2).

In doctrinal conflict and development Isaiah's material would play many roles. Irenaeus would argue against Theodotion, Aquila, and the Ebionites that Isa 7:14 spoke of a *virgin* conceiving, not a young woman. God had superintended the translation of the Hebrew into Greek (LXX), and the translation was in accord with the apostolic faith (*Adv. Haer.* 3.21.1–4). Against the gnostics who allegorized Isaiah's prophecies of the end times into ideas related to their *pleroma* Irenaeus would argue that they taught no such doctrine. Rather, in accord with Revelation they taught the times of the kingdom and the refashioning of the creation (*Adv. Haer.* 5.35.1–36.3). Also against the gnostics Irenaeus would connect the prophecies of Isa 11:1–4 and 61:1–2 with the baptism of Jesus and the Spirit's descent upon him as recorded, for instance in Matt 3:16–17. By doing so he opposed the gnostic thesis that it was a spiritual "Christ" from the *pleroma* that descended upon Jesus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.9.3; 3.17.1).

Origen would see the Son and the Holy Spirit in the two seraphim of Isa 6 (*Homilies on Isaiah* 1.2; *First Principles* 1.3.4). This would evoke the anonymous (Pseudo-Jerome) anti-Origenistic tractate *On the Vision of Isaiah* 6:1–7. Jerome, too, would object to Origen's interpretation in his *Commentary on Isaiah* (3.6.2) and in a letter to Damasus (*Ep.* 18A, 4.1–5.7). Jerome sees

Christ as the Lord who is seated and who speaks and the seraphim as the two testaments.

Isaiah's role in theological discussion would not be limited to the dispute over the vision of ch. 6. Much material from the prophet would have an important place in trinitarian development. The Arians used Isaiah 1:2 to nullify the claim that the christological term "begotten" referred to the Son's sharing the Father's nature. For them the prophet made the term "son" applicable to those of dissimilar nature to God (Eusebius of Nicomedia, *Epistle to Paulinus of Tyre*; Alexander of Alexandria, *Epistle to Alexander of Thessalonica* 10–11; Athanasius, *Defence of the Nicene Definition* 9–10). Alexander of Alexandria, however, would explain that the passage referred to those adopted as God's sons, not the Son who was the Son by nature (*Epis. Alex. Thes.* 32). Isaiah 45:14 would be used by Athanasius to prove the divine essence of the Son, for there he is worshipped (*Against the Arians* 2.23), while Ambrose cited it to validate the unity of the divine substance (*On the Christian Faith* 1.3.27). For Basil the Great Isa 48:16 taught the Holy Spirit's divine nature (*Against Eunomius* 3.2.4; *On the Holy Spirit* 19.49). Isaiah 53:8 would be quite prominent. Alexander of Alexandria cited it twice in his *Epistle to Alexander of Thessalonica* (21, 46) to insist that the Son is begotten of the Father, but that his *hypostasis* and his generation are beyond human investigation. Thus Alexander sought to prevent Arian speculation into the Son's generation, but the Arians would use the text to prevent Nicaea's language about the Son being the same substance as the Father from being taken too seriously; the Son was clearly subordinate (Sirmian Formula (*Blasphemia*) in Hilary, *On the Councils* 11). But Cyril of Jerusalem would see the Son's eternity in the prophet's words (*Catechetical Lectures* 11.5).

Isaiah's place in the Church's liturgical use of the OT is second only to Psalms. It is read during Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Holy Week. The readings remind the people of God that a holy, righteous God has provided a suffering, yet ultimately victorious, saviour in the incarnate Son.

JEREMIAH

From Origen's hand twenty homilies on Jeremiah are extant in Greek and fourteen in Latin. Fragments from Cyril of Alexandria's comments on the prophet can be found in *catenae*, and still extant is a commentary said to be authored by John Chrysostom, but it is spurious. Theodoret's commentary on Jeremiah treats the prophet as well as Lamentations and Baruch. Jerome's commentary on Jeremiah seems to have been his last. *Catenae* also preserve

comments on Jeremiah by Ephrem (or Pseudo-Ephrem). Within Jeremiah the Fathers of the early Church would find material that informed them about their place in redemptive history, their ministry, their ethics and morals, and their theological questions.

Jeremiah 2:12–13, a passage in which the prophet chides the people for forsaking the Lord and digging broken cisterns, is a favored text for Christian self-definition against other groups. The opponents are contrasted with the Church, Christian faith, and maybe Jews (Justin, *Dialogue With Trypho* 14.1; Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews* 13) or heretics (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.24.1). An appeal by the prophet for the people to circumcise their hearts in accord with new covenant expectation (4:3–4) is used as a petition to Jews for Christian conversion (Justin, *Dial.* 28.2) and as warrant for the unity of the one God of both prophet and apostle of the new covenant (Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 1.20.4). Aphrahat will understand Jer 6:30 as teaching that the kingdom of God has passed away from the Jews, that they have been rejected (*Demonstrations* 5.21). Jeremiah echoes the Church's message and its self-understanding.

The prophet also provides moral teaching. Jer 5:8 is used to compare lustful behavior to that of horses (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.8.3; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 9.13). Jeremiah 9:23–24 functions as an appeal to Christian humility (1 *Clem.* 13) and an exhortation to trust and glory in God (Cyprian, *Treatise* 12.3.10). For Origen, in a homily on the prophet, Jer 20:9 teaches the need to confess and repent of sinful words which burn in the sinner's heart (*Homily on Jeremiah* 19.8–9).

In the development of doctrine Jeremiah's material would play an important role. Irenaeus's explanation of Christ's divinity and humanity against those who assert that he was only a man is informed by Jer 17:9: "he (it) is a man and who can know him (LXX)." The text teaches the Lord's humanity, but also the unfathomable depth of his deity revealed only by God. He is Son of humanity and Son of God (*Adv. Haer.* 3.18.3; 3.19.2; 4.33.11). For Tertullian the same passage would contribute to the Christian teaching, against Marcion and the Jews, on the two advents of Christ, one lowly and the other glorious (*Against Marcion* 3.7).

In thinking about God, Gregory of Nazianzus would invest considerable space in explaining God's incomprehensibility from Jer 23:24 (*Oration* 2.8–11). Origen would be fascinated with Jer 20:7: "O Lord, you have deceived me and I have been deceived." It sets forth God as a parent or physician who may deceive the child or patient for his or her ultimate good. It should raise believers' awareness of their childlike, untaught state in which God teaches them as children, not as adults (*Homilies on Jeremiah* 19, 20).

In the Trinitarian controversy Athanasius would cite Jer 2:13 of the Father: “A fountain of living water.” Since the Son is life (John 14:6) it is absurd for the Arians to suppose that “there was when he was not.” This would make the Father a dry fountain void of life (*Defence of the Nicene Definition* 3.12; *Against the Arians* 1.19). The same bishop of Alexandria would cite Jer 9:10 (LXX 9:9) and 23:22 (LXX 23:18) in support of the Nicene formula’s statement on the Son being of the Father’s essence or substance (*Epistle to the Bishops of Africa* 4). Athanasius sees in the Greek wording of these texts (*hypostemati, hyparxis*) prophetic testimony to the language of Nicaea.

Finally, since the early Christian community read the prophets in light of the new age introduced by the Christ-event, Jeremiah informed their vision of christology and soteriology. Origen read Jer 11:19 (LXX), “Come let us put wood into his bread,” as indicating the Bread of Life’s, the Teacher’s, the Word’s crucifixion at the hands of those people who opposed his teaching (*Homily on Jeremiah* 10.2). Likewise, Athanasius is found associating the tree or wood of 11:19 with the prophetic prediction of the cross (*On the Incarnation* 35). Of course the Fathers would give special place to Jer 31:31–34, the new covenant. Irenaeus emphasizes the newness, that is, its liberty, the blessing of the Spirit, the faith in Christ, the new manner of life that differs somewhat from the covenant of Moses, but he also stresses the unity of the God who gave both (*Adv. Haer.* 4.9.1; 4.33.14). In his *Treatises* Cyprian quotes the entire passage to teach the prophetic expectation of a new dispensation and covenant for the Gentile Church (12.1.11). For Jerome the passage teaches, in concert with others, that until the end comes humans will be incomplete in righteousness (*Against the Pelagians* 2.25–26), and for Augustine it emphasizes the blessing of power to fulfill the Law through the Spirit’s writing it upon hearts. The fearful become those who delight in Law; the transgressor is made a lover (*The Spirit and the Letter* 32–42).

In the liturgy Jeremiah is read in Ordinary Time, Lent, and Ritual Masses including those of Penance, Marriage, Baptism of Adults, Religious Profession, and Vocations. The words of the prophet remind the faithful to seek righteousness not through law written on stone but through a new heart written upon by God’s Spirit.

LAMENTATIONS

Eusebius tells us that he possessed five books of Origen’s *Commentary on Lamentations* (*Hist. Eccl.* 6.32.2). Unfortunately, of these only fragments have survived. Theodoret includes remarks on Lamentations in his *Commentary*

on *Jeremiah*. Olympiodorus' comments on Lamentations also survive only as fragments in *cataena*.

Lam 4:20 was an important text to early Christians. In addition to reading the text as referring to Christ as the believer's spiritual food, early Christians would see the incarnation, cross, and passion prophesied in Lam 4:20. Since the nose, the organ of breathing, stands out from the face, Justin believed a cross was traced in the center of the human visage. Thus Lam 4:20, "the breath of our nostrils is the Lord's anointed," anticipated Christ's crucifixion for Justin (*1 Apology* 55.1–6). Irenaeus, too, would see the Lord's passion in Lam 4:20, but he would emphasize both the reference to "breath" in 4:20a, which he translates "Spirit," and the reference to "his shadow" in 4:20c. This combination of terms prophesied the bitter, veiling incarnation (shadow) of the Spirit Christ (*Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* 71). For Origen as well the passage spoke of the first advent of the Lord Christ, that humble incarnation (*Homily on Joshua* 8.6). But the "shadow in which we live" could also refer to the mortality of the present age that clouded even the believer's partial experience of immortality in this life (*Commentary on Matthew* 15.12). Again the Alexandrian would read it in a positive, yet guarded manner of the Christian's present experience. "His shadow in which we live among the nations" is contrasted to the shadow of the Law in which the unredeemed live. In the shadow the believer has a share in Christ as the way, truth, and life, but it is dim. The believer still awaits a perfect, future redemption (*Commentary on the Canticles* 3).

The language of Lam 4:20, then, as already seen would serve the Christian's understanding of the present state in tension between two worlds, one of mortality and lament and one of immortality and exultation, a state reflective of the Lord's passion prior to glory. Such a theme would also be found in Lam 3:34, "...the prisoners of the earth." Gregory of Nazianzus would find here a reference to the body and carnality (earth) that obstructs the Christian's (prisoner) path to God (*Theological Oration* 2.12 [*Oration* 28.12]). The same theme of the Christian's struggle in the present state would be seen in Lam 3:27, 28, 30, 31. From these verses Jerome composed a description of the character of the ascetic life of the anchorites. Finally, early Christians would find in Lamentations anticipatory words of their own deep, relentless grief. At his *Funeral Oration on Meletius*, bishop of Antioch, Gregory of Nyssa would cite Lam 1:4, "The roads to Zion mourn." For Gregory, Jeremiah spoke these words long ago in reference to his grief over the demise of Jerusalem, but these words of lament were also realized and fulfilled in the community's mourning for Meletius.

BARUCH

Frequently referred to by the Fathers as a part of Jeremiah, the book of Baruch supplied rich material for early Christian thought. Theodoret would include remarks on Baruch in his Jeremiah commentary, and Olympiodorus would also provide commentary. Baruch would inform the Church's ideas on a broad range of questions from eschatology, revelation, and incarnation to Christian gnosis and sanctity in marriage.

Irenaeus, the earliest Father to cite Baruch, reads the address to Jerusalem in 4:36–37, 5:1–9 as Jeremiah's prophetic expectation of the rebuilt, eschatological Jerusalem in the Kingdom prior to the new earth (*Adv. Haer.* 5.35.1–2). He also reads Bar 3:37 [38], which speaks of God conversing with humanity on the earth, as fulfilled in the prophetic ministry of revelation mediated by the Father's Word and in the Word's own incarnate ministry of revelation (*Adv. Haer.* 4.20.4, 8). Tertullian will allude to the passage when he also discusses the Son of God's ministry of revelation throughout all redemptive history (*Against Praxeas* 16.3). Even later, in the fourth century, Bar 3:37 [38] would be associated with the Son's incarnate life among humanity. It is here that God was conversing with humanity (Ambrose, *On the Christian Faith* 5.18.222). For Clement of Alexandria, Bar 3:13, which promises eternal peace to the one who walks in God's way, teaches the blessing that follows knowledge (*The Instructor* 1.10). Clement would also find in the language of Bar 3:10, which speaks of Israel's defilement in a strange country, a lesson against intimacy with a foreign (that is, a non-spousal) partner.

In their formulation of trinitarian doctrine Christians of the fourth century also turned to Baruch. In the same way that he had used Jer 2:13; 17:12 against the Arians, Athanasius would use Bar 3:12. If the Father is the "fountain of wisdom" he could never be without the Son, for this would make him a dry spring (*Defence of the Nicene Definition* 3.12; *Against the Arians* 1.19). Furthermore, Bar 4:20, 22 with its language about the eternity of God provided Athanasius with a basis for his argument on the Son's eternity. Against the Arians who said "there was when he was not," Athanasius argues that he who is the expression and revelation (cf., for example, Matt 11:27; John 14:8–9; Heb 1:3) of the Father who is eternal must himself be eternal (*Against the Arians* 1.12). With the same agenda to show the Son's deity and to show him as a distinct person from the Father, Hilary (*On the Trinity* 4.42) cites Bar 3:35[36]–37[38]. In contrast to an Arian usage of the text that would capitalize on the language about God's exclusive uniqueness in 3:35[36] in order to emphasize the Father's separation from the Son, Hilary takes another path. He emphasizes 3:35[36]–37[38] in order to teach

that the OT testified to the existence of the Son, “God,” who dwelt among humanity on earth (3:36 [37]–37 [38]). Therefore the term “God” (3:35 [36]) could not be assigned to the Father alone, for he was not incarnate on earth in conversation with humanity.

EZEKIEL

Origen’s twenty-five book commentary on Ezekiel was the first in the early Church. Unfortunately, it is no longer extant, but fourteen of his homilies on the prophet’s writings, translated by Jerome, do survive. Sadly, many other commentaries on Ezekiel have not reached the present era, except as fragments in *catenae*. Those of Apolinarius of Laodicea, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Polychronius of Apamea, have all been lost. However, the commentaries of Theodoret of Cyrus and of Jerome are extant as are twenty-two homilies of Gregory the Great which present important teachings on his views of spirituality, contemplation and compunction (his texts are Ezek 1:1–4:3 and Ezek 40). Also, a homily falsely ascribed to the Egyptian monk, Macarius the Great, giving a spiritual interpretation of Ezek 1:4–2:1 is available in the collection *Fifty Spiritual Homilies*.

The Fathers openly declared the profundity and obscurity of the writings of the prophet Ezekiel yet found his prophecies formative for Christian faith, perspective, and practice. (cf. Gregory of Nazianus, *Orat.* 23; Theodoret, *Commentary on Ezekiel* Pref.; Jerome, *Ep.* 53, *Commentary on Ezekiel* Pref.). The early Church would find the vision of God in Ezekiel 1 pivotal to its case for the partial, progressive nature of God’s revelation of the divine essence to humanity. For Irenaeus the nature of the vision of ch. 1 is explained by Ezek 1:28: it was the vision of the *likeness* of God’s glory. This contributes to his theme of the progression of humanity, in the advance of the economies, toward ever more immediate visions of God. The prophets did not see God as those who saw the Son would see God, and the incarnate vision anticipates the fuller vision of God in the eschatological kingdom. For Origen, too, the vision described in Ezek 1:15 is not a direct seeing of God. It is a vision of good things, the type of life which is available to the believer in the present age. Yet it is only a *shadow* of the full life available in the future glory when one is absent from the body and united with God and God’s Son (*Dialogue with Heraclides* 173–74). Likewise, for Gregory of Nazianus the vision of the prophet was not an observation of the essence or nature of God. No human being in the present state of things, prior to eschatological glory, has seen God’s nature or essence (*Theological Oration* 2.19, cf. 17 [*Oration* 28.19]).

For the Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, Ezek 18:4, “The soul that sins shall die,” provided a basis for meditation on sanctification and the nature of death. Clement (*On Spiritual Perfection* 3.14) would argue that the passage was addressing a Christian’s putting aside of wicked passions in the same way that Paul speaks of the old human dying and being raised to life (Eph 4:22, 24). In this way one would be an acceptable sacrifice (cf. Rom 12:1). Origen, however, would read the passage differently. It is seen repeatedly in his discussions of the soul’s death, mortality, and immortality. For him the passage teaches death as a soul’s capitulation to sin. It addresses the exclusion of that soul from God, that is, life (*Homily on Leviticus* 9.11; *Dialogue with Heraclides* 168–72; *Commentary on John* 13.59).

For Gregory of Nyssa, who argued against an idea that the incarnation involved only human flesh and not the human soul, Ezek 18:20 was critical. He reasoned that if Christ came to save the lost he came to save their whole being. Ezekiel 18:20 teaches the death of the sinning soul, as does 18:4, which in his mind took effect immediately at the Fall because there humanity was alienated from God; bodily death followed years afterward. Since, then, humanity dies in both soul and body the Saviour must have taken upon himself all that is lost (*Against Eunomius* 2.13).

Furthermore, for the early Christians ch. 18 would function prominently to inform them about repentance and steadfastness in the Christian life. Ezek 18:18–32, which teaches the Lord’s preference for the sinner’s repentance and righteousness rather than the sinner’s death, and 33:11, which teaches the same, would be referred to repeatedly (e.g., Athanasius of Alexandria, *Ep.* 3 [Easter 331] 4; *Life of Antony* 18; Basil of Caesarea, *Ep.* 41.2; Jerome, *Ep.* 122:1; 147.3). Illustrative of how differing theological climates can produce different readings and emphases from the same text is Tertullian’s much earlier use of Ezek 33:11. Against the theological dualism of Marcion that sees two gods, one of goodness and one of justice, Tertullian turns to the Ezekiel passage. Here he finds one God who mercifully prefers a sinner’s repentance but who justly and righteously will punish the sinner. This teaches one God who should be loved by the obedient but feared by the sinner (*Against Marcion* 2.13).

It is important to note how the new covenant blessing of Ezek 36:25–27 was frequently understood by the early Church. The Lord promised Israel a cleansing with water, a new heart, and a new spirit. These promises were realized for the early Christian in regeneration by baptism (e.g., Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Baptism of Christ*; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 3.15; 16.30). Also important is the long patristic tradition connected with the eschatological reading of Ezekiel 37, the prophecy of the valley of dry

bones. From pastoral exhortations for unity, to Christian apologetics and polemics, to catechetical instruction, the promise of the bones coming to life gave early Christians the expectation of a second return of Christ and their own resurrection from the dead (1 *Clem.* 50; Justin, *Apol.* 1, 52; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.15.1; Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 29; Cyril, *Catechetical Lectures* 18.15). Origen, however, brought out a future hope of the ecclesial unity of the members of Christ's body, the Church (*Commentary on John* 10.233–238). For Theodoret, the most interesting feature of ch. 37 was the later reference to the coming unity of Israel's house and the eternal rule of God's servant David (vv. 15–28). Seeing no basis for a literal, historical fulfillment among the Jews in Palestine under a davidic descendant, Theodoret interpreted the prophecy spiritually in reference to the invisible, eternal, heavenly rule of Christ (*Commentary on Ezekiel* 37.24–25; cf. the helpful discussion in Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992], 143–148).

Finally, three different readings of Ezekiel's prophecies regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem (chs. 40–48) will be mentioned. First, it was common in the second century for Christians to expect to receive and inhabit, on the basis of Ezek 48:30–35 and other parallel prophetic texts (Isa 54:11–14), a new, rebuilt, eschatological Jerusalem upon the earth (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 3.24.3–4; cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.34.4). But, with a more spiritual exegesis like that of Origen, the actual rebuilding of an earthly Jerusalem as a Christian hope gave way to the expectation of a heavenly Jerusalem where the soul would be nourished and the mind enlightened (Origen, *On First Principles* 2.11.2–4). Interestingly, when Theodoret's interpretation is encountered, the rebuilt Jerusalem is the Jerusalem of his own day, the Christian Jerusalem with its Christian churches (*Com. Ezek.* 48.35).

In the Church's liturgy Ezekiel is read on Easter Vigil and Pentecost, on the feast of Christ the king, on the fifth Sunday of Lent, and in Ordinary Time. The prophet encourages the community of believers concerning the blessings of the new covenant, resurrection, the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the sovereign graciousness of God in salvation.

DANIEL

Portions of the book of Daniel have had an important place in the Church's thought and practice. Daniel's material is discussed in theological, polemical, and apologetic treatises as well as in commentaries. Motifs from the stories within the prophetic book were also popular in the Church's iconography.

The behaviour of Daniel and his companions in the first chapter exemplifies for Hippolytus, in his *Commentary on Daniel* (1.8, 12), the faithfulness and purity expected of Christians. It also validates for Origen the authenticity of Daniel as a true prophet of the Church in contrast to the false prophets of the pagans (*Against Celsus* 7.7).

The stone of Dan 2:34, 35 cut out from the mountain without human hands was interpreted christologically, covenantally, and ecclesiologically. It was seen to teach the virginal conception and the mysterious, divine incarnation of the Father's Son (Justin, *Dial.* 76.1; Ephraem, *Commentary on Daniel* 5.206); the glorious, powerful, destructive second coming of Christ against the temporal end-time kingdoms in order to establish the eternal kingdom (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.26.1–2; Tertullian, *Adv. Iud.* 14); the coming of the new covenant, law which overtakes and ends the old law and replaces it with a new, spiritual circumcision (Tertullian, *Adv. Iud.* 3); and the Church, the body of Christ, which has tangibly filled the whole earth (Tyconius, *Book of Rules* 1) and therefore those who speak of a division and pollution of the Church (for example, the Donatists) hate their brother and stumble blindly against the mountain (Augustine, *Homilies on 1 John* 1.8, 13). These readings are frequently influenced by the rich scriptural images of “stone” and “mountain.”

The three young Hebrews in the furnace of fire (Daniel 4) who are not burned provided a hopeful soteriological image reproduced in early Christian art. The common association of the fourth figure in the furnace with Christ the Son is present already in Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.20.11) and Hippolytus (*In Dan.* 3.92). Nebuchadnezzar's subsequent repentance (Dan 4:25–37) serves as an example to stir others to repentance and restoration (Tertullian, *On Repentance* 11). Jerome in his *Commentary on Daniel*, emphasized a historical and literal reading of Nebuchadnezzar's experience denying any symbolic reference.

The story of Daniel in the lions' den (Daniel 6) was rich soil for the early Church's meditation. Daniel's response of prayer to the king's decree and his preservation was a model of how the Christian prays without ceasing and receives blessing (Origen, *On Prayer* 12.2; 13.2). His suffering at Darius' hands teaches that Christians are persecuted by wicked men and therefore should not rebel against one another (1 *Clem.* 45). To Cyprian, it teaches the place of the fear of God in faith and hope (*Treatise* 12.3.20). In the early Church's iconography the story was popularly depicted as a hopeful picture of salvation and resurrection.

The four beasts of Daniel 7 and the four parts of the image of Daniel 2 were of particular interest to early Christians. In most interpretations the first

three were read as the empires of Babylon, Persia (Medo-Persia), and Greece. The fourth empire was commonly understood as Rome (Hippolytus, *In Dan.* 2.1–3; Jerome, *In Dan.* 7.1–7) with Cyril of Jerusalem stating that this interpretation was the Church's tradition (*Catechetical Lectures* 15.13). The Syrian commentators, however, offer some alternative readings of the fourth empire. Aphrahat's interpretation is somewhat difficult to clarify. On the one hand he seems to identify the fourth kingdom as Rome, yet on the other hand he appears to believe that the third and fourth kingdoms found their fulfillment together in Alexander, that is, in Greece (*Demonstrations* 5.19). Ephrem, in his *Commentary on Daniel* (5.206), sets the four kingdoms forth as those of the Babylonians, Medes, Persians (Cyrus), and Greeks (Alexander).

The "little horn" of Dan. 7, 8 was understood by the Fathers both historically and eschatologically. Hippolytus saw it in one place as referring to Antiochus Epiphanes (*In Dan.* 2.9–10), but in others as referring to Antichrist (*In Dan.* 2.2–3; 3.7.19). Jerome would stress against Porphyry the vanity of reading the little horn as Antiochus rather than Antichrist, but seems to allow for an orthodox reading that sees Antiochus as a proleptic fulfillment or type of Antichrist (*In Dan.* 7.7–8; 8.5, 9, 14). The Syrian commentators, as one would expect, prefer the historical interpretation. For Aphrahat (*Demonstr.* 5.20) and Polychronius, in his *Commentary on Daniel* (11), the little horn was Antiochus, in continuity with the identification of the fourth kingdom.

When it comes, however, to the interpretation of the Son of man in Dan. 7:13 the Syrian reading is not so predictable. Polychronius gives no identity, Aphrahat (*Demonstr.* 5.21) rejects the interpretation that it is a reference to the Jews and applies it instead to Christ in his first advent, while Ephrem (*In Dan.* 5.215) applies it proleptically to the time of the Maccabees, but in its consummation to Christ. Commentators other than the Syrians read the passage christologically as well, and with both historical and eschatological perspectives. For Justin (*Dial.* 31) it refers to Christ's second advent, as it does for Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.8.11) and Tertullian (*Adv. Iud.* 14). Lactantius connected the passage with Jesus' ascension into heaven in a cloud (*Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 47; cf. Acts 1:9). For Jerome the text is linked with Acts 1:11 and Phil 2:6–8. It refers, then, to the Son of man as the Son of God who is equal with God, who has taken human flesh and who will return from heaven (*In Dan.* 7.13, 14).

The late Middle Ages would show that disputes between ruler and Pope, dissident order and Pope, and reformer and Pope resulted in the Pontiff being identified with the Antichrist of Daniel and his acts equated with the abomination of desolation. The Protestant Reformation, particularly in the writings of Martin Luther, would continue this identification from Daniel.

John Calvin's commentary on the prophet, however, would emphasize a historical interpretation, seeing the fourth kingdom as Rome and the little horn as Antiochus.

In the Church's liturgy Daniel is read, for example, on the thirty-third Sunday, the feast of Christ the King, and during the thirty-fourth week. It is also read in Lent and in Masses for persecuted Christians. The readings encourage God's people concerning God's sovereign control of events and their eventual victory over trial and adversity.

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VIII MINOR PROPHETS

The twelve minor prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) appeared early as a literary unit in Sir 49:10: "May the bones of the Twelve Prophets send forth new life." In canonical lists this custom of referring to these prophets as the "twelve" was common, yet the Fathers frequently cited them individually. Augustine gave us the appellation "minor prophets," this distinction being drawn because of their shorter length (*City of God* 18.29). Eusebius records (*His. Eccl.* 6.36.3) that there were at least twenty-five books of Origen dedicated to the twelve prophets, of which only fragments of Hosea now remain. Extensive expositions of these books were undertaken by Cyril of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Jerome. Jerome's work, occupying the later years of his life, is of considerable erudition.

HOSEA

For the patristic writers the issue of how to interpret Hosea's marriage was particularly troublesome. Julian of Eclanum, who, in addition to Cyril, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret and Jerome, also wrote a commentary on Hosea, points out that the differences of interpretation on this matter were largely regional (*Commentary on Hosea* 1.2–5). The Alexandrians interpreted the command from God allegorically. This school claimed that a real marriage would have exposed Hosea to ridicule, and God nowhere else in the Bible demands a violation of formerly-revealed laws.

The Antiochians, in contrast, said an actual marriage did take place. Theodore (*Commentary on Hosea* 1.3) and Theodoret (*Interpretation of Hosea* 1.2) argued that literal names and places are attached to the marriage, and the woman is said to bear literal offspring. The point of the passage is not legalistic adherence to divine precepts but Hosea's unquestioning obedience to God's will for him (Theodoret, *Interp. Hos.* 1.4; cf. Julian, *In Hosea* 1.2–5). The prophet chose an absolute moral good. Even Cyril of Alexandria attempted to refute an unnamed interpreter who claimed the marriage must have been purely symbolic since Hosea would not have literally obeyed such a command from God. Like others, Cyril took note of the text's historical indicators such as actual names for actual offspring (*Commentary on Hosea*

1.15.12ff.). Other directives from God, he points out, seem more repugnant than that a prophet should marry a prostitute (1.19–20). In fact, Christ Himself associated with sinners, which is mystically pictured in Hosea's action (1.21–22). He rescued Gomer from her shameful position and gave her legitimate standing in society (1.22). While not depending on other commentators directly, Cyril's interpretation was consistent with Antiochians such as Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret in the attempt to prove the historicity of Hosea's marriage.

Jerome notes that Apollinaris of Laodicea, Origen, and Pierius had written on Hosea (preface to *Commentary on Hosea*). His own work was intended to complete the brief commentary of Origen at the request of Didymus of Alexandria. However, Jerome is much more ambiguous when it comes to the appropriate hermeneutical method to be used. In the preface he states a predilection for an allegorical interpretation of Hosea's marriage because "God commands nothing but what is honorable, nor does he, by bidding men do disgraceful things, make that conduct honorable that is disgraceful" (preface to *In Hosea*), but his interpretation of Hos 1:2 seems to indicate a literal marriage took place. Such variety in approach shows the flexibility with which the patristic interpreters came to the Scriptures, cautioning against a too-rigid distinction between the "Antiochian" and "Alexandrian" schools.

JOEL

Origen brought his characteristic allegorical hermeneutical tendencies to his address to the book of Joel. For example, in his commentary on the book he finds multiple layers of meaning in 1:11–12, which predicts the withering of Judah's farms, vineyards, and orchards. Beyond the literal aspect the passage refers spiritually to the devastation of the Jews at the hands of the Romans for rejecting the Messiah, and tropologically to the soul, which is like a garden that blooms when virtue is pursued but shrivels from vice.

For Cyprian, Joel 2:12–16 was an important passage. He used it to demonstrate God's mercy toward those who had denied the faith but who then penitently sought reinstatement into the Church (e.g., *The Lapsed* 36).

Because it is quoted in Acts 2, Joel 2:28–32 is one of the few passages from the Minor Prophets that the Fathers unanimously agreed must be read in light of the NT. In *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus sees the unity of prophetic expectation and apostolic fulfillment in Peter's use of the prophet (3.12.1). Tertullian gives the passage a Montanistic flavor in *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* (63), a tendency also seen in the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas*

(preface), which may bear his influence. Ambrose quotes 2:28 four times in *The Holy Spirit* to prove that the outpouring of God's Spirit was predicted by the Hebrew prophets (1.18, 85, 92; 2.22; cf. *The Sacrament of the Incarnation of Our Lord*, 6.59). Even Theodore of Mopsuestia understood Joel 2:28–32 in a christological sense by relating it to the day of Pentecost (*Commentary on Joel 2:28–32*).

AMOS

Amos 4:13, “For lo, the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind, reveals his thoughts to mortals, makes the morning darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth—the LORD, the God of hosts, is his name!” was important for the Church Fathers. It functioned pivotally in the trinitarian debate. The LXX contains the phrase “and declares His Anointed [= Christ] to humanity,” which the orthodox patristic commentators used to teach the distinctiveness of the Son from the Father (Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* 28). Gregory of Nazianzus, however, highlighted the cooperation between Father and Son in the continuous upholding of the created order (*Oration* 30.11). Athanasius examined the verse in detail and found in it decisive proof against the Pneumatomachians who denied the divinity of the Spirit (*Letters to Serapion* 1.3; *On the Holy Spirit* 2.6). There is no cause for taking the created “wind” (*pneuma*) as a reference to the Holy Spirit, he argued, because Scripture uses the definite article when it wishes to indicate the Third Person of the Trinity. Ambrose also refuted the heretics’ use of Amos 4:13 (*On The Holy Spirit* 2.6). The passage does not refer to the Holy Spirit but to the “thunder” of the incarnation, the Sons of Thunder (Jesus’ brothers), and the voice of God at the Lord’s baptism (2.6.54–57).

Amos was also important in christological and ecclesiological discussions. The coming darkness and mourning of Amos 8:9–10 were thought to foreshadow the dimming of the sun at the crucifixion of Christ. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.33.12), Tertullian (*An Answer to the Jews* 10.17, 19; 13:14; *Against Marcion* 4.42.5), Lactantius (*Divine Institutes* 4.19.3) and Cyprian (*Testimonies Against the Jews* 2.23) take this view. Basil, however, applies the verse to the persecution and confusion of the Eastern Churches (*Letter to the Bishops of Italy and Gaul* 243).

Amos 9:11, which speaks of the fallen “booth of David,” was interpreted as the body of Christ by Hilary of Poitiers (see commentary on Amos in this volume). Jerome, however, understood it as the demise of the Jewish synagogue, which has been superseded by the Church, to which all na-

tions will be converted. Irenaeus had a similar view, arguing against the Marcionites that the God of the OT promised in the words of Amos to come to the Gentiles and raise up a new tabernacle of David (*Adv. Haer.* 3.12.14), but elsewhere he takes it as the resurrection body of Christ (*Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* 38, 62).

OBADIAH

Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cyril of Alexandria, and Theodoret understood the book in light of the sibling rivalry between Esau and Jacob. “Edom,” as the family and descendants of Esau, became a symbol of all who oppose Israel. From this the idea developed that “Edom” was the personification of the devil.

For the Latin Fathers Edom became a type representing worldly wickedness, the enemy of the Church and the soul. Augustine modifies the largely antagonistic interpretation of Edom by saying that as Esau was a “part” for the whole of Edom, so Edom was a part for the whole, the Gentile nations. Augustine interpreted Obadiah 21 as referring to Christians, and specifically the apostles, as those who “came up from Mount Zion” (Judea) to “defend” the mountain, that is, to preach to the Gentiles the gospel of salvation from the kingdom of darkness (*The City of God*, 18.31).

Jerome formally commented on Obadiah on at least two different occasions. While he was very young he composed a commentary on Obadiah that he would later disown. When he again took up the project (ca. 396 while in the midst of the Origenist controversy) he would regret his earlier attempt because of its excessive allegorization.

JONAH

Of the twelve minor prophets Jonah was the most frequently cited and artistically represented in the early Church. On this abundance of references Jerome wrote with perspicacity: “I know that older interpreters, both Greek and Latin, have said many things about this book, and have not so much uncovered many questions as they have obscured meanings” (*On Jonah*; CCSL 76: 377).

In patristic thought the death and resurrection motif was frequently articulated both through the avenue of typological exegesis (Jonah being the “type” and Jesus the “antitype”) and within the context of apologetic

or theological writings defending or explaining the resurrection of Christ (e.g. Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* 107 and Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oration* 2.106, 109). Jerome captured this theme, as well as the universality of God's salvific plan, when he wrote of Jonah's "shipwreck prefiguring the passion of the Lord [that] calls the world to penitence: and in the name of Nineveh he announces salvation to the Gentiles" (*Ep.* 53).

Developing the theme of God's increasing scope of salvation, Jerome wrote elsewhere that Cyprian of Carthage was converted to Christianity by meditating on the book of Jonah. Particularly prominent interpretations of God's larger plan of salvation include Cyril of Alexandria's *On Jonah*, which propounded that the very reason for Jonah's mission was God's universal design. Theodoret (*On Jonah*) was more assertive in arguing that Jewish and Gentile salvations were correlatives under God's one rubric of salvation. Augustine, in commenting on Jonah's refusal to go to Nineveh, interpreted such reticence as a sign of Israel's jealousy to Gentile salvation (*Ep.* 102.30–38).

The resurrection and salvation motifs also found expression in art. The story of Jonah was the most frequently depicted of OT scenes. He was most commonly displayed as being thrown into the sea and swallowed by the monster (which would allude to Christ's passion and resurrection), spewed out on dry land, and finally resting under a gourd. This later episode received various depictions. Sometimes Jonah was at ease, suggesting the Christian transformation of the pagan myth of Endymion who was transported to Elysium, paralleling Jonah's deliverance into Paradise. Other times Jonah appeared sad under the vine, underscoring his reluctance to spreading God's message of salvation to the Gentiles.

In modern times Jonah has found extensive liturgical expression, being read both within Jewish (on the Day of Atonement) and Christian traditions. Since Vatican II, Jonah 3 is read in the first week of Lent, and chs. 1–3 are read during the twenty-seventh week in alternate years. Anglicans and Episcopalians cite Jonah 3–4 on the Sunday closest to September 21, and Lutherans refer to Jon 2:2–9 on Easter evening and Jon 3:1–5, 10 on the third Sunday after the Epiphany.

HABAKKUK

For the Fathers, Habakkuk was usually interpreted in light of the nt. The phrase, "but the righteous will live by my faith," (2:4) was particularly important because of its use in Romans 1:17. Irenaeus, in light of Rom 1:17,

understood the advent of Christ to be the fulfillment of the prophet's words (*Adv. Haer.* 4.34.2). The prophets and apostles, then, are from the very same God. For Tertullian, Habakkuk anticipated the kind of faith exercised by the woman who anointed Jesus' feet (*Against Marcion* 4.18; cf. Luke 7:36–50), or all who are justified by Christ (5.3). "Faith" in God was understood to open new avenues of understanding. Clement of Alexandria quoted Hab 2:4 to prove belief must precede the soul's "transcendental contemplation" of divine themes (*Stromata* 2.2). Likewise, Cyprian uses the verse to show faith in Christ is necessary to understand the Scriptures (*Testimonies Against the Jews* 1.5) and to see great miracles achieved in one's life (3.42).

ZEPHANIAH

The book of Zephaniah was often interpreted eschatologically, especially in associating the terrors of the last judgment with the prophet's "Day of the Lord" motif. Cyprian links the inevitability of God's future wrath (Zeph 3:8) to Jesus' command not to take vengeance since such belongs to God alone (*Three Books of Testimonies Against the Jews* 3.106; cf. *On the Advantage of Patience* 21). Origen, arguing against the view of Celsus that the peoples of the world could never be brought under the single reign of God, interprets Zeph 3:7–13 as a prophecy certain to be fulfilled (*Against Celsus* 8.72). Evil will be destroyed by God and human harmony will one day prevail. This eschatological reality will occur at the "consummation of all things." Zephaniah also contained christological references for the Church Fathers. For example, Cyprian understood 1:7, "the LORD has prepared a sacrifice," to be speaking of the crucified Jesus (*Against the Jews* 2.20).

HAGGAI

On the whole the little book of the prophet Haggai is seldom mentioned by the Church Fathers. It would, however, inform them on various issues. It addressed, for example, their views of theology, history, and morals.

Cyprian refuted his pagan opponents' premise that wars and famines continue because the ancient gods have been abandoned by Christians. He used Haggai's statement in 1:9 to prove the reverse: God's anger actually burns against those who continue to worship idols (*An Address to Demetrianus* 6; cf. *Three Books of Testimonies Against the Jews* 3.20). In book 10 of the *Ecclesiastical History*, where Eusebius was reflecting on the glories of

the Churches rebuilt after persecutions ceased, Paulinus of Tyre is likened to Zerubbabel. In this bishop's basilica Haggai's prophecy in 2:9 that the glory of the Jewish temple will be restored "is no longer a word but a fact, for the last glory of this house has become and now truly is greater than the former" (*Eccl. His.* 10.4.45–46). Other historical readings would be much broader. The "shakings" of Hag 2:6–7 referred to the great epochs of salvation history for the Church Fathers. They reveal a movement from the former time of darkness to the new age of the Gospel. Origen interpreted the "earth" as the era of lesser understanding under Moses and Plato and the "dry land" as the Christian land in which he now lives (*Against Celsus* 7:30; cf. 2.30). For Gregory of Nazianzus there were two "remarkable transformations of the human way of life in the course of the world's history," from idolatry to Law and from Law to Gospel, plus one "shaking" yet to come in the end times when this earth is transformed (*Theological Oration* 5.25 [*Oration* 31.25]).

The book of Haggai was also used to provide moral instruction. For example, Clement of Alexandria interpreted 1:6 as a command for fiscal responsibility. The one who greedily hoards money or spends it wantonly will lose an eternal reward, putting the money into a "purse with holes" (*Christ the Educator* 2.3; *Stromata* 3.56.2).

ZECHARIAH

The book of Zechariah was one of the Minor Prophets most widely quoted by the Church Fathers. This is because many of Zechariah's prophecies would come to be interpreted in the Christian tradition as references to Jesus' life and work. However, those who tended toward Antiochian exegesis, especially Theodore of Mopsuestia, were reluctant to give anything but a historical interpretation to passages that had important christological meaning for other patristic writers and the NT authors.

Zechariah 9:9, which describes the victorious king of Jerusalem riding "a colt, the foal of a donkey," was applied to the triumphal entry of Christ in Matthew 21:4–5. Justin Martyr sees this as fulfillment of prophecy that proves Jesus is the Christ (*Dial.* 53). Clement of Alexandria, however, understands the colt as "high-spirited" Christians who are "unsubdued by wickedness" and are in need of Christ as a "trainer," (*Christ the Educator* 1.5.15). Theodore of Mopsuestia strictly limits the meaning of the verse to the return of Zerubbabel from exile (*Commentary on Zechariah* 9.9). The gospel application to Christ can be made only because Jesus displayed the same characteristics Zechariah described in Zerubbabel.

The prophet spoke of looking with regret on the “one whom they have pierced” in 12:10, and here the Church Fathers found another reference to Christ. Cyprian applied the verse to the historical event of Jesus’ crucifixion, which was viewed by actual witnesses just as Zechariah predicted (*Testimonies Against the Jews* 2.20). Ignatius used the verse to refute the Docetic teaching that Jesus did not really assume human flesh (*Trall.* 10) and did not have a physical resurrection body (*Smyrn.* 3). At times the verse was given an eschatological interpretation. Irenaeus applied it Christ’s second coming in judgment, when sinners will be punished for their unbelief and rejection of the Son of man (*Adv. Haer.* 4.33.11). Tertullian does the same in attempting to show the error of the Jews and of Marcion in not understanding the two advents of Christ, one lowly, the other sublime (*An Answer to the Jews* 14; *Against Marcion* 3.7). Ambrose, however, focuses on the “pouring out of the spirit” in the verse, understanding it as a reference to the grace of the Holy Spirit (*The Holy Spirit* 1.12.127).

Tertullian gives Zechariah 13:7–9 a martyrological interpretation in which the striking of the shepherd and subsequent scattering of the sheep in v. 7 referred to clergy who abandon their congregations, and the purging fire of v. 9 is the “flame of persecution” that proves the steadfastness of the confessor’s faith (*On Flight in Persecution* 11. 3). Normally, however, the passage was understood to address the scattering of the disciples when Jesus was arrested for trial and put to death. Justin, for example, follows this interpretation (*Dial.* 53). Origen believed the “striking” of Christ the Shepherd was prefigured in the rock struck by Moses that brought forth flowing waters. In the same way, water issued from Christ’s side, which represents the Word of God (*Homily on Exodus* 11.2). Zechariah 14 was usually understood as a reference to Christ’s second coming.

MALACHI

Malachi 1:11, “In every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering,” was understood by the Church Fathers to have eucharistic significance. Furthermore, for Justin, Irenaeus, and Cyril of Jerusalem the “unacceptable sacrifices” of v. 14 referred to Jewish worship, now replaced by the Christian meal. Tertullian also understood the text to speak of the Church’s replacement of Israel, but in addition to the sacramental theme he interprets the sacrifices as spiritual offerings of praise and obedience, hymns of worship, and holy prayer (*An Answer to the Jews* 5; *Against Marcion* 3.22; 4.1).

The “messenger of the Lord” in 3:1 was understood to be either John the

Baptist or Christ himself. Jerome interpreted the messenger as the Baptist and the “one coming to his temple” as Jesus. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.11.4) and Tertullian likewise understood John to be the messenger, who is “angelic” in his Spirit-empowered ministry of witness (*Answer to the Jews* 9; cf. *Against Marcion* 4.18). Clement of Rome, however, interprets 3:1–2 as a promise of Christ’s return (*1 Clem.* 23). In a similar fashion Cyril of Jerusalem takes the text eschatologically, not as a reference to the Second Coming alone but to both advents of Christ (*Catechetical Lecture* 15.2).

Malachi 3:6, “For I the LORD do not change,” was used by the Fathers to teach the immutability of God. Origen refuted the Stoics who held that God is a body capable of change (*Against Celsus* 1.21). Even in condescending to become human God did not change as Celsus believed (4.14; cf. 6.62). Alexander of Alexandria, refuting the Arians, used the text to show there cannot be a time when the Father was without His Son (*Epistles on the Arian Heresy* 2.3). Hilary of Poitiers argued for the coequality of the Father and Son existing in constant immutability (*The Trinity* 4.8; 7.27; 11.47).

The “sun of righteousness” in 3:20 (4:2) was understood christologically. As the true Sun, Jesus should be worshiped throughout the day, according to Cyprian (*On the Lord’s Prayer* 35). For Origen, like the dawn, the Lord opened up a new day with the light of knowledge (*Homily on Exodus* 7.8; cf. *Homily on Leviticus* 9.10.2), as opposed to the mere “lamp” of the Law (*Hom. in Lev.* 13.2.1).

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IX
GOSPELS AND ACTS

MATTHEW

In light of Irenaeus's reference to the four-gospel canon and his specific mention and exegesis of Matthew the early Church's use of the first Gospel is certain. But evidence collected by Edouard Massaux (*The Influence of the Gospel of Saint Matthew on Christian Literature Before Saint Irenaeus*, 3 vols. New Gospel Studies 5.1–3, translated by N. J. Belval and S. Hecht [Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990–93]) and W.-D. Köhler (*Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Zeit vor Irenäus*, WUNT ser. 2, 24 [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987]) argues strongly for the Church's use of Matthew in a variety of works by the end of the first or the beginning of the second century.

Although Jerome remarks that he knew of a commentary on the gospel (probably on the four gospels) by Theophilus of Antioch, he seems to question whether it is actually from Theophilus' hand (cf. *Lives of Illustrious Men* 25; *Ep.* 121.6; *Commentary on Matthew*, preface). The commentary under Theophilus' name first published in 1575, and discovered and set forth again by Zahn in 1883, is actually a fifth-century spurious assemblage of the comments of others. Jerome also reports that he knew the Greek commentaries on Matthew by Hippolytus of Rome, Origen, the Arian Theodore of Heraclea, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Didymus of Alexandria, and the Latin commentaries by Victorinus of Pettau, Hilary, and Fortunatian of Aquileia (*In Matt.* preface). Didymus's and Victorinus's commentaries are lost and only fragments of the others survive except for portions of Origen's twenty-five book work and the short commentary of Hilary. Allegorical in focus, Hilary's *Commentary on Matthew* presents a Matthean interest in Jewish hostility toward Christ and his Church and the inclusion of the Gentiles. The extant portions of Origen's commentary consist of a treatment in Greek of Matt 13:36–22:33 and an anonymous Latin translation treating Matt 16:13–27:63. Eight homilies on Matthew falsely attributed to Origen also survive. His commentary, as K. J. Torjesen has pointed out (*Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis*, *Patristische Texte und Studien* 28 [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986], 105–107) is composed in such a way as to lead the reader from knowledge of Christ the Logos as human to the perfect understanding of him as divine. He does not ignore the literal sense of Matthew's account, but derives a spiritual teaching from it. For example, he acknowledges the historical significance of Jesus' transfiguration six days after

the dialogue with the disciples on his identity and passion (Matt 16:21–28; 17:1–2), but the event teaches that the spiritual who wish a higher vision of the Logos must pass beyond the six days, which are the lusts and passions of the world since it was made in six days (*In Matt.* 12.36).

Other Greek works on Matthew's Gospel include the *Scholia* of Athanasius of Alexandria, the ninety homilies of John Chrysostom, fragments of Cyril of Alexandria's commentary, and some homiletic fragments under the name Ammonius of Alexandria. (These last are believed to be spurious.) Though a collection of homilies, Chrysostom's work offers the oldest surviving complete commentary on Matthew. Filled with moral teachings concerning the chaste, separate life of the Christian, Chrysostom's homilies also emphasize theological themes. Against the Manichaeans God's unity is developed, while in opposition to the Arians the Son's equality to the Father is treated in light of the weakness of his humanity.

Latin works on Matthew not mentioned in Jerome's list include the following: forty homilies and sixty tractates by Chromatius of Aquileia, an anonymous partial commentary on Matt 24 attributed by some to Victorinus of Pettau or Ambrosiaster, an incomplete Latin commentary falsely ascribed to Chrysostom but actually written by an Arian of the fifth century, Jerome's own commentary which relies on Origen, and Augustine's two-book treatment of the Sermon on the Mount, his explanation of forty-seven problematic Matthean passages (and fifty-one Lukan), his argument for the concordance of the four Gospels, and his explanation of seventeen passages in Matthew. Augustine also preached several sermons on Matthew. Eleven homilies on Matthean texts survive from the hand of Gregory the Great.

The early Church commonly viewed Matthew as the earliest gospel, composed in Hebrew for Jews by the tax collector turned apostle and later translated into Greek. The tradition is first seen in Papias, and though later writers are indebted to a degree to his testimony, independent knowledge by some of the Fathers cannot be dismissed, and the combined testimony seems to extend beyond him (Papias in Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 3.39.16; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1; Origen in Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 6.25.4; Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 3.24.6; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 14.15; Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, Preface, *Lives of Illustrious Men* 3).

For Irenaeus the original orientation of Matthew's Gospel is seen immediately in the genealogy. He wrote to prove to the Jews that Christ was descended from David (frag. 27) and to develop the humble, gentle humanity of the incarnate Word (*Adv. Haer.* 3.11.8). To the catechumen, Cyril of Jerusalem was quick to explain that the notion of genealogy or generation in Matt 1:1 applied to his flesh. Christ was David's son "at the end of the age"

(Heb 9:26), but God's Son before any age, for he is eternally begotten of the Father (*Catechetical Lecture* 11.5). Origen's reading of Matthew's first verse in his *Commentary on John* (1.22) points the reader to John's Gospel. He, along with Irenaeus, notes its orientation toward the Jewish expectation of the Davidic Messiah, but from that point he asserts that only John's Gospel emphasized Jesus' deity. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in his reading, await John's highlighting of the Word as God. However, although Irenaeus will see Jesus' humanity stressed in the genealogy and in other places throughout the gospel, he has no difficulty finding strong testimony to Jesus' divinity. For instance, in *Against Heresies* 3.9.2 it is plain to him in the title Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matt 1:23) and the Magi's gift of frankincense (Matt 2:11).

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) would enter fully into the Church's theological and moral reflection. In Irenaeus's polemic against the gnostics, Matt 5:17, "I have not come to abolish [the law and the prophets] but to fulfill them," would function pivotally. It informs his thesis of the unity between the acts and teaching of the Lord of the New Covenant and the revelation given under the old economy (*Adv. Haer.* 4.34.2). But the Lord's saying also, for the Bishop of Lyons, sets forth the Lord's extension of the prohibitions of the Old Covenant's Law. Jesus fulfills the Law by making explicit the Law's teaching concerning internal desires and thoughts. The Law does not prohibit merely external actions, but applies also to the interior part of the human being. Thus the teachings of Jesus regarding such things as anger and lust (murder and adultery, Matt 5:21–32) are his fulfillment, extension, expansion of the Law (*Adv. Haer.* 4.13.1, 3). Clement of Alexandria concurs. Fulfillment of the commands of the Law involves, for the Christian of true knowledge, separation from the desire for and mental anticipation of what is prohibited (*Miscellanies* 4.18.113). Within Irenaeus's polemic, which included a response to Marcion, his interpretation would provide the Christian community a positive understanding of the Lord's word. Such a reading would be needed, for Marcion, Tertullian reports, erased Matt 5:17 from the Lord's sayings and argued that Christ had come as the opponent of the Law and the prophets (*Against Marcion* 4.7, 9, 12, 36; 5.14). Tertullian himself shows how in his deeds and words Christ was true to the saying of Matt 5:17. Against the dualism of both gnostic and Marcionite, Matt 5:17 demonstrates to the second-century Church a theological and covenantal continuity in salvation history. Later catechetical instruction would stress the same continuity between the OT and the NT on the basis of this Matthean text (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 4.33).

Another word of the Lord from Matthew's account of the sermon that would significantly inform early Christian thought was the beatitude of the

pure, Matt 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” Along with other biblical texts (e.g., Job 19:25–27; 1 John 3:1–2; 1 Cor 13:12) this beatitude would contribute to the Church’s development of the hope of the vision of God. For Irenaeus the saying reflects the vision of God attained by humans in different degrees in different economies of revelatory history. Some in the past, under the Old Covenant, saw God figuratively, prophetically; some in the incarnation under the New Covenant see God adoptively; those in the times of the kingdom to come will see God immediately, paternally (*Adv. Haer.* 4.9.2; 4.20.5). In his reading of the text, however, Origen emphasizes a mystical, spiritual vision, knowledge of God, not through bodily eyes, but through the pure, undefiled mind and heart (*Against Celsus* 6.4, 69; 7.33, 45). Since God is by nature invisible, to see God is to know God and therefore the Lord’s word applies to the intellectual faculty, not the faculties of sense (*First Principles* 1.1.8–9). There is for Origen a postmortem progressive ascent of mind and intelligence toward the perfect vision, knowledge of God by those of undefiled, spiritually-schooled, rational minds, intellects. These minds progress toward a perfect understanding of reasons and causes of God’s ways (*Princ.* 2.11.6–7). Basil the Great, too, reads the text in reference to the inner person’s contemplation, but for the Cappodocian there is a different focus. As the bodily parts that apprehend sensations need to be treated when they are injured, so the embodied, imprisoned mind needs to give heed to a proper faith. Contemplation of such a faith includes contemplation of the pure doctrine of the trinity (*Ep.* 8.12). Through such trinitarian contemplation God is seen.

Matthean material outside the Sermon on the Mount would also inform the early Church’s thinking. Matt 11:27 and its Lukan parallel (10:22) would provide language critical to the development of orthodox theology and christology. The second phrase of this saying of the Lord, “no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him,” aids Irenaeus in his polemic against the gnostics. They teach two gods, the unknown, eternal Father and the wicked creator of the ot. They know the Lord’s word recorded in Matt 11:27 (Luke 10:22), but they read “no one *knew* the Father except the Son” in order to emphasize the utter hiddenness of the Father until he was revealed by the Son’s advent (*Adv. Haer.* 4.6.1). Before Christ the gnostic’s Father was unknown, and therefore he was not the known God of the ot. Irenaeus, however, does not read the saying as a temporal indicator of a specific moment of revelation. The saying emphasizes the Son as the true, perfect agent of the revelation of the Father, an agency he has been performing throughout redemptive history, even prior to his incarnation

(*Adv. Haer.* 4.6.2–7). For Irenaeus, then, the Lord’s word teaches against the gnostics the one Father revealed in all times by the Word, the Son, and challenges the Jews to receive the Son along with the Father. Such emphasis on the unity of the God revealed exclusively by the Son is echoed by Clement of Alexandria (*Misc.* 8.10.58), while Origen claims the Word’s appropriateness as the Father’s revealer (*In Ioann.* 1.277–78), and Cyril of Jerusalem repeats the corollary between reception of the Father and reception of the Son (*Catechetical Lectures* 10.1).

Most fourth-century exegesis of Matt 11:27//Luke 10:22, however, would concentrate on the saying’s trinitarian implications. Cyril of Jerusalem in catechesis would emphasize the perfect, reciprocal knowledge between Father and Son as indicative of the Son’s equal dignity with the Father in the Godhead (*Catechetical Lectures* 4.7; 6.6). Gregory of Nyssa, in polemic, set the Son’s exclusive role as the Father’s agent of revelation against Eunomius’s subordinationism and saw in the Son’s word of Matt 11:27 an affirmation of the Son’s equality in essence and glory with the Father (*Against Eunomius* 1.32; 2.4). Athanasius of Alexandria wrote a tract countering the Arian interpretation of the Lord’s word (*All Things Were Handed Over To Me* [Matt 11:27]). Whereas the gnostics through their reading of the saying had focused Irenaeus’s attention on the second part of the verse, the Arians began with the first line: “All things have been handed over to me by my Father...” To the Arian this indicated a moment prior to the incarnation when the Son had been made Lord of creation. If this was so, they argued, he is not eternally of the Father for he would then have been Lord eternally. Therefore there must have been once when he was not, that is, the Son must be created (*All Things* 1; *Against the Arians* 3.26). Athanasius, however, argues that the saying applies to the Son’s incarnation. The Son, being eternal with the Father, did not gain a lordship previously unearned. Rather, the “all things” refer to fallen humanity which the Father delivered over to the Son to be redeemed, healed through his saving incarnation (*All Things* 2–3). It is a deliverance to save, not rule, for the rule was already his. However, in another place Athanasius would explain the text differently. Again he insists that it does not refer to a prerogative being given to the Son, as if the Son did not have all glory eternally, but, neither does he apply it to incarnation. Now he interprets it as a saying that discloses the distinction between the persons of Son and Father. Guarding against Sabellianism (Modalism) the Bishop of Alexandria emphasizes that the Lord’s language simply explains the Son’s relationship to the Father. It is a relationship in which he is eternal with the Father but in which he receives his inheritance of all things, as a Son, from the Father (*Against the Arians* 3.35–36). Such an understanding

of the first line of the saying of Matt 11:27 applying to the Son's inheritance as the Father's only-begotten, obedient Son is seen also in Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catechetical Lectures* 7.5; 10.9). Although the Arian usage of the first line of Matt 11:27 would draw Athanasius's attention to that phrase of the saying, he also employed the second part in polemic against the Arians. The Son's statement that he knows the Father—the invisible, unoriginate One—sets the Son apart from creatures who are unable to see God's face and live (Exod 33:20) and associates him with the essence of the Father as they both share the omniscience peculiar to God (*Against the Arians* 2.22.44). Finally, the second phrase of Matt 11:27 informs Athanasius's view on the Son's eternal generation. For him, the Word did not become the Son at the incarnation. This would indicate, because of the saying's particular usage of the term "son," that until the incarnation the Word did not know the Father. But if the Father was being revealed to the people of the ot, and if the saying limits knowledge and revelation of the Father to the Son, the Word, then, must also have been Son before the incarnation (*Against the Arians* 4.23). Thus whether anti-gnostic or anti-Arian, the early Christian mind would emphasize the eternal nature of the Son's knowledge which he exercises throughout redemptive history.

Of course, any treatment of Matthew in the early Church must take account of the words of the Lord to Peter in Matt 16:18–19. An early developed presentation occurs in Cyprian's *The Unity of the Catholic Church* (4). In fact there exist two versions of Cyprian's treatise on the passage, commonly viewed as an early version and a later revision by his own hand. In both editions Cyprian's emphasis is on the unity of the Church through the unity of the bishops, which has as its paradigm the Lord's beginning the Church from *one* apostle, Peter. For Cyprian all the apostles are equal. There seems to be no supremacy apportioned to Peter or Rome, but this one apostle does function as the point of unity among different apostles from which will derive diverse episcopal lines. In other exegesis of the passage the Fathers focus on the Lord's language, "upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it," as indicative of several truths. It may indicate the Church's permanency in contrast to the OT economy (Athanasius of Alexandria, *Against the Arians* 4.34). It may indicate Jesus' deity, for only as God could he on his own authority declare Peter to be the Church's foundation (Ambrose, *Exposition of the Christian Faith* 4.5.57). Or it may emphasize Peter's faith as the foundation of the Church, his confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the son of the living God (Matt 16:16)," by interpreting "upon this rock" as his christological belief (Augustine, *Homily on 1 John* 10.1). And though later Peter's confession, his faith, would not be minimized

in the Church's interpretation of the passage (e.g., Leo the great, *Ep.* 33.1; *Sermon* 62.2) the premier authority of the Roman See, as Peter's see, would be derived from the Lord's words to Peter. Sometimes linked with John 21:17 and Luke 22:31, the words were understood to give to Peter and his Roman successors, through his enduring ministry, an exalted identity, role, and authority (Leo the Great, *Sermon* 3.3; Gregory the Great, *Ep.* 7.37).

Finally we come to the role of Matt 28:19 in the faith and practice of the early Church. Already in Irenaeus's soteriology the Lord's words prior to his ascension, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," have an important place. They teach that the trinitarian order of baptism commanded by the Lord is the power of regeneration apportioned to all nations (*Adv. Haer.* 3.17.1). Cyprian maintains the same soteriological significance of the Lord's words when he objects to reconciliation of the lapsed through certificates provided in the names of confessors and martyrs. Peace and forgiveness are available to the nations not through any name on a certificate, but through baptism in the name of the Trinity (*Ep.* 27.3). In like manner he emphasizes the necessity of baptism in the name of the Trinity against those who would diminish the relevance of the faith of the baptizer. He argues that if the faith of the baptizer is not trinitarian, the faith of the one baptized is in danger, and therefore so is the remission of sins (*Ep.* 73.5-6). So, too, thinks Gregory of Nyssa. He claims the words of Matt 28:19 to be the mysterious word of the Christian's new birth, the transformation from being corruptible to incorruptible, mortal to immortal, after the likeness of the Godhead. But Gregory presses the trinitarianism of the words. The titles of Father, Son, and Spirit teach that these are the proper titles for the three persons and not the blasphemous ones proposed by the heretics. These titles, given by the Lord, the Word, are a rule of faith, truth, and piety, which lead the pious into a sufficient faith about God. The Lord says "name," singular, signifying immediately the unity of essence of the three persons. Gregory also develops that the Lord never identified this one name. This is because the essence of Godhead is incomprehensible and therefore cannot be named (cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 40.45 [*On Holy Baptism*]). The Lord then spoke the three titles in order to set forth not a difference in nature or substance among the three, but their particular properties, so that a true faith in God is seen as a trinitarian faith. The titles divide the three in such a way that even in differentiation the three, Father, Son, and Spirit, are comprehended only in relation to each other. Thus, for example, faith in the Father calls forth faith in the Father's Son who is implied in the title "Father" (*Adv. Eunom.* 2.1-3). Augustine in his prayer at the end of his *De Trinitate* 15.51, begins with a

reference to Matt 28:19, echoing a later high regard for the place of the text in theological development. The Lord would not have spoken about our God as Father, Son, and Spirit unless God were Trinity, and the Lord would not have ordered baptism in the name of any who was not God.

MARK

Because of the greater detail in the other synoptic accounts, the Gospel of Mark was given little individual attention in the patristic period. However, the Fathers did make selective use of Mark in their various writings.

The earliest attestation of Mark by a patristic writer is that of Papias, quoted by Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* 3.39). Papias associates Mark with the preaching of Peter, whose words Mark recorded with “great accuracy.” That this gospel is a second-hand account explains why some events in Mark occur in a different order than an actual eyewitness might have recorded them, though nothing has been omitted or falsely stated. Clement of Alexandria recalls that Mark’s gospel was undertaken at the urging of many Christians in Rome, with neither the encouragement nor discouragement of Peter (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 6.14). Tertullian also makes the connection between Mark and Peter (*Against Marcion* 4.2.5) as does Origen (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 6.25). Irenaeus places the writing of Mark at the time just after Peter’s death (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1). He calls it a gospel with a “prophetical character,” revealed by the Son of God through the Spirit that hovers over the Church, corresponding to the “creature like a flying eagle” of Rev 4:7 (*Adv. Haer.* 3.11.8). He believes this characterization is appropriate because the gospel begins with the Isaianic prophecy and because it is “compendious and summary,” which prophecy tends to be. Origen agreed that Mark had produced some abridged versions of events (*In Ioann.* 6.129–31) and that Mark presented the Gospel’s “beginning” while John presented its completion through his emphasis on Jesus’ divinity (*In Ioann.* 1.22).

Jerome’s homilies on Mark (falsely ascribed to John Chrysostom) are the fullest, extant treatments of the Gospel by a Church Father. Fragments from Theodore of Mopsuestia’s comments on Mark’s Gospel survive, as do sermons based on Markan passages written by such Fathers as John Chrysostom, Augustine, Peter Chrysologus, and Gregory the Great (for the listing of Gregory’s homilies see the Matthew bibliography). Works on Mark erroneously attributed to Jerome and Theophilus have also survived.

LUKE AND ACTS

As with Matthew, the early Church's use of Luke's Gospel is certain at the point of Irenaeus's four-gospel canon, but even before the bishop of Lyons composed *Against Heresies*, usage of the gospel is possibly evident in some Apostolic Fathers and Justin Martyr. Irenaeus relates that both Marcion and the gnostic Valentinus knew Luke's Gospel and were being inconsistent by taking parts of it and editing out other material (*Adv. Haer.* 3.14.3–4). Already in the second and early third centuries Luke's Gospel is perceived as representative of Paul's (Gentile) gospel by both orthodox and heretic (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1; Tertullian. *Against Marcion* 4.2.5; Origen, *Homilies on Luke* 1).

The earliest known commentary on Luke was the fifteen-book work of Origen extant only in a few fragments. Fortunately, thirty-nine of his homilies on the gospel still survive. Jerome would translate it in 390. Of the other Greek Fathers, *scholia* on Luke from both Eusebius of Caesarea and Athanasius of Alexandria are extant, as are fragments of comments by Dionysius of Alexandria, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Titus of Bostra. Cyril of Alexandria's commentary on Luke's gospel, actually a series of 156 homilies, is complete in a Syriac version, while only three homilies exist complete in Greek and the rest survive in Greek only in fragments. In Latin there survive fragments of an Arian commentary on Luke's gospel, the *Tractate on Luke's Gospel*. Ambrose was the only Latin Father to compose a commentary on the Gospel of Luke. The commentary appears to be his revised and edited compilation of selected homilies on the gospel. Though Augustine did not produce a commentary, he did explain fifty-one passages of Luke in his treatment of difficult texts in Matthew and Luke, and preached several times on Luke. Seventeen homilies on Luke are contained in a collection of gospel homilies by Gregory the Great (see Matthew bibliography).

There are fragmentary remains of several Greek patristic commentaries and homilies on the Acts of the Apostles from several authors including Origen, Didymus of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Cyril of Alexandria. The only substantial extant collection of homilies is a series of fifty-five sermons by John Chrysostom. From Chrysostom's hand eight additional homilies have survived: four on the beginning of the book and four on other passages including Paul's change of name. From the Latin Fathers it is important to mention Augustine's several homilies on Acts and the allegorical interpretive poem of Arator on the Acts of the Apostles.

JOHN

From among the early Fathers, Ignatius of Antioch probably knew and used the Fourth Gospel; the same is practically certain of Justin Martyr. That he did not refer to it explicitly may be due to the fact that some Roman circles (called “*Alogoi*” by Epiphanius) opposed this gospel as heretical. Tatian, a disciple of Justin who later became an encratite, used the gospel of John as a framework for his four-gospel harmony, the *Diatesseron*. Melito of Sardis used it as well. Theophilus of Antioch in his *To Autolyclus* (2.22) explicitly quotes it: “Hence the holy scriptures and all those inspired by the Spirit teach us, and one of them, John, says, ‘In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God’ [John 1:1].” It is interesting to note that the catacombs of Rome contain representations of scenes from the gospel of John (in particular the raising of Lazarus) probably from the second century (F.-M. Braun, *Jean le théologien et son évangile dans l’Église ancienne*, Études bibliques, [Paris: J. Gabalda, 1959], 149–56).

The Alexandrian gnostic Valentinus, who moved to Rome (ca. 140), almost certainly used the gospel of John. The Valentinian *Gospel of Truth* (ca. 150?) contains numerous echoes of it. Ptolemy, an early disciple of Valentinus, wrote a commentary on its Prologue, attributing it to “John, the disciple of the Lord” (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1.8.5). Heracleon, another Valentinian, authored the first known commentary on the gospel (ca. 170), extended fragments of which are quoted in Origen’s commentary on John. Excerpts from the Valentinian Theodotus have been preserved by Clement of Alexandria.

The first explicit witness of the four-gospels canon, Irenaeus of Lyons, made extensive use of the gospel of John in his *Against Heresies* in refuting the gnostics and Marcion and explaining the orthodox faith. His theological synthesis, emphasizing the unity of the history of salvation, treated almost all the major themes of the gospel of John. For example, he clearly perceived that the “life” or “eternal life” that presupposes faith in Jesus is not biological life or merely a continued existence of the soul, but communion with God the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

Tertullian, too, made substantial use of the gospel of John, in particular in establishing the distinction of Father and Son within the Unity of God (see especially *Against Praxeas*). Hippolytus of Rome uses the Gospel of John in a similar vein. Clement of Alexandria is reported by Eusebius as having written that “...John, last of all, conscious that the outward facts had been set forth in the Gospels, was urged on by the disciples, and, divinely moved by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel” (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.14.7).

The first patristic commentary of which substantial parts have been preserved is that of Origen; Eusebius knew of thirty-two books (commenting on John 1–13), of which only approximately eight and a half are extant. For these, fortunately, we have the Greek text. The first five books were composed relatively early in Origen's life, while he was still in Alexandria, the rest being composed later in Caesarea. The first books of the commentary are extremely prolix: Book 1 is entirely on John 1:1, Book 2 arrives at John 1:7. These first verses of the Prologue of John offered Origen an opportunity to expose his christology and theology of the Trinity, and even some essentials of his comprehensive view of the created universe. There are manifold correspondences between the doctrines of these books of the commentary and those of *On First Principles* (a work written around the same time, but fully preserved only in Latin). Origen's "spiritual exegesis" is often quite congenial to the Fourth Gospel. "The kind of deeper meaning that he finds varies from the most arbitrary allegorising to a profound understanding of the symbolism of the Gospel" (M. F. Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel: The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church* [Cambridge: University Press, 1960], 23). He is almost the only ancient commentator who systematically studied the key terms of John, such as "spirit," "truth," "life," "light," "knowledge," and "glory," and often penetrated their deeper meaning.

John's Gospel played a key part in the trinitarian and christological discussions from their beginning, and therefore received special attention in the great controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries. Unfortunately, a good number of commentaries written in this context have been lost or survive only as fragments in *catenae* (see Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel*, 4–5). Several important ones, however, have been preserved. The first of these is the series of eighty-eight homilies by John Chrysostom, preached in Antioch (ca. 391), and containing a careful exposition of the whole gospel. From the West, Augustine's *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, also covering the whole gospel, are extant. The work consists of 124 "sermons," some actually delivered, others merely dictated. Generally, the first group (1–54) is dated earlier (ca. 406–418) and the second (55–124) later (ca. 416–420). These works share a pastoral character and at the same time have substantial theological content. Chrysostom, though developing the teachings of the gospel against Arianism, is, in the spirit of Antiochian exegesis, more practical and less prone to explore the deeper symbolic meaning. Augustine's exegesis is more congenial to John's theology. Finally, ten homilies on John by Gregory the Great survive (see Matthew bibliography).

From the beginning of the fifth century two major Greek commentaries survive, those of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Cyril of Alexandria.

Theodore's commentary, preserved in its entirety only in Syriac translation, is typical of the Antiochian school: its bent is practical and literal (though where the text clearly demands it he does give symbolic interpretations). His christology, too, reflects Antiochian tendencies. Cyril's monumental commentary is eminently theological, with ample use of spiritual interpretation. Doctrinally he fights against the Arians and the christology of Antioch, though Nestorius is not mentioned by name, and therefore the commentary is dated before 429. Fragments of several Greek commentaries are compiled in J. Reuss, ed., *Johannes-Kommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche*, TU 89 (1966). Commentaries represented are those by Apollinaris of Laodicea, Theodore of Heraclea, Didymus of Alexandria, Theophilus of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria (or Pseudo-Cyril), Ammonius of Alexandria, and Photius of Constantinople.

There are, of course, numerous commentaries of lesser importance from Byzantine theologians and Western medieval authors. From the golden age of Scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas' *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John* deserves special mention. Taken down from actual lectures in Paris by Thomas' secretary, Reginald of Piperno, it was corrected by Thomas himself, and is considered to be one of his outstanding writings on sacred Scripture.

Due to the special interest, and abundance of recent research on the patristic interpretation of John, as well as the immensity of the task of attempting to summarize the features of that interpretation, a secondary bibliography is offered to the reader.

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X
PAULINE EPISTLES AND HEBREWS.

In order to treat adequately the question of the patristic reception and interpretation of Paul it is necessary to recall the change in the state of the question which has occurred during the last few decades.

As Professor William Babcock has written in his Introduction to *Paul and the Legacies of Paul* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), which collected the papers presented at an international research conference, held in Dallas, 1987: "Over the past century and a half, especially among Protestant scholars, assessments of Paul's place and legacy in the early history of Christianity have tended to fall into a distressingly stereotyped pattern" (p. xiii). According to Babcock this "pattern includes at least four elements" that can be summarized as follows:

1. "That Paul's theology exercised its greatest appeal—and came closest to being rightly understood—among versions of Christianity that would turn out to be marginal or heretical by the standards of what would become the dominant tradition."

2. That "the traditions that did ultimately give Christianity its enduring shape either ignored or misconstrued Paul..."

3. That "only with Augustine, in the Latin West and at the turn from the fourth to the fifth century, did there emerge something like a recovery of the genuine central motifs in Pauline thought and in particular, a true sense for the great Pauline theme of justification by grace and faith..."

4. That "the Greek Christian tradition never did—before or after Augustine—achieve an apt appreciation of Paul..."

The cover copy indicates that "*Paul and the Legacies of Paul* presents a series of studies that paint a very different, and more complex picture"—a picture confirmed by a whole series of studies cited in the bibliographies given below. "They suggest that Paul was by no means a negligible or marginal figure in what would become 'orthodox' Christianity, that the 'orthodox' reading of Paul was no mere domestication of his thought, and that Paul certainly had a formative significance for Greek as well as for Latin Christianity."

The reception and interpretation of the Pauline letters begins within the NT itself. The so-called Deutero-Pauline letters (according to most exegetes, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians [?], Ephesians, and the Pastorals), which were, of course, considered unquestionably Pauline by the Fathers, are here among the first examples (see their treatment in the present commentary below).

Among the Apostolic Fathers the letter of Clement to the Corinthians,

the letters of Ignatius, and the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians reflect the influence of the Pauline letters. Surprising is the absence of the use of the Pauline letters in most of the Apologists. (The *Letter to Diognetus* is an important exception.) The following passage from that letter (with several others) undoubtedly shows the influence of Paul, especially the letter to the Romans:

He himself gave up his own Son as a ransom for us—the holy one for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty, the righteous one for the unrighteous, the incorruptible for the corruptible, the immortal for the mortal. For what else could have covered our sins except his righteousness? In whom could we, lawless and impious as we were, be made righteous except in the Son of God alone? O sweetest exchange! O unfathomable work of God! O blessings beyond all expectation! The sinfulness of many is hidden in the Righteous One, while the righteousness of the One justifies the many who are sinners. (*Diogn.* 9.2–5, translated by E. R. Fairweather in *Early Christian Fathers*, LCC 1, edited by C. C. Richardson [(Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), 220–21].)

Of course several of the gnostic writers appealed also to Paul. Marcion tried to support his rejection of the OT and his opposing to its creator “God,” the good God of Jesus Christ, on a collection of (often drastically mutilated) Pauline Epistles.

For Irenaeus and Tertullian the Pauline corpus forms an integral part of the NT (substantially as we know it). It was especially Irenaeus who in his *Against Heresies* integrated the interpretation of practically the whole Pauline corpus (together with the other NT writings) into his own anti-gnostic and anti-Marcionite theology (cf. R. Norris, “Irenaeus’s Use of Paul in His Polemic Against the gnostics,” in *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, 79–98).

From the third century on we have a considerable number of explicit commentaries on Pauline epistles (“from Jerome we know of some 20 Greek commentaries dedicated to various Pauline epistles... the majority of them unknown to us...” [Angelo Di Berardino, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, s.v. “Paul III. Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles,” by M. G. Mara]). In what follows only those commentaries and homilies will be mentioned that have been preserved entire or from which we have substantial fragments. (For detailed accounts and editions of the fragments see the bibliography on the patristic exegesis of Paul.)

Origen seems to have been the first to comment on all the Pauline epistles, although except for his commentary on Romans (in Rufinus’s Latin translation, and partly in Greek) only fragments have been preserved. John Chrysostom left us a complete series of homilies on all the Pauline epistles

and a commentary on Galatians, fortunately all preserved. From Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentaries only those on the "minor" Pauline epistles (that is, from Galatians to Philemon in the canonical order) are extant integrally in an early Latin translation, though we have numerous fragments of the Greek original. Theodoret's brief, but systematic, commentaries on all the Pauline epistles are preserved in the original Greek.

From among the Greek writers of the later patristic or Byzantine period we have commentaries or fragments of commentaries, for example, by John of Damascus, Photius of Constantinople, Oecumenius of Tricca (10th c.), Theophylactus (11th c.), and Euthymius Zigabenus (early 12th c.).

The first Latin patristic author who commented on the Pauline epistles is Marius Victorinus. We have only parts of his commentaries on Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians. The writer called "Ambrosiaster" (an unknown author of the fourth century whose works have been falsely attributed to Ambrose) has left us substantial commentaries on all the Pauline epistles. From Jerome we have commentaries on Philippians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Titus. Pelagius, whose commentaries antedate his controversies with Augustine, commented briefly on thirteen of the Pauline letters.

From Augustine we have a commentary on Galatians and several incomplete treatments of Romans, both before and after his clash with Pelagius. Cassiodorus and his school left us orthodox re-workings of the commentaries of Pelagius.

In the Syrian Church, Ephrem (or Pseudo-Ephrem) commented on all the Pauline epistles. They have been preserved in Armenian, and indirectly in Latin.

Some of the major medieval authors who commented on the Pauline epistles were Hugh of St. Victor, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and Dionysius the Carthusian.

From among the Protestant Reformers Luther's commentaries on Romans and Galatians have been foundational for his theology of justification and immensely influential. Calvin published commentaries on all the Pauline epistles (Strassbourg, 1539). Catholic commentators of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries include Cajetan (Thomas de Vio), whose commentary on the Pauline epistles was published in Rome in 1529, and Cornelius de Lapide (Antwerpen, 1614).

Due to the special interest and abundance of recent research on the patristic interpretation of Paul, as well as the immensity of the task of attempting to summarize the features of that interpretation, a secondary bibliography is offered to the reader. Also included is a bibliography informing the reader on the place of Hebrews in the early Church.

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XI
CATHOLIC EPISTLES

Eusebius of Caesarea informs us of Clement of Alexandria's *Outlines* (*Hypotyposesis*), eight books of interpretations of selected passages from the OT and the NT, including the Catholic Epistles, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Apocalypse of Peter* (*Eccl. Hist.* 6.14.1). Fragmentary comments on 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 John survive in Cassiodorus' Latin translation, *Outlines Concerning the Canonical Epistles*. Photius, in his *Library* (*Bibliotheca* Codex 109) would explain Clement's *Outlines* as reflecting both orthodoxy and impiety. In addition to these fragments of Clement's *Outlines*, a few patristic commentaries are known and extant. Didymus of Alexandria, though his authorship had been questioned earlier this century, composed a commentary treating James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, and Jude. It survives in its complete form only in a Latin version. A commentary on the same epistles by Pseudo-Oecumenius also is extant as is one sometimes attributed to Hilary of Arles, but it is spurious and dates probably to the late seventh or early eighth century. Fifty fragments on the Catholic epistles survive in *catenae* under the name of John Chrysostom and thirty-eight *scholia* are ascribed to Cyril of Alexandria. From Augustine, ten homilies developing the theme of charity within 1 John survive.

JAMES

The epistle of James would inform early Christian morals and spiritual practice as it was used repeatedly to teach the virtues with which James was concerned. Origen would exhort Christians to pray that God would fulfill Jas 1:22 in their lives ("be doers of the word, and not hearers only") by cleansing them of sin and enlivening the good through Christ and the Spirit (*Homily on Genesis* 2.6). But he would also teach that Jas 4:17 taught personal responsibility to flee sin once the divine Word had begun to reveal to them the difference between good and evil (*On First Principles* 1.3.6). Valerius would dedicate a homily on Jas 4:6 to the virtue of humility (*Homily* 14). Augustine would preach sermons on James 1:19–22; 2:10, and 5:12.

Theologically, Jas 1:17, "...the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change," would provide language important to trinitarian discussion. Hilary of Poitiers states that the Arians would appeal to it to emphasize the Father's exclusive Godhead to the denial of the

Son's divinity (*On the Trinity* 4.8). Athanasius, however, uses it differently. He deduces that the Arians erroneously make God a compound of quality and essence by saying the Son is like the Father only in virtue (quality). This conflicts with God's simplicity in essence, a simplicity he sees stated by James in 1:17 (*Epistle to the Bishops of Africa* 8). Cyril of Jerusalem cites the entire verse in his lecture on the Father, to show the eternal Fatherhood and a begetting of the Son that meant no alteration in the Godhead (*Catechetical Lecture* 7.5). Augustine, too, cites it in his discussion of the mystery of God's substance, the mystery of an immutable God who creates mutable things (*On the Trinity* 1.2–3). In the christological discussion Cyril of Alexandria would refer to Jas 1:17 to state his opposition to any notion of confusion of the divine Word with flesh. No change, no alteration could occur in the Word's divine nature (*Epistle to John of Antioch* 107e–108a).

The passage in James that would become somewhat troublesome in later soteriological thinking, Jas 2:14–26, usually found application without any apparent tension between Paul and James in the early Church. Gregory of Nazianzus taught the Christian that both faith and works are each dead without the other (Jas 2:17). Therefore the Christian was to do good works upon believing the points of the faith (*Oration on Holy Baptism* 45). Ambrose would state simply that a proper faith in Christ is only profitable when crowned with good works (*Exposition of the Christian Faith* 2. Pref. 14). For Augustine the faith that is set apart from that of the demons (Jas 2:19) is the faith that works through love by the Holy Spirit (*On the Trinity* 15.32).

Into the Middle Ages some tension would arise, and there would be attempts to reconcile perceived differences between Paul and James on faith and works. For example, Julian of Toledo would read Jas 2:24 as not so much dismissing justification by faith alone (cf. Rom. 3:28), but as teaching the falseness of the idea that one could refuse good works (*Antithesis* 2.77). Later, in the Reformation, some opponents of the Reformers would set Jas 2:21–24 against their doctrine of justification by faith alone. John Calvin would reply that James is not treating manner of justification, but imploring Christians to bring forth good works that prove and are the fruit of righteousness (*Institutes of the Christian Religion* 3.17.11–12).

James occurs in the Liturgy, for example, on the third Sunday of Advent, in Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, in Ritual Masses for Reconciliation, and in the Anointing of the Sick. It instructs the believer on the complementary relationship between faith and good works, especially the need to complement faith with love for neighbor, social justice, and moral purity.

1 PETER

Two passages within 1 Peter that would influence some formulations of the creed were 3:19 and 4:6: "...in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison"; "for this is why the gospel was preached even to the dead..." These two passages would help inform the doctrine of Christ's descent into hell between his death and resurrection. For example, Origen would emphasize that Christ's ministry of preaching for conversion did not take place only in the body, but also when Christ's soul left the body and descended to preach to other bodiless souls (*Against Celsus* 2.43). Gregory of Nazianzus would read the significance of the descent to include rescue: when Christ descended he brought souls up from hell. Preaching was extended to triumphant deliverance of the dead (*Theological Orations* 3.20). Rufinus would see a somewhat more comprehensive significance. For him Christ descended to the dead to preach and to lead godly dead forth from corruption (*Commentary on the Apostles' Creed* 28–29). Yet, Clement of Alexandria had read the passages differently, in a manner unrelated to the creed's confession of Christ's descent into hell. The "spirits" and the "dead" referred to Christians who formerly were unbelievers, within whose spirits Christ became alive (*Commentary on 1 Peter* [fragments] 3:18, 20; 4:6).

In discussions of trinity and soteriology as well as moral instruction 1 Pet 2:22–33 would provide the early Church with rich language. The passage speaks of Christ's sinlessness and his faithful, quiet passivity in suffering as an example to believers in their own tribulation. Athanasius of Alexandria referred to the passage in his *Second Festal Letter* (5) for the precise purpose of exhorting Christian conduct in imitation of Christ, but for Gregory of Nyssa, in his treatise *Against Eunomius* (6.3), the passage defended the Son's sharing of the Father's essence even in incarnation. The heretics (Anomoeans) may argue that Christ is clearly distanced from the Father's unimpassioned nature in his taking upon himself human nature. But Gregory notes that the Son did not assume "passion" in the sense of a perverted nature, for "he committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips" (2:22). He only took upon himself the inconvenient attributes of body and soul. Also, Cyril of Jerusalem would refer to the passage (*Catechetical Lecture* 13.3–4). For him, however, the words of 1 Peter 2:22 need to be recognized first as the words of the prophet Isaiah (53:9), and then as words which reveal the true glory of the cross. Christ did not die for his own sins, but for the sins of others, and here is true redemption and salvation.

In christological matters, regarding the union of the two natures of Christ, 1 Pet 4:1, "Christ suffered in the *flesh*," would be important. Cyril of

Alexandria would set this text's language against those who would suggest a confusion of the Word's impassible divinity with flesh. Christ suffered not in the impassible nature of God, but in his own flesh (*Ep.* 39.107e–108b; to John of Antioch). Such an emphasis from 1 Peter's words were already set out by Athanasius of Alexandria in his theological work against the Arians. In his conception the Arians had become fixated upon the humanity of Christ to the point that they numbered him among the creatures. He counters this heresy by arguing that the phrase "in the flesh" of 1 Pet 4:1 demonstrates the weakness of Christ limited to the nature of flesh, that which belongs to humanity. One must recognize that the words of the Apostle separate such creaturely attributes from the divine nature of the Word (*Against Arians* 3.34–35).

And then, of course, there is the early Church's interest in the flood/baptismal passage of 1 Pet 3:20–21. For Cyprian the reference to the eight people in the ark saved through water teaches the necessity of the sacrament of baptism within the one, undivided Church (*Ep.* 73.11; 74.15; 75.2). Tertullian had already anticipated this typology between ark and Church in *On Idolatry* 24 and had developed the ark/flood, Church/baptism typology in *On Rapture* 8. The earth is our flesh, the flood our baptism, the dove that returned to the ark the spirit of God that brings God's peace.

1 Peter is read, for example, in the Church's liturgy during the Sundays of the Easter Season, on the first Sunday of Lent, in Masses of the Chair of Peter, and on the Feast of Mark the evangelist. It provides baptismal teaching and reminds the believer about the blessing of an enduring spiritual, heavenly inheritance, and of the need to be prepared to follow Jesus in suffering.

1, 2, 3 JOHN

Whereas Raymond Brown (*The Epistles of John: Translated with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*. AB 30. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982, 6–9 [see pp. 3–13 for an orientation to 1, 2, 3 John in the Church's tradition]) speaks of some "possible echoes" of 1 John in the early Christian literature of the second century, one finds probable use only in Justin (cf., *Dial.* 123.9: "We who observe the commandments of Christ are called genuine children of God—and that is what we really are," compared especially with 1 John 3:1), and the *Letter to Diognetus* (cf. 10.2–3). According to the same author one would find "probative knowledge of one or more of the Johannine letters" for the first time in Polycarp's *Epistle to the Philipppians* (cf. 7.1: "For everyone who does not confess Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh is Antichrist")

compared with 2 John 7 and 1 John 4:2–3). Irenaeus in his *Against Heresies* quotes explicitly from both 1 John and 2 John, but as if they were one letter (Brown, *The Epistles of John*, 9–10). The third epistle of John appears in early Christian literature only by the middle of the third century, and it is only by the end of the fourth century that acceptance of all the three Johannine letters as canonical was slowly prevailing (Brown, *The Epistles of John*, 11–13).

As for commentaries, a few Fathers who commented on the so-called “Catholic” epistles included also brief comments on 1–3 John (see the bibliography on Catholic epistles). A major commentary on 1 John has been preserved in the form of ten homilies preached by Augustine (six during the Easter Week of the year 415, the last four between Easter Week and the Feast of Ascension). All manuscripts end with homily ten, covering 1 John 5:1–3, thus leaving 1 John 5:4–21 without comment. These homilies could be called also a treatise on charity: “there is no theme on which I would fainer speak than charity; and no other Scripture extols charity with greater warmth” (8.14; trans. J. Burnaby in *Augustine’s Later Works*, 327–28). Augustine anchors charity (as does 1 John) in God’s love for us, manifested especially in the incarnation of the Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit (cf. especially Homily 7), yet the major part of his homilies is an exhortation to brotherly and sisterly love that, paradoxically, includes also enemies as potential brothers and sisters (cf. Homily 8).

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XII REVELATION

There exists little consensus on possible traces of the book of Revelation in the Apostolic Fathers, but Justin testifies of his own knowledge of the prophecy (*Dial.* 81:15). Melito of Sardis, by Eusebius of Caesarea's record (*Eccl. Hist.* 4.26.2), composed a work *On the Devil and the Apocalypse of John*, no longer extant, and Theophilus of Antioch used Revelation in his work *Against the Heresy of Hermogenes* (Eusebius *Eccl. Hist.* 4.24.1). Irenaeus uses Revelation frequently in his *Against Heresies*. He states that John the Lord's disciple wrote it (4.20.11; 4.30.4) at the end of Domitian's rule (5.30.3) and testifies to familiarity with several manuscripts of the book (5.30.1). It had, then, an early, broad circulation within the Churches of Asia Minor, Syria, and Gaul. Within Gaul, the Churches of Lyons and Vienne certainly knew the language of Revelation and reflect it in their epistle to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 5.1.8–61). In the same time frame of the latter half of the second century it was also among the books accepted in Italy (*Muratorian Fragment*).

Hippolytus of Rome's *Apology for the Apocalypse and the Gospel of John*, now lost and extant only in fragments, shows continued Italian interest in the book into the turn of the century. Tertullian's numerous references as well as Origen's promised, but apparently unwritten, commentary indicate its honored place in North Africa. Fortunately some *scholia* of Origen on Revelation have survived, but the collection set forth by Harnack as Origen's *scholia* contains *scholia* from others, including Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria.

The book of Revelation, however, was not without its questioners and opponents. Marcion rejected it (Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 4.5). Gaius of Rome attributed it to the gnostic Cerinthus (Eusebius *Eccl. Hist.* 3.28.1–2), among other possible reasons because of his distaste for chiliasm. The Alogoi, a second century sect of Asia Minor with anti-Montanist tendencies, also rejected Revelation (as well as John's Gospel) and ascribed it to Cerinthus (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 51.3.1–6). They mocked the book for what they considered its impractical content—things like angels and trumpets (Rev 8:2)—and faulted it for its supposed erroneous reference (Rev 2:18–29) to a Church in Thyatira (Epiphanius, *Panar.* 51.32.2–33.1). Dionysius of Rome was acquainted with such connections of Revelation to Cerinthus and of its history of rejection. He himself did not reject it, although he did not believe the author was John the apostle, but another John of Asia. The book was

written, he thought, in a crude style and contained mysteries to which there must be a deeper, non-literal meaning. Significantly, these comments were evoked by the Egyptian bishop Nepos' book *Against the Allegorists*, which taught a chiliasm drawn from Revelation (Eusebius *Eccl. Hist.* 7.24–25).

Eusebius, who is our source for much of the above history, himself had a view of Revelation that was not enthusiastically positive. He does not reject the book outright, noting that opinion on its recognition is evenly split, but he will allow its placement among the spurious writings including texts such as the *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Barnabas*, and the *Teachings of the Apostles*. The hesitancy of Eusebius regarding acceptance of Revelation may be due to his rejection of chiliasm, which was popularly found in John's book. Such a futuristic, earthly, regal eschatology (not to mention the extreme, sensual version of Cerinthus) was unacceptable to his vision of Constantine's present Christian empire. Furthermore, the tension felt with regard to Revelation by Eusebius and those whose accounts he presents may be due to its possible connection to Montanism. Though much evidence is circumstantial, it is plausible that the Montanists used John's visions as models for their own visions and had a chiliast eschatology informed by Revelation.

Victorinus, Bishop of Pettau (martyred ca. 304), wrote the earliest extant commentary on Revelation. The text of the original commentary was not established until 1916, and three recensions exist. Of the three the best known is that of Jerome, which improved the Latin, made other stylistic editorial changes, and altered or removed passages that revealed Victorinus's chiliasm. Though Jerome had identified him as a chiliast (*Lives of Illustrious Men* 18) and his commentary presents a literal reading of Revelation 20–21, the bishop of Pettau weaves in a remarkable amount of allegory and figurative reading throughout his comments. For example, as in Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.11.8), the four living creatures of Revelation 4 are the four gospels. The twenty-four elders are the Law and the Prophets, and the white robes of Rev 6:11 symbolize the Holy Spirit. The woman of Revelation 12 is the Church, ancient as the patriarchs, and the dragon is the devil, a murderer from the beginning (cf. John 8:44). This would be expected, for Jerome also writes of his being a follower of Origen (*Ep.* 62). For Victorinus the events of the seven bowls (Revelation 16) recapitulate the events of the seven trumpets (Revelation 7–8) more emphatically. The point is not order of events within Revelation, but their significance. They describe judgment and tribulation. Historically the beast of Revelation 13 was Nero, and eschatologically it is Nero resurrected from the abyss to be Antichrist. The first resurrection of Rev 20:4–6 is shown as parallel to the Pauline resurrections of 1 Thess 4:13–18; 1 Cor 15:51–54. This resurrection enables those in the book of life, then immortal,

to rule with Christ over all nations on the earth for a thousand years before the second trumpet. Jerome, of course, omitted this interpretation in his recension. He substituted instead a reading that emphasized the reign as the lawful, virginal purity of the believer. This is not surprising. Elsewhere, on the basis of the reference to the 144,000 who remained virgins (Rev 14:1–5), he argues that all who have not preserved their chastity are defiled (*Against Jovinianus* 1.40).

Victorinus shows continuity with earlier chiliasts. Similar readings of Revelation 20–21 as a time of earthly blessing and renewal following a first literal resurrection and again followed by a second resurrection with judgment can be seen in Justin, *Dial.* 81; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.35. 1–36.3; Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 25; *Against Marcion* 3.25.

After the work of Victorinus the next commentary, extant only in fragments, is that of Tychonius, the Donatist. He follows Victorinus's notion of events recapitulated by future narration of events. The commentary's uniqueness rests in its strong ecclesiological focus. The millennium of Revelation 20 is the Church's present experience between Christ's two advents because Christ has already bound the devil (cf. Matt 12:29; Luke 11:22). Revelation 12 describes in general the incessant struggle between Christ and the devil, but more particularly it reveals the life of the Church (Donatist) that, pregnant with the gospel, gives birth to those in whom Christ is formed. The devil persecutes the Christians, the Church, Christ's body through the false Church (Catholic). Within Tyconius's commentary one can see at work several of the hermeneutical principles outlined in his *Book of Rules*. Tyconius's exegesis would provide a dominating paradigm for the Church's reading of Revelation in subsequent years.

Augustine, though he never wrote a commentary on Revelation, did adapt something akin to Tyconius's figurative-ecclesiological interpretation of Revelation 20 in his *City of God* (20.7–10).

The final Latin commentaries of the patristic period were those of Jerome, Primasius, and Apringius. Jerome's, as mentioned above, was one of several recensions of Victorinus's literal, chiliastic commentary. Primasius's commentary combines the thought of both Tyconius and Augustine. The manuscript of Apringius's work, published first in 1900, has only his comments on 1:1–5:7 and 18:6–22:21 surviving. The gap of 5:8–18:5 in the manuscript is filled with the material of Jerome and Victorinus. Cassiodorus's brief notes on Revelation have survived and evidence references to Tyconius and influence from both Victorinus and Augustine. Also Caesarius of Arles' nineteen homilies on Revelation are extant, though earlier they had mistakenly been classified as Augustine's *Exposition of the Apocalypse*. These homilies

reflect the ecclesiological reading of Tyconius: the millennium of Revelation 20 is the Church's rule in the world; the first resurrection is regeneration; the descent of the new Jerusalem (Revelation 21) is the Church's universal dispersion.

The earliest surviving Greek commentary on Revelation is that of Oecumenius (6th century) who with an appreciation for allegory reads the material as either referring to the past moment of Christ's incarnation, the present situation, or to the end time. For him the woman and the male child to which she gives birth in Revelation 12 are Mary and Jesus. The woman and child are threatened by the dragon but the boy is saved by God while the woman flees into the desert for 1,260 days. That is, Satan stirs up Herod to murder Jesus but the heavenly Father gives Joseph a dream and the family flees to Egypt and remains there 1,260 days until Herod's death. Similarly, the millennium of Revelation 20 symbolically refers to the incarnation. Oecumenius, however, can still see Satanic persecutions through the Antichrist of the end time in Revelation. Andrew of Caesarea seems to know Oecumenius's commentary and employs it in his own. Andrew reads the material in an eclectic manner, finding an adequate interpretation through a literal, tropological, or allegorical sense. Unlike Oecumenius for Andrew the woman and child of Revelation 12 are the Church and the Christians it brings forth, while the millennium of Revelation 20 is the time from Christ's first advent until the knowledge of God is universal. The first resurrection of Rev 20:4 is not eschatological, but refers to spiritual regeneration.

Revelation, as can be seen, informed the early Church concerning Christ's incarnation, the period between incarnation and the end time of tribulation and eventual blessing, and the Church's life between those times. There was always discussion of the number 666 and the identity of Antichrist, both historical and eschatological, that ranged from highly speculative to being sober-minded and restrained. The interpretations of the rich symbolism of Revelation could be very fanciful and very earthy. One's hermeneutical approach determined what one saw. But the history of Revelation in the early Church is not only a history of differing interpretations that at times led to differing opinions of the book's usefulness and even its canonicity. It is also a history of the ministry of the book to the faith of Christ's body in the first centuries.

In particular, the language of Revelation contributed to the Church's reverent christology. The descriptions of the Lamb and the Word as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Rev 17:14; 19:16) cause Origen to address Christ as the "treasure of treasures" (*Homily on Jeremiah* 8.5–6; cf. Col 2:3; Matt 13:46). Cyprian in his *Treatises* (12.2.26) cites John's vision of Christ in Rev

1:12–18 to address the everlasting power the Son received from the Father after his resurrection from the dead. Gregory of Nazianzus sees the divinity of the Son in the language of Rev 1:8 which he thinks is spoken of the Son “...who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty” (*Theological Orations* 3.17 [Oration 29.17]). To the catechumen, Cyril of Jerusalem would present the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lion (Rev 5:5), not because he consumes humanity but because he is a steadfast, confident king who opposes and tramples the devil, that roaring, devouring, deceiving lion (*Catechetical Lectures* 10.3).

Revelation has a large role in the Church’s liturgy. It is read on Holy Thursday, the Sundays of Easter season, and on the feasts of the Assumption, All Saints, All Souls, Christ the King, and in Ordinary Time. The book encourages believers toward faithfulness and separation from wickedness in light of Christ’s sure, ultimate triumph over sin, death, and the devil.

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Part B
Historical Survey

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SECOND CENTURY

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I

INTRODUCTION

As the time of the formation of post-apostolic churches, the second century C.E. was a privileged area of research for many twentieth century patristic scholars. It was in the second century that the canon of the NT emerged from the consensus among the major church communities and that the reception of the OT pervaded the very first Christian literature. It was at this time that a hierarchy of community services, or “ministries,” started to become a regular feature of Christian groups. The twentieth century scholarly focus on the second century was the result of a fusion of theological concerns with historical inquiry, drawing on the traditional representation of a divine agency actively involved in the building up of the earliest church communities. In this way the “Apostolic Fathers” of the second century became, in a sense, sacralized by their proximity in space and time to the NT period.

New perspectives challenged such traditional apologetics. While the title “Apostolic Fathers” continued to be in use, the theological constructs on which it originally rested did not stand the test of time. In particular, the breakdown of the earlier stance resulted from the fast development of studies on Gnosticism in the wake of the Nag Hammadi discovery in 1945, as well as from the special interest on second century “Judaeo-Christianity” developed by a number of specialists during the 1950’s.

The present chapter examines highly complex issues in the intellectual history of these early Christian communities, a history which culminates in the works of Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus of Lyon. Our sole purpose is to document the use of scripture by second century authors. It is unnecessary to insist that the present survey does not dispense from consulting Patrologies for more general information.

Section I, “The Formation of the Scriptural Canon,” follows the process by which the churches reached an agreement about the scriptural canon. The legacy of biblical Judaism for Christian communities materialized in the form of a standard collection of writings soon to be called “Old Testament.” To these scriptures another collection was joined in the form of gospels and other “apostolic” writings, recognized as authoritative by local traditions. In these foundational writings catechumens were instructed and liturgies celebrated. These writings, claiming apostolic origins, eventually became the “canon,” or official collection, of the sacred NT. While the overwhelming influence of the NT in second century churches has been the object of much

research during recent decades, it remains a field open for new studies and fresh approaches.

The church teaching based on the NT will be discussed in Section II, “The Apostolic Fathers,” which deals with the founding of an “apostolic” consensus of Christian traditions. The sources concerned are the *Letter to the Corinthians* of Clement of Rome (with a mention of the apocryphal “*Second Letter to the Corinthians*”), the *Didache*, the *Letters* of Ignatius of Antioch; Polycarp of Smyrna, Papias of Hierapolis, the *Letter* of Barnabas and the *Shepherd* of Hermas and the enigmatic *Physiologos*, an anonymous product of the culture of Alexandria in the late second century by which a Christian “expert in nature” claims to have learned his typological knowledge of the animal kingdom from the scriptures.

Section III—“Early Christian Poetry,” consists of a (too) short notice about the *Odes of Solomon*, and a section IV—“Acts of the Martyrs,” is dedicated to the literary genre of the martyr acts. In Section V, five authors representing the intellectual life of the second century, are introduced under the title “Greek Apologists,” a title which emphasizes their main significance in their own time and in the later traditions of the church. They are Justin of Rome, Miltiades, Tatian the Syrian, Apollinarus of Hierapolis, Athenagoras of Athens.

With a brief review of Montanism in Section VI, Section VII opens the debate concerning Gnosticism, strictly limiting the analysis to the use and interpretation of scripture during that major crisis of early Christianity. Specific attention will be given to the Nag Hammadi Library, Marcion, and Valentinian exegesis about which Anne Pasquier offers a special contribution. Section VII, “The Response to Gnosticism in the Greek-Speaking Churches,” will consider the works of Hegesippus, Theophilus of Antioch, Melito of Sardis, and the author of the *Letter to Diognetus* together with a special contribution on Irenaeus of Lyon by N. Brox. The final section (VII) is dedicated to Clement of Alexandria whose literary creativity already announces the leading role that the Alexandrian church would play in the history of Christian exegesis in the third century.

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II THE FORMATION OF THE SCRIPTURAL CANON

I. THE ISSUES AT STAKE

The link between Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) is of a vital importance for the inner structuring of the new-born church. The Hebrew scriptures became OT for believers who experienced a hermeneutical conversion when facing the newness of the gospel-event. In affirming the truth of the gospel these converts opened a new space and a new time into which they entered by creatively claiming their Christian identity. As part of the renewed creation ("the eighth day," according to the *Epistle of Barnabas*) the disciples of Jesus read the sacred books of Israel's past as anticipatory stages in the history of God's action in their world. They considered themselves as participating directly in that divine action through their faith in the gospel-event.

The NT resulted from the conversion experiences of several generations of believers who progressively entered into what they saw as the ultimate phase of salvation history. From the time of Jesus' death until around 120 C.E., the NT gives testimony that hosts of men and women became participants in that same gospel-event. It presents a story of Jesus, the Messiah, written more or less independently by different authors designated by early Christian communities, together with a set of circumstantial essays or letters addressed to small groups of believers struggling for survival. In a variety of literary genres created or adapted for these purposes, the NT retrieves the OT message in order to celebrate the gospel-event. In a word, the NT resulted from a relocation of the Hebrew Bible from the particularity of Israel's past. At the same time it radicalized OT prophecies and OT wisdom applying them directly to the very person of Jesus and to the faith experience of his disciples.

The spiritual treasures of the OT filled the hearts of earliest Christians, just as the hermeneutical conversion included in the gospel-event reshaped and directed their minds. With their eyes opened and their tongues freed by their conversion, Christian believers explored and proclaimed the fulfillment of the OT in the gospel event. Hence the NT reflects the dynamics of that event, as understood and articulated by a particular group of believers. As a literary document, the NT represents a community event in which one can hear the message of Jesus through the voices of the men and women who lived it.

II. THE LEGACY OF JUDAISM

The strong Jewish belief in the divine authority of Torah (the Pentateuch: “five books” of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) is best expressed through the vivid metaphor of God himself writing on stone for Moses the basic elements of the Law: Ex 31:18, 32:15-16; Dt 5:22, 31:10-13. The special sacredness of Torah was forever etched into the biblical faith of Israel, but after some time it was to a certain degree extended to other books: the Book of Job was probably one of the first to be counted with Torah as of divine origin (paleo-Hebraic manuscript at Qumran). In the early second century B.C.E., a “canon” (in Greek, “ruler”: official collection of writings) of Prophets already existed including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel and the twelve Minor Prophets.

At Qumran, in the Essene community formed about two centuries before Christ, “holy scripture,” formally quoted as such, included: Torah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel, the twelve Minor Prophets, Psalms: a total of twenty-two books. Esther is the only OT book never referred to at Qumran—nor is it mentioned in the NT. Psalms are used as prophecies (again as in the NT), while the Song of Songs is completely allegorized. Historical books (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles) have not yet reached the status of “holy scripture,” rather they are revered “documentaries,” again as in the NT. Many other revered writings were quoted and copied at Qumran: the cycle of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, the Roll of the Temple, etc.

In Greek, a Qumran roll of Minor Prophets dating from the early first century C.E. shows traces of a revision—hence the Hebraic text used for the revision was considered as authoritative. In the first century B.C.E., a Greek version of Esdras-Nehemiah had replaced an older one, whereas the Canticle of Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations were translated for the first time into Greek during that same period and distributed among the synagogues of the Diaspora for liturgical Passover readings. Qohelet (Ecclesiasticus) was translated into Greek only near the end of the first century C.E. because of a controversy between Pharisees: the school of Shammai refused its canonicity, but the school of Hillel admitted it.

Actually, the Pharisean canon of scripture was considered closed from the middle of the second century B.C.E., the end of a continuous succession of Prophets having been dated from the end of the Persian period. Prophets were seen as followed by “Sages.” If Daniel could be added to the canon, it was as “prophet,” and so were Esdras, Nehemiah, Kings, Chronicles.

A gathering of rabbis between 90 and 105 at Yahvne decided to replace Gamaliel II by his brother-in-law Eleazar ben Hyrcanos as the head of the

Yeshiva, the rabbinic academy. During the meeting, Canticle and Qohelet were confirmed in their canonical status, Canticles being recommended for the liturgy only and Qohelet defended against the objections of Shammaï. Against Judaeon/Christian innovations, the rabbinic canon of twenty-two (twenty-four commonly admitted) OT books was definitively closed before Bar Kochba's revolt.

III. THE "OLD TESTAMENT" OF THE CHRISTIANS

As described by Origen of Alexandria in his *Letter to Julius Africanus*, the OT includes also Tobit and Judith, and in Daniel the stories of Susannah, of Bel and the Dragon, and the Canticle of Ananias, Azarias, Misael; it also includes in Esther the prayers of Esther and Mardochai and two royal edicts; but some parts of the Hebrew text in Jeremiah and Job were ignored by the Greek translators.

The differences between the Rabbinic and the Christian canon are not due, as often repeated, to an "Alexandrian" canon, but to pietist circles not yet controlled by the Pharisees at the beginning of C.E., circles like Qumran open to enlarging the canon. Only after Bar Kochba did Pharisaism identify with Judaism.

The Pharisean Canon and the Christian Bible form two concentric circles with the same central principles:

	Mosaic authorship is limited to Torah.
	The collection of Psalms is the same.
	The Pharisees admitted two Salomonian additions.
	The Pharisees admitted an addition to Jeremiah, the Lamentations; LXX-Christians add Baruch and the Letter of Jeremiah.
	To ancient historical books, the Pharisees added Chronicles, Esdras, Nehemiah; LXX-Christians add a more recent one, Maccabees.
	The Pharisees admitted three short novels: Ruth, Jonah, Esther; LXX-Christians add two more: Tobit and Judith.

Lists of canonical books are given by Melito in the second, and Origen in the third century C.E. They are transmitted, like other lists, by fourth-century authors: Codex *Hierosolymitanus* 54, folio 71; Melito (Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History* IV.26,14;3); Origen (same, VI.25,2); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat-*

echetical Homilies IV, 35; Athanasius of Alexandria, *Festal Letter* 39; Council of Laodiocea, canon 59 (60); Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 8,6; *De mensura* 4 and 23, three lists; Gregory Nazianzus, *Carmen* 12; Amphilochius of Iconium, *Iambi ad Seleucum*, verses 251–319; *Apostolic Canons*, 85.

In second-century literature, the uncontested predominance of OT references is that of the Pentateuch and the Psalms. Wisdom literature enters into the scriptural armoury of Christians only near the end of the second century with authors like Clement of Alexandria, who also quotes Enoch, IV Esdras, Ascension of Moses, Apocalypse of Sophoniah, Hebraic Sybill, Apocalypse of Elija, an Apocryphal of Ezechiel, in a total of about thirty quotations from Apocryphals. In the third century Origen distinguishes between “testamentary” (ἐνδιατήκοι) and “apocryphal” (ἀπόκρυφοί) books, a rabbinic distinction.

The “apocryphal” books quoted by Origen are: *The Martyrdom of Isaiah*, *The Prayer of Joseph*, *The Book of Iannis and Mambres*, *The Apocalypse of Elija*, *The Apocalypse of Ezechiel*, *The Story of Joseph and Aseneth*, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *The Ascension of Moses*, *The Apocalypse of Abraham*, *The Apocalypse of Baruch*. Origen never terms books not included in the Hebrew version of the rabbis, like Wisdom, Sirach, Judith, or Tobit, as “apocryphal.” Note that “apocryphal” implies no pejorative connotation; it means “valuable, but not canonical.” As such, “Apocryphals” are censured for the first time only by Athanasius, *Festal Letter* 39, in 367, because they are not used in the liturgy, are quoted only by heretics, and at all events more recent than canonical writings. Athanasius calls *Deuterocanonicals* the “other books” (*hetera biblia*) and he recommends them for the moral progress of beginners. Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of “apocryphal” and “controverted” (like Revelation) books all at once. No patristic homilies or commentaries on deuterocanonical books are available.

In the Latin churches, Priscillian (c. 340–386) in Spain pleads in favor of the Apocryphals: they should be used for private study, if not in the liturgy, as prophecy goes beyond canon. Condemned by imperial authorities under Maximus, Priscillian became the first Christian subjected to capital punishment for an alleged heresy.

In Italy, ca. 400, in *Apology against Jerome* and *Explanation of the Creed*, Rufinus of Aquileia opposes Jerome’s “Hebraica veritas” in defense of the LXX, which he considered as the only inspired text, because it was received in the church, scripture and church taking their origin in the same Spirit.

The *Decretum Gelasianum* is a private collection (*Collectio Hispana*) dating from the seventh century, introduced in a larger collection of canons. It transmits documents of the late fourth century with a list of biblical

books: Kings and Samuel are not distinguished, hence 4 Kings; Maccabees are placed at the end of the list. Against Priscillian, it does not enlarge the canon; against Jerome (who eliminated the Deuterocanonicals because of his narrow understanding of the “*veritas Hebraica*”), neither does it reduce the canon.

In Africa, synods of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397) stated: *Ut praeter scripturas canonicas nihil in ecclesia legatur sub nomine divinarum scripturarum*, “outside of canonical writings nothing should be read in church under the title of divine scriptures.” Augustine defends the Deuterocanonicals against Jerome in *De doctrina christiana* II, 15. 22. Following strictly the content and order of the rabbinic canon in his Prologue to Kings, Jerome calls all other books “apocryphal,” that is Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, Maccabees. The resulting confusion in relation to Athanasius’ definition of “Apocryphals” is a clear witness of Jerome’s erudite viewpoint’s prevailing over traditional liturgical use.

For a popular literature covering seven centuries, from the third century B.C.E. to the fourth century C.E., the *Clavis Apocryphorum Veteris Testamenti*, published by J.-C. Haelewyck, presents manuscripts, editions and bibliographies concerning 277 different writings. The field still remains open for fresh discoveries, for instance, the author notes: “It is likely that documentation for Slavic will undergo a major upheaval: F. J. Thomson is preparing a *clavis* of slavic literature for the *Corpus Christianorum* for which he has assembled a voluminous bibliography” (XI, note 4). Of particular interest for the study of patristic exegesis are books dating from the third century B.C.E. until around 100 C.E. With the exception of 2 Esdras, they are all included in LXX: 1 Esdras; Tobit, Judith; additions to the Book of Esther; Wisdom of Solomon; Ecclesiasticus (Sirach); Baruch, with the Letter of Jeremiah; Song of the Three Young Men; Susanna; Beliard the Dragon; Prayer of Manasseh; 1 Maccabees; 2 Maccabees. The total of these writings equals four-fifths of the NT writings.

Of a historical character are 1 Esdras, quoted by Cyprian and Augustine; 1 and 2 Maccabees. To the genre of haggadah (morals communicated through fictional tales) belong Tobit, Judith, the additions to Esther and Daniel. Wisdom literature is represented by Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom of Solomon.

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IV. THE SEPTUAGINT (LXX)

Greek was considered by the rabbis as the only language capable of serving as a translation of the Hebrew Bible. They invoked Gn 9:27, “May God extend Japheth’s boundaries, let him dwell in the tents of Shem, may Canaan be his slave.” In rabbinic interpretation, Japheth represented the Greeks, Shem the Hebrews. According to Targum of Jonathan (Add. 27031), the “tents” were rabbinic study houses: “May the sons (of Japheth) become proselytes and stay in the school of Shem.” A large percentage of the population in a variety of cultures around the Mediterranean and in the Near East spoke Greek, either in administration, the army, commerce or scholarship. In Egypt, where their proportion was the highest, Jews were sociologically assimilated to hellenophones. Greeks did not learn foreign languages, but no foreigner, including Jews, would neglect to learn some Greek.

During the last three centuries B.C.E., Hebrew scripture was translated into Greek in Egypt, at Qumran and among orthodox rabbis in Judaea. As an ongoing enterprise, new versions were also produced in the first centuries C.E. by rabbis like Theodotion, Aquila and Symmachus, until the time of Origen. Always aware of the differences between the two languages, in translating they kept in mind the critical observations and the purpose formulated by the author of Ecclesiasticus: “For what is said in Hebrew does not have the same force when translated into another tongue. Not only the present work, but even the law itself, as well as the prophets and the other writings, are not a little different when spoken in the original...I thought it necessary to spend some energy and labour on the translation of this book” (Preface transl. *Revised English Bible*).

Over the centuries the Hebrew scriptures were subject to a process of constant, if slight, changes. From generation to generation new variants entered into them until a group of rabbis, in the early second century C.E., succeeded in imposing the so-called ‘massoretic’ (*massorah*, Hebrew ‘tradition’) text by vocalizing it (dots and other signs signal for each consonant the appropriate vowels to be joined, except for YHWH too sacred to be pronounced). The greatest Jewish commentator of Torah in late Antiquity, Philo of Alexandria (first century C.E.), knew only the Greek Bible; like Origen (third century C.E.), he possessed no knowledge of Hebrew.

On the scale of the Roman Empire, the Christian reception of the Bible as

OT inculturated the syntax and metaphoric language of the Hebrew people, translated in an Hebraic-sounding Greek by bilingual Jews. At the same time, this Christian biblical reception also assimilated hermeneutical principles and devices proper to those translators:

1) the principle of *literalism*: attention was given to the letter of the text in view of its word-by-word appropriation;

2) the principle of *intertextuality*: lexical analogies were recognized when the same words recurred in different places and contexts, creating an “intertextuality” which enriched the meaning of isolated words and suggested a network of thematic correspondences;

3) the principle of *allegorism*: the need for “allegory” is witnessed for instance in Is 9:14, 15 as it is for the interpretation of the Song of Songs at Qumran and in rabbinic exegesis at large, and in the church.

V. THE NEW TESTAMENT

The NT writings evidenced for small groups of believers from Jewish and non-Jewish backgrounds the validity of the Christian claim that the ancient prophecies about God’s initiatives for saving his elected people have found their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah. The central reference for all statements made by authors of the NT was the written tradition of Israelite faith, enlarged in the Septuagint (LXX), its Greek edition secured by the Egyptian Diaspora. In the NT, the books of the LXX are quoted, alluded to, rethought and paraphrased, in order to give a proper account of the Jesus-event for the earliest Christian communities. Conditioned by their own context at the time of their composition, and marked by the personal gifts and motivations of their authors, in essence, NT writings originated from a specific exegesis of LXX.

The NT enterprise, though in some respects midrashic in character, implied a profound rupture with the use of scripture in the rabbinic schools because of the spiritual nature of the Jesus-event celebrated among gospel believers. The life, death and resurrection of the Messiah is announced by the gospel writers as *the* central reality of the gospel. On the one hand they gave a down-to-earth facticity in the historical immediacy of their accounts, and on the other, a transcendent access to the divine mystery of salvation. Hence the rabbinic ordinances, which applied Mosaic Law in age-old veneration, sounded obsolete and dispensable to a gospel-orientated community. In Paul’s Letters and in later parts of what was to become the NT, a constant

affirmation of faith refers to Jesus as *the* revelation which gives all former statements of scripture a new meaning—in other words Christian faith demands a conversion of one's former understanding of scripture.

Firstly, the use of scripture in NT writings is *kerygmatic*. The very first public announcement (*kerygma*, in Greek) of the gospel-event as perceived by the disciples of Jesus as essentially “according to scripture.” There was no way, sacred or profane, to mention the risen Christ in other than scriptural terms. The most elementary awareness of the new kind of faith claimed by the disciples of Jesus postulated a *hermeneutical conversion* by which these believers reinterpreted their sacred scriptures of old in order to articulate the meaning of the Jesus-event for them. Thus their kerygma proceeded from implicit or explicit recall of the ancient scriptures constantly mingled with their narratives and their proclamations about Jesus.

Secondly, the use of scripture in NT writings is *charismatic*. The authors of gospels, acts, letters, homiletic essays and apocalyptic writings (up to twenty-seven writings in the canonical collection which became standard in all major churches from the third century on) served their local communities in exercising a personal “charisma” (a gift attributed to God's Spirit). These authors contributed actively to the building up of the church which they served, as their writings helped to clarify and stabilize the oral traditions of which different communities gave over to them as a vulnerable and vanishing legacy. In a humble ministry, entailing no personal fame except in the case of the apostle Paul, all the writers of the NT are, for us, nothing but names—John, Mark, Matthew, but for all times they are the voices of believing men and women who declared themselves Christians during the later decades of the first century and the first decades of the second.

Thirdly, the use of scripture in NT writings is *foundational*. Because of their use of the OT which made possible the transmission of the gospel-message in a written form, these writings of the NT constitute a sacred foundation of all Christian literature to come. While they are not part of patristic literature the scriptures anticipate and regulate it. From the standpoint of contemporary NT scholarship, it is important to recognize the particular focus of the NT for patristic studies. From a patristic viewpoint, the focus is on the *reception* of scripture in the churches, rather than on their genesis.

The term “reception” implies an historical process:

- (a) the recognition of given writings as being of an apostolic origin and therefore normative for Christian faith;
- (b) the transmission and distribution of these writings in their original Greek or in translations;

(c) the quotation of their statements as authoritative for regulating the verbal or written sharing of faith, allowing thereby a consensus among various church traditions.

The centrality of this process of “reception” will be evident throughout the whole of Part B of this work.

VI. THE NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

The major part of Christian writings produced during the late first and the whole second century has been classified under the rubric “New Testament Apocrypha.” Convenient as it may be in regard to the official collection of the NT, canonized progressively during the second and third century, that rubric seems arbitrary and inadequate for categorizing the most popular literature of Christian origins. For by no means was it a “hidden” (ἀποκαλύπτειν, to hide from) sort of writings. It had not been conceived as such by its authors, nor was it read as such, and there was no regulating authority from whom to hide it from censure.

The so-called Apocrypha represent a needed complement to the NT writings. Most importantly, they help to identify the latter in their specific originality. They also illustrate the collective need for actualizing the significance of the gospel-event in the every-day life of the communities. They open a space for the imagination of the believers beyond the retrospective reconstruction of the gospel narratives bound exclusively to the circumstances of the life and death of Jesus. They question the times, past, present and future, in which the revelatory dimensions of the gospel-event are meaningful. Finally, they respond to religious needs in the hearts and souls of believers, needs which could not adequately express themselves in what became canonical NT literature. Such was the understandable tendency to speculate about after-life and the “other” world of supernatural powers, specially in relation with the resurrection of Jesus, a topic hardly alluded to in the apostolic writings of the NT. In order to satisfy legitimate aspirations of that sort, more “apostolic” writings were composed long after the time of the true apostles. Between such apocryphal works and gnostic productions the border cannot always be traced with certitude, both sorts of writings intending to respond to similar spiritual questionings.

For a methodological introduction and a general survey see F. Bovon, A. G. Brock, C. R. Matthews, eds. *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*. Cambridge, Mass., 1999.

The *Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*, published in 1992 by M.

Geerard (CC, Turnhout 1992), provides information about manuscripts and relevant bibliographies concerning the *Acts of Peter* (13 titles), the *Oriental Acts of Peter* (9 writings), the *Acts of Andreas and Bartolomaeus* (7 titles), *Matthias* (2 titles), *Paul* (10 titles), *Philemon*; twenty-nine apocryphal Apocalypses of *Baruch*, *Daniel*, *Elija*, *James* (6 titles), *John* (13 titles), *Mary* (7 titles), *Paul* (10 titles), *Peter*, *Philip* (7 titles), *Sedrach* (Jewish or Christian, OT or NT Apocr.?), *Zephaniah*, *Thomas* (6 titles), plus *Ascensio Isaiae*, V–VI *Ezra*, *Mysteria Iohannis*, *Oracula Sibyllina*, *Sibylla Maga*, *Sibylla Tiburtina*, and *Visio Ezrae*; the *Cycle of Pilate* (15 writings), the *Dialogues with the Savior* (9 titles), *Epistles* (10 of them), *Gospels* (10 “lost or fictitious,” 6 gnostic, 5 “more recent,” such as the *Gospel of Barnabas*, unpublished gospels from Georgia and Romania, the Arabic apocryphal *Gospel of John*, and fragments from at least 20 other lost Gospels).

The Series Apocryphorum, added since 1983 to the Corpus Christianorum, presently includes the critical editions and translations, completed with luxurious commentaries, of the *Acta Iohannis*, *Acta Andreae* and *Ascensio Isaiae*. To this must be added the two volumes of *Apocrypha Apostolorum Armeniaca* with introductions and French translations of the Armenian Acts of Peter, Paul, Andreas, Matthias, Matthew, James son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Barthelemy, Thomas, James the brother of Jesus, Thaddaeus, and Simon Zealot.

Because they were excluded from the canon, ultimately the NT Apocrypha exercised a minor influence on the formation of the Christian mind. Their direct use by some patristic authors appears only peripheral. Their contribution to specific beliefs (the miraculous birth of Jesus, his descent into Sheol between his death and Easter morning, his resurrection itself and his encounters with the apostles before returning to the Father), richly imaginative as it was, cannot be compared with the mighty foundation secured for subsequent Christian thought by the NT itself.

Écrits apocryphes chrétiens, I, an edition directed by F. Bovon and P. Geoltrain (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade. Paris 1997), includes thirty-two apocryphal writings, translated from Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopian, by as many, if not more, specialists. In addition, one finds in it a set of manuscript variants from the gospel texts and small gospel fragments. Each writing is preceded by a detailed introduction; it is thoroughly annotated and followed by a bibliography. These apocryphals refer indifferently to the OT or the NT, but they all date from the first two or three centuries of the patristic era. A volume II is announced with “the apocryphal Christian writings of the following centuries (until the Middle Ages)” (XII, note 5). It is unnecessary to stress the fact that this latest collection of Christian

apocryphals, secured by F. Bovon and P. Geoltrain, evidences the remarkable progress made in the field since the publication of similar collections by M. R. James (Oxford 1924); E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (3rd ed. Tübingen 1987–89); M. Erbetta (Casale Monferrato 1966–81); L. Moraldi (Turin 1971) and even A. de Santos Otero (6th ed. *BAC*, Madrid 1983). But see also J. K. Elliott (Oxford 1993).

The content of the admirably edited volume in the “Bibliothèque de la Pléiade” (1,782 pages!), is best indicated by a listing of the apocryphal titles:

1. *On Jesus and Mary*
 - The Preaching of Peter
 - The Gospel of Thomas
 - The Secret Gospel of Mark
 - The Proto-Gospel of James
 - The Childhood Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew
 - The Book of the Nativity of Mary
 - Mary’s Dormition of Pseudo-John
 - The History of the Childhood of Jesus
 - The Arabic Life of Jesus
 - The Gospel of Peter
 - The Questions of Barthelemy
 - The Book of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ by the Apostle Barthelemy
 - The Epistle of the Apostles
 - Gospel Fragments
2. *Visions and Revelations*
 - The Ascension of Isaiah
 - The Apocalypse of Esdras
 - The Apocalypse of Sedrach
 - The Vision of Esdras
 - The Fifth Book of Esdras
 - Odes of Solomon
 - The Apocalypse of Peter
 - The Apocalypse of Paul
 - The Book of the Revelation of Elkasai
3. *On John the Baptist and the Apostles*
 - Acts of Andrew
 - Acts of John
 - Acts of Peter
 - Acts of Paul
 - Acts of Philip

Acts of Thomas
 Doctrine of the Apostle Addai
 The Legend of Simon and Theonoe
 Encomium of Saint John the Baptist
 Correspondence of Paul and Seneca

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III
THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS:
FOUNDING AN "APOSTOLIC" CONSENSUS

Under a title invented in the 17th century (J.-B. Cotelier, *Patres aevi apostolici*, 1672), seven authors from the late first and early second centuries witness the birth or the earliest stages of literary and doctrinal traditions in the churches beyond the production of writings. They are treated here according to the most probable chronology.

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I. CLEMENT OF ROME (LATE 1ST C.)

The *Letter to the Corinthians*, "the earliest extant Christian writing which is not part of our NT canon" (Hagner, 1973, 1), was probably written at the time of the persecution of Domitian (96–98 C.E.). That exhortation for peace and concord, addressed in the name of the Christian community of Rome to a fellow community in Corinth, was translated into Syriac, Coptic, and Latin. Its author shows an intimate knowledge of OT and training in secular rhetorics.

Clement of Rome, presider over the local college of elders who governed the Jewish Christian community near the end of the first century, in 95 or 96 C.E., was the author of the *Letter*. By his disapproval of any form of discord in the community of believers, and his many arguments in favour of penance, piety and humility, the author is led in the first part of the letter to a massive quotation of biblical examples. In the second part, his insistent demands for discipline and submission also rest on references to OT institutions. The way of arguing and composing his text keeps Clement in close vicinity to contemporary Jewish literature. Actually the distinction between OT and NT remains blurred in his unified vision of God's working in history. Despite an explicit mention of Paul's similar Letter(s) to the Corinthians, Clement seems unable to take over any element of Pauline dialectics. His attitude towards scripture parallels the one proper to some Apocryphals. He rewrites scripture in quoting it. He lacks the strong christology of the canonical Gospels or Letters, but maintains an eschatological focus.

Biblical quotations in Clement's *Letter* have received a full treatment by D. A. Hagner who distinguishes between "essentially verbatim quotation" (Gn 4:3–8; 2:23; 12:1–3; 13:14–16; 18:27; 1:22–27; 1:28; Ex 2:14; Dt 32:89, 9:12–14; Job 11:2–3; 5:17–26; in addition there are twenty-one quotations from the

Psalms, three from Proverbs and three from Isaiah); “moderately variant quotations (Gn 15:5–6; Ex 32:32; Job 1:1; 14:4–5; 19:26; Ps 36:35–37; 68:31–33; Is 29:13; Ez 33:11), and “composite quotations” either “from the same book” or “from different books” (38–64). The use of the apostolic writings underlines the fact that these writings were already well recognized as such.

CPG I, 1001–1008.

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The *Second Letter of Clement* is the oldest known Christian homily (outside of the NT), dating from ca. 150, and put under the name of Clement of Rome. It originated in Syria or Egypt.

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II. THE ANONYMOUS OF THE DIDACHE (LATE 1ST C.)

The full title, "The Teaching of the Lord Through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations," even if perhaps of a later time, stresses the apocryphal nature of the document. Prescriptions pertaining to the liturgy of baptism and to community meals precede other regulations about ministries and social behaviour in what seems to be a compilation of texts dating from different periods of time around the year 100 C.E. Its final editing was secured in the first half of the second century; its provenance located in rural settlements of the Syrian mountains. Literary contacts with scripture are anyone's guess.

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III. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH (EARLY 2ND C.)

Allegedly written by the third "bishop" of Antioch on his forced journey from Antioch to Rome, where he was destined to die in the amphitheatre under the reign of Trajan (98-117), three of these *Letters*, addressed to the churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, were sent out of Smyrna. Two others, written elsewhere, were directed to the community of Philadelphia and to Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna. The most extensive and substantial letter was sent to Rome. No letter at all went to Antioch. The work represents a collection of epistolary masterpieces at an early stage of ancient Christianity.

With profound intuitions about divine revelation, together with an intense focus on renewal and dedication in faith, the author insistently magnifies the ideal unity of the church, secured by its episcopal structure, founded by Jesus himself. The passionate plea for a monarchical type of episcopacy, apparently out of context in the first decade of the second century, led some critics to the hypothesis of a later date around 160 for the "Ignatian" *Letters*, in the monarchian circle headed by Noetus of Smyrna (R. M. Huebner). As always, chronology conditions the whole interpretation of those amazing documents. Ignatius remains a mysterious figure who centers his attention on Smyrna, without a single word addressed to his own church of Antioch.

It is generally recognized that “Ignatius reflects scant interest in the Hebrew scriptures” (W. R. Schoedel, 9). He only quotes (“For it is written”) Prv 3:34 in *Ephesians* 5, 3; Prv 18:17 (“As it is written”) in *Magnesians* 12, and Isaiah 52:5 (“For”) in *Trallians* 8, 2. Otherwise one must be content with allusive references due to secondary (oral?) sources (as in the case of Matthew), and with affinities caused by common traditions, for instance of a Johannine type. The only verbal contacts with the NT are with 1 Cor 6:9, “does not inherit the Kingdom of God,” in *Ephesians* 18, 1; and with 1 Cor 4:4 “Not for that reason am I justified” in *Romans* 5, 1. He imitates 1 Cor 15:9–9, “I am the last of them and a miscarriage” in *Romans* 9, 2, and he echoes once more 1 Cor 6:9 (or 10) “does not inherit the Kingdom of God” in *Philadelphians* 3, 3. But Ignatius knew that Paul had written more letters and indirectly they may have contributed to his writing (A. E. Barnett). Like Hermas in regard to James, Ignatius is best understood in verbal and spiritual agreement with Johannine literature through common traditional background. The vexed passage of *Philadelphians* 8, 2, “For I heard some say, ‘If I do not find (it) in the archives, I do not believe (it to be) in the Gospel’ and when I said ‘It is written,’ they answered me, ‘that is just the question,’” (tr. Schoedel, 207) sounds like the debate between Justin and Trypho. It implies a clear distinction between OT and NT and a hermeneutic of their relationship.

Only seven *Letters* are authentic (Zahn, 1873; Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Part 2: *S. Ignatius, S. Polycarp*, 3 vols. London 1885; 2nd ed. 1889, 1, 127–221), dated 100–118 C.E. For the challenging views of R. Weijenborg, J. Rius-Camps, R. Joly, see W. R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: Hermeneia. A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*. Philadelphia 1985.

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IV. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA (D. 156)

Martyred in February 156 C.E., Bishop Polycarp left behind him several letters of which at least one, *To the Philippians*, survives. His veneration of

“the blessed and glorious Paul” (3, 2) is vibrant throughout the letter. His reception of Pauline thought was mainly due to deutero-Pauline Letters, like Ephesians (1, 3; 12, 1) 1 and 2 Timothy (4, 1; 5, 2; 9, 1, 4), Hebrews (6, 2). He also refers to 1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, and Philippians, mostly without any express quoting formula, or sometimes with phrasings equivalent to “the Lord says” (2, 3; 7, 1). Only once does he quote “as it is said in his scriptures” (1 2, 1), “his” meaning “God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 2, 2), and the text cited is Ps 4:5 as partially repeated in Eph 4:25.

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V. PAPIAS OF HIERAPOLIS (EARLY 2ND C.)

A bishop of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, Papias wrote an *Explanation of the Sayings of the Lord* (Λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεις), in five books, ca. 130–140. A friend of Polycarp of Smyrna, he witnesses inside his tradition the transfer of oldest oral “sayings,” mainly Gospel narratives, into the written form of the NT (thirteen fragments preserved in Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5, 33, 4; Eusebius of Caesarea, *HE* II, 15, 2; III, 36, 2; 39, 13–17, about the Gospels of Matthew and Mark). Papias introduces Mark as the “interpreter of Peter,” and mentions a Hebrew original of Matthew, translated into Greek. He is also a witness to millenarism: “There will be a thousand years after the resurrection of the dead, when the Kingdom of Christ will be set up in a material form on this earth,” a chiliastic belief proper to Asia Minor, on which Irenaeus of Lyon would write extensively in his fifth book *Against the Heresies* (J. P. Bligh, J. Munck, J. Kürzinger).

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VI. PSEUDO-BARNABAS (MID-2ND C.)

Another apocryphal writing, dating from the middle of the second century after the Bar-Kochba revolt, perhaps written in Alexandria, it was still counted among the canonical writings of the NT by Origen who calls it καθολικὴν ἐπιστολὴν (PA III, 2, 4, 7; CC I, 63: “general epistle.” Chadwick 1953), and in the Codex Sinaiticus (fourth century). A violent diatribe against Judaism, massively quoting the OT and with the same notion of the “Two Ways” of life and death which was noticeable in the *Didache*, the *Letter of Pseudo-Barnabas*, like Ariston of Pella, supports an exclusively allegorical reading of OT.

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VII. HERMAS (FIRST HALF 2ND C.)

A slave sold to a woman called Rhoda (cf. Acts 12:13) and later freed by her in Rome, Hermas converted to Christianity as a land-owner with wife and grown-up children. He completed his visionary compilation under the title *The Shepherd* around 140 C.E. A layman without any official status in the church, Hermas presented a work including five "Visions," twelve

“Commands” and ten “Similitudes” or parables, which shows no logical or compositional unity. A very unusual “Book of Allegories” (Brox 1991, 39), its apocalyptic frame lacks the appropriate content of eschatological themes, but it obviously succeeded in legitimating the allegorical and parenetic purposes of its author. Its many semitisms (almost all in LXX: A. Hilhurst) do not put into question Hermas’s mother tongue, a low-level Greek *koine*. Hermas does not quote any sources (except in Vision II, 3, 4), but he is reminiscent (at least for some modern critics) of many data parallel to LXX (Harnack, *History*, 1/1, 51). In thirty-eight passages Hermas comes close to nineteen verses of James (Brox, 46–47), but even then a proper literary dependency remains highly questionable. The same is true about Hermas’s proximity to Gnostic writings like Poimandres, the popular “Shepherd” of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Finally, the distinction of canonical and extracanonical writings did not yet exist for Hermas.

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VIII. THE *PHYSIOLOGOS* (SECOND HALF 2ND C. OR LATER)

The *Physiologos*, or *The Expert in Nature*, was written in Greek by an unknown Alexandrian (perhaps Pantaenos) during the second half of the second century. Originally in forty-eight chapters, the *Physiologos* offered a

typological description of animals, stones and plants, based on the LXX and the NT. Tertullian probably knew it; Clement of Alexandria uses it in *Prot X*, 106, 1 (*Phys.* 11 and 21); XI, 118, 1 (*Phys.* 13); *Strom.* IV, 6. 100, 3 (*Phys.* 10); *Paed.* II, 119 (*Phys.* 44). Origen refers to it in his *Commentary on Matthew*, frg. 202: GCS 12, 3, 67f. (*Phys.* 11) and elsewhere (Sbordone 1936). A *terminus ante quem* is secured by Hyppolytus, *On Antichrist* 54f. (*Phys.* 18), dating from ca. 200; the *terminus post quem* is given by a quotation from the Proto-Gospel of James (10, 2–11, 4: *Phys.* 35) composed ca. 150. Several allusions to India (*Phys.* 44, 46) directed the attention of some experts to Pantaenus who had visited India according to Eusebius, *H.E.* V, 10f. The work seems to have started circulating without any mention of an author. Information in *Phys.* matches statements of Aelian, Pliny the Elder, Timothy of Gaza, the Cyranides, Horapollon; however the essential source of the work, very often quoted literally, is LXX—NT. Some elements are borrowed from Ps-Barnabas's *Letter* (10, 1, 4: *Phys.* 35a; 10, 8: *Phys.* 21; 10, 7: *Phys.* 24; 12, 2. 9: (*Phys.* 40); 1 *Clem* 59, 3 in *Phys.* 2; and *Hermas*, 38, 1 in *Phys.* 3.

The authentic expertise in nature, according to the author, is given only through the biblical revelation communicated by OT in view of the salvific gospel-event. The popular knowledge of natural realities is not ignored, but under the appearance of naive stories a highly sophisticated typology is at work all along the *Physiologos*. “Each chapter is something of a creative masterpiece” (Carmody 1967, 342).

With a record number of almost eighty Greek manuscripts and several enlarged editions secured in Byzantine times, the work enjoyed translations into Ethiopic, Armenian, Syriac, Coptic, Georgian, Slavonic and Old Romanian. At least two independent Latin versions existed, of which one was quoted by Ambrose and Jerome, later in the *Decretum Gelasianum* and in the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville. Popular adaptations of the *Physiologos* contributed much to medieval *Bestiarii* (K. Alpers 1996).

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Pitra, J.-B.: *SpicSol* 3, 1855, XLVII–LXXV, 338–390.

Sbordone, F.: Milan 1936; Hildesheim 1976, 1991.

Carmody, F. J.: *Physiologos Latinus*, Versio B, Paris 1939; Versio Y, *University of California Publications in Classical Philology*, Berkeley, CA 12 (1941) 95–134; NY 1971.

TRANSLATION

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IV
EARLY CHRISTIAN POETRY:
THE ODES OF SOLOMON (EARLY 2ND C.)

M. J. Pierre ends her introduction to the *Odes* in *Écrits apocryphes anciens* by asking: “Which biblical text did the author of the *Odes* know? Had he already a written copy of the NT, or did he only collect an oral tradition? For the *Odes* never quote scripture literally, even when playing with biblical vocabulary: quasi-quotations, allusions, thematic affinities, all testify to a deep knowledge of the Bible and of its interpretive traditions in a Semitic milieu, in line with the messianic fulfilment. But the literary genre imposes its form: the *Odes* are poems, and the poet intends no didactic work. In a rigid and strict frame, the discourse seeks to recover the mystery, submitted to the harmony of rhythm, the pertinence of sound” (675–76).

A collection of forty-two poems composed in Syriac, probably in the early second century, the *Odes of Solomon* remain mysterious in their origin and their very perfection. Their French editor, M.-J. Pierre, suggests “the hypothesis that the author belonged to the Judaeo-Christian ‘nazir’ of Jerusalem, members of the priestly caste with whom the earliest Christian tradition associates the Davidic family of Jesus.” She also observes that “the wisdom and the christology of the *Odes* are very primitive, earlier than the technical elaborations of the Gnostics and the dogmatic definitions of the mainstream Churches” (1997, 657). Pierre adds a bibliography with the essential titles of editions and studies (678–679).

In a notice of *LACL*, M. Lattke condensed the results of a life-long dedication to the *Odes*: “The *Odes* benefit from the Old Testament, they are close to some texts from Qumran, they refer to the circles of the evangelist John and of the Ignatian Letters.... As the time of their composition one may choose the first quarter of the second century” (542).

EDITIONS

Harris, R., A. Mingana: Manchester 1916–20.

Lattke, M.: Fribourg, Switzerland 1979.

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Pierre M. J. and J. M. Martin, eds. and transl., *Les Odes de Salomon*, Turnhout 1994.

Testuz, M., *Od.* 11, Papyrus Bodmer X–XII. Genève 1959.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Bright, P., *Od.* 37 and 40: C. Kannengiesser ed. *Early Christian Spirituality* Philadelphia 1986, 37f. Harris: above.

French: Pierre, Testuz: above.

German: Lattke, M., *LACL*, 2nd ed. 1999, 541f.

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V

ACTS OF MARTYRS

Strictly speaking “Acts of Martyrs” are the official records of the trials where Christians were condemned to death, and are to be distinguished from the “Passions,” or martyr stories based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses. Such *Acts* and *Passions* are enumerated by W. Rordorf in *DS* 10 (1980): 720–22:

Martyrdom of Polycarp and his eleven companions, a letter from the church of Smyrna, dating probably from 156.

Martyrdom of Ptolemee and Lucius in Rome, ca. 155–160, related by Justin, *Apology* II, 2.

Martyrdom of Justin and six companions in Rome, between 163 and 167, of which several records are transmitted.

Acts of Carpus, Papyrus and Agathonike, martyrs of Pergamum, probably 161–169, or during the persecution of Decius, according to a Latin tradition.

Martyrs of Lyon and Vienne, in 177.

Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs, a record is transmitted of their trial in Carthage ca. 180.

Acts of Apollonius, with a historical nucleus dating from the reign of Commodus (160–192).

Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas and their companions, in Carthage 202–203, under Septimus Severus; possibly edited by Tertullian.

Martyrdom of Potamiana and Basilides, disciples of Origen, in Alexandria 202–203.

To this list are to be added stories of a more questionable authenticity, related to the persecution of Decius (250–251):

Martyrdom of Pionius, a priest of Smyrna, and four companions.

Acts of Maximus

Martyrdom of Apollina and companions, reported in a letter of Dionysius of Alexandria (Eusebius, *HE* VI, 41).

Acts of Acatius, bishop of Antioch of Pisidia.

Other sparse information is available in the *Letters* of Cyprian.

From the persecution of Valerian (257–258) date:

The Proconsularis Acts of St. Cyprian, executed in 258;

The Passion of Montanus, Lucius and companions in Carthage;

The Passion of Marian and James in Lambes, Numidia;

The Passion of Fructuosus and Companions, in Tarragona, Spain;

The Martyrdom of Marin, one of the first soldiers martyred (Eusebius, *HE* VII, 15).

In the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, it is worth noting the purpose of the letter: "That the Lord might show us from above a martyrdom becoming the Gospel" (I; *ANF* 1, 37). I Cor 2:9 is quoted in ch. 2 and the details of the narrative indeed evoke the passion story of Jesus in the Gospels: Polycarp, betrayed by people of his own household and found at supper time on the Day of the Preparation, was brought to the stadium by an officer called Herod, "that he might fulfil his special lot, being made a partaker of Christ" (VI; *ANF* 1, 40). The report closes by stating that "all desire to imitate (Polycarp's) martyrdom as having been altogether consistent with the Gospel of Christ" (XIX; *ANF* 1, 43). Thus the paradigm was established for the genre of *Acts of Martyrs* to become, for the most part, narratives actualizing the Passion of Christ when describing the heroic death of Christian witnesses.

The Passion of the Holy Martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas received in its final redaction, possibly due to Tertullian, a Montanist flavour. The martyrs witness to the power of the Spirit as a source of special gifts and visions predicted by J1 2:28–29 (Preface). In one of her visions Perpetua comes close to contemplating a scene of the Book of Revelation: "We entered and saw the boundless light, and heard the united voices of some who said without ceasing, 'Holy! Holy! Holy!' And in the midst of that place we saw, as it were, a hoary man sitting, having snow-white hair and with a youthful countenance; and his feet we saw not. And on his right hand and on his left were four and twenty elders" (IV, 2; *ANF* 3, 703). Entering the amphitheater, Perpetua "sang psalms," and with her companions "rejoiced that they should have incurred anyone of their Lord's passions" (VI, 1; *ANF* 3, 704).

EDITIONS

Amet, J.: *SC* 417 (1996).

Beek, C. I. M. Ivan, Nijmegen 1936 = *FlorPatr* 43 (1938).

Franchi, de Cavalieri, P., Rome 1896 = *Scritti agiografici* 1, *StT* 221 (1962): 41–155.

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VI THE GREEK APOLOGISTS

I. JUSTIN OF ROME (D. 162/168)

Justin of Rome wrote the first known apology “Against the Jews,” the *Dialogue with Trypho*, of which the introduction and a large part of chapter 74 are lost. The long dialogue, or a set of equivalent conversations, reported in 142 *capitula*, may actually have happened, possibly in Ephesus. Its argument includes (1) a summary on Christian interpretation of the OT in chap. 9–47; (2) a firm affirmation of faith in Christ in chap. 48–108; (3) a recognition of pagan nations gained for Christ, as the new Israel and the true elect. The texture of the whole work rests on interrelated quotations from the OT and NT.

As a philosopher, Justin opened a school in Rome. He “was no autodidact, no vagrant in the territory of Plato, but the student and exponent of a systematic doctrine which it was possible to hear in the schools of his day” (Edwards). Currently, one calls this doctrine Middle Platonism, best represented by the teaching of Numenius. As a religious thinker, Justin conceived his public responsibilities in line with the philosophical apologists in the Jewish Christian church of his time. He “understood ‘theology’ as a kind of argumentative production of biblical texts.... According to a tendency of the Judeo-Christian community of Rome, Justin has little feeling for the newness of the Gospel in the way of Pauline dialectics, but he affirms that newness in the light of his own perception of the rational consistency of Christian faith. The Gospel is not for him the fulfillment of a divine dynamic, growing throughout the economy of salvation as Irenaeus would teach near the end of the century; for Justin, it presents the concrete and perfect evidence of what has always been the truth for Jewish thinkers as well as for any philosopher.... Scripture is the ‘mystery’ of the links between prophetic revelations and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, a mystery perceived only by those who adhere freely to Christ in faith (*Dialogue* 44 and 84). Justin enumerates the gifts of the Holy Spirit in line with Pauline statements and Is 11:2–3. He presents a series of typological interpretations of Exodus and of Jacob as a figure of Christ and the church. He refers to Jeremiah and Job.

EDITIONS

apol. dial.: Goodspeed, E. J., *Die ältesten Apologeten*. Göttingen 1914 = 1984.
apol.: Marcovich, M., Berlin 1994.
 Munier, C., Fribourg 1995.

dial.: Archambault, B., Paris 1904.
Haeuser, P., BKV 2nd ed. 33.

TRANSLATIONS: *DIAL.*

English: Halton, T. P. and Slosser, M., Rev. ed. and trans. of T. B. Fall, *FaCh* 6 (2003). *ANF* 1 (1885 = 1995), 159–302. Lukyn Williams, A., London 1930.

French: Munier, Archambault: above.

German: Rauschen, BKV 2nd ed. 12. Veil, H., Strasbourg 1894.

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II. TATIAN THE SYRIAN (LATE 2ND C.)

Tatian, a Syrian by birth, became a pupil of Justin after a conversion that probably took place in Rome. As he narrates in his *Discourse to the Greeks* (*Oratio*), he encountered “certain barbaric writings too old to be compared with the opinions of the Greeks, and too divine to be compared with their errors.” He appreciated in these writings (undoubtedly the scriptures) “the unpretentious caste of the language, the lack of artifice of the writers, the foreknowledge displayed of future events, the excellent quality of the precepts centered on one Being” (*Orat* 29; J. Quasten I, 220). His emphasis on the uniqueness of the scriptures led to a complete rupture with the secular world, occasioned criticism of the Christianity of his time which he accused of being too indulgent toward contemporary education and culture. Around 172, back in the East, he founded the sect of the Encratites, or “Abstainers” in line with Gnostic rigorism. At that time Tatian composed (propably in Syriac) the *Diatesseron*, literally “Out of Four,” a composite selection “through which the threads of the narratives of the four gospels were dexterously interwoven” (Vööbus, 1967, 653). This work was to play an extraordinary role in the Syriac tradition. As late as the fourth century, Ephrem wrote a commentary on it. Near the middle of the fifth century Theodoret found two hundred copies of it in the diocese of Cyrrhus and had them destroyed: “I myself found over two hundred copies of that sort venerated (τετιμημένας) which I put away (ἀπεθέμην), and I introduced in their place the gospels of the four gospel writers” (*Haer* 1, 20; PG 83, 372). Many quotations survive in Syriac literature. The influence of the *Diatesseron* can be traced “from Armenia to Abyssinia, and from Rome to the British Isles” (Vööbus, 1967). Translations into Arabic, Persian, Latin, Italian dialects, medieval German dialects, Dutch, French and English, allow a fairly accurate reconstruction of the original text (See bibliography in Quasten I, 225–228).

Among the lost writings of Tatian, mentioned by Eusebius of Caesarea (*H.E.* 5, 13, 8) the book *On Problems* in which “he engaged in explaining what is obscure and hidden in the scriptures” is a particular loss for the history of early biblical interpretation. There is little doubt that Tatian’s initiatives in his Syriac-speaking homeland contributed enormously to consolidating a Christian identity, as distinct from the rabbinic.

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III. MILTIADES (SECOND HALF 2ND C.)

Among many other apologetic pamphlets, Miltiades wrote two treatises, one *Against the Greeks (Idolatres)*, in which he defend the Christian way of life "against the rulers of this world" (πρὸς τοὺς κοσμικοὺς ἄρχοντας), a phrase close to 1 Cor 2:6-8, and another treatise, *Against the Jews*, thus marking a tradition of polemical apologetics, which would lead in the early fourth century to Athanasius of Alexandria's *Treatise on the Incarnation*.

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IV. APOLLINARIS OF HIERAPOLIS (SECOND HALF 2ND C.)

Apollinaris of Hierapolis bishop ca. 160–180, followed Miltiades's initiative by composing five books *Against the Greeks* and two others *Against the Jews*.

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V. ATHENAGORAS OF ATHENS (SECOND HALF 2ND C.)

A contemporary of the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodian, to whom is addressed the *Embassy for the Christians*, Athenagoras was a philosopher, probably established in Athens. He seems to have been unmentioned by his contemporaries, except for Methodius (*De res.* I, 37, 1–3) who quotes him (= Epiphanius, *Panarion* 64, 29, 1–3). A copy executed by Arethas of Caesarea in the tenth century allowed his main writings, the *Embassy* and the *Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead*, to survive.

After converting to Christianity, Athenagoras continued his teaching of philosophy and rhetorics in the frame of contemporary Middle Platonism. He tentatively harmonized Christ and Reason as two expressions of the same divine Logos, in building up a first systematic form of Christian philosophy. The *Embassy* dates from ca. 175, around the time when Christians were persecuted in Lyon. *On the Resurrection*, written soon after, is a piece of anti-Gnostic apologetics on that issue.

References to scripture are rare, and on the whole allusive in both writ-

ings. Seven passages of OT are quoted in the *Embassy*: Is 22:13; 43:10–11; 44:6; 66:1; Prv: 8:22; 21, 1; Bar 3:36), all from LXX. They seem always quoted from memory. Citations from NT in the *Embassy* also are from memory: Mt 5:28, 40–45, 46; 19:9; Rom 1:27; 1 Tm 2:2. Only three scriptural citations occur in *De res.*: Is 22:13; Ex 20:12, 14; Rom 13:9 (Pouderon 1992, 341–343: “Appendice VII. Les citations scripturaires et leurs sources”).

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VII MONTANISM

In Phrygia, ca. 172, possibly as early as 157, a charismatic movement was born led by Montanus, who had experienced ecstatic prophecy (Eusebius *H.E.* V, 16, 6). The mystic event signified for Montanus and his earliest disciples the active presence of the Paraclete, according to Jn 14:16–18, and the imminent second coming of the Lord, inaugurating the ultimate millennium (Rv 20:1–6). The “end of times” called for intense fasting and for volunteering for martyrdom. The heavenly Jerusalem was to be established on earth (Rv 21:1–10).

The message of Montanus received an enthusiastic response in the villages of Phrygia, where eschatological expectation and the practice of prophecy had prevailed since the days of the daughters of the alleged Gospel writer Phillip, all four famous prophets, buried in the city of Hierapolis. In 177, the Montanist “New Prophecy” had possibly reached Lyon: *The Letter on the Martyrs of Lyon* names Vettius Epagathus as “ardent in the Spirit” thanks to the ‘assistance of the Paraclete’, and eager to die in the arena.” The movement had also spread over into Galatia and Thracia. Soon it expanded to Antioch and Rome. It received a favourable welcome in Roman Africa where Tertullian adopted its rigorism in 207. The charismatic interventions of the Paraclete were emphasized by the anonymous redactor of the *Passio Perptuae et Felicitatis*. As a consolidated church with numerous bishops, presbyters and deacons, all of them male or female, Montanism maintained itself deep into the fourth century. One finds it mentioned for the last time around 580 in John of Ephesus’ *Church History* III, 20, 32.

The significance of Montanism in the history of patristic exegesis is very limited, due to the fact that the charismatic movement did not produce its own literature. A partial and probably biased insight about it may be gained by examining the peculiar use of scripture in Tertullian’s writings dated from 207 on, starting with his *Treatise Against Marcion*. In particular, between 211 and 217 the author of *Adversus Praxean*, *On Fasting*, *On Monogamy*, *On Chastity*, was entirely committed to the sectarian principles of Montanism, as he was in *On the Veiling of Virgins* and in *On Modesty*. An essay in “six books” *On Ecstasy* is lost. For a more in-depth review of Tertullian’s Montanist writings in regard to his use of scripture, Fredouille (1972) gives valuable insights. One could also explore the introductions to the relevant volumes of *Sources Chrétienues*: In SC 343, *De monogamia*, P. Mattei notes the use of Pauline texts (33–34); In SC 319, *De exhortatione castitatis*,

C. Moreschini discusses the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7 (35–39); In SC 424, *De virginibus velandis*, the attention concentrates on 1 Corinthians 11; in SC 394, *De pudicitia*, other Pauline verses, mainly of 1 Corinthians, are central in Tertullian's argument.

Despite ground-breaking inquiries in epigraphic and archeological data (Tabbernee), the Montanist use of scripture remains enigmatic. A suggestive foray into the significance of Sirach 24 in Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean* 8, 5 (noted by O. Skarsaune, "The Development of Scriptural Interpretation in the Second and the Third Centuries—except Clement and Origen": Magne Saebø, ed., *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, vol. 1/1: *Antiquity*, Göttingen 1996, 433 n. 119) is presented by J. C. Poirier (1999). Poirier concludes that the personified figure of Lady Wisdom in Sirach 24 was central in the Montanist reception of scripture, leading the adherents of the sect to conceive "wisdom in charismatic terms, as the prophetic unction. This understanding of wisdom as a prophetic unction, headquartered in Pepuza, rather than the millennialist eschatology of the Book of Revelation, holds the key for understanding (Epiphanius) *haer* 49, 1, 2–3" (507).

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VIII CHRISTIAN GNOSTICISM

I. INTRODUCTION

During the second and third centuries of its existence Christianity faced a life threatening crisis, due to the success of Gnostic doctrines proliferating inside the main-current churches and in their cultural surroundings. A crisis of identity deeply affected the self-understanding of Christian believers, entailing the loss of entire communities and calling for a reformulation of apostolic traditions. The origins of the crisis at once Jewish, pagan and Christian remain obscure and complex. As appropriate backgrounds, capable of explaining the explosive propagation, literary production and popular ubiquity of gnosticism, scholars have invoked the Jewish disasters of 70 (Temple of Jerusalem destroyed) and 135 (Simon Kochba's revolt defeated), the irruption of oriental religions into imperial city life, the intrinsic dualism of Platonism, as well as the deficiencies of the Christian establishment itself. Present expertise dates the earliest symptoms of the proper crisis from before the first century C.E., in the wake of the Baptist movement, originating from Samaria but contaminated by Jewish Christian expectations and popular Platonism (H. M. Schenke *TRE* 23, 735).

For the reception and interpretation of the Bible in the burgeoning churches of the second and third centuries, the Gnostic crisis played a decisive role. By their adamant rejection of many biblical beliefs and of sacred Torah as such, the Gnostics imposed on church leaders a theoretical reassessment about their own acceptance of the OT. The canonical books of the NT also needed to be better identified, as their inner logic and literary texture kept them bound to Jewish scriptures. The formation of the OT-NT canon became a high priority under the pressure of Gnostic, in particular Marcionite, teachings.

Christian exegesis began as a scientific discipline in some Gnostic circles of Alexandria with the *Commentary on John* by Heracleon, a disciple of Valentinus. The great Valentinus himself (see below Anne Pasquier's special contribution) had already built up a theological and hermeneutical theory in order to legitimate his biblical exegesis. Teaching inside church communities, first in Alexandria, later in Rome, this prestigious spiritual leader lost the support of church authorities, mainly because of his peculiar interpretation of scripture. On the broader scale of the multifaceted Gnostic trends for which literary evidence is now available, a thorough study of the Gnostic use of scripture still represents a task of the future.

A new impulse was given to such study by the discovery, in December 1945, of the Nag Hammadi manuscripts, thirteen codices in a Coptic dialect on papyrus and containing a total of fifty-six separate tractates, some reduced to a few lines, others repeated two or three times. The codices, dating from the first half of the fourth century, were hidden in a cave before the end of the fourth century, transmit writings from a much earlier time, possibly from the first and second century C.E., many of them coming from Syria. Why, from where, and by whom they were collected and/or hidden remain unanswered questions.

Most of the tractates preserve Gnostic teaching, hymns and prayers, to a large amount completely unknown before the sensational discovery. In the present stage of research, over half a century since 1946, a first translation and provisional analysis of the Nag Hammadi texts is available for the public. Only very tentative conclusions may be suggested concerning the significance of these texts for the early history of patristic exegesis:

1. The picture of Gnostic thought and exegesis, known through anti-Gnostic writers, like Irenaeus, is substantially confirmed.
2. The list of NT apocryphals is significantly enriched by the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip*, the *Book of Thomas the Contender*, the *Apocryption of James*, the *Dialogue of the Savior*, the *(First) Apocalypse of James*, the *(Second) Apocalypse of James*, the *Letter of Peter to Philip*, the *Act of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, the *Apocalypse of Paul*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*.
3. The Jewish and Christian traditions of wisdom literature in their Gnostic reincarnation at the start of common era are much documented, thanks to *The Gospel of Thomas*, *The Book of Thomas the Contender*, *The Provider of Perfect Daniel*, *The Thunder-Perfect Mind*, *Authentikos Legos*, *The Teachings of Silvanus*. The latter's intensive quotation of OT, NT and Homer's *Odyssey*, exemplifies a genuine Wisdom christology of Christian origin.
4. The appropriation of Pauline letters by Gnostic teachers is abundantly evidenced in the Nag Hammadi texts, *The Interpolation of Knowledge* offering "a high significant primary source for understanding now some Gnostic Christians—and specifically certain Valentinian Christians—understand the church in the light of Jesus' teaching and of Paul's letters" (E. H. Pagels, in J. M. Robinson *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 473). The "Valentinian" provenance of the homily being a matter of debate, as is the case for *The Gospel of Truth*, and *The Treatise of the Resurrection (Letter to Rheginos)*, more recently attributed to a "Sethian" school of Gnosticism.

II. MARCION OF SINOPE (CA. 85–160)

A wealthy ship-owner from Pontus, Marcion joined the disciples of the Gnostic teacher, Cerdon, and between 140 and 150, donated 200,000 sesterces (approximately \$10,000) to the Roman church community in applying for his membership; but after a short time he was expelled from the church and the money given back to him. According to Marcionite dating, exactly 115 years and six and a half months after Jesus had inaugurated his public appearance (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 1, 19, 2), Marcion proclaimed himself the true “Apostle of Jesus Christ” and founded his own church, firmly organized and entirely based on his own scriptural canon, his *Apostolikon* or revised collection of Pauline Letters, and his *Gospel* of Luke, also expurgated. His teaching was contemporary with Justin Martyr (1 *Apology* 26, 5; 58, 1). It reached a climax under the Roman bishop Anicetus (154–165), and spread over many provinces of the Empire as a real threat for the apostolic traditions of the church, a danger highlighted by an abundant anti-Marcionite literature. Through Syria and Armenia, Marcionite communities still flourished during the first decades of the fifth century.

Marcion’s most influential and independent disciple was Apelles, the author of thirty-eight books of *Syllogisms* demonstrating the inconsistency of OT prophecies, who combined Marcionism with Alexandrian Gnosticism. “A comprehensive reconstruction of the Marcionite bible is an important requirement for scholarly research” (B. Alland, 90). Marcion initiated the tradition of a fixed canon, namely one Gospel (Luke) and ten Letters of Paul (excluding 1–2 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews). His canon claimed to be free of the Jewish influences denounced in the dispute between Paul and Peter at Antioch (Gal 1–2); it intended to restore the “pure” gospel of Paul whose text had been corrupted by (Jewish-Christian) pseudo-apostles (Gal 1:16–17). Marcion proceeded exclusively by eliminating dubious elements in Luke’s Gospel or by introducing small variants (Lk 11:3 “*your* bread,” instead of “*our*” bread). He conceived of no pseudepigraphy of his own. His revision of the Gospel was of a theological nature: the God of the OT (taken completely out of context: “It is me who creates evil,” Is 45:7; cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 1, 2, 2), was rejected; the “unknown,” good Redeemer was Jesus. As a commentary added to his Gospel, Marcion composed a set of Antitheses by which he stressed the alleged opposition between OT and NT, and he must have added some exegetical comments to the Gospel text comparable with the systematic exegesis of Basilides, Tatian or Clement of Alexandria.

Like Hermas, Marcion was concerned by the presence of sinners in the church. He stated that according to Rom 7:11 the “commandment” of the

Law, not sin itself caused evil; the sinner was victimized by the Creator-Demiurge of OT, enslaved by him until freed by the “good God” Jesus, the *destructor legis* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 4, 9, 5); henceforth love of this “good God” prevented from sinning. The Gospel means liberation from sin (*homo liberatus in fidem optimi dei. Adv. Marc.* 1, 24, 6) and salvation. It dispenses from any legal constraints, the “Beatitudes” calling for nothing but trust and love. The manifestaion of the “good God” in Jesus was totally unpredictable and sudden (*subito filius et subito missus et subito Christus*) *Adv. Marc.* 3, 2, 2f.), with no connection with the OT, and no biological father or mother (The “Christ” of OT was another Christ, still to come). The final judgement, though destroying by fire all the just, together with the bad “Creator-Demiurge” himself, allows true believers to be saved beyond death in the heavenly kindom of the “good God” (B. Aland: *TRE* 22 (1992): 89–101, bibliog.).

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III. THE VALENTINIAN EXEGESIS

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Anne Pasquier

The notion of "Valentinianism" has been inherited from heresiology,¹ which means that we know a specific group inside Christianity built up by disciples and successors of Valentinus² only through the indirect sources of the testimonies of church fathers who opposed Gnostics. These indirect sources enable us to identify a Valentinian text because the direct sources tell us nothing about their origin or their author. Even if the Valentinians aimed at reaching a comprehension of Christianity deeper than the one taught officially in the church, at the same time they claimed to belong to that same church and did not see themselves other than as Christian.³

According to the indirect sources Valentinus was born in Egypt near the end of the first century C.E. in a town of the Nile delta. He later came to Alexandria for his scholarly training and as a teacher invested with the secret wisdom of Christ transmitted by Paul and his disciple Theonas. Around 140, Valentinus left Egypt and settled on Rome where he took on some ecclesiastical responsibilities. In ca. 160 he must have separated from the church in Rome, probably because of his theoretical teaching. The rest of his life is unknown. Possibly he travelled to Cyprus where he might have opened a school. Short quotations of his work are preserved by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.*, II, 36, 2-4; II, 114, 3-6; III, 59, 3; IV, 89, 1-3; IV, 89, 6-10; VI, 52, 3-4), Hyppolitus of Rome (*Ref.*, VI, 42,2; VI, 37, 6-8), and Marcellus of Ancyra (*De sancta ecclesia*, 9).

The best known disciples of Valentinus are Ptolemaeus and Heracleon. Born in Alexandria, both were probably teaching in Rome. Ptolemaeus's doc-

1. The purpose of heresiologists was to exclude Gnostics from the church. One of their polemical procedures was to deprive Gnostics of the title of Christian, and to call them by the name of one of their teachers, in this case Valentinus.

2. On Valentinianism in general on the basis of patristic testimonies, the most elaborate studies are still those by F.-M.-M. Sagnard, *La gnose valentinienne et le témoignage de saint Irénée*. Paris 1947 and A. Orbe, *Estudios valentinianos*, 1955, 56, 58, 61, 66.

3. cf. Irenaeus (*AH* III 15, 2) a text brought to light and well explained by K. Koschorke, *Die Polemik der Gnostiker gegen das kirchliche Christentum*, NHS XII. Leiden 1978, 3; 10; 175-85; 242-55.

trine served as a basis for the polemical critique of Gnosticism of Irenaeus of Lyon, while Epiphanius transmitted the complete text of one of Ptolemaeus's writings, the *Letter to Flora*. Heracleon is known for his commentary on the Gospel of John, of which several extracts are preserved by Origen. Two other Valentinian teachers, Theodotus and Mark, gained disciples in Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor before their doctrines spread all around the Mediterranean. Theodotus is known through Clement of Alexandria, and Mark through Irenaeus when Mark's doctrines had reached Gaul near the end of the second century. To these Valentinian writings, identified as such by church fathers, one must add a vast literature which remained anonymous.

The main authors who wrote against Valentinianism, or quoted Valentinian fragments, if not complete works,⁴ are Irenaeus of Lyon (*Treatise Against the Heresies*), Clement of Alexandria (*Stromateis* and *Extracts from Theodotus*), Hippolytus of Rome (*Refutatio*), Tertullian (*Against the Valentinians* and *The Flesh of Christ*), Origen (his *Commentary on John* includes the fragments of Heracleon), Epiphanius (*Panarion*, in particular section 33, 3, 1–33, 7, 10, quoting *in extenso* the *Letter to Flora* by Ptolemaeus). One could also add the Pseudo-Tertullian, Philastrius, Theodoret of Cyrus, and a few others.⁵

Among the sources handed down through direct tradition the Coptic library of Nag Hammadi includes several tratises identified as Valentinian by the specialists, though many divergencies of opinion among them persist.⁶ It is obvious that such a classification remains problematic. As no writing introduced itself as Valentinian, it is not easy to decide which writings should be considered under that rubric, as the decision rests exclusively on the

4. See the list given by Sagnard, *La gnose*, 119–20.

5. For the list of later patristic works, see K. Koschorke, "Patristische Materialien sur Spätgeschichte der valentinianischen Gnosis": M. Krause, ed., *Gnosis and Gnosticism: Papers Read at the Eighth Annual International Conference on Patristic Studies (Oxford Sept. 3rd–8th, 1979)*. Leiden 1981. The non-Christian testimonies of Plotinus (Second *Ennead*) and Prophyry (*Life of Plotinus*) did not concern the Valentinians in the view of some specialists. But again one must admit that there is no general agreement on this issue.

6. For a general survey of that library, and the adequate tools of research: editions, translations, indices, dictionaries, concordances and bibliographical repertories, see L. Painchaud, "Le défi documentaire dans les études sur le gnosticisme": J.-Cl. Fredouille and R.-M. Roberge, eds., *La documentation patristique. Bilan et prospective*. Québec – Paris 1995, 225–32. On the other collections of Gnostic texts, M. Tardieu and J.-D. Dubois, *Introduction à la littérature gnostique I. Collections trouvées avant 1945*. Paris 1986.

finding in those writings of affinities with patristic descriptions.⁷ It is true that Irenaeus insists on the diversity of Valentinianism (*AH* I 11, 2). One must also take into account the process by which a great number, if not the majority of treatises in the Coptic library, show traces of rewriting due to their passage through different doctrinal circles. Hence it is risky to classify them on the sole basis of their doctrinal orientation.⁸ Despite these difficulties which prevent us from establishing a corpus of Valentinian texts, one may note a certain consensus about Nag Hammadi texts whose terminology and doctrine signal Valentinianism: they could be of Valentinian origin, or non-Valentinian works rewritten by Valentinians, or again of Valentinian origin but rewritten by non-Valentinians, such as the *Prayer of the Apostle Paul* (I, 1); the *Gospel of Truth* (I, 3/XII, 2); the *Treatise on the Resurrection* (I, 4); the *Tripartite Treatise* (I, 5); the *Gospel of Philip* (II, 3); the first *Apocalypse of James* (V, 3); the *Interpretation of Gnosis* (XI, 1); the “Valentinian” *Exposition* and the fragments on baptism and the eucharist which follow (XI, 2). Some experts add the *Exegesis of the Soul* (II, 6), the *Authentikos Logos* (VI, 3), the *True Testimony* (IX, 3), and the *Apocryphal Letter of James* (I, 2). Still other writings seem to show marks of Valentinian influence.⁹

7. On Valentinianism in general after the discovery of the Nag Hammadi Library, see B. Layton, ed., *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism: Proceedings of the International Conference on Gnosticism at Yale, March 28–31, 1978. I The School of Valentinus*. Leiden 1980.

8. See L. Painchaud, “Le phénomène des réécritures,” in *Les textes de Nag Hammadi et les problèmes de leur classification*, 51–85. To be noted is also the position of F. Wisse who goes as far as wondering if one should distinguish or isolate any Valentinian text in the Nag Hammadi collection: “Prolegomena to the Study of the New Testament and Gnosis”: A. H. B. Logan and A. J. M. Webberburn, ed., *The New Testament and Gnosis*. Fs. R. McL. Wilson. Edinburgh 1983, 138–45. In addition, one must observe that the direct sources are not original documents but versions which were often reshaped by non-Valentinians, and for which a precise dating is impossible: Their usual dates are located between the late second century and the first half of the fourth century. It is not excluded that the *codices* were used—selected and transformed?—by monks during the fourth century.

9. Some include also in the Valentinian group the *Letter of Peter to Philip* (VIII, 2). Another addition: According to E. Junod and J.-D. Kaestli, in their edition of the *Acts of John (Acta Iohannis)*, CCSA 1–2. Turhoo 1983. The chapters 94–102 and 109 are of an independent origin, and derive from Valentinian circles (possibly second century, Syria. See also J. Frickel (*Hellenistische Erlösung in christlicher Deutung: Die gnostische Naassenerschrift*, NHS 19. Leiden 1984), for whom the fragment quoted by Hippolytus (*Refutatio* V 6, 4–10, 2) is Valentinian in its final redaction

Comparing direct and indirect sources is important for our understanding of gnostic exegesis. As orthodoxy slowly established itself in reacting against them, it is possible to reassess the issues at stake in heresiological treatises. For the course of polemics witnesses that the interpretation of scripture was central to the debate.¹⁰ One obviously meets traditions and theological visions leading to divergent conclusions. Hence, before examining the exegetical method of the Valentinians, one must summarize the theology on which it rests: it is that theological frame about the significance of scripture which justifies their exegetical method and hermeneutical presuppositions.

(quoted by M. R. Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, SBL Dissertation Series 108. Atlanta 1990, 7). For the bibliography on the problem of classifying the texts see L. Painchaud, *Le défi documentaire*, 215–16, note 16. Also the introduction by M. R. Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, 1–17 and L. Painchaud and A. Pasquier, eds., *Les textes de Nag Hammadi et le problème de leur classification. Actes du Colloque tenu à Québec du 15 au 19 septembre 1993*. Leuven and Paris 1995.

10. Though the discovery of direct sources should not lead to underestimate contributions of indirect sources for a better knowledge of Valentinian exegesis, one has to take into account the polemic representation given by the latter of heretical exegesis. As A. Le Boulluec has well shown (*La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque, II^e–III^e siècles*, I: De Justin à Irénée. Paris 1985, 218–53; see also vol. II: “Clément d’Alexandrie et Origène”) the heresiological representation intends foremost to demonstrate the non-Christian nature Valentinian exegesis. In particular, for Irenaeus, Christian language is used abusively in it as a mask, with the intention to seduce the simple believers; Gnostics adapt scripture to an alien system. The strategy of their refutation consists therefore in separating their interpretation of scripture from the Gnostic “system” conceived as a mixture of elements borrowed from paganism or from an alien doctrine. Its purpose: to make it impossible for Gnostic exegesis to subsist. But the tenor of the polemics emphasizes the fact that the discussion develops on the level of the hermetical method used by the Gnostics. Even in Irenaeus’s developments dealing with their forced adaptations, it is clear that the conflict of interpretations becomes inevitable due to obscurities and ambiguities in the Bible. Also G. Vallée, *A Study in Anti-Gnostic Polemics. Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Epiphanius*. Studies in Christianity and Judaism, 1. Waterloo 1981; N. Brox, *Offenbarung, Gnosis und gnostischer Mythos bei Irenäus von Lyon. Zur Charakteristik des Systems* (Salzburger patristische Studien, 1). Salzburg and Munich 1966.

1. *The Valentinian Theological Conception of the Links Between Jewish Scriptures and the Christian Message*

At the beginning of the Christian movement no New Testament yet existed as an authoritative collection corresponding to the Jewish Bible.¹¹ The latter remained for the church the unique scriptural norm, even if submitted at a very early stage to the authority of Christ. The articulation between that Bible and the new Christian message was not initially a matter of deep concern. In the long run, it became impossible to consider the Jewish Bible as the unique authoritative document revealing God. Criticism developed from inside the church, and it crystallized in the question: how is Jewish scripture legitimized by Christ? why such a legitimacy? As we shall see, for different reasons, for example the contradictions perceivable in it, or its diversity and its ambiguities; but mainly because some of its doctrines diverged from the Christian message. The *Epistle of Barnabas* (IV. 6–7), for instance, refuses any literal interpretation of that scripture (all of it needs a spiritual interpretation, the Christian one). Thus the Bible is somehow taken away from the Jews, and Jewish history negated. Essentially, any opposition or difference between the Jewish text and the Christian message is thus ignored. In a direction contrary to such a radical Christianizing of what would become the First Testament, others base their reflection precisely on the distance between the Law and the Gospels: Marcion and the Gnostics, though in different ways. As H. von Campenhausen stated, the Gnostics did not create the problem, but their vision of reality, their culture and what it presupposed, enabled them to discover it before any one else, and to look for an adequate solution.¹²

Even a cursory reading of the Nag Hammadi treatises and of the patristic literature dealing with Gnosticism, reveals the unmistakable importance of First Testament exegesis for the Gnostics. Whole treatises are dedicated to it.¹³ It is for them an inspired book. However, like Marcion, they did not see how they could ignore the distance existing between the Law and the

11. See H. von Campenhausen, *La formation de la Bible chrétienne*. Paris 1971, chapt. III La crise du canon de l'Ancien Testament au deuxième siècle, 65–101.

12. *La formation*, 72–73.

13. On the relation with the OT, see B. A. Pearson, "Use, Authority and Exegesis of Mikra in Gnostic Literature": M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling, eds., *Mikra. Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. Assen/Maastricht – Philadelphia 1988, 635–52. Also, quoted by Pearson n. 5 a series of articles on the matter in K.-W. Tröger, ed., *Altes Testament—Frühjudentum—Gnosis. Neue Studien zu "Gnosis und Bibel."* Berlin 1980; R. McL. Wilson "The Gnostics and the Old Testament": G. Widengren, ed., *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Gnosticism: Stockholm, August 20–25, 1973*. Stockholm 1977,

Gospel (as was the case for Barnabas). Paul's Letters, especially Galatians and Romans, had an important influence on them. The history of the interpretation of Paul's Letters during the second century, it has been said, is essentially the history of Gnostic exegesis.¹⁴ However that distance did not mean for them in any way an insurmountable opposition, The Law is not an antithesis of the Gospel as it was for Marcion. In fact, in his *Letter to Flora*, Ptolemaeus considers the complete rejection of the Jewish corpus as more dangerous than its uncritical acceptance. Under the influence of Platonism, the Valentinians integrate the Jewish Bible and the Christian message with a relatively harmonious coherency in a monistic system which warrants salvation from the very beginning. Let us see how.

In the Valentinians' view, the questions to be faced were the following: is the First Testament the ideal representation of God, acceptable for a Christian? can divine thought ever be absurd or contradictory? For in the Jewish Bible the Valentinians found many contradictions as well as unworthy behavior attributed to God. For readers in Antiquity, many influenced by Greek philosophy, the deep structure of written statements represented the deep structure of reality itself; words reflect thought, which in its turn reflects reality. Whereas for other Christians such impossibilities and imperfections call for allegories, for the Valentinians they are incompatible with the ultimate Christian revelation. The Jewish Bible is seen as a provisional revelation, in need of being relativized, and imperfect in some of its parts (be it in its spirit or its interpretation).

The distance between Law and Gospel as it structured their vision of the world is noticeable in the complex cosmological systems which they elaborated. For they also asked: how could an imperfect Law which needed to be completed by the Savior come from a perfect God (*Letter to Flora* 3, 4)? Their answer then would be: the God who promulgated it, with his angels, cannot be the supreme God. It must be an intermediary being, itself a power or angel, an answer which saved monotheistic faith, and they interpreted the Pauline statement of Gal 3:19 accordingly, that the Law was promulgated by the intermediary of angels. For the God of the Law is as well the demiurge of the world. The Law and its God represent the spirit of this world, and

164–68. For a systematic presentation of the use of the Jewish Bible and of Christian writings by Gnostics, see: C. A. Evans, R. L. Webb, R. A. Weibe. Leiden – New York – Cologne 1993 (where one finds a complete bibliography on the issue).

14. See H. Langerbeck, *Aufsätze zur Gnosis*. Göttingen 1967, 38–82 and 167ff.; E. H. Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul. Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters*. Philadelphia 1975; W. Schmithals, *Paul and the Gnostics*. Nashville and New York 1972.

this world itself is an image of a superior world. This Gnostic conception of one or several inferior powers possibly indicates an interpretation of Philo's notion of God's creative and law-giving powers. Grounded on what they understood in the First Testament, the Valentinians elaborated, with the help of a mythical language, a picture of what was supposed to be the God of the Law and the world, either as imagined by people or as he really existed. Such is the main purpose of the myth of Wisdom, whose elements were collected by Irenaeus, or of Logos in the *Tripartite Treatise* of Nag Hammadi, and in the *Gospel of Truth* (17, 4–27).

According to the myth described by Irenaeus (*AH I* 2, 1–4), Wisdom signifies the last hypostasis or attribute of the Man of the Church, in other words, the pre-existent Church inside which the Fall happens. Wisdom tries to reach, or comprehend the greatness of the Father by herself alone, a vain attempt as the Father is incomprehensible and inaccessible, a quest making sense only in agreement with the Savior and through him, as he alone reveals the Father (*Extract from Theodotus* 7, 1). By that original wrong-doing anything produced by divine Wisdom would be an image or a shadow of celestial similitudes: the God of the Law, to whom is nevertheless given a part of the Spirit. The Law is a mixture of Spirit and shadow. The agreement of Wisdom with the Savior allows to complete the Law, in order to arouse and actualize in it the hidden Spirit. Thus, partly through mythical reports, the Valentinians formulated the kind of link which allegedly existed between the Jewish Bible and the Gospel, the ancient and the new religion, for any myth intends to narrate how the origin is directly relevant for people's actual situation in the world.

The Law has a divine origin. Nevertheless, it is a shadow or a degraded image of a perfect model. It shows a resemblance to the divine model, which means that it can lead to it, and that it contains positive elements, otherwise it would only be a pure antithesis; but, being image, it is a sign of Truth as much as it marks its loss. There is then a difference of spiritual levels: the First Testament is inspired, but by a spiritual principle which is still imperfect. The highest knowledge of God is only expressed in Christ's words. According to Ptolemaeus, *Letter to Flora* 4, 3ff., the Savior's words enable us to determine what is valuable in the Law and what is not. The separation of model and degraded image eliminated in the Valentinian's mind the contradiction between the Jewish religion and the new Christian religion as dispensing from ancient, literal precepts being required for salvation. The Platonic representation of a universe where each level of reality is an image of the preceding one, and a model for the following level, enabled the Valentinians to give an account of the different degrees of inspiration in scripture.

2. *Valentinian Exegesis*

i. *The Valentinian Theory of the Scriptural Interpretation: The Hermeneutical Principle of Graduated Inspiration.*

The Valentinian views about the origin and nature of prophecies seemed to change from one source to another. Hippolytus (*Refutatio* VI, 35, 1–2) offers at first sight a completely negative view: according to Valentinus, all prophets like the author of the Law himself spoke under the inspiration of the demiurge. Given the latter's ignorance, not one of them proclaimed the high mysteries revealed through the advent of the Savior. Even if some discordance probably existed among the Valentinians on that issue, the position described by Hippolytus diverges from most Patristic testimonies and also from the Nag Hammadi documents. In the *Tripartite Treatise*, prophecies originate from the spiritual sphere superior to that of the demiurge, from the sphere of the Logos which in other words corresponds to that of Wisdom: "For the Logos used him (the demiurge) like a hand, in view of forming and fabricating inferior realities and he used him like a mouth in saying things which had to be prophesied" (100, 30–35). The demiurge is an intermediary, and therefore he generates and proclaims realities greater than his own nature, without knowing initially where they came from. One must also point out the positive attitude of the *Tripartite Treatise* in regard to Jewish prophets, a logical attitude in so far as their prophecies are also inspired by higher spiritual powers. The Hebrew prophets belonged to those who pay attention to the spiritual seed in themselves. They attest to what is superior to them and wait for it in hope: "Prophets said nothing by themselves, but each spoke according to what he had seen or heard about the proclamation concerning the Savior...but sometimes prophets speak about him as still to come, in other occurrences as if the Savior spoke through their mouth, and that the Savior will come and will be benevolent for those who did not know him." But if the author of the *Treatise* stresses the harmony of prophecies, that harmony itself is an image of a superior harmony, and his purpose is to underline the diversity and ambiguity of prophecies and the various degrees noticeable among them. Each prophet has a partial and a particular vision. In addition, the author distinguishes between prophecies as such and their interpretation by prophets and Jews who disagreed from each other. For instance, the Savior announced by them was only an aspect, or an inferior part of the true Savior, the one exposed to birth and suffering, that is to say, his pneumatic body, the Church. But the "law of judgement which means condemnation and wrath" (97, 33–35) comes from inferior powers below the

demiurge. The *Treatise* admits thereby the composite nature of the Jewish Bible. Some prophecies are uttered by the Logos, speaking through the demiurge; others by men who possessed the spiritual seed, though only partially developed. Finally the Law includes inferior elements to be rejected.

Another example is the *Letter to Flora*. It is a short essay explaining how a Christian must judge to Law in order to properly understand it. Ptolemaeus's theory of the scriptures may be summarized as follows: the revealed Law contains human interpolations, words of elders and additions by Moses, when not speaking under divine inspiration (4, 1–2). Even purified from human comments, the revealed Law is uneven. It counts three parts. “Of these three parts, says Ptolemaeus, Jesus’ disciples spoke, as well as Paul: of the symbolic part, already mentioned, when speaking about the Easter lamb immolated for us, and about the bread without yeast; of the part bound to injustice, when stating that the Law of the commandments has become irrelevant, due to a new teaching; of the part free from all injustice, in the words: ‘the Law is holy and the commandment is holy, just and good’” (6, 6; transl. G. Quispel, 69).

By comparing Ptolemaeus's position about the Law with the one described by Irenaeus, in *AH I* 7, 3–4, about the whole First Testament, and with the position of the *Tripartite Treatise*, the following summary of the Valentinian views on the matter may seem acceptable: in addition to human interpolations (coming from prophets when uninspired: Ptolemaeus and *AH I* 7, 4), that First Testament includes (a) parts of lower inspiration: a *hylic* component (*Tripartite Treatise*) to be overcome, but which Ptolemaeus specifically attributes to Yahweh alone, such as the law of “tooth and claw,” so decisively contradicting the Christian message, but whose transitory need can be admitted; for that reason Ptolemaeus opposes those who attribute such commandments to the Devil; (b) a *psychic* prophetic spirit, coming from Yahweh when speaking and acting under the inspiration of the Logos or Wisdom: probably the typical Law, in image and symbol, like the ceremonial prescriptions for Sabbath, circumcision or fasting which were relevant for a given time, but became obsolete in their letter. In the Valentinian myth, divine Wisdom has disposed that “all things from below (be) veiled figures of things above (Irenaeus, *AH I* 7, 2), as witnessed by the letter of scripture, its historical narrative; (c) *pneumatic* passages completed by the Savior's utterances giving them a full meaning; for instance, the Ten Commandments, as presented by the Savior in his discourse on the Mount, as well as monotheistic affirmations, and the notion of humans made in the image of God, etc.

If Valentinus and his disciples elaborated an exegesis of Jewish scripture on the basis of the Savior's statements (*Letter to Flora* 3, 8), and if they were the first to use systematically the Christian writings which became the NT, their relationship with those writings calls for some clarification. According to Irenaeus (*AH I* 7, 3), the very words of Jesus did not seem homogeneous to the Valentinians, but included elements coming from the Savior, from Wisdom, or again from Yahweh. In other words, it means that sometimes it is the soul of the Savior, or his psychic nature, which becomes vocal (in those cases, Jesus identifies with the messiah expected by the Jews), while at other times his spiritual body, the Church (identified with Wisdom) speaks out. Again at other times, in his most divine and deepest being, the Savior speaks as the head of the Church. Here again one meets the idea of a graduated comprehension. Thus, for a carnal or psychic contemplation, the Savior was submitted to suffering, but for a spiritual one, he is different: the vision has to reach beyond. The investigation of deeper senses is a way of access to the knowledge of spiritual realities in a sort of endless reading. In addition, the Valentinians considered the revelation as unfinished, and that other illuminations by the Spirit can continue to enrich and deepen the interpretation of scripture, as can be learned from Irenaeus's testimony, (*AH III* 2, 1) and from their exegetical method. In short, Irenaeus's notion of a Gospel, seen as a closed up corpus or a definitive revelation limited to a collection of writings, was foreign to the mind of the Gnostics, nor indeed to a great number of other Christians. One may notice here the promise of a theology of open revelation, not reducible to a specific writing. The Valentinians also insist on the many ambiguities of biblical language, which only a stable tradition may succeed in interpreting, and which can only be understood by the ones who possess the Spirit.

From that theory of scriptural inspiration, it is possible to infer most of the Valentinian exegetical method. Beforehand let us note that, like some other Christians, they admit the influence of Homer (the *Exegesis of the Soul* contains quotations from Homer called "the Poet" in 136, 27–28: *Odyssey* 1, 48–59 and 4), Hesiod, Plato and other Platonic sources. They also used Apocryphals, and they had links with Jewish apocalyptic literature, Jewish mysticism and magical texts. As well, they transmit haggadic traditions or *midrashim*, as can be seen for instance in *The True Testimony* (45, 30–46, 2 and 69, 32–70, 24).

ii. *The Exegetical Method*

(a) Typology and Allegory: The Different Degrees of Inspiration

Since they identify different degrees of inspiration in the First Testament, the Valentinians submit it to a *selective exegesis*. There is indeed the pure Law, for example, the Ten Commandments which must be followed literally, but understood spiritually. There is the symbolic part of the Law, “given as image of transcendent realities” (*Letter to Flora* 6, 4), which also calls to be applied in a spiritual sense. Like other Christians, the Valentinians practiced a typological reading of the Bible, as can be seen in the *Letter to Flora*, where carnal circumcision is the type of the circumcision of the heart, and the Easter lamb the type of the Savior’s passion (6, 6) etc. The same is true for the interpretation of the martyrdom of Isaiah in *The True Testimony*: “As Isaiah was sawn into two parts with a saw, so does the Son of Man partake with us through the Logos of the cross” (40, 21–25). A recurrent theme mentions the separation and union of Adam and Eve typologically applied to Christ and the Church, or to the spirituals and their angelic partners (*Gospel of Philip* 118, 9–119, 22). Again, always with Pauline overtones, it is applied to the theme of Adam as figure of Christ (*Gospel of Philip* 119, 16–21), or the theme of Israel representing the spiritual man (*Ext. Theod.* 56, 4).

However it is important to note that very often typology is combined with allegory, since there are not only links between the historical realities, but between historical realities and a non-temporal world. Like Philo, the Valentinians belong to Alexandria, namely to its Judeo-Christian tradition. Their main idea comes from Platonic exemplarism, according to which the visible world, or the historic level of reality, is of secondary value. The dualism noticeable in any allegory actually re-duplicates itself, when it serves a dualistic vision of the world. In this regard, Valentinian exegesis resembles that of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Law and its cult are an image and a shadow of transcendent realities (Heb 8:1–6). According to Irenaeus (*AH II* 24, 3) the Valentinians seize upon everything in the Law fitting with the numbers of their systems, and they try to build up proofs of the realities of the Plerôma. Their taste for the symbolic value of names and numbers is emphasized, as can be seen in the case of Mark; etymology plays an important role in their exegesis. Actually the major part of the Law is open to such a symbolism. For instance, Clement of Alexandria notes (*Ext. Th.* 21, 1), that the Valentinians see in the verse “In the image of God he created them, male and female he created them,” Gn 1:27) the signification of the *syzygies* in the Plerôma. The *Exegesis of the Soul* articulates texts of the Jewish Bible and their commentaries in an elaborate exegetical composition, sacred passages

leading to symbolize different moments in the doctrine of the soul, its exile and its return, hence some references to the *Odyssey*, which was read since Numenius as an odyssey of the soul. But for the Valentinians, as for the whole Christian tradition, things themselves, events and actors of Jewish history, signify other realities, and not only the letter of the text.

The Platonic postulate of a spiritual reading is also applied in their exegesis of Christian texts. As in the case of the First Testament, the leading notion is that of degrees of meaning, with deeper or higher levels where one goes from what is imperfect and incomplete to perfection and fullness; it is not the notion of truth opposed to error. The ability to distinguish is what characterizes the Gnostics. The literal sense gives a certain knowledge of our world, and for a same text one passes on to deeper meanings. In Heracleon's exegesis of Jn 4:22 (fr. 22), "salvation comes from the Jews," in the literal sense means that salvation was spread over the world from the Jewish people, as the Savior appeared in Judea; but in the spiritual sense, salvation comes from them because they are images of those who live in the Plerôma, in other words images of the Church when the Church is contemplated in the fullness of Christ's body. In a similar way, the terrestrial Jerusalem is the image of the celestial Jerusalem; the lash used against the merchants of the Temple, is the image of the power of the Spirit and a type of the cross, etc. Allegorism and precise observations are key marks of Heracleon's method noted by all the critics. In addition, one should note the play between letter and allegory, an allegory sometimes conceding space to the letter, sometime existing side by side with it, and at other times excluding it. Beside the Platonic background of that method the use of precise rules of grammatical analysis provided by the Stoics and the allegorical techniques of Philo has been noted. Like other Valentinians, Heracleon applies allegory to the speeches of Jesus as well as to the events of his life in explaining almost all the details of the narrative.

The terms used by him are: κατὰ τὸ ἀπλοῦν—κατὰ τὸ νοούμενον for the literal and the spiritual sense, the latter being also indicated by the verb διανοεῖσθαι. In Ptolemaeus, one finds the phrases: τὸ αἰθητόν and τὸ φαινόμενον opposed to τὸ ἀόρατον, or τὸ σωματικόν—τὸ πνευματικόν. For type and image, the words used are mainly: εἰκών, τύπος, σύμβολον. Another characteristic is the proliferation of multiple forms of allegorism: ethical, anthropological, cosmological and anagogical, with however a prevalence of soteriology. In fact, one and same biblical text occasions a variety of allegories.

The interpretations are often displayed in a hierarchical order. The levels of meaning can be linked with the three-fold anthropology of 1 Cor 2: 6–3:3 (body, psyche, intellect), paralleled with three levels of life, the hylic, the psychic and the pneumatic, and possibly beyond it in a process of endless

reading, according to Irenaeus of Lyon's report. Thus the senses of scripture are compared with the anthropological divisions (body, soul, spirit or intellect). Or, as shown by F. Sagnard, with the three divisions of the world as *plerôma* (fullness), *kenôma* (emptiness), and *cosmos*: in regard to this three-fold frame a same passage can be interpreted in reference to one or the other levels, like in Heracleon's exegesis of Jn 1:3–4. Another example of such a graduated exegesis, but of a different nature: in their interpretation of the prologue of John's Gospel, Ptolemaeus and Heracleon elaborated their christology on the basis of a Judeo-Platonic hierarchy of being. They distinguished between different *epinoiai*, or names of the Son with regard to the titles in the prologue, the Son revealing himself as Principle, Word, Life, and Light, becoming multiple in order to save (*Ext. Th.* 6:1–4 and *AH I* 8, 5).

Some additional remarks on Valentinian allegorism. First, some interpretive rules seem to be of a *rhetorical* nature. Combined with the hermeneutical principle of the degrees of inspiration, these rules apply metaphor, metonymy, or synecdoche. Thus the same verse may be read on two levels of interpretation. In the words "here is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29), according to Heracleon, the lamb signifies the body of Christ, whereas the following words refer to the divine nature: by metonymy the sacred text speaks of the Savior without distinguishing between his body and his divine nature, and he crosses from one to the other due to the fact that they are intimately linked, though they should be distinguished from one another. The *Gospel of Philip* (116, 26–28) attributes the question of Jesus in Mk 15:34 ("My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"), not to the whole Savior, but to the carnal Jesus after the departure of his divine part: the synecdoche consists here in considering the whole as a part. According to Irenaeus, the same phrase was interpreted by the Valentinians as speaking of divine Wisdom when separated from her spouse, the Savior (*AH I* 8, 2). A similar application of such rhetorical figures can be found in *Extracts of Theodotus* 61, 4–5.

The search for the deeper meaning of scripture, urged on by the need to answer existential questions like in the *Extracts of Theodotus* (78), is stimulated by the enigmatic aspects of scripture. The obscurity of the biblical text has a double significance in Gnostic understanding: it is a privation of light, but also a signal of the unreachable and unknown God. The obscure passages show that the Spirit or the highest Wisdom was hidden in the period preceding salvation. Irenaeus explains that the Valentinians discovered a Father different from the one usually proclaimed as God, who was indicated only in parables and enigma in scripture, when they attempted to explain ambiguous texts (*AH II* 10, 1ff.; *II* 27, 2–3). They interpreted in such a way

Is 1:3; Hos 4:1; Ex 33:20; Rom 3:11–12; etc. (AHI 20, 2). It is interesting noting the use of the technique of questions and answers for solving scriptural difficulties.

A last distinctive mark of their allegorical exegesis: it is very often targeted anthropologically, rather than being properly christological, given their notion of the Savior-saved: the Son, being unique in multiplicity, comes to collect the spirituals, his members.

(b) The Parts of the OT with Inferior Inspiration: an Allegorism of Rejection, or a Refusal to Allegorize

In addition to the pure Law and the symbolic part, the Jewish scripture contains parts with an inferior inspiration. In this case *only the literal sense is possible*, or otherwise allegorism becomes polemical, and one derives from the letter a meaning which actually contradicts it. In other words, the First Testament is true in so far as it delivers a true knowledge about the creation and the status of the world. If one reads some parts of it literally, they reveal the authentic conditions of the world's creation. For the world itself is born from a fall, and the Law reflects the spirit of this world. Anthropomorphisms, cruel acts of God, his wrath or jealousy, his repentance, show that this God is nothing but an image, that he is not God in truth. At the start of *On Principles*, Book IV, which deals with exegesis, Origen examines all the proponents of literalism in order to criticize them, among them the Gnostics (2, 1). The literal statements about God, he says, when taken without allegory, result in an undervalued image of God. With the Gnostics, Origen admits impossible meanings, deficiencies, contradictions. But he notes that this is necessary: divine Wisdom intended to place stumbling blocks and interruptions along the lines of the historical narratives (IV 2, 9). Thus she (Wisdom) signals that one should not content oneself with the apparent meaning, but continue the search for a deeper significance. It is the theory of absurdity as exponent of allegory. A Jewish exegete like Philo influenced by Platonism could consider certain statements about God as inconvenient. He needed but to allegorize them to overcome the difficulty.

For the Gnostics, it does not make sense to allegorize the whole of the First Testament. Thereby one would lose the difference between Jewish religion and Christian message. The literal sense can in no way be conceived *in its entirety* as the figure of a proper sense still to come or to be unveiled. The lack of meaning, or statements unworthy of God are not necessarily a sign that a spiritual reading is needed. Hence there is no global allegorization required which would eliminate the opposition between Law and Gospel. Even the myths in it, like those of Genesis, reflect the reality of the world,

as one sees in the Gnostic interpretation of the biblical story about Paradise and the transgression of humankind. That interpretation serves essentially to characterize the psychic nature of the God of the First Testament and of the Law in general. (*The True Testimony* 47, 14–48, 7; *Tripartite Treatise* 106, 25–107, 18; *Gospel of Philip* 73, 33–74, 12ff.).

In fact being literalistic, that exegesis frequently becomes subversive. Thus the serpent in the tree of Paradise is no longer identified as Satan, as in other Christian or Jewish interpretations, but as the serpent held up by Moses in the desert (Nm 21: 9): It symbolizes Christ on the cross who came to abolish part of the Law (*The True Testimony* 48, 15–49, 10). Some aspects of the Jewish Bible being perceived as an inversion of invisible realities in the sensible world, the Gnostics adopt at given times what could be called an inverted and polemical typology: By diverting its original meaning, Jewish scripture becomes reduced to a reference on the basis of which one builds up a new scriptural universe. In the *Gospel of Truth*, for instance, the tree of Paradise is the figure of the tree on which Jesus was nailed. Far from giving death as did the tree of Paradise, Jesus becomes the fruit of the knowledge of the Father for those eat from it (18, 21–31). Therefore, in addition to the form of a commentary or a homily, Gnostic exegesis may sometimes result in a rewriting of the sacred text. Such rewriting sometimes actualizes the text.

(c) Narrative Exegesis and Actualization

If one retrieves the idea of a historical revelation in Gnostic writings (Jewish prophets having benefitted from a partial revelation of truth), the important factor of this retrieval is the closeness it creates between the events narrated in the Bible with contemporary events. What is then produced is a sort of *actualizing of biblical writings* in regard to the present situation: one starts from the present in order to highlight the texts. Thus the story of Genesis on Cain, Abel and Seth would serve as a foundation for explaining how in the present one finds different levels of consciousness, which may be psychic or pneumatic (*Ext. Th.* 54, 1–57). In fact, it is an ascetical reading of Paul which founds the practical implications of the story. The focus is more anthropomorphic rather than historical or announcing future events, as in the typological exegesis of other Christians.

Such an exegesis is close to the one adopted in several intertestamental writings, apocryphal or pseudo-epigraphic; it is also close to Judeo-Hellenistic literature, in particular to Philo of Alexandria; in short, due to their paraphrases of biblical narratives, to a type of writings whose way of interpreting led after some time to the haggadic midrash. That exegesis aiming at a more explicit content of biblical narrations is creative and it often

bears a polemical or apologetical dimension. The Gnostics retell the stories of the Bible; they amplify them with Jewish, Greek, or Christian motifs; they insert into them religious, or philosophical and speculative considerations by supplying missing links and focusing on passages more difficult to explain; or again they supply data which remedy the silences of scripture: for example, in the wake of the Gospel narratives they stage dialogues with the Risen One. Thereby no quotation of the sacred text is necessarily required, but the text is “recaptured,” and biblical phrases are reworked like basic data in the narrative process. Such rewriting, influenced by Platonism finds its most elaborate expression in broad interpretations of the world, like the *Tripartite Treatise*, or in Ptolemaeus (*AH I 1–7, 5*). The latter combines as model and image, the Johannine Prologue for describing the spiritual world, and the story of Genesis for the material world, the couples of the Plerôma representing the spiritual generations of which the carnal ones are shadows and figures. Biblical titles and notions, like faith, wisdom, only-begotten, beginning, logos and life, engage them, in extremely different ways from one text to another, into a narrative and mythical process rather than into a discursive presentation.

Conclusion

The hermeneutical presuppositions and the exegetical method of the Valentinians derive from their theological understanding of scripture. The First Testament is needed for the history of salvation because it prepares for and explains the coming of the Savior. The resemblance between type and antitype is due to the fact that Law and Gospel are parts of the same divine projects, but the idea that the supreme God is not the direct origin of the Law explains the latter’s status as an imperfect image. That presupposes that there was a period of rupture and partial ignorance during which the Law was hiding the true God, in veiling the Spirit mixed with it, and somehow imprisoned in it. Christ comes to save the hidden Spirit in revealing the status of the First Testament as an image, in bringing to fullness what was incomplete, but also in rejecting what was contrary to the Christian message. Hence there are different degrees of inspiration in the Law, and exegesis becomes selective. Coherent doctrine results from selection. The First Testament is not a single piece, all parts of it do not have equal meaning for salvation and should not be understood as speaking about Christ and the Church. Hence on one side the refusal to allegorize certain parts, and on the other the use of an inverted and polemical typology. Under the influence of Platonic exemplarism, the OT or Christian writings are interpreted on graduated levels

of meaning where one shifts from shadow to reality, from the temporal to the eternal, from incomplete significance to its fullness. These semantic differences are sometimes linked with the three-fold anthropological divisions of 1 Cor 2:6–3:3. They may also be explained in the light of a Platonic world vision: material world—spiritual world, or *Plerôma*, *Kenôma*, *Cosmos*. Finally, in addition to the usual forms of exegesis common to other Christians, the Valentinians adopt a form of narrative exegesis close to *midrash*.

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IX
THE RESPONSE TO GNOSTICISM IN THE
GREEK-SPEAKING CHURCHES

I. INTRODUCTION

During the third century C.E. the response to Gnosticism will reach its climax with the two major contributions of Origen, *On First Principles*, and the *Commentary on John* examined in the next chapter. For now, the story of second century churches needs to be completed by noting the most important chapters of anti-Gnostic polemics.

Anti-Gnostic pamphlets, taking on the proportions of voluminous representations as in Tertullian's *Against Marcion*, or delivered in the poetic form of homilies sung from the pulpit as by Melito of Sardis, occupy the first work among the production of Christian authors during the second century of the church. The study of that profuse literature limits itself in the present work to a short mention of relevant exegetical aspects.

They are: Hegesippus (c. 170–180), Theophilus of Antioch (ca. 180), Melito of Sardis (ca. 180–190), the author of the *Letter to Diognetus* (c.194–200), and last but not least, Irenaeus of Lyon (c. 190–200).

II. HEGESIPPUS (CA. 170–180)

Hegesippus, a Hellenistic Jew, born in Syria, travelled to Rome where he lived from 155 to 180. His purpose was to check "in all places the continuity of early apostolic traditions." Five books of Memoirs (ὑπομνήματα), written in the Orient after his return, are lost. Against proliferating Gnostic traditions these books exposed "the flawless tradition of the apostolic kerygma" as Eusebius quotes in H.E. 4, 7, 15–8, 2. Thus the institutional frame for the formation of the canon and the patristic interpretation of canonical writings was secured, as needing to be "apostolic," an anti-Gnostic concept linked with the claim of a verifiable continuity in matters of faith.

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III. THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH (SECOND HALF OF 2ND C.)

Theophilus of Antioch, sixth bishop of Antioch in Syria, according to Eusebius (*HE* 4, 20), was born of pagan parents and received an excellent education. His conversion resulted from a personal study of “the sacred books of the holy prophets.” In *Ad Autolyicum* he offered the first theoretical statement in an anti-Gnostic context on the creation of the world “out of nothing,” *creatio ex nihilo* (G. May).

Theophilus wrote *Commentaries on the Gospels* and *On the Proverbs of Solomon* according to Jerome, *De vir. inl.* 25. In *On Histories*, composed before *Ad Autolyicum*, he had discussed biblical genealogies, showing thereby how the Gnostics engaged church leaders to study more carefully the $\sigma\tau$.

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IV. MELITO OF SARDIS (LATE 2ND C.)

Melito of Sardis, in a metrical sermon, *On the Passion* (εἰς τὸ πάθος) opposes Gnostic salvation theories by glorifying the salvific dimension of God's incarnation. In line with the *Letters* of Ignatius of Antioch, he stresses the experienced reality of God-made-man and the actualizing of that reality in the present faith experience of Christians.

On Melito's anti-Judaic stance, see chapter 5, XI, ii.

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V. LETTER TO DIOGNETUS (LATE 2ND C.)

An anonymous letter, dating from the end of the second century, presumably in Alexandria, and addressed to a high-ranking pagan in the imperial administration: "The writer is a master of rhetoric, his sentence structure is full of charm and subtly balanced, his style is limpid" (Quasten I, 251). The only surviving manuscript was destroyed in Strasbourg in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War. As can be expected, no citation from scripture occurs in an apology destined for a non-Christian readership, but its closeness to Pauline thought is striking (H. P. Roasenda, "Il pensiero paolino nell' Epistula a Diogneto." *Aevum* (1935): 468–473; H. I. Marrou, *A Diognète*, SC 33 bis (1950, 2nd ed., 1965), 127–128 (other parallels to Matthew, 146–148): K. Brändle (1975); A. L. Townsley, 1976. The final chapters offer an allegorical interpretation of Gn 2:9 in form of a remarkable doctrine on the divine Logos, source of all knowledge and life.

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VI. IRENAEUS OF LYON (FL. LATE 2ND C.)

In five books Against the Heresies and in a pamphlet entitled *Demonstration of the Apostolic Kerygma*, Irenaeus born in Smyrna (Turkey), bishop of Lyon from 178, presented the first complete and systematic exposition of an anti-Gnostic understanding of Christian faith. For him scripture is more than a proof text. It is the matrix of his whole theological discourse. Against Gnosticism Irenaeus applies principles of reason and a sound affirmation of classical *paideia* in his biblical hermeneutics. The salvation story of the

Bible demonstrates how the constant education secured by the Creator helps humankind to grow to the full maturity of Christian faith. *Contra Haereses* was soon translated into Latin. The Greek original being lost, one complete Latin text used for current editions, dates from the late fourth century. Also available is a literal translation into Armenian of Books IV and V. Many fragments in Greek or in Syriac continue to be identified.

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VII. IRENAEUS AND THE BIBLE

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Norbert Brox

Irenaeus has not left any handbook as a guide to biblical interpretation. His major work *adversus haereses* (*Against the Heretics*) is a polemical and apologetic treatise. In it he defends the fundamental doctrines and truths

of Christianity, since in his time, in the middle and towards the end of the second century C.E., this was a need of the greatest urgency for his church. Irenaeus battled against Gnosticism, a religion which arose at roughly the same time as the infant Christianity and confronted it sometimes with a degree of sympathy and sometimes in rivalry. Christian theologians defended themselves fiercely against the “strange doctrines.” Irenaeus wrote a comprehensive dogmatic book, in which he achieves the effect of developing and safeguarding the “whole” doctrine of faith. For this he uses the Bible as his authoritative standard, because in it all truth is to be found. His theme in any case compelled him to go back to the Bible. And since on the one hand the biblical texts, as is well known, could present difficulties for interpretation, and on the other hand many gnostics claimed this same Bible for their own, and in Irenaeus’s judgment distorted it, interpreted it falsely, and misused it, he had to explain what the gnostics did wrong. The battle for the truth led to a battle about the Bible. The battle about the Bible however became more and more a conflict about method: how is the Bible to be read to reveal the truth that is contained in it? Irenaeus states the methods of his church. With full conviction he sets forth the rules according to which one must proceed, and sternly demands of the gnostics that they abandon their methods because they lead to error. Again and again he writes—scattered over the book—very fundamental ideas about dealing with the Bible and its truth, so that one may find in him and collect a whole series of rules, principles and methods, as well as experiences and observations, to which the exegete must hold and which he has to bear in mind.

1. The Bible of Irenaeus: Content and Authority

Irenaeus knows the Bible in roughly the same dimensions as the later church from the fourth century on. The only books in its Canon which are missing in him are Ruth, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Obadiah, Nahum, Haggai and in the NT Philemon, 3 John, Jude, Hebrews.¹⁵ He read the OT in the LXX version which was current in the church, and marvelled at the circumstances of its origin (III 21.2). The description of the biblical books as a whole in Irenaeus takes various forms: he often uses the plural “Scriptures/γραφαί” for the OT (e.g. II 9.1; 28.7) or for

15. Irenaeus knew Hebrews, but apparently outside the church’s Canon (Euseb. *HE* V 26). On Irenaeus’ NT canon, cf. G. Nathanael Bonwetsch, *Die Theologie des Irenäus*, Gütersloh, C. Bertelsmann, 1925, 40; H. Reventlow, *Epochen der Bibelauslegung* t.I, München 1990, 154.

the two Testaments together (II 27.2: *universae scripturae*), and the singular for individual biblical books (e.g. III 12.9; V 30.2), for particular passages, and for the whole ot; he also chooses it for extra-biblical and even heretical books (I 20.1; III 3.3), frequently also for his own book “Against the Heretics” (III 6.4; 17.4; V *praef.*). The formula *scripturae dominicae* (II 30.6; 35.4; V 20.2) denotes the whole Bible.¹⁶ To authenticate biblical texts Irenaeus adduces the following authorities, with deep respect and in a variety of choice and sequence: it was the Lord, Moses, the remaining prophets, apostles, the Holy Spirit, the Gospel, Paul (I 8.1; II 2.6; 30.6; III 5.3; 6.1; 8.1; 9.1; IV 32.1; V 31.1) who in each case said what then follows. It is not possible to recognise any distinct theological evaluation (e.g. in a comparison of speeches of Paul and words of the Lord).

Irenaeus finds in the form of the biblical writings many advantages, which all contribute to the trustworthiness of their statements. He sees a happy fullness and completeness in the quaternion of the Gospels (III 11.8).¹⁷ The number four is no accident, and must be preserved without question, because of the guarantee of the truth which it signifies (III 11.9). Every biblical author attests with full power the whole truth of these writings, all have the entire Gospel, the unabridged truth, which is stored up in the church. To extract a portion is to abandon the whole. The Bible contains the complete stock and in addition the reliable standard of the truth. “One must eat of every tree in Paradise, that is, feed upon every scripture of the church” (V 20.2). Conversely one does not by any means have to study and fulfil the whole range of gnostic ideas in order to know their miserable quality. Irenaeus quotes the proverb: “One need not, as the saying goes, drink up the whole sea to know that its water is salt” (II 19.8). It is different with the Holy Scriptures. One must know them all in order to do justice to the claim of truth. In terms of content, the primary question is the demonstration, directed against the gnostics, of the unity and uniqueness of God and of the fact, with its attendant phenomena, of the redemption of humanity through God incarnate.

Since the whole truth is present in all biblical books, Irenaeus takes pains to present it in all its actual fullness and breadth. He does not proceed in a selective fashion, or give only examples, but “uses” for preference and consistently the “whole” Bible (e.g. IV 41.4). He reviews it in its full breadth,

16. Cf. Theodor Zahn, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* I/1, Erlangen 1988, 97.

17. The symbols or attributes of the four Evangelists—the man, bull, lion and eagle—appear for the first time in Christian tradition in Irenaeus (III 11.8).

lets his readers know and understand it from all sides, and claims every single line for the whole truth. Irenaeus seeks to bring the whole Bible, all its texts, individual writings and authors, into play for the proof of the Church's doctrine and truth. For this a passage from Book III is significant by way of example, for in it from 6.1 to 12.11 one and the same theme (the one God) is given expression through many biblical books. If one reads Irenaeus long enough, one can in fact be of the opinion that for his quotations he was not, like most early Christian theologians, dependent upon current lists of selected biblical passages, but that from an enormous knowledge and grasp of the Bible he had "evidently to a large extent mastered it by heart."¹⁸ Here one may already see a first hermeneutic rule: the Bible is always to be used as a whole. Selection means abridgement and loss of truth. When one isolates texts from their context, that leads to one-sidedness and error. According to Irenaeus, all parts of the Bible stand in complete harmony with one another.¹⁹ Individual contradictions or obscurities cancel out within the frame of the whole Bible, and present no problem. Irenaeus demonstrates from the gnostics what is the result when one neglects this basic principle. The Bible does not allow itself to be treated as the gnostics wish (II 24.3). For a moment Irenaeus deals cynically and experimentally with the texts, exactly as they do, to show himself a match for and superior to the gnostic methods, but then says that nothing but blasphemy and nonsense comes of it when one in this fashion neglects the order and context of the texts, entangles individual texts in gnostic speculations, and does not pay attention to what is actually spoken of in the Bible in each case (I 9.2; II 25.1)

2. The Perfection of Scripture

In Irenaeus this principle stands at the beginning: that the Bible is in every respect perfect and sufficient. It is "as a rule of conduct the truth itself and the testimony of God set forth in all clarity" (II 28.1). The Scriptures are "perfect, because they were spoken by the Word of God and by his Spirit" (II 28.2). There is "order (τάξις) and continuity (εἰρμός)" in the scriptures, which the interpreter must know and observe (I 8.1), and "nothing is unimportant of that which...stands in the scriptures" (IV 31.1). Since in contrast to the "untold multitude of apocryphal and falsified writings" they are the "scriptures of truth" (I 20.1), appeal to any other authority whatsoever

18. Reventlow 157. Irenaeus can put the Lucan Sondergut together from the Bible without any trouble (III 14.3–15.1).

19. See H. Reventlow, 150–70: "Harmonie der Testamente."

(the unwritten special and secret tradition of the gnostics) is inadmissible (I 8.1). The perfection of scripture has its consequences for interpretation. On the basis of this conception of the Bible Irenaeus sketches a radiant and inspired picture of the ideal biblical expositor: “A mind that is healthy and not imperilled, pious and loving the truth, which zealously investigates all that God has given into the hands of men and made accessible to our knowledge, will be successful therein, making learning easy for himself through daily practice. These are the things which lie before our eyes, and those which are set forth openly and unambiguously word for word in the scriptures” (II 27.1). That is how biblical interpretation appears according to Irenaeus. The basic attitude of the exegete is of the utmost importance for right exegesis, that is, his discretion (see below) as a respect for the truth in the text and as a realistic self-assessment of humanity in general, in which he does not seek to know everything that he might ask of the Bible.

It is part of the perfection of scripture that it has been handed down through time unadulterated since the Apostles. The Apostles gave it into good hands. The church is the place where it is, so to speak, “at home.” There it was and is expounded in its full compass. “Nothing was added to it, nothing removed from it. It is read without falsification, and in conformity with the scriptures it is expounded correctly and carefully, without danger and without blasphemy” (IV 33.8). With the origin of the Bible and its place in the church we have named the central orientation, according to Irenaeus, of all scriptural interpretation and all theology, the basic hermeneutical motive of his understanding of exegesis: “The whole doctrine will stand firm” for the exegete “if he carefully reads the scriptures with the presbyters of the church, with whom the apostolic teaching rests” (IV 32.1). “Let one therefore read the scriptures, how the Lord after his resurrection from the dead discoursed with his disciples and showed them from the Scriptures that it was necessary for Christ to suffer...thus will one become a consummate pupil” (IV 26.2). Only to this extent does Irenaeus restrict the sufficiency of the Bible, according to which one needs nothing but the Bible itself and the Bible is to be interpreted from itself alone.²⁰ Without a bond to the church scriptural interpretation must suffer shipwreck. “In view of such weighty proofs, one ought not to seek the truth from others when it may easily be obtained from the church” (III 4.1)—that is the homely biblical hermeneutic of the church at the end of the second century. With this and nothing else one unlocks the

20. IV 26.2: “If I trouble myself with the scriptural proofs...you can understand that the proofs which are contained in the scriptures can only be exhibited from the scriptures themselves.”

Bible, which Irenaeus calls the rule (or canon) of truth (IV 35.5: *nos regulam veritatis habentes eius sermones*; cf. II 28.1). There is no more eminent symbol of its reliability and freedom from ambiguity in his terminology.

3. Allegory, Parables, and Comprehension

Anyone who reads the Bible comes across problems which lie in the text, not in the reader. Irenaeus too knows difficulties, which according to his theory strictly should not have existed, but they are incontestable. The exegete must find and show the ways by which they are overcome. There are kinds of text which do not at all fit the thesis of the clarity, freedom from ambiguity and uniformity of the Bible, but lead to obscurities which are extremely dangerous. These are the parables²¹ and allegories, “which can be pulled in many directions” (I 3.6) and “in which the question always arises as to what is meant in them” (II 10.1). Irenaeus does not make any decided distinction between the two (I 3.6; II 21.1). According to his hermeneutical principles he must reject allegory as a method, because it departs from the true sense of the text and leads into the realm of speculation, beyond the possibility of proof, and to presumption and error: “One may not interpret anything allegorically, but all is certain, true and real” (V 35.5). Irenaeus can adduce speeches of the Lord, in which he speaks not in parables but clearly and plainly (*simpliciter ipsis dictionibus*; IV 41.4, see below). Allegory however interprets the text in every possible way at the whim of the reader. It is the opposite of everything that is “certain, true and real.” The texts of the Bible are unambiguous. Hence anyone is suspect who shows a special partiality for parable texts and allegories. Scriptural interpretation must start from “what lies before our eyes and what is set forth openly and unambiguously word for word in the scriptures. Hence the parables ought to be adapted to what is not ambiguous” (II 27.1). Irenaeus reacts strongly to the contrary procedure, that for the interpretation or explanation of the parables something should be brought in “which is not openly spoken,” and therefore for its part is not clear. He seeks to prevent any ambiguity being explained in biblical interpretation by another ambiguity (I 10.1). For example, the descriptions of the future new world in the prophets may not in any circumstances be interpreted allegorically (V 35.1), because that would undermine the realism

21. “Parable” here does not mean the biblical parable in the narrower sense of a literary Gattung, but biblical texts of a figurative and symbolic character with several conceivable meanings (e.g. II 10.1). Parables are texts “in which the question always arises, as to what is meant in them” (II 10.1).

of ideas about the blessings of salvation, which is important for Irenaeus. Beyond doubt, Irenaeus can show a considerable antipathy against parables and allegories when he reflects on the misuse which the gnostics practised with them (cf. II 10.2; 20.1–24.3). He does indeed give appropriate and well-aimed basic principles for the interpretation of parables, but one senses the abiding mistrust that something other may result, like the monstrosity of a false conception of God (II 10.1): “Hence one must explain the parables according to what is not ambiguous. For then the interpreter explains them without risk, and the parables are explained by all in the same sense, and the body of the truth remains unharmed” (II 27.1). The rule of truth and the criterion of parable interpretation is therefore scripture itself in its clear and unambiguous parts. For in truth “the parables agree with what is expressly said, and what is clearly said explains the parables” (II 28.3). But he who begins with the parables “will therefore ever seek, but never find, because he has rejected the method (*disciplina*) which makes it possible for him to find anything” (II 27.2).

Further, the danger of error adheres to the parables, and Irenaeus can only warn against their use. “If anyone thinks that what was said by the apostles about God must be understood allegorically” he is “suffering from morbid broodings,” of which 1 Tim 6.4 speaks (III 12.11). It is all the more astonishing and significant, in view of the basic hermeneutical principles which he formulates and after he has repeatedly disqualified and exposed allegory, that Irenaeus himself to a large extent and in the most varied ways makes use of allegory. The texts themselves are the cause of this, for “the prophets spoke for the most part in parables and allegories and not according to plain speech” (II 22.1). Thus there is a whole swarm of allegories from the pen of Irenaeus himself, e.g. that of the Treasure in the Field (IV 26.1), the allegorizing of Lot (IV 31.1–3; 21.7–9), and many others. Both Testaments are allegorized.²² In the process, fidelity to the text is very varied.

Allegory is in many cases an instrument for typology. A significant example of this, and for Irenaeus’s readiness for extreme allegorizing, occurs at V 8.3: the OT comparisons of godless men with irrational and bestial animals (V 8.2) provoke Irenaeus into drawing out still more in meaning and interpretation from the relations between text and reality which according to his conviction are concealed therein. In the text men are represented by beasts. Now in the laws of purity (Lev 11.1–8) all those animals are declared clean and allowed for eating “which have divided hoofs and are cleft-footed and

22. See the examples: III 21.4,5,7,8; V 17.4; *Epid.* 44–46; 53–62; 94; IV 36.2,7; V 10; 13.1; 17.4.

chew the cud” (11.3). An animal which lacks one of these characteristics is unclean (11.4-8). Irenaeus knows and explains the meaning: “Who then are the pure? Those who make their way steadfastly to the Father and the Son by faith—that is the meaning of the divided hoof—and meditate on the utterances of the Lord day and night (Ps 1.2), that they may adorn themselves with good works—that is the meaning of chewing the cud. But unclean are those who neither have the divided hoof nor chew the cud, that is, those who neither have faith in God nor meditate on his utterances; this is the abomination of the heathen. But those that do chew the cud but have no divided hoof are likewise unclean—that is the figurative description of the Jews, who do indeed have the utterances of God in their mouth but do not take firm root in the Father and in the Son, and therefore their race falters. For those animals with a single hoof slip easily and do not go so surely as those with double hoof, because the divided hoofs follow one another on the way, each hoof supporting the other. Unclean likewise are those which have a double hoof, but do not chew the cud. By this are evidently meant all heretics, and those who do not meditate on the utterances of God, nor adorn themselves with the works of righteousness” (V 8.3).²³

One may ask whether this is still the Irenaeus of the hermeneutical counsel we have seen so far, and must answer in the affirmative. For Irenaeus, it makes a difference who is allegorizing. If the gnostics do it, they are doing what is forbidden. If Irenaeus does, he is expounding the Bible. If simple Christians (exposed to the gnostics) do so, they are running an irresponsible risk for their faith. What determines legitimacy is the (orthodox) result. Where the modern reader of the Bible wonders at the free crossing of OT texts with NT themes (especially in Christology, e.g. III 16.2-5), Irenaeus regards the allegorizing he has just carried out as the only possible and appropriate interpretation of the text. However, he never calls it allegory, but treats his results as the literal meaning of the texts. We must explain this on the basis that Irenaeus accepts allegorizing when it is devised within the church, or stems from his own hand, for then the correct meaning is assured through the proper surroundings, and it may rank as without rival like the literal sense, only one must deal with it appropriately. He thus does not dispute a two-fold sense in biblical texts (II 10.1), and in the “speeches of the Lord” concerning the Father he distinguishes, as already said, those which speak *per parabolis* (in parables) from those which speak *simpliciter ipsis dictionibus* (in unambiguous words) (IV 41.4). Irenaeus goes a stage

23. This allegory occurs in the same version in Clem. Alex., *Strom.* VII 109.1-110.1; otherwise Barn 10.11.

further, and makes elaborate allegories out of NT parables. The parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, for example, speaks according to Irenaeus of the history of the world and of mankind, and of the unity of God (IV 36.7). In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30–35) he interprets the two denarii allegorically (III 17.3). Warning from the text for new and different situations is possible in the NT also, and is not confined (as typology) to the OT. The biblical writings are all equally competent and superior to the gnostic teachers (II 30.6).

4. Hermeneutical Discretion

The Bible is thus, as it proves, more complex than would appear, or is provided for in Irenaeus's theory of its sufficiency in form and content and the manifest clarity of its meaning. Apart from the fact that the Bible proved to be the cause of the conflict (with the gnostics) and not a bridge to agreement, it does not match the questions for which the gnostics required an answer. As a clear and manifest testimony from God it forbids what Irenaeus experiences to his displeasure. There are people who "continually turn aside to other solutions for their questions, and reject the firm and true knowledge of God," whereas one must "orient the solution of these questions by precisely this characteristic teaching" (II 28.1). "It is indeed correct to exercise oneself in questions about the mystery and the order of salvation..." (*ibid.*), but one must be ready to break off the questions and the exercise immediately when one has to recognise that one has asked improper questions, is unequal to the knowledge one has sought, or is unable to reckon with an answer. According to Irenaeus it is a fact that not everything that people ask of the Bible can be known. He is concerned about a possible reaction: "If we cannot find solutions for all the questions which are thrown up by the scriptures...we must leave such difficult things to God...knowing very well that the scriptures are indeed perfect...but that to the extent that we are smaller and very much later than the Word of God we lack the knowledge of his mysteries." The exegete does not in every case attain his goal, "and it is no wonder if we come to discover this" (II 28.2). People do not know many things even in the realm of daily life, how much less can they (seek to) know everything in the spiritual and heavenly realm (II 28.1–2)? These considerations relate to the hermeneutical competence of people. Over and over again Irenaeus commends discretion, humility, as the proper and pious attitude (II 28.3). A part of knowledge we must entrust to God, so that he "is always teacher, but man is always learning from God" (*ibid.*). Renunciation of questions and of knowledge is a positive quality in the biblical interpreter,

and so is the patience which is ready to learn, instead of affirming a perfect knowledge (Gnosis) (II 28.9).

Here Irenaeus has turned a traditional idea to good account for biblical hermeneutics. It is the “programme” of the critique of knowledge. In the ancient world and in late antiquity there was critical debate about the human thirst for knowledge. Suspicion of the desire for knowledge and doubt as to the legitimacy of human investigation were widespread. The curiosity (περιεργία/*curiositas*) of men was assessed as an acute danger of self-conceit, a morally doubtful and fundamentally false attitude. From his way of thinking, Irenaeus belongs to those who were full of mistrust against the wide range of human knowledge. In his opponents, the gnostics, he found the most malignant and dangerous attitude of their false ways precisely in the train of their thought and speech. In every respect the gnostics esteemed themselves quite unrealistically and much too high. The critique of knowledge was one of the quite central themes in Irenaeus’s polemic. He clearly strengthened this distrust against Gnosis (as knowledge and intuition) in his community, in order to immunise the many church Christians against the seductions of Gnosis. In the interest of a theology for the simple (*simplices*) Christians he urged rejection and mistrust. It is precisely in biblical interpretation that the danger is great, and requires verification. This verification lies in the discretion under discussion. Questions, inquiries, speculations, after the revelation (in scripture also) has already taken place and has given the knowledge of all that man must know, are extremely dangerous for faith. In particular the products of gnostic speculation, as a (false) doctrine, represented an acute danger. He who still inquisitively seeks loses what he has found, or foolishly seeks further, although he has received from God what is needful. That means that he is seeking beyond the measure of his capacity, beyond the measure of what is given, as well as beyond what is possible and admissible—and of necessity comes to grief. He who despite the revelation given seeks further and wishes to know more and something new commits a fatal error. The Bible is decisively involved. It makes any seeking superfluous, and instead requires understanding and faith. The understanding of scripture is a sensitive area. Irenaeus warns against thoughtlessness as against arrogance.

People must therefore without shame (II 28.6) leave the answers to many things to God, for “our knowledge is partial” (1 Cor 13:9) (II 28.7), since the Bible is very far from imparting everything and much is not attainable or appropriate for human knowledge, and this precisely in the context of the Bible. Irenaeus links this idea of a merely partial human knowledge systematically with the understanding of the Bible.

5. The modified Theory of Scripture

In Irenaeus's church environment there is thus a number of hindrances which do not allow any carefree, lighthearted reading of the Bible. One needs the experts for hermeneutics and practice, sometimes also for special knowledge in exposition, to avoid injury and error. The optimistic theory of the perfect scripture, such as Irenaeus from time to time outlined with enthusiasm, could not but be affected. In practice Irenaeus had long since not indeed abandoned this theory of the perfection of scripture, but modified it. Even in theoretical discussion, however, it could no longer pass without restriction. And in fact there are in Irenaeus statements according to which the Bible does not show this high degree of clarity and completeness of content, but for its part raises questions for which no answer can be found (II 28.2). Not only do the parables offer difficulties for understanding, but the great sequences regarding Heilsgeschichte and the saving action of God, as the Bible speaks of them, also pose questions which are difficult to resolve. He who can explain all this has a deeper understanding than the rest. Irenaeus however hastens to add at once that he does not mean this in the gnostic sense of a division of humanity into pneumatics who know (gnostics) and psychics who do not. Although he here no doubt brings anthropological differences into hermeneutics, he does not by any means wish to speak of esoteric knowledge (a new reality, another God), but to validate the difference between man and God, which was undervalued or disputed by the gnostics. There are certainly experts in biblical interpretation in the church, who penetrate more comprehensively and more deeply. Through the shrewd discernment of these judicious men the approach is opened up for all: "The fact that according to their powers of comprehension some know more and others less does not mean that they alter the content of the teaching and think up another God for themselves...as if this one would not suffice them...or another Christ...It is rather that what is spoken in the parables is repeatedly reflected on, to accommodate it to the basic argument of the truth, and God's activity and dispensation for mankind are explained" (I 10.3). Irenaeus enumerates the questions which present themselves to men on these and other themes, which they are not able to answer for themselves. The church needs the experts, whose pre-eminence over other Christians does not consist in the fact that they possess a different and elitist knowledge, but that they are able, in terms of Rom 11:3, to search out the riches of the Bible, which not all can do (I 10.3). One must, as already said, read the Bible "with the presbyters" and "in the church."

On these considerations, Irenaeus's picture of the Bible and its interpretation takes on changed features. Scripture raises serious questions (II 28.2). Of all that stands in scripture people can by God's grace, as already said, "only explain some things," while others remain reserved to God (II 28.3). This does indeed trouble impatient and inquisitive people (the gnostics), but is not at all surprising; rather would the Bible be undervalued should it be considered accessible for everyman in all its fullness. For it was "spoken by God's Word and by his Spirit," so that we in consequence "lack the knowledge of his mysteries, to the extent that we are smaller and much later than God's Word and his Spirit" (II 28.2; cf. 25.4). What appears problematical is according to Irenaeus in accordance with the facts. He draws the consequences for hermeneutics, and from the fact that the statements of scripture can only be grasped in part by men deduces a certain circumspection, that only that should be investigated "which God has given to the power of men and subjected to our knowledge" (II 27.1; cf. 28.2,3). And in this connection Irenaeus also defines precisely the sufficiency of the Bible in terms of content. The Scriptures do not contain all that men may ask. For example, the Bible gives no information as to what God did before the creation of the world, any more than about other things which Irenaeus enumerates (II 28.6). Consequently one should not ask about everything. "The answer rests with God" (II 28.3). Thus the discretion we have discussed is required of men by Scripture. The criterion for the legitimacy of the questions is the saving significance of any particular knowledge. The image of the Bible then remains no longer quite the same: what is difficult, obscure and inexplicable comes in alongside its clarity, certainty and completeness, to serve men as a warning against undue self-esteem. But the attitude of people towards it, such as Irenaeus requires, has remained the same: one must read and pay attention to take cognizance of what is there said, and without altering, omitting or adding anything. Irenaeus still has in mind the presbyters in Asia in the days of his youth. They are for him the model of the one who "piously knows his place" (*idiotia religiosus*); his repulsive example on the other hand is "the blasphemous and shameless sophist" (*blasphemus et impudens sophista*) (V 20.2). Biblical interpretation is not to be driven by the desire or the certainty of being able to know everything, but must be done "in faith in Christ and in prayer to God for wisdom and deliberation, for the understanding of the statements of the prophets" (Epid. 52).

With this delimitation of the possibilities of human understanding Irenaeus attacked the gnostics head on, for all this was absolutely repugnant to their thinking and for them there was no greater folly than to deny oneself the possibility of perfect Gnosis. For that reason Irenaeus describes the Bible

as a limited revelation, tailored to salvation and the needs of men, but for that purpose complete and perfect. With this revelation he cuts away the ground beneath the gnostic hybris. Irenaeus also wishes to carry on the debate about principles with his opponents, from a hermeneutic point of view, on the ground of scripture. To that end he shows that scripture is the most inappropriate object for gnostic intellectual treatment. He lets the uncontrollable interpretative methods of the gnostics run aground on the clarity of scripture, and at the same time makes clear that the allegedly perfect and comprehensive Gnosis (knowledge) of the gnostics is an impossible construct, because the limited themes of the Bible and the uncertainty or difficulty of its interpretation at some points do not yield the necessary information for it. Irenaeus's polemic makes plain his conception of the Bible. On one side the clear unambiguousness is the compelling argument, and in another connection the very opposite can be brought into play, namely what is difficult or even impossible to explain in scripture. On the thesis of the sufficiency of scripture it should expressly be said that it is left in a peculiar loose relationship to the principle of the church's *regula veritatis*. Irenaeus develops the two independently, and for this reason they do not turn out identical.

6. The True Gnosis as Criterion

All this remains free from contradiction in Irenaeus, because he is arguing with an entity which so far has not yet been systematically treated. This is the "true Gnosis"—a concept opposite to the "Gnosis falsely so called" (since 1 Tim 6:20). It is the entity which in truth regulates scriptural interpretation. For beside the rule that the obscure passages of Scripture are to be interpreted according to the unambiguous texts (II 27.1,3) there is at another point a suggestion which does not have the same meaning, to align oneself with tradition: "Should discussion arise about some modest question, ought one not to resort to the most ancient churches, in which the Apostles discoursed?" (III 4.1). Here then is yet another orientation, and Irenaeus cannot (and will not) pass it by. He describes it and develops it as "(gnostic) tradition" or as "the canon of truth." The several descriptions of it overlap. Thus one of them is "the true Gnosis." And this knowledge makes itself known in biblical texts, according to which Scripture itself is "as a rule (*regula*) the truth" and "the testimony that lies open before us." Irenaeus calls to mind "a firm and true knowledge," a conviction that is proclaimed in the clearest way, and this entity to which he refers is clearly not just the result of the preceding biblical interpretation, but has controlled and guided this interpretation, and brought it safely to its goal (II 28.1). Strictly speaking, the

understanding of the scriptural statement here stands not as a result at the end, but as knowledge at the beginning of the exegesis. Irenaeus describes it in the version already quoted, that for right interpretation it is necessary to read scripture “carefully with the presbyters of the church, with whom the apostolic teaching rests,” and then the “whole doctrine” will stand firm (IV 32.1), for the presbyters “expound the scriptures for us without danger” (IV 26.5). He who holds steadfastly to the church’s faith interprets the Bible correctly (I 3.6). Quite clearly, in these and many other texts, the truth or the true Gnosis precedes the interpretation of scripture. It is present in the church, and takes from exegesis the risk which it evidently always means for relatively unskilled Bible readers. Irenaeus adheres quite specifically to the sequence of church, faith and scriptural statement when he says: “One must take flight to the church, be brought up in its bosom, and be nourished from the scriptures of the Lord” (V 20.2).

One thus receives scriptural interpretation from the church. But there is something that precedes the interpretation. It can thus be called “true Gnosis,” and is not identical with right interpretation, but rather a precondition for it. It establishes the authority of the Bible in its church interpretation in the simplest conceivable fashion: “True Gnosis is the teaching of the Apostles and the ancient system of the church throughout all the world and the character of the Body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops, to whom the Apostles handed down that church which is in every place. The true Gnosis came to us preserved without falsehood as a complete treatment of the scriptures, having undergone neither addition nor abridgment. Here the reading is unadulterated, and exposition according to the scriptures is legitimate and careful, without danger and without blasphemy” (IV 33.8). Reliable interpretation of the Bible has its presuppositions in church and tradition. Now the Bible according to Irenaeus’s theory is fully comprehensible of itself, and stands by itself, another time the church tradition is of necessity added to it, as the standard for the compass and the interpretation of the scriptures. Irenaeus has not brought the two into agreement with one another. But he can speak in both ways. The Bible is now the subject of dispute, about which one can begin to debate with the gnostics without further presuppositions, as the pure textual basis. Here what the opponents can only deny, with laborious malevolence, becomes plain. The heretical Gnosis contradicts scripture, but the church’s doctrine harmonises with it without a gap. In this sense the Gospels are “our Gospels” (III 11.7). On the other hand one must also say, regarding the form of the Bible, that one describes it within the framework of church, tradition and apostolicity, because only in this combination does it reliably yield its meaning.

What lays claim to truth must harmonise with the Bible. In this way Irenaeus makes the Bible a quasi neutral judge between heresy and church, instead of claiming it from the outset (like Tertullian, *praescr.*)²⁴ for the church alone and denying it to his opponents. This has its grounds both in the attempts of the heretics to define their teaching (or Gnosis) as the real deeper sense of scripture, and also in Irenaeus's theory of scripture, for he is convinced that he can carry the day with the text alone. But naturally it becomes clear even for Irenaeus the exegete that scripture is not the unifying basis upon which one may on both sides attain identical results, to bring an end to the conflict. Irenaeus however does not see himself compelled (like Tertullian, *praescr.* 14) to change from scripture with its *ambiguitas* and *obscuritas* to the *regula fidei* as a basis for argumentation, but holds firmly, with conviction and on apologetic grounds, to the sufficiency and clarifying function of the Bible, although the principle is alive only in theory. In point of fact his hermeneutical orientation is not the biblical text alone; basically the rule of faith as the "true Gnosis" is the guiding thread. But Irenaeus sees this otherwise. scripture and the rule of faith, through their common origin as the Word of God through Moses, as the Word of Christ through the Apostles, and as the preaching of the church's presbyters, are together one and the same. In consequence Irenaeus refers not simply to the Bible, but to the Bible in the interpretation given to it in the course of the tradition: "For we have not come to know the ordering of our salvation through any other than those through whom the Gospel came to us. What they then made known by word of mouth, and later by the will of God handed down to us in the scriptures, was to be the foundation and pillar (cf. 1 Tim 3:15) of our faith" (III 1.1). The scripture recognisably plays a kind of subordinate role. With that Irenaeus enters into an undeniable formal parallelism with the thinking of the heretical Gnosis. The gnostics took their stand on the position that "the truth cannot be found from the scriptures by those who do not know the tradition. But the tradition is not handed down in writing, but through the living word" (III 2.1). Irenaeus too has for his scriptural interpretation an authority outside the Bible. The correspondence is unmistakable. In each case the biblical interpretation draws its life from the comprehensive hermeneutical viewpoint of a Gnosis which is there before it, on the one side heretical, on the other the ecclesiastical, which Irenaeus also calls "the

24. Tertullian, *praescr.* 19.2; 15.3; 37.1; 44.13. Cf. Norbert Brox, *Offenbarung, Gnosis und gnostischer Mythos bei Irenäus von Lyon*. Zur Charakteristik der Systeme, Salzburg – München, Anton Pustet, 1966, 97, 101.

true Gnosis.” From the point of view of a historical and critical assessment however one must say that the proximity to scripture of the Gnosis in each case is different in quality. The distinction is important. Whereas the gnostics could at any time emancipate and distance themselves or their interpretation from the Bible, and declare it defective (III 2.1), Irenaeus in doubtful cases appeals to the church’s preaching in order to show the harmony of scripture and tradition, of which he is always firmly convinced. One must begin with scripture, and in it clarity is to be won. To this Irenaeus holds fast, and he could never hit upon the idea which Tertullian freely contemplates, that scripture was quite deliberately conceived by God in such a way that it gave occasion for heresy, and that without the Bible there would be no heresy, for according to 1 Cor 11: 19 there “must” be heresies (*praescr.* 39.7). Irenaeus contends with the gnostics for the content, not for the legitimate possession (hermeneutics) of the Bible.

7. Tradition without Scripture

Irenaeus on occasion puts forward a remarkable hypothesis. “Let us suppose,” he says, “that the Apostles had left us nothing in writing” and that “a discussion had arisen about some minor question; would it not then be the only right thing to do, to go back to the oldest churches, in which the Apostles lived, and let them give us certainty and real elucidation for the solution of the present problem?” (III 4.1). This is hypothetical.²⁵ In order to say how comprehensively and abundantly the apostolic doctrine has been deposited in the church as oral tradition, Irenaeus constructs a situation without the Bible, which however does not exist. In principle, scripture is not to be imagined away, and is not dispensable. Despite this Irenaeus for the moment, purely for the sake of argument, puts the case that we have to cope without the Bible, and his thesis is that without the Bible we should cope, because the apostolic teaching is directly present and accessible in the churches founded by the Apostles. What he wants to say is that the church’s proclamation is doubly assured. If it could on a theoretical level actually be assumed that the Bible is superfluous, this for Irenaeus is not a conceivable possibility. Scripture is for him so decisively important, beloved and dear that

25. Also Hans von Campenhausen, *Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 2nd ed. 1963, 187: “It is a question of something unreal!” (ET *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries*, London 1969). Similarly Reventlow 168.

he simply cannot think of a church without the Bible.²⁶ Irenaeus continues this train of thought in concrete terms:

Many nations of the barbarians who believe in Christ adhere to this rule. Without paper and ink they have salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit. They carefully preserve the old tradition.... Those who believe this faith without the scriptures are, from the point of view of our language, barbarians, but as for their opinions, their usages, their way of life they are because of their faith the wisest men, and please God.... If anyone should proclaim to them in their own language what the heretics have invented, they would at once stop their ears and flee far away from him, since they cannot bear even to hear blasphemous speech. Thus through that ancient tradition of the Apostles they do not allow the portentous eloquence of those people into their minds (III 4.2).

The meaning of this reference to the barbarians, made by Irenaeus, bishop among Celts, is once again that the (unwritten) ancient tradition, with which the gnostics have nothing to do, is (already) sufficient for orientation towards the truth.

At another point Irenaeus opens up the idea of tradition, and speaks of the witness of all humanity to the one Creator God: "The ancients, from the first man on, preserved this faith on the basis of tradition. The rest who came after them received the commemoration of this matter from the prophets. Finally the Gentiles learned it directly from the creation" (II 9.1). This too is unwritten tradition, which flows into the tradition of the Church, and exists "without paper and ink" (III 4.1). We may compare also what Irenaeus develops in IV 16.3: "The righteous fathers had the virtues of the Decalogue written in their hearts and souls, loving God...so that it was not necessary to warn them by stringent letters, because they had the righteousness of the Law within themselves"; "but when this righteousness and love for God (i.e. among the Israelites in Egypt) had passed into oblivion, then it was necessary for God...to reveal himself to men through his voice"; thus again without scripture.

26. It is a matter of this question only (also in III 4.2, see below), and not whether the individual person can be a Christian without the Bible. This distinction was not correctly made by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Axiomata* 8 (*Gesammelte Werke* 8. Bd., Berlin and Weimar 2nd ed. 1968, 181–187), who also appealed to Irenaeus (ib. 187) and by Hans Lietzmann, *Geschichte der Alten Kirche* t.2, Berlin – Leipzig, Walter de Gruyter, 1936, 211 (ET *The Founding of the Church Universal*, London 1938).

8. Exegetical Methods and Procedure

Anyone who reads Irenaeus sees him invariably at work on the Bible. He takes this work very seriously, reflects on the necessary methods, and adheres to them. According to his conviction, literal meaning and allegory remain very close in the biblical text. What is important is attentiveness to the text and its literal meaning, even when it is a question of a parable. Also important is caution in exegesis, with the aid of which one leaves undisturbed the inherent order (τάξις) and the actual continuity (εἰρημός) of the statements. These hermeneutical rules are intended by Irenaeus in a thoroughly technical and philological way. What they mean is to obtain the literal sense according to the rules of the art. These rules he repeats and practises. The interpreter of scripture must observe the church's rule of faith, and with his exegesis remain within the church and in the tradition; he must demonstrate the unity of the Bible and the harmony of its parts; he must find the key to obscure passages through those that are clear and certain; he must be satisfied with the sure and unambiguous truths, and not seek to go beyond them. All this has already been discussed.²⁷ What is still lacking is a glance at sundry examples of Irenaeus's work on such texts, which he would not call parables but has to reckon among the unambiguous passages.

In a critical interpretation, which on his own assessment proceeds along expressly philological lines, Irenaeus puts his earnestness to the proof of treating the text with all care and accuracy. Concepts are made clear in critical fashion, parallel texts adduced for understanding, parable interpretations are appropriately found from the context of scripture as a whole (e.g. II 22.1,2; IV 36.1f.). In the application of this method Irenaeus is guided by a very sure ear, as is shown for example by his anti-gnostic explanation of the term "flesh, fleshly" in Paul, which in spite of its use of non-Pauline anthropological terminology is still to be described as at one with Pauline theology in its direction (V 9; 11; 12). And when a biblical parable is explained in such a way that the parts of the parable are transposed point by point into the realities of salvation, this not only has its base in the nature of parable, and not only relates to the flow of the text, but Irenaeus himself evaluates the correspondences thus discovered between the biblical text and the reality addressed therein like any literal meaning, as the result of clear exposition of the exact wording. An example is the exposition of Mk 12:1–11 par. in IV 36.2:

God planted the vineyard of the human race first through the creation of Adam and the election of the patriarchs, and gave it to the tenants

27. Bertrand de Margerie, *Introduction à l'histoire de l'exégèse* t.1, Paris, Cerf, 1980, 65–71, seeks to arrange these rules systematically into a hierarchy.

through the legislation of Moses. Then he surrounded it with a fence, that is, he set bounds to their culture. He built a tower, in that he chose Jerusalem. He dug a wine-press, and prepared a vessel for the prophetic Spirit. And so he sent the prophets...to ask for the fruits, saying to them: Thus says the Lord, Purify your ways and your habits...When the prophets proclaimed this, they sought the fruits of righteousness. But since they did not believe them, at last the Lord sent his Son... The wicked tenants slew him, and cast him out of the vineyard. Therefore the Lord God handed it over, no longer fenced about but expanded over all the world, to other tenants, who would yield the fruit at its time. The tower of election is exalted everywhere in splendour. For the church shines forth everywhere, and everywhere the wine-press is dug round about, for everywhere there are people who receive the Spirit. For since they rejected the Son of God, and after killing him cast him out of the vineyard, God has justly rejected them (the Jews) and given it to the Gentiles who live outside the vineyard to till it, that it may bring forth fruit.

In this parable Irenaeus sees the whole economy of salvation measured out in broad but precise steps. In the Bible all this is intended just as Irenaeus proceeds: step by step the details of the text are in the narrow sense allegorically interpreted and drawn into the story as a whole, in that they are all assigned meaning as parts of this whole.

That is why Irenaeus's allegorical paraphrase matches so edifyingly with the biblical text.²⁸ The biblical interpreter obtains the meaning of such parable stories by way of the virtues of the philologist, which means by reading the text itself according to Irenaeus's basic hermeneutical rules (see above).

Sometimes Irenaeus insists with such rigour upon the wording of the text (the "letter") that one must call it exaggerated, shooting beyond the meaning of the text. For example, where he is seeking to prove (against the gnostic teaching) that Jesus preached and taught for more than just a year, he first lets the reader wonder at the simple-minded view ("How should the Lord have preached for only a single year?" II 22.3). It is foolish because according to the church's conception of salvation, as Irenaeus knows and formulates it, Jesus "sanctified all stages of life through their likeness to himself" and "lived through every stage of life" (II 22.4; III 18.7; cf. Justin, *Dial.* 88.2; Hippol. *Ref. X* 33.15). And now Irenaeus makes his observations on the biblical text, to provide himself with arguments: "At the time of his baptism

28. Of the example here chosen (the exposition of Mk 12:1–11 par *in haer.* IV 16.2) it must be said that the passage is already clearly allegorical in style and among the synoptic parables represents a special case, and is open to further exegesis.

the Lord was thirty years old, then having the perfect age for a teacher he came to Jerusalem, so that he was justly heard by all as a teacher. For he did not appear any other than he was...but what he was, that he appeared. Since he was a teacher, he also had the age of a teacher" (II 22.4). These assertions all relate to narrative elements in the Gospels. These are scriptural proofs, and they are further added to: "His advanced age, in which he was a teacher and taught all," was exactly "the necessary and most honourable stage of life" (and it was precisely this that the gnostics wished to expunge).

How did he have disciples, if he did not teach? How did he teach, if he did not have the age of a teacher? When he came to baptism, he had not yet completed thirty years but was only at the beginning of the thirtieth—for thus Luke, who noted the years of his life, stated his age: 'Jesus was at the beginning of his thirtieth year' (cf. Lk 3:23),²⁹ when he came to baptism—and (according to the gnostics) after his baptism he preached for one year only and suffered after the completion of his thirtieth year, when he was still a young man who had not yet reached an advanced age. For everyone will agree that thirty years is the first age of a young man, which extends to the fortieth year. From the fortieth and fiftieth year one passes to the age of a senior, which the Lord had when he taught (II 22.5).

The really apposite scriptural proof for the duration of Jesus' life (and his preaching) is for Irenaeus found in Jn 8: 56f., which can also show an influence among the opposition. It obviously gives him pleasure to play off the testimony of the Jews against the gnostics. For when the Johannine Christ affirmed to the Jews that Abraham wished to see his day, and saw it (Joh 8.56), "they answered him: You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham? (Jn 8:57). This can meaningfully be said to one who has now passed forty years but has not yet reached the fiftieth, though he is not far short of it. To one who is thirty years old, one would say: You are not yet forty. They wanted to show him a liar. They did not extend the number of his years far beyond the age they saw him to have. On the contrary they expressed it as accurately as possible, whether they really knew it from the census lists or guessed it from the age they saw him to have, as over forty; but at any rate not as thirty. It would be altogether irrational for them to lie by twenty years, when they wished to show that he was younger than the times of Abraham. What they saw, that they also said. But he who appeared

29. To reinforce his argument, Irenaeus has undertaken a slight manipulation (of which perhaps he was unaware) in the Lucan text: he has brought forward the word "about" (quasi) and thus obtained the catchword "beginning" (*incipiens/archomenos*) for the statement of the age ("about the beginning of his thirtieth year" instead of the beginning of his work, as it is in Luke).

to them was no phantom, but the truth. He was therefore not far short of fifty, and that is why they said to him: You are not yet fifty, and you have seen Abraham? And so he did not preach for one year only.... For the time from the thirtieth year to the fiftieth will never be a single year" (II 22.6). Irenaeus is no less interested in extending the life of Jesus than the gnostics were in cutting it short. The relatively trivial detail of the mocking comment of the Jews in the Johannine conflict story about the age of Jesus has for Irenaeus a considerable demonstrative value, but it is frankly not based on historical information.³⁰ Irenaeus holds firm to the text, which in content is unambiguous and beyond dispute. The result is cogent to the letter, that the Lord did not suffer as a young man but reached a ripe maturity.

The scriptural proof for the Virgin Birth of Jesus is conducted in very similar fashion (*Epid.* 36), from Ps 132:11; 2 Sm 7:12. It is for Irenaeus no accident but a deliberate mode of expression that "God promised David that from the fruit of his body he would raise up an eternal king, that is, one born from the Virgin, who was of the race of David. That is why the promise speaks of the fruit of the body, which means birth from a pregnant woman; and not of the fruit of the loins or the fruit of the reins (which relates to the man). This is also a special kind of birth, that the special quality which belongs to the fruit of the virgin Davidic body (of Mary) might become evident." "Fruit of the body" is meant for the woman, "fruit of the reins and loins" for the man. To find this distinction in the wording of the biblical text, Irenaeus has to suppress the possessive pronouns in the text of the psalm ("his/your" body, referring to David).³¹

Such scriptural proofs (cf. also III 8.1) have professedly reached their goal by philological argument, and demonstrate that a particular interpretation is the only possible one. From the reconstruction of such exegesis it is however easy to see that the cogency of the interpretation is not philologically proven, but dogmatically controlled. A fitting example of this is the manner in which Irenaeus blunts the force of the biblical plural and any large-scale use of the word "God" (θεός). The scriptural sayings which speak of "gods" must at all costs be saved from the heretics, because they sought by using them to support grave errors. Here it is interesting to see how Irenaeus either almost violently re-interprets the terminology of an archaic or polytheism such as Ps 82: 1, 6 and 50: 1 into familiar statements of Christian theology,

30. Cf. Hermann Strathmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1955, 154: "The assertion, at an age of not yet fifty—a round figure, set deliberately high, which cannot be put to chronological use." Cf. C.K. Barrett, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, Göttingen 1990, 355: "Probably fifty is a round number" (original English edition 1955, 292; 2nd edition 1978).

31. The same proof in *haer.* III 21.5; cf. *Epid.* 64.

and so renders them innocuous (e.g. III 6.1; 19.1; IV 38.4), or reduces them to prophetic and NT ideas (e.g. Is 17:8; Gal 4:8f.; 1 Cor 8:4–6), so that the name “gods” is given to nonentities which are gods only so far as the word goes (*verbo tenus*, IV 1.2). Using this method, Irenaeus can even save himself when he is interpreting the particularly difficult text 2 Cor 4:4, which the gnostics claimed for their doctrine of two Gods. Paul there speaks of “the God of this world,” who accordingly stands beside God Most High. Here Irenaeus was at a loss. In this case he could not rest content with the literal sense, which at first glance gives the right to his opponents. He reports their exegesis, and then sets about correcting it: “They appeal to the fact that Paul in the second letter to the Corinthians says openly: In them (i.e. the lost) the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving (2 Cor 4:4), and they say that there is indeed one who is God of this world, but another who is above every principality.... It is not my fault if those who say that they know the mysteries concerning God do not even know how to read Paul. For Paul has the habit of using transpositions of words (*hyperbata*), as I show at many other places.³² If one accordingly reads as follows: ‘In them God’—and then breaks off and makes a slight pause, and reads the rest in one breath: ‘of this world the minds of the unbelieving,’ then he will find the truth; so the meaning of this passage is: God has blinded the minds of the unbelieving of this world. And this is shown through a small distinction. For Paul does not say the God of this world, as if he knew another above him, but he has confessed God as God; but he speaks of the unbelieving in this world, because they will not inherit the coming world of incorruptibility” (III 7.1). Here Irenaeus has found himself at a loss, but as already said has known how to extricate himself, even if in quite remarkable ways. In the face of the difficult text he changes his method and puts into practice a special technique for finding meaning in the text (*hyperbaton* and a pause in reading). We may ask why he did not think on the spot of the Pauline meaning of the verse. By “the God of this world” Paul means Satan or the devil. For Irenaeus this compromise evidently goes too far, because this interpretation may be misunderstood. From III 8.1,2 we learn to know the doubts which Irenaeus has about the phrase “the God of this world,” even when the phrase derives from Paul. Hence he commends his method of “word-transpositions” and pauses in reading: “If then one does not pay attention, and make manifest the intervals in what is said, not only will there be incongruities, but he will even blaspheme in his reading.... As then in such cases one ought to show the *hyperbaton* through the reading, and preserve the Apostle’s consistent meaning, so also there (i.e. in 2 Cor 4:4) we read not “the God of this world,” but

32. Two examples follow in the next section, 7.2, where Irenaeus finally comes back to 2 Cor 4:4 to sum up his conclusions.

say “God” of him whom we truly call God, but understand the “unbelieving” and blinded “of this world” in the sense that they will not inherit the world of life that is to come” (III 7.2). The clear and unambiguous literal sense, such as Irenaeus makes the task of exegesis, is in such examples (cf. III 7.2) more complicated, but for Irenaeus no less clear on that account.

For such methods of interpretation Irenaeus has to make the best of changes in the text and its meaning. As in the example above, in his proof of the Virgin Birth, he suppressed the possessive pronoun which stood in the way of his interpretation, so here it is no longer Satan, as in Paul, but God who blinds men (on this idea cf. IV 29.1), and Satan disappears completely from the text. This interference, born of necessity, cannot be regarded as an example of serious exegetical dealing with the Pauline text, and as “a real concern for the text and its understanding,” in order to go on thereafter and call Irenaeus the first in the church “who concerned himself with an interpretation of the letters of Paul.”³³ Comparison with the Greek text shows the desperate character of these operations, which one also encounters in Irenaeus. He remains absolutely sure of his methods. It is a part of his method that in IV 29.1 he quotes the “dangerous” and problematic text unconcernedly and without any warning, transposition or precautionary measures. Such detailed interpretation of individual lines of the Bible, or individual terms, is no concern of Irenaeus. He dwells for preference on the larger contexts, which are indeed likewise known from the biblical texts but are to be rendered in broad paraphrases and according to their internal logic. One sees Irenaeus at such work in IV 6.1–6, for example, where he sets forth for insight and understanding that text of such high quality (for himself and the gnostics), Mt 11:27.

Biblical interpretation as a method is the instrument with which one finds and attains the truth contained in the written tradition. Over against the gnostics, Irenaeus provides the clue with which one may find the way: “Read attentively the Gospel, which was given us by the Apostles; read attentively the prophets; and you shall find proclaimed in them all that our Lord did, all that he taught, all that he suffered. Should it occur to you to ask: What new thing did the Lord actually bring to us by his coming? Then consider, that he brought all that was new, in that he brought himself, he who was promised. For precisely that was proclaimed, that the New would come to renew men and quicken them to life.”

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³³ So Wilhelm Schneemelcher, *ZKG* 75 (1964): 13.

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X

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (CA. 150–215)

Born ca. 150, a contemporary of Irenaeus, Tertullian and Hippolytus, Clement converted to Christian faith after a quest for truth which had led him to southern Italy, Syria and Palestine. Finally, he met Pantaenus, “the Sicilian bee gathering the spoil of the flowers of the prophetic and apostolic meadow” in Alexandria, where he was a teacher of Christian thought. Clement replaced Pantaenus ca. 200 as head of the Alexandrian school of catechumens, but he was driven out of Egypt by the persecution of Septimius Severus (202–203). He died in Jerusalem shortly before 215.

In his writings Clement “alludes to the OT in fifteen hundred passages and to the NT in two thousand. He is also well versed in the Classics, from which he quotes not fewer than three hundred and sixty passages.” (Quasten, II. 6). His literary legacy includes:

I. *THE EXHORTATION* Προτρεπτικός πρὸς Ἕλληνας (CPG 11 1375)

With 132 quotations from classical sources such as Homer, Euripides, Plato and the *Oracula Sibyllina*, the vibrant essay counts almost as many references to both Testaments.

II. *THE TUTOR* Παιδαγωγός (CPG 11 1376)

The Divine Logos, first proclaimed source of true knowledge in *The Exhortation*, comes now forward as the “Tutor” who shows converts how to conduct their daily life in order to reach perfection as authentic Christian “Gnostics.” Both Testaments are the main authority referred to by Clement next to Plato, Plutarch and Stoic sources. No less than 633 verses of the OT (LXX), quoted or alluded to in four hundred passages of the three books, show how “both Laws served the Logos for the education of humankind, one through Moses the other one through the Apostles” (III, 12, 94, 1). In the NT, Matthew takes the lead, with about as many quotations as the three other canonical Gospels together. Pauline references prevail over those from the Gospels. The Book of Revelation is explicitly introduced only once, in II, 10, 108, 3): “and Revelation (ἡ ἀποκάλυψις) says” (Rv 6:9, 11); in eleven other passages it is only reminiscent. Among the topics for which scripture

is most frequently invoked, scriptural childhood comes first. As baptism gives a new start in life, catechumens are regenerated, their youth in faith and newness of life calling primarily for Pauline quotations, as does their imitation of Christ. He offers abundant advice for down-to-earth practice and ethical behavior, for example in getting dressed, taking a bath, eating, and sleeping, all finding appropriate support in biblical literature.

III. *THE CARPETS, OR STROMATES* Στρωματεῖς (CPG II, 1377)

“The name ‘Carpets’ is similar to others used at the time, like ‘The Meadow,’ ‘The Banquets,’ ‘The Honeycomb.’ Such titles indicated a genre favoured by philosophers of the day through which they could discuss most varied questions without strict order or plan and pass from one problem to another without systematic treatment, the different topics being woven together like colours in a carpet.” (Quasten, II, 2)

In seven books (the eighth is fictive, being a set of notes used for the other books) the author discusses the relation of Christian religion to secular culture. He emphasizes the primacy of the biblical revelation over all philosophy, “for God is the cause of all good things; but of some primarily, as of the Old and New Testaments and of others by consequence, as philosophy” (I, 5, 28). Any moral or religious truth in paganism, even when taught by Plato derives from the prophets of the OT (Book II). The principles of Gnosticism are refuted in Books III to VII, Book III focusing on ethics, Book IV on martyrdom and Christian perfection, Books V and VI on the symbolic language of faith and the indebtedness of Greek philosophers towards Scripture, and Book VII recapitulating the main themes.

Most favoured biblical books are Psalms, Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, and among the Letters of Paul, First Corinthians. Proverbs receives a special treatment in *Stromates* I and II, but throughout the *Stromates* the citation of the NT is clearly predominant. Some chapters, such as Genesis 1–3, Exodus 20, and Deuteronomy 5 with the Ten Commandments, Matthew 5 with the Sermon on the Mount, the Prologue of John, 1 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians 4 are central in Clement’s biblical thought. A constant memorizing of biblical data pervades his style and regulates his exuberant references to non-biblical traditions, classical, Jewish, or Gnostic (A. Mehat, *Étude*, 195–204).

IV. *EXCERPTS FROM THEODOTUS*, Ἐκ τοῦ Θεοδότου (CPG II, 1378)

In his comments on some *Excerpts* from a disciple of Valentinus, the most famous Alexandrian Gnostic teacher, Clement refers only a dozen times to the OT (ed. Sagnard, SC 23, 250), but he quotes the NT in at least a hundred occurrences. Usually scriptural elements need to be identified in the texture of Clement's own sentences; only a few quotations are introduced by "as the Lord says" or "as Paul the Apostle said." The recourse to Scripture functions with regard to anti-Gnostic concerns whereby Genesis 1–4, the Prologue of John's Gospel, and that Gospel as a whole, as well as 1 Corinthians 15, play a major role.

V. *ECLOGAE PROPHETICAE*, Ἐκ τῶν προφητικῶν ἐκλογαί

A collection of OT quotations, some having already served in earlier writings of Clement, others being presumably stored for the last (and never composed) books of *Stromates*.

VI. *WHO IS THE RICH MAN THAT IS SAVED?*

Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος; (CPG II, 1379)

An essay written as a sermon, (but not delivered) on Mk 10:17–31, not to be taken literally in all cases, but with a heart free of desire for money.

VII. *FRAGMENTS* Ὑποτυπώσεις (CPG II, 1380)

Of Clement's eight books of commentaries on the OT and NT in form of sketches or outlines only a few fragments survive from Book IV (on 1 and 2 Corinthians), V (mainly on Galatians 2 and 5), VI (on Mark), VIII (on 1–2 Timothy); to these must be added two other Greek fragments on Hebrews and other topics, and in an Old Latin translation by Cassiodorus (ca. 540); short comments on 1 Peter, Jude and 1–2 John (GCS 3, 2d. ed., 1970, 203–215). The Greek fragments are transmitted in Eusebius, *HE* I, II, VI; Pseudo-Oikomenius (6th–7th c.?) I–II; John Moschus, *The Spiritual Meadow*, and Photius, *Bibl. Cod.* 109 H.

A. Echle, *The Baptism*: Quasten II, 17.

VIII. ON THE PASCHA Περὶ τοῦ πάσχα (CPG II, 1381)

This has been lost, with the exception of a few lines, most of them in Eusebius, *Chronicon Paschale*; see also mentions of the work in *H. E.* IV, 26, 4, and VI, 13, 9. Clement called on similar essays *On the Passion* by Melito, Irenaeus and others.

IX. ECCLESIASTICAL CANON, Κατὰ ἰουδαϊζόντων (CPG II, 1382)

A single fragment figures among the patristic quotations added by Nicephorus of Constantinople (ca. 758–829) to the third book of his *Antirrhetic*i against Constantinos Copronymos: GCS 3, 2nd ed., 218–19).

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XI ANTI-RABBINIC POLEMICS

Specific needs of the Christian believing community inspired adequate uses of scripture. The rupture with the rabbinic authorities of the Diaspora, already witnessed in the canonical Gospels entailed deep into the third century a proper genre of polemical writings “Against the Jews,” *Adversus Iudaeos*. Not the least aggressive in this regard were converts from Judaism to Christianity, turning against their former fellow-believers. One distinctive literary creation in anti-rabbinic pamphlets is the systematic quoting of biblical references known as *Testimonia*.

I. *TESTIMONIA*

Specific psalms or passages from the Prophets served to elaborate the earliest Christian self-definition in the NT, such as Psalm 21 and Isaiah 52–53 in regard to the passion of Jesus, Psalm 117 for proclaiming his incarnation, Psalm 23 and 67 about his ascension or Psalm 109 for his being seated at the right hand of the Father. For a similar purpose, other OT citations were slightly modified, words being added or subtracted, two or more scriptural verses being conflated (cf. *Letter of Barnabas*), a method familiar to the *targumim*. Some elements taken over from *midrashim* like the *Book of Jubilees* or the *Apocryphon of Genesis*, were joined to OT data. Such are the “Testimonia, with all the features of archaic quotations: reductions, additions, fusions, modifications” (Daniélou, *Études*, 8–9).

During the first two centuries the *Testimonia* circulated from one Christian author to another. They shifted from theme to theme, long before they were collected by Melito of Sardis, Cyprian of Carthage, Athanasius of Alexandria or Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa. They inspired early Christian art and enriched many Christian liturgies. They also ended in collections of biblical citations organized according to the inner order of the Bible, first the prophecies of Moses taken from the Pentateuch, then those of David taken from the Book of Prophets: the *Eclogae Propheticae* of Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea.

Dt 28:66, “Your life will hang continually in suspense” first used in its modified form (add: “You will see”) by Melito (*On the Passion*) also appears, but in another form closer to LXX, in Irenaeus, *Proof of the Apostolic Teaching* 79 where it enters into a set of OT quotations about the passion of

Christ. Clement of Alexandria alludes to it (*Stromates* V, ii, 12, 2). Clement and Origen (*Commentary on Matthew* XII, 33) in line with Philo, quote it when mentioning the “two ways” of life and death. Tertullian quotes it among other prophecies of the passion in *Adversus Iudaeos* (X, 19), in adding “on the wood” (*in ligno*); he quotes it elsewhere (*Adv. Iud.* XIII, 11). In Commodian’s versified *Instructions*, the phrase occurs seven times, in keeping occasionally Tertullian’s additional *in ligno*. Melito had joined Dt 28:66 with Jer 11:19, Ps 2:1, and Is 53:7, whereas Justin combined Dt 28:66 with Jer 11:19 and Ps 95:10. Such constellations of biblical quotations continued to be carried on through separate channels in all established traditions of East and West.

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II. ANTI-JUDAIC AUTHORS

1. Ariston of Pella

Ariston of Pella (ca. 140), Alexandrian author of a lost *Discussion between Jason and Papiscus about Christ* (Maximus Confessor, referring to Eusebius, *HE* IV 6, 3) presented the very first entirely allegorical Jewish-Christian hermeneutics on the OT. His essay was attacked by Celsus, and for that reason defended by Origen. Quoting Celsus: “I know a work of this sort, a Controversy between one Papiscus and Jason, which does not deserve ridicule but rather pity and hatred. It is not, therefore, my duty to refute this nonsense; for it is obvious to everyone to give his attention to the actual writing. But I would prefer to teach about the order of nature and say that God made nothing mortal,” Origen adds the following comment: “Nevertheless, I could wish that everyone who hears Celsus’ clever rhetoric asserting that the book entitled ‘A Controversy between Jason and Papiscus about Christ’ deserves not laughter but hatred, were to take the little book into his hands and have ‘the patience and endurance to give his attention’ to its contents. He would then at once condemn Celsus, for he would find nothing in the book deserving of hatred. If anyone reads it impartially he will find that the book does not even move him to laughter. In it a Christian is described as

disputing with a Jew from the Jewish Scriptures and as showing that the prophecies about the Messiah fit Jesus; and the reply with which the other man opposes the argument is at least vulgar nor unsuitable to the character of a Jew" (C.C. 4, 52; Chadwick 1953, 266f.).

In other words the allegorical method, proper to Alexandrian culture, was initially applied in anti-Judaica by a Jewish Christian apologist, eager to legitimate his Christocentric reading of ancient prophets. Allegorism was not a founding decision of Christian hermeneutics. It was a subsequent and secondary effect of unavoidable polemics. In its very origin, the hermeneutical initiative proper to Christian faith was much more bound to the inner dynamic of faith itself.

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Prostmeier, F. R.: *LACL* 2nd ed. 1999, 51f.

Williams, A. L., *Adversus Judaeos*. 1935, 28–30.

2. Justin of Rome: see chapter 5, VI, i

3. Melito of Sardis: see chapter 5, IX, iv

Melito of Sardis, in his homily *On the Passion* makes a strong anti-Judaic statement, similar to what one reads in pseudo-Cyprian's *Against the Jews*.

4. Pseudo-Cyprian

Adversus Judaeos, transmitted under the name of Cyprian, is a sermon dating from ca. 175. D. van Damme attributes it to a minister in the Jewish Christian community of Rome, which had already produced the *Letter of Clement to the Corinthians*. This "oldest sermon in Latin" is not directly addressing Jews, but sectarian Jewish-Christians inside a Gentile-Christian community. After calling on the ancient covenants of God, from Adam to Moses, the preacher comments on the two parables of the evil tenants (Mt 21:33–46; Mk

12:1–12; Lk 20:9–19) and the wedding feast (Mt 22:1–14; Lk 14:16–23), with special refernece to the two sons (Mt 21:28–32). The description of Christ's Passion serves as a rhetorical climax binding together the comments on the different parables. Contemplating the rejection of the unbelieving Jews and the election of the nations leads to a hymnic profession of faith. The homilist ends by celebrating the fact that some Jews reached salvation thanks to Christ's compassion and to baptism. Pseudo-Cyprian was a rhetor and a gifted writer familiar with the classics. He was also trained as a jurist; the notions *vetus* and *novum testamentum* keep a strictly juridical sense when he claims: *hic est qui rupit vetro suum testamentum et scripsit novum, quo gentes ad possessionem bonorum suorum vocavit* (par. 61). The homily shows several contacts with a very early text of the *Diatessaron*. It comes close to Irenaeus and to Melito's homily *On the Pasch*. OT quotations are: Gn 9:3 (par. 14), 17:5b and 8 (par. 15); Is 1:2 (par. 29), 13b–14a (par. 41), 15:16, 18 (par. 71), 2:3b–6 (par. 73), 3:1–3 (par. 57), 8:6–7 (par. 55). The sermon only alludes to Jer 2:23, 27, 33; 6:17–18 (par. 63), and Is 35:5–6 (par. 63).

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Diercks, G. F.: *CCL* 4 (1972): 265–78 (Introduction, 254–63).

TRANSLATIONS

Damme: above.

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CHAPTER SIX
THIRD-CENTURY GREEK
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION:
THE BIBLE IN THIRD-CENTURY CHRISTIANITY

The third century witnessed a substantial growth of the Christian minority in the urban centres of the Roman Empire, as well as the implantation of Christian communities beyond the borders of the Empire, in Syria, Persia and Armenia. The Greek *koine* served as a *lingua franca* for many transactions in the sphere of religious and cultural activities. Even in Rome the Christian liturgy continued to be celebrated in Greek, whereas Latin was the official language of the imperial administration, including that of Alexandria and of the eastern provinces. Christian authors of the West inherited a *lxx*, difficult of access in poor and diverse Latin translations, and so, like Tertullian, some other writers did not hesitate to translate the Greek exemplars of the Bible at their disposal on their own initiative. At the same time, these authors tended to content themselves with latinizing many technical terms in exegesis and liturgical practice. Actually, the entire view of a biblical interpretation in the West, which had grown out of the Judeo-Christian catechesis in Rome, Africa, or Spain, and had been founded on basic principles in properly Latin terms, slowly but surely assimilated the more elaborate hermeneutics flourishing in Greek-speaking churches. After the occasional (lost) Greek pamphlets of Tertullian written during the first two decades of the century, Hippolytus of Rome, over a decade later, was the last Westerner in the church composing his works in Greek.

The storm of Gnosticism, severe in its impact for some Christian communities, milder for others, had urged the need for a canonical list of OT and NT writings for all the churches. Before the end of the second century, the old collections of *Testimonia* had been replaced by more elaborate expositions of Christian doctrines, the most comprehensive being authored by Irenaeus of Lyon. Biblical exegesis was on the verge of becoming a main component of Christian literature as the increasing need for educating the faithful in scripture challenged community leaders. Hence the writing of apologies, aimed at presenting Christianity in an acceptable way to a non-Christian readership, receded from the creative horizons of church writers, while explanations of the sacred scriptures used in the liturgy and for the training of catechumens gained in popularity. The main churches of Antioch and Alexandria, Ephesus in Asia and Caesarea in Pontus, Carthage in Africa, and of Rome and the rest of the Latin West, consolidated their liturgical community life with a strong emphasis put on the biblical education of their converts.

Persecutions by State authorities broke out sporadically, due to political

opportunism and social unrest. This was the case at the start of the third century, when an edict by Septimius Severus in 202 strictly forbade conversion to Judaism or Christianity. Until the short reign of Emperor Decius (249–251), only Maximinus (235–238) occasioned an anti-Christian outburst, with the Roman bishop Pontianus and the priest Hippolytus among its victims. In 250, a general edict of Decius imposed on all inhabitants of the Empire to offer a sacrifice, a *supplicatio*, to the gods for the well-being of the State. In all cities, Commissions delivered certificates (*libelli*) to those who sacrificed. The refusal of the public act of loyalty toward the emperor, which the sacrifices implied, was punished by prison, torture, and often by death. An Ethiopian document, whose authenticity has been warranted by the Bollandists (*Acta sanctorum* 1695, June 1, 32), mentions sixteen thousand Christian casualties in Egypt alone. The defection of a great number of catechumens and baptized who, through bribery or other means, acquired *libelli* without sacrificing, provoked a deep scandal inside Christian communities. Unforgiving rigorists in the spirit of Novatian, dreamed about a church of the Pure and claimed to take sides with the *confessores*, who had really suffered during the persecution; a more accommodating majority of priests and lay people considered the situation with realistic indulgence. Hence, in the Christian writings of the time, biblical arguments of a new kind pleaded in favour of reconciliation and forgiveness. The OT teaching about penance and the NT message of love received in that context much attention by intellectual church leaders of opposite camps, such as Novatian and Cyprian. In 257 and 258, general measures by Emperor Valerian struck the clergy and leading laity in particular, in Rome, Egypt and Roman Africa; the persecution was stopped by Gallian in 262.

During the long period of relative peace between 262 and 304, the third century Christianity prospered on the scale of the Empire, mainly in urban areas. In Alexandria, but also in other places, a spectacular inculturation of the Christian self-affirmation entailed a re-thinking of biblical exegesis. Origen of Alexandria inaugurated a new style of interpretive techniques and literary genres applied to scripture, which integrated the Jewish scholarship of Philo and contemporary rabbis with the pastoral needs of church congregations, and the mystic vision of his own genius. Like Alighieri Dante, a thousand years later in Florence or William Shakespeare in Elizabethan England, Origen created a literary legacy, precisely in the area of scriptural interpretation, which was to change forever the language of future generations.

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I

SIXTUS JULIUS AFRICANUS (D. CA. 240)

Africanus was born in Aelia Capitolina. He became a civil servant under Septimus Severus and he studied Christian thought as a pupil of Heraclas in Alexandria. He died at Nicopolis in Palestine, ca. 240.

The *Chronicles*, a millenarian compilation of times from the creation of the world to 221 C.E., biblical data and facts being synchronized with events of Greek and Roman history was the first attempt to harmonize biblical traditions with the secular history of the world. Hippolytus of Rome and Eusebius of Caesarea, among many others, would become Julius's successors in this respect.

Julius Africanus also wrote a *Letter to Aristides* on Christ's genealogy in the Gospels (Eusebius, *HE*, I, 7; Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew* I, 26) in order to eliminate any discrepancy between Matthew and Luke: "Thus neither of the evangelists is in error, as the one reckons by nature and the other by law" (II), "The gospel, however, in any case states the truth" (V), and a *Letter to Origen on the book of Susannah*, entirely preserved with Origen's answer.

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On his biography and work: M. Simonetti, *DPAC* II (1983) 1612f. : *EECI* (1992) 460.

II HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME (D. CA. 235)

Of Greek descent, Hippolytus was a Roman presbyter at the time of Bishop Zephyrinus (199–217), possibly of Victor (189–198). He wrote a *Commentary on Canticle* and a tractate *On Christ and Antichrist* before the edicts of Septimius Severus (ca. 200), a *Commentary on Daniel* soon after them. Under the reign of Severus Alexander (222–235), who was barely in his teens and still under the guardianship of his mother, Julia Mamaea, Hippolytus seems to have enjoyed the support of Bishop Urbanus (222–230) and Bishop Pontianus (230–235). His personal quarrel with Bishop Callistus did not result in any real schism (M. Richard, *D Sp* 7, 535, referring approvingly to J. M. Hansen's, *La liturgie d'Hippolyte*, 302–18). After the murder of Severus Alexander and Julia Mamaea in 235, Maximinus turned against the Christians. Pontianus and Hippolytus were deported to Sardinia and died there.

For a clear and comprehensive survey of Hippolytus's works, with indication of their manuscript transmission, their ancient and contemporary editions and translations, see M. Richard, *D Sp*. Among these works, exegetical writings prevail. In biblical order they are:

1. *Commentary on Genesis*
2. *On Blessings of Isaac, Jacob and Moses*
3. *On Hexaemeron*
4. *On What Follows Hexaemeron*
5. *On Exodus*
6. *Benediction of Balaam* (Numbers 22–23)
7. *The Great Ode*
8. *On Elkanah and Anna*
9. *On Pentateuch*
10. *On Judges*
11. *On Ruth*
12. *On Elkanah and Samuel* (1 Samuel)
13. *On The Story of David and Goliath* (1 Samuel 17)
14. *On the Witch of Endor* (1 Samuel 28)
15. *On Psalms*
16. *On Proverbs*
17. *On Ecclesiastes* (Qoheleth), mentioned by Jerome
18. *On Song of Songs*
19. *On Isaiah*

20. *On Ezekiel*
21. *On Daniel*
22. *On Zechariah*
23. *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (unique commentary on a book of NT)
24. *Homily on Matthew 24:15-34* (eschatological discourse): 14 fragments in Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopian catenae on Matthew
25. *Homily on Matthew 25:14-31*, the talents, (quoted by Theodoret)
26. *Homily on Luke 23:39-43*, the two criminals (quoted by Theodoret)
27. *On Christ and Antichrist*
28. *Chronicles*
29. *On the Date of Easter*
30. *On the Pasch*; cf. P. Nautin, *Homélie paschales*, I Une homélie inspirée du traité sur la Pâque d'Hippolyte. SC 27 (1950).

In current scholarship, Hippolytus is probably the most controversial writer of the early church. As a truly creative pioneer in the field of Christian exegesis, he published at least twelve scriptural commentaries:

1. *Commentary on Genesis* Fragments, most of them in the *Catena on Genesis* by Procopius of Gaza (6th century), edited by H. Achelis (1897) in GCS I, 2, 51-71. An additional fragment is edited by M. Richard, in *Serta Turyniana*, Fs. A. Turin, Urbana 1974, 394-400.

2. *Commentary on the Blessings of Isaac and Jacob*, in two books on Genesis 27 and 49, in Greek: TU38, 1 (1911); also in Armenian and Georgian. A German translation of the Georgian text (through a Russian version) already secured by G. W. Bonwetsch: TU 26, 1 (1904), led to the discovery of the Greek original (TU 38, 1) 1911. *On the Blessings of Moses: On Deuteronomy 33*, extant in Armenian and Georgian; two small fragments in Greek. All three *Blessings* are edited, with a French translation, and with exhaustive biblical and orthographic indexes, by M. Brière, L. Mariès and B.-Ch. Mercier, in *PO* 27 (1954), 1-274.

3. *On the Hexaemeron*: Eusebius and Jerome transmit six authentic fragments, GCS 1,2, 51-53.

On What Follows the Hexaemeron: a fragment on Gen 4: 23-24, Eusebius

On Exodus: mentioned by Jerome

On the Benedictions of Balaam (22-23): six fragments, TU 26, 1, p. 94

On the Great Ode (Deuteronomy 32): quoted by Theodoret

On Judges: eleven fragments

On Ruth: one fragment

On Elkana and Anna: quoted by Theodoret

4. *The Story of David and Goliath*: a homily on 1 Samuel 17, in Armenian

and Georgian; German translation. G. N. Bonwetsch from the Russian (translated by Karbelov from the Georgian) in TU 1904. Add: *On the Sorceress* (ἑγγαστρίπτρον) of *Endor* (1 Sm 28:7–14); statue; Jerome.

5. *On Psalms*: Statue, Jerome; quoted by Theodoret of Cyrus, on Psalm 27, 22:1, 23:7: GCS 1, 2 (1897): 127–153. Syriac version of the Introduction: P. de Lagarde, An. Syr. 83–87. English translation: ANL 9; ANF 5, 170–172. German: GCS 1, 2 (1897): 127–35. Greek: Prologue with French translation published by P. Nautin, *Le dossier* 165–66. His commentary was used by Origen.

6. Greek fragments collected by H. Achelis: GSC 2 (1897): 155–78; M. Pritchard, *Mvs* 78 (1965): 257–90; 79 (1966): 61–84, 80 (1967): 327–64.

7. *On Song of Songs*: Complete text extant in Georgian (up to Cant. 3:7); fragment in Greek, Slavonic, Armenian, Syriac. Ed. G. N. Bonwetsch; short fragment of the Greek original; other fragments of the Slavonic version (from Armenian and Syriac versions), and continuous Armenian text of Com. Cant. 1:5–5: 1, in German translation: GCS 1.1 (1897): 343–374. Georgian and Armenian texts with Latin translation: G. Garitte, in CSCO 263/264 (1965). A summarizing Greek paraphrase, ed. M. Richard: *Mus* 77 (1964): 137–154. A set of homilies with allegorical interpretation: the king is Christ; his bride is the Church; she also stands for the God-loving soul. Ambrose used Hippolytus' allegory in his explanation on Psalm 118.

8. *On Isaiah*: Theodoret, Jerome.

9. *On Ezekiel*: Eusebius.

10. *Commentary on Daniel*: entire text in Old Slavonic, most of it in Greek fragments. Composed around 204, the very first exegetical work by a Christian, written under the pressure of persecution by Septimius Severus. In four books, based on the Greek version of Theodotion. Allegory of Daniel 1: 1–19 and the story of Susanna (I); Daniel 2f., about the three young men in the fire and the spiritual power of martyrdom (II); Daniel 4–6, discussing the relationship between Church and State (III); and Daniel 7–12, with the story of the four kingdoms: Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman (IV).

The *Commentary on Daniel* was written, not preached. Again and again the author recommends his readers to attend to the scriptures carefully, for nothing is useless in the scriptures. In I, 7, Hippolytus explains that the purpose of scripture is to exhort us to glorify the prophets, for the Word generates saints and is regenerated by them (compare Jer 15:19). Scripture tells the whole story—both admirable deeds and the scandals (Susanna)—in calling on allegorical interpretations (I, 14). Thus the reception of the story is secured in the light of ecclesial actuality showing why and how scripture is meaningful in all its details. The present church experience generates

meaning for scripture (15). Understood as prefiguration, the story is assists the church to assume a disconcerting present experience (16). From the *figura* we lift up our eyes to spiritual realities in Heaven (17); the *exempla* are given for our imitation (22). In short, scripture does not deceive us (29). Therefore in all things we must keep the majesty of scripture (30). In Book II, Hippolytus adds further hermeneutical remarks: Nobody can explain heavenly mysteries without participation in the Holy Spirit (2). When allegorism serves for an appropriate interpretation, all details can become significant (27). For scripture uses all possibilities available to engage us into a fully Christian dedication (28). In Book IV, Hippolytus adds a final request: Anyone reading scripture must imitate the prophet (15 and 20).

11. *On Zechariah*: through Jerome; used by Didymus and Proclus of Constantinople

12. *On Proverbs*: Fragment, in PG 10, 615–28, or GCS 1, 157–75 (H. Achelis), to be avoided! Check M. Richard, *Opera Minora* I (1976) 17: “Les fragments du Commentaire de S. Hippolyte sur les Proverbes de Salomon, I–VIII”: *Le Muséon* 79 (1966): 61–94; 80 (1967): 321–64: “Les fragments du Commentaire de S. Hippolyte sur les Proverbes de Salomon, II. Édition provisoire”: *Le Muséon* 78 (1965): 257–90.

In addition, Hippolytus wrote:

On Christ and Antichrist, ca. 200, the longest Patristic exposition on Antichrist, based on the Prophets, Daniel and the Apocalypse. Hippolytus refers to it in his *Commentary on Daniel* (IV. 7. 1; 13. 1). Greek original: Achelis, GCS I, 2, 1–47. Georgian version with modern Latin translation: G. Garitte, CSCO 263–264 (1965): 165–214. Old Slavonic, with German translation, AGWG 40 (1895).

The Chronicle, whose main source is the Bible, was written in 234, and was in line with the *Chronicle* of Julius Africanus (221), and with Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* I, 109–136. It narrates a world history from Creation on, against wrong expectations of the Day of Judgement. Hippolytus counted only 5738 years of the 6000 presumed for global history.

The Determination of the Date of Easter (see Eusebius of Caesarea, *HE* 6, 22.1), dates from 222. Hippolytus counts from that date on (wrongly) a sixteen-year cycle for Easter in order to free the church from the Jewish calendar. It was corrected in 243 by an anonymous *De pascha computus*, transmitted under the name of Cyprian.

M. Richard, *Comput et chronographie chez saint Hippolyte*, Lille, 1950; Notes sur le comput de cent-douze ans; *REB* 24 (1966): 261–266 (*Opera Minora* I, n. 20).

A. Strobel, *Ursprung und Geschichte des frühchristlichen Osterkalenders* (TU 121), Berlin, 1977.

Hippolytus excels in the narrative style of a historical and typological exegesis. He is entirely committed to the biblical *historia*, which he usually paraphrases in adding details of his own imagination, able to dramatize or to clarify circumstances. He not so much actualizes the biblical narratives, as he reads into them Christian actuality, namely the gospel event as narrated in the gospels and the apostolic foundations of the church known through the NT. The core of salvation history, *the* “mystery” for Hippolytus, consists in the transfer of divine economy from the biblical Israel to the “church of the Gentiles.” Hippolytus witnesses the “mystery” objectively, in line with the kerygma of church tradition, not subjectively through interiorizing it in reference to the experience of faith (as Origen will do). Thus his typology itself remains narrative, as a part of the paraphrase of the OT, in a concrete, catechetical and homiletic style. His aversion to philosophy and higher learning seems absolute. He could have been inspired by the exegetical initiatives of Melito, Justin and Irenaeus. Because of his lack of rhetorical culture, he remains alien to the allegorism and the Gnostic disposition of contemporary Alexandrian exegetes.

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CPG I, 1870–1902.

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III
ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA (185–253)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Hermann J. Vogt

I. BIOGRAPHICAL

Origen (born about 185 C.E. in Alexandria) is said to have learned the scriptures by heart already as a child, under the guidance of his father Leonidas; later, as minor errors show, he appears often to have quoted from memory. Inspired by the biblical call to imitation of Jesus, he wished to follow his father to a martyr's death, and was only prevented by a ruse devised by his mother. He gave up the income he earned as a teacher of grammar in order to comply with the wishes of a growing number of heathen, who wanted him to teach them about Christianity,¹ but this now required of him a scholarly preoccupation with the Bible which had been familiar to him from his youth. Origen however always regarded its interpretation as a task to be undertaken only by experienced Christian teachers, who also directed their daily lives in accordance with the Scriptures. He appears to have approached the systematic presentation of the truths of the Christian faith and their theological exposition much more nonchalantly than he did exegesis; at any rate his great work on the first principles (*Peri Archon – De principiis*), preserved complete only in Rufinus's Latin translation,² betrays no hesitation or doubt over taking in hand such a task. Rather, sure of his knowledge, he begins it thus: "All who believe... receive the knowledge which summons men to live good and holy lives, exclusively from Christ's word and his teaching." In contrast, in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms, composed while he was still in Alexandria and probably the first of all his exegetical works, he explains not only "how tightly shut and sealed the divine scriptures are,"³ but also

1. So Eusebius in his Church History (*HE VI 1–3*).

2. Rufinus (d. 410), an erudite Latin monk, learned Greek in the East and became enthusiastic for Origen's works, which he sought to introduce to the West. In the first great conflict over Origen's orthodoxy at the turn from the 4th to the 5th century, he fell out with his former friend Jerome, who until his death in 420 lived as abbot in Bethlehem and indefatigably translated the Bible and, relying in the main on Origen, commented on it.

3. *Patrologia Graeca* (PG) 12, 1076C.

that this venture is properly beyond his powers and only undertaken at the request of his friend Ambrosius.

The same holds for his great commentary on John, which he likewise began at the request of Ambrosius, whom he had converted from Gnosticism to Christianity, and to refute the commentary on John by the gnostic Heracleon (and perhaps never completed). He says in the very first book (cap. 4.32) that one could only understand John if like him he had lain in the bosom of Jesus (cf. Jn 13:25) and like him had received from Jesus Mary as his mother (cf. Jn 19:26f.); Origen will scarcely have affirmed such a thing of himself. Certainly we can see here not only a difference in attitude towards dogmatic presentation and scriptural interpretation, but probably also an advance in discernment. In the fourth book of the *De Principiis*, the first three chapters of which are devoted to Holy Scripture,⁴ Origen was convinced that “the cause of the false opinions” which he had encountered among Jews, heretics and simple Christians, lay only in the fact that “scripture is not spiritually understood, but conceived according to the bare letter” (*Princ* IV 2.2). In his commentary on John, and thus in his debate with Gnosticism, it occurred to him that there is also false doctrine which understands itself as spiritual interpretation, and that therefore spiritual interpretation, allegorizing, is no guarantee of orthodoxy (*Comm. in Joh* 13.9.51; 13.16.98).

To preach on biblical texts, and thus to speak about them in divine service before a congregation composed of very diverse elements, was for Origen probably again a new experience, which he first had after his move from Alexandria to Caesarea.⁵ He had indeed been invited to preach even earlier, on a journey through Palestine—naturally because of his well known knowledge of the Bible—but this was at most occasional preaching. In Caesarea

4. They occupy 50 pages in volume V of the edition of Origen in the “Griechisch-christliche Schriftsteller” series (GCS).

5. Eusebius (*HE* VI 26) speaks in neutral terms, but earlier (VI 19.16) he had referred to a fresh conflict which flared up in Alexandria and caused Origen to leave the city. Origen himself may have been the cause of this conflict; for Eusebius reports also that the Alexandrian bishop Demetrius brought charges against Origen out of envy (VI 8.4), and that because of his ordination as presbyter in Palestine accusations were brought against him, with which other church leaders also had to concern themselves. Eusebius, or his teacher Pamphilus, had expressed himself more clearly in a work written in defence of Origen; it was still known to the great Byzantine scholar Photius in the ninth century, and he has left us extracts from it; from this it emerges that actually two synods in Alexandria had pronounced against Origen. J. A. Fischer (“Die alexandrinischen Synoden gegen Origenes”: *Ostkirchliche Studien* (OS) 28, 1979, 1–16) offers a careful account.

however, where he spent the last two decades of his life in unflagging activity, he was entrusted with the regular liturgical exposition of scripture; he was to expound the whole of Holy Scripture, probably in accordance with the Antiochene three-year cycle of the lections for divine service, and thus preach not only on Sundays but on working days also. He appears however not to have carried this task to the very end; the church historian Eusebius, himself bishop in Caesarea from about 300, found in the library there no complete preaching cycle for all the biblical books. It has been conjectured that the bishop released Origen from his task before the first three years had elapsed, because in his sermons he did indeed speak otherwise than in the great commentaries, but none the less delivered even before the congregation his profound theological ideas, thereby probably asking too much of many listeners. At any rate he himself sometimes complains of lack of attention. That was certainly not wanting at the synods, to which Origen was occasionally invited; there also he expounded Holy Scripture, and at least once in lively discussion brought back to the Catholic creed a bishop suspected of heresy.⁶ He had been asked by his friend Ambrosius to compose his commentary on John, his first exposition of the Gospels; but beyond doubt the debate with Gnosticism also attracted him. This is indeed a theme which continues right through into his late works.⁷ Origen appears also to have commented on the Gospel of Luke, but all that remains is only sermons on Luke, which leave great gaps and certainly preceded the commentary. That Origen occasionally refers to Luke in his commentary on Matthew, but on the other hand frequently offers an interpretation of the details of Luke and Mark in connection with his exegesis of Matthew, probably shows that the commentary on Luke was composed after that on Matthew—a commentary on Mark is never ascribed to him. In ancient literature the reader is frequently

6. The whole discussion was noted down, and is available to us in the “Dialogue with Herakleides and his episcopal colleagues.” Text and French translation by J. Scherer, *Entretien* (cf. bibliography). On these synods see J. A. Fischer, “Synoden mit Origenes,” *OS* 29, 1980, 97–117.

7. E.g. in the *Commentary on Matthew* (Book XI, cap. 14). Origen combats not only the false doctrine of God in Gnosticism, but also its anthropology, according to which being good or evil was supposed to derive from the different natures. Against this Origen, e.g. *Comm. in Matt.* X, 11, in his interpretation of the net cast into the sea, defends the liberty and responsibility of man, without however falling victim to Pelagian exaggeration; rather he could even be named as a witness for the position of Augustine: “They are free from righteousness only through the decision of the will; they become free from sin only through the grace of the Saviour” (*Against two Pelagian Letters* I 2.4).

addressed, but the addresses to the reader in the commentary on Matthew could also be understood like those in the commentary on John, and would then also be directed to Ambrosius and indicate that once again he stimulated Origen to this exegetical work, if he did not actually compel him, just as Origen conversely encouraged him in his own study of the Bible.

Occasionally Origen laments that the whole scriptorium which the rich Ambrosius had placed at his disposal, comprising some twenty persons, wanted to be kept busy without interruption, and thus forced him into incessant theological and literary activity. While the commentary on John was, so to speak, an academic work, some of Origen's preaching experiences also appear to have found a place in the commentary on Matthew. He probably did not bring the commentary on John to completion, but perhaps he did that on Matthew. In it and in the great work against the heathen philosopher Celsus, which probably came into being about the same time and was also inspired or even demanded by Ambrosius, we may see in each case Origen's final word on a question of faith. He died after 251, probably from the consequences of the torments suffered in the Decian persecution.

II. DOCUMENTARY

Among exegetical works, Origen has left us not only large scientific commentaries (tomoi), e.g. on Genesis, the Song of Solomon, the Psalms, the Gospels of Matthew and John, and Romans, as well as numerous sermons (homiliai), namely on the Pentateuch, i.e. the five books of Moses, as well as on Joshua and Judges, on Samuel, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, on the Song of Solomon and on the Gospel of Luke, but also works of a third kind, which were perhaps conceived of as preliminary work for major commentaries; they are short expositions on individual verses, the so-called scholia. First and foremost however one work must be mentioned, which is not strictly exegetical but represents the foundation for all interpretation of Holy Scripture, namely the establishing of a reliable text. Origen knew no Hebrew, and thus could not read the original text of the OT, even if he obtained information from rabbis at least about the significance of Hebrew names. He did indeed systematically defend the LXX, the translation of the OT into Greek prepared in Alexandria in the third century B.C.E., because of its long use as the Bible of the church, and for that reason decisively rejected the demand for a new translation from the Hebrew;⁸ but he was perfectly aware of the not inconsiderable differences

8. So in the letter to Julius Africanus (cap. 4, PG 11, 57A–60A).

at many points between the Greek translation and the Hebrew text used at the time by the synagogue.

Decades before Origen began to study the Bible, educated Jews had already produced new Greek translations of their Bible; that was how the usual Christian proofs for the Messiahship of Jesus were to be refuted, for they were based on the Septuagint text. The most famous passage is probably Is 7:14, where the LXX says: "The virgin will...bring forth a child," but the Hebrew text does not expressly speak of a virgin, but only of a young woman; thus over against the word *parthenos* in LXX the new Jewish translations offered *neanis*. The differences between LXX and the original in the content of the text were naturally thrown into clear relief in these works by Aquila, who translated with extreme literalism and even attempted to preserve the etymology of the Hebrew words, by Symmachus, who aimed at a good Greek, and by Theodotion, who presented rather a revision of LXX. Origen himself discovered two further translations, which however probably did not reproduce the entire OT. As a basis for the exegetical works of the second half of his life, his activity in Caesarea, Origen had the various translations written side by side in six columns, the first probably containing merely a transcription of the Hebrew text in Greek letters; this gigantic work is called the Hexapla (the six-fold). In it all those passages were marked which occur either only in the Hebrew text (and its exact translations) or only in LXX.

Origen had such a reverence for both forms of the text that he did not wish even the surplus material in LXX to be lost. Indeed, he occasionally even expounds two different readings of the same biblical verse with the same degree of sympathy. For example, Jeremiah says: "I am a debtor to no man, and a creditor to none" (15:10), in Greek: "*ouk opheilesa, oude opheilese moi oudeis*." In some manuscripts Origen also found the reading: "*Oute ophelesa, oute ophesele me oude heis*, hence: "I was useful to no-one, and no-one was useful to me," and finds in them not only information about the life of the prophet but also important statements about the saving activity of the Redeemer (*Jer. Hom. XIV 4f.*). The Hexapla was indeed never copied in full, and therefore is not preserved complete, but it has manifestly influenced the biblical text of not a few manuscripts; the fragments of the Hexapla, preserved in various ways, were gathered together by F. Field and reprinted in volumes 15 and 16.1–3 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*.

On the first book of the OT, Genesis, Origen certainly composed a detailed commentary, for there are quotations from the first and third books, and some further fragments; but the chief extant remains are sixteen homilies translated by Rufinus. On Exodus there are, in addition to very meagre fragments, thirteen sermons translated by Rufinus, and likewise sixteen

sermons on Leviticus and twenty-eight on Numbers; on Deuteronomy only meagre fragments have survived, but for Joshua twenty-six sermons and for Judges nineteen translated by Rufinus. On the books of Kings only one sermon has survived through Rufinus's translation, but the sermon on 1 Kings 28:3–25 (Saul and the witch of Endor) is still extant in the original Greek. Perhaps Origen did not comment in detail on the books of Kings, although he evidently intended to; for in No. 138 of the *Commentariorum* series,⁹ on Mt 27:50, he says that he cannot here explain what had become visible through the rending of the veil at the death of Jesus; this would be more appropriate in the comment on the third book of Kings (i.e. the first in our numbering) and the second book of Chronicles. On Ruth and Job there are meagre fragments.

To the Psalter Origen devoted all three kinds of exposition; Jerome (*ep.* 74) bears witness that he composed many volumes of commentaries on all the Psalms; Eusebius, already mentioned, reports (*HE* 6.24.2) that he had already published a commentary on the first twenty-five Psalms in Alexandria. Origen himself also refers in his *De Principiis* (2.4.4), certainly composed while he was still in Alexandria, to his exposition of Psalm 2:5 (“Then will he speak to them in his anger”), which he has interpreted “in accordance with his small insight.” Here he does not seem to have meant any commentary on all the Psalms; for in his commentary on Romans, which was composed later (4:1; extant only in Latin), he says that he spoke of how David himself calls us to a deeper understanding of the Psalms when he “commented on the Psalms in sequence”; there he manifestly means his complete commentary on the Psalms. In other works also Origen mentions his expositions of the Psalms (cf. PG 12, 1049–1052). Evidently he began a new commentary on the Psalter in his second period of creativity in Caesarea. P. Nautin believes that the introductory remarks on the Psalter as a whole, which in the tradition are ascribed to the book on the first Psalm (PG 12, 1075–1084), may be assigned to the beginning of the Alexandrian commentary, while he sees in the text of columns 1053–1076, which likewise discuss basic questions, the beginning of the Caesarean commentary.¹⁰ On the individual verses of Psalms 1 to 4 somewhat longer expositions have come down to us, which however may be recognised as extracts from the more detailed commentary; from Psalm 5 on we possess only occasional shorter explanations of single

9. On this, see below.

10. P. Nautin, *Origène. Sa vie et son oeuvre*, Christianisme antique I, Paris 1977, 276f., would however arrange the fragments in a different sequence, namely 1060 CD to 1076 B, then 1053 A to 1056 A, then 1056 A to 1057 C.

verses, of which many indeed belong to Evagrius Ponticus, the later admirer of Origen, but many probably reproduce the concise exegetical comments of Origen himself, of which the tradition reports.

That Origen did not work on one biblical book after another, and in each case concern himself only with this book, can be seen from a reference to Psalm 109 (110) in the last part, extant only in Latin, of his commentary on Matthew. Where Origen is expounding Mt 22:41–46, the debate with the Pharisees in which Jesus asks how the Messiah could be David's son when he calls him "my Lord," he says¹¹ that anyone would be better able to interpret this Psalm verse "if he has undertaken to interpret the Psalm itself." Origen had thus not yet himself worked on Psalm 109 when he reached chapter 22 in his commentary on Matthew. But it can scarcely be thought that the complete Psalm commentary of his creative period in Caesarea came into being as a whole only after the commentary on Matthew, since we are certain that at least the commentary on Luke belongs in this late period.

The exposition on the three Psalms, Nos. 36, 37, and 38, occupies a special place. Because it is "wholly moral" and deals with "conversion, repentance, purification and improvement of life," Rufinus translated it into Latin in the form of nine homilies and dedicated this "Corpus" to his disciple Apronian.¹² We must therefore (as with the translation of the *De Principiis*) reckon with interference by Rufinus.

Origen was especially fond of the Song of Solomon; already in his youth he expounded it in a short commentary, of which however only a small fragment is preserved in the *Philocalia*,¹³ and then devoted to it a large commentary in ten books, of which four are extant in Rufinus's translation; in addition there are also two detailed sermons on the Song of Solomon, which Jerome translated. He says of Origen that with his scriptural interpretation he surpassed all other exegetes, but with his exposition of the Song of Solomon he surpassed even himself. In the bridegroom of the Song Origen sees Christ and in the bride the Church or the believing soul; thus he prepared the way for a pious Church-consciousness, and so for the Ecclesiology of Augustine and his successors, but at the same time laid the foundation for nuptial mysticism and so for Christian mysticism generally.

11. In No. 7 of the *Commentariorum series*; on this see further below.

12. PG 12, 1319–68A; 1369B–1388C; 1391A–1410B.

13. The *Philocalia*, literally "delight in what is beautiful and true," is a collection of fairly long extracts from works of Origen which the two friends Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus put together in their time as monks; a fairly large part of it, chapters 21–27, is concerned with freedom of the will. New edition: *Philocalie* (see Bibliography).

Origen had composed the first five books of his great commentary on John in Alexandria, and had begun the sixth. However, when he was expelled from the Alexandrian Church and removed to Caesarea in Palestine the beginning of Book VI was lost and he had to begin afresh (VI 2.11f.). He evidently never completely finished the commentary; Eusebius already laments (HE 6.24.1) that only thirty-two books “have come down to us”;¹⁴ in the Greek there still exist today Books I, II, VI, X, XIII, XIX and XX, XXVIII and finally XXXII; this last however explains the Gospel only as far as 13:13; of the one hundred and forty-one fragments which Preuschen collected in GCS (some of which however belong to Theodore of Mopsuestia), only two deal with a text beyond Jn 13:13, namely Jn 17:4 and 20:24. It is also already striking in the last extant books that Origen is no longer doing his exegesis at length, as when he began the work; for the first two books deal with the Gospel only as far as Jn 1:7. Perhaps however he also lacked the incentive for further interpretation; in the first books he is refuting the commentary on John by the gnostic Heracleon, who for his part seems only to have reached as far as Jn 8:50; beyond Book XX 38, 358 Origen quotes him no more.

The commentary on Matthew also has not come down to us complete. In Greek there exist today only Books X to XVII, which deal with the text of Matthew from 13:36 to 22:33. There is however a Latin translation, deriving probably from the 6th century, which from Book XII.9 (i.e. from Mt 16:13) runs parallel with the Greek text; this too does not extend to the end of the Gospel, but only to Mt 27:66. In the Middle Ages the last part of it, for which the Greek has not survived, was curiously treated as an independent work, and divided into one hundred and forty-five sections of varying length; it was given the name *Commentariorum Series*. This Latin version betrays interests of its own, ascetic and monastic; it can therefore be adduced only with caution for the correction of the Greek text.¹⁵ Of Books I to IX of the commentary interesting fragments have survived above all in the *Catena*.

14. All the manuscripts do present the number “twenty-two,” but Jerome in the introduction to his translation of Origen’s homilies on Luke speaks of thirty-two books; the text of Eusebius is thus to be corrected. For shortly afterwards (cap. 28) he speaks about the content of Book 22, which is no longer available to us; he thus very probably still had in his library everything that Origen wrote on the Gospel of John.

15. At any rate not to the extent that E. Klostermann did in the first critical edition, volume X of the works of Origen in the GCS series. E. Früchtel already withdrew most of these interferences with the Greek text, in volume XII.2 of the GCS edition of Origen, Berlin 1955. More recently Mme Bastit, who has taken over the editing of Books XII onwards for the *Sources Chrétiennes* series, is attempting to improve

The ancient witnesses also ascribe to Origen a commentary on Luke; as a matter of fact, in volume IX of GCS Rauer offers, in addition to the thirty-nine homilies on the Gospel of Luke handed down in Jerome's Latin translation, 257 fragments some of which cannot derive from the homilies. Incidentally it may be said that Jerome probably wanted in the main to show by his translation how much his older contemporary Ambrose, bishop of Milan, had taken over from Origen in his sermons on Luke, which were combined into a continuous commentary.¹⁶ Ambrose in fact made similar use of Basil's sermons on the six-day work of Creation (*Hexaemeron*) for his own interpretation. However, Jerome's own sermons on the Psalms are essentially only translations of the homilies of Origen, even if they have been slightly adapted to the needs of the small monastery in Bethlehem.¹⁷

Origen devoted to Romans a commentary comprising fifteen books, but Rufinus condensed the text to ten books in all (PG 14, 833–1292). In addition some not unimportant Greek fragments have survived, about 40 to 50 pages altogether.¹⁸ J. Scherer has published separately the exposition of Rom 3:5 to 5:7, preserved on papyrus.¹⁹ Here Origen sees in Paul the arbitrator between Jews and Gentiles, who occasionally rejects unjust claims and confirms those that are justified, but on the whole represents the "Translatio Religionis," from the Jews to the Christians.²⁰ Noteworthy pieces have been preserved in Greek from the commentary on 1 Corinthians, which was already finished when Origen was working on the twenty-second chapter of Matthew,²¹ and

the text with the aid of a third manuscript, the independence of which Klostermann had not recognised. R. Girod has brought out Books X and XI as No. 162 in the same series; cf. bibliography.

16. Cf. H.J. Sieben's introduction in his edition Origenes. *In Lucam Homiliae. Homilien zum Lukasevangelium* in the series *Fontes Christianae*, Freiburg 1991, 35f.

17. Cf. Peri, V., *Omèlie Origeniane sui Salmi*. Contributo all' identificazione del testo latino = *Studi e Testi* 289, Città del Vaticano 1980.

18. Namely pages 209–24 and 357–68 in the *Journal of Theological Studies (JThS)* 1912 and pages 10–22 in *JThS* 1913, edited by A. Ramsbotham, and pages 74–83 in the *Biblische Zeitschrift* 1929, edited by K. Staab.

19. Scherer, J., *Le commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III, 5–V, 7, d'après les extraits du Papyrus no. 88748 du Musée du Caire et les fragments de la Philocalia et du Vaticanus Gr. 762. Essay de reconstitution du texte et de la pensée des tomes V et VI du "Commentaire sur l'Épître aux Romains,"* Cairo 1957.

20. So Theresia Heither, *Translatio Religionis*. Die Paulusdeutung des Origenes, *Bonner Beiträge zur Kirchengeschichte* 16, Bühlau, Cologne / Vienna 1990.

21. In No. 8 of the *ComSer*, Origen quotes 1 Cor 15: 20–28 and says: "For all this we have given an explanation in its own place." This particular section however has not survived.

on Ephesians.²² Other fragments really only provide evidence that Origen also interpreted Colossians, the two letters to the Thessalonians and the letters to Titus and Philemon, and devoted to Hebrews not only a commentary but also homilies; on the Apocalypse, on the other hand, he appears to have left only brief scholia.²³

There is however not only much genuine material from Origen under the names of later exegetes, but some that was written by later admirers of Origen has been handed down under his name. For example, it was made clear only a few decades ago, through the investigations of H. U. von Balthasar²⁴ and M. J. Rondeau,²⁵ that many of the brief expositions on the Psalms (in vol. XII of PG) in reality belong not to Origen but to Evagrius Ponticus, an Origenist from the period about 400. It is similar with Greek citations which ostensibly derive from works of Origen, and which the emperor Justinian had condemned at a synod in 543; they were held to be genuine, so that the editor of the *Peri Archon* in the GCS series even inserted them into the Latin text handed down to us. That however aroused a false impression; more recent researches have shown that these meagre sentences are no exact quotations, but have a tradition of their own, which to some extent goes back to the party hostile to Origen in the years around 400, hence to the great conflict over Origen's orthodoxy and his whole legacy. The new edition of the *Peri Archon* by H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti²⁶ has therefore rightly removed these alleged fragments both from the text and also from the French translation.²⁷

III. ANALYTICAL

Origen not only expounded almost all the books of the Holy Scripture, but already in the *De Principiis* he outlined a theory (IV cap. 1–3), indeed a theology of exegesis, based on the general consensus that the scriptures intimate mysterious divine actions of salvation (IV 2.2), that in them the Holy Spirit seeks to convey knowledge about God and his Son, about the

22. Namely pages 231–47, 353–72, 500–514 in *JThS* 1908 and pages 29–51 in *JThS* 1909, edited by C. Jenkins, or pages 233–44, 398–420 and 554–76 in *JThS* 1902, edited by J. A. F. Gregg.

23. The precise details are to be found in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, ed. M. Geerard, vol. I (Corpus Christianorum), 1983, Nos. 1410–1468.

24. “Die Hiera des Evagrius”: *ZKTh* 63, 1939, 86–106 and 181–206.

25. “Le commentaire sur les psaumes d’Evagre le Pontique,” *OCP* 26, 1960, 307–348.

26. Cf. below in the bibliography: *Traité des principes*.

27. In the edition by H. Karpp and H. Görgemanns, *Origenes. Vier Bücher von den Prinzipien* (Darmstadt 1976) they are still reproduced in the German translation.

soul, about the world and the origin of evil (IV 2.7 and 8). But not all are capable of this knowledge; hence the Holy Spirit has hidden the deeper mysteries in what are “outwardly tales,” which already prompt to the Good, that beginners in the faith may rest content; the more advanced penetrate into the deeper meaning.

Indeed, Origen at first even distinguishes between three kinds of reader and three levels of scriptural meaning, as between body, soul and spirit in mankind.²⁸ This distinction, which he outlines only briefly, is generally singled out in an exaggerated form; already in the later chapters of the *De Principiis* and all the more in the later works, especially in the commentary on Matthew, he distinguished only between the literal and the deeper (literally “higher”) sense; for he finds already in the literal wording guidance for good conduct, and thus the moral sense. Admittedly there are, in his opinion (*ib.*, par. 5), not a few passages in Holy Scripture which on a literal understanding yield no meaning, and invite us to seek a deeper sense not only here but throughout the whole of scripture. Origen however regards all figurative language, all similitudes, and of course especially all anthropomorphic statements about God, which we today treat as immediately comprehensible, as meaningless in their literal sense; he can thus bring forward many proofs for the necessity of metaphorical interpretation.

The result for the Christian exegete is not only the justification but the necessity of making use of those methods which the old interpreters of Homer had already applied, for example to make tolerable the stories about the gods, which for the philosophically educated were offensive. In the same way the Jew Philo, who worked in Alexandria in the first century, had made the Jewish Bible, our OT, tolerable for educated Gentiles. Nevertheless there is a fundamental difference between Origen’s allegorizing and that of his predecessors. Whereas Philo and the interpreters of Homer are at one in believing that in their texts they can and should find general truths and moral commands which can basically be attained through human reason, Origen seeks and finds in all the texts of the OT the truths which now all together form the content of the Christian faith. God’s saving activity in Jesus Christ is the hidden content of all scriptures, which can be laid hold of by allegorizing. One might thus think that the NT, which speaks in the literal sense of Christ, does not require to be allegorized. But there Origen attempts to find something generally valid in the narrative of an individual event, the historicity of which he does not call in question; not however general philosophical truths, but statements of how God to the end of time heals and sanctifies all mankind through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. For example, the story of

28. *Princ.* IV 2.4.

how Jesus healed the blind (Mt 20:29ff.) is to be understood as a promise of light and knowledge for all who believe and concern themselves with the understanding of Holy Scripture (*MtCom* XVI.11). Allegorizing is thus not a procedure brought from without to the scripture text, but the scriptural text itself demands allegorizing; that is how it is expounded.

The Holy Spirit has not only woven into the biblical narratives such things as did not happen, or even cannot happen, he has woven into the laws demands which simply cannot be fulfilled (*Princ.* IV 2.9); each of these points holds both for the OT and for the New. When Genesis (1.5–13) speaks of days even before the creation of sun and moon, this cannot be understood in the customary sense. That from a high mountain one should see “all the kingdoms of the world” (Mt 4:8) is impossible. The injunction “let no man leave his place on the seventh day” (Ex 16:29) is for Origen (*Princ.* IV 3.2) just as incapable of fulfilment as the command in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:29), to pluck out the right eye if it give offence (*Princ.* IV 3.3). Through these manifestly “untrue” or “impossible” interpolations the Holy Spirit seeks to prevent the reader from reading the Holy Scripture like other works of world literature, purely for pleasure and thus merely superficially (*Princ.* IV 2.9). Jesus, the Logos become man—Origen can treat him too, like the Holy Spirit, as the author of all Scripture—even warns: “Search the Scriptures!” (Jn 5:39). One must thus penetrate through the surface of the holy text into its depths. The meaning of the obscure passages must be opened up with the aid of similar words and concepts which occur at other places in the Bible; on the basis of the results it will then be possible to discover a deeper spiritual meaning in those passages also which are meaningful read literally, and finally to grasp the real meaning of the Bible as a whole (*Princ.* IV 2.9 and 3.5).

In the commentary on John (13.46.303) Origen sees it as the goal of the gradual development of theology, which is to be attained by way of ever more careful and extended exegesis, “to set forth the one corpus of the whole truth.” This task however is never to be completely fulfilled; for when “a created spirit...has found a little of what was sought, he sees again something else that is still to be sought” and so further (*Princ.* IV 3.14). Later in the *Commentary on Matthew* Origen spoke in detail about the provisional and limited character of his expositions (XI 2; XV 37; XVII 7). In this commentary he also expresses another concern, which goes beyond the question already posed in *De Principiis* as to whether what has become known can also be spoken, namely whether it is possible and permissible to set down what has become known in writing, and thus as it were to deliver it up to readers whom one cannot shield from error and misuse by additional explanations, as one can with hearers with whom one is in conversation. This probably first dawned upon Origen in the course of his life as a result of

misinterpretation and unjustified resistance; but the concern was not new; Plato too was already perplexed by it. It is not only in this respect that Origen stands in the succession of this great philosopher.²⁹

Even if Origen in essentials remained true to his early insights in regard to content and method, he still occasionally discovered and set forth new aspects. The idea of three levels of meaning which are all at the same time contained in scripture—this is rather a Platonic idea—is recast in the fifth homily on Leviticus in a Christian and heilsgeschichtlich way: the body of scripture was intended for those who were before us, its soul for us, but its spirit for those who in the future inherit eternal life. With a happy inconsistency, Origen then still labours to ascend even to the spirit of the scripture, although admittedly not through his own exertions alone, but with prayer for insight.

Origen's discussions of the book of the philosopher Celsus, again, throw another light on the possibilities of scriptural interpretation, for Celsus had not only attacked the content of the faith of Jews and Christians but had expressly denied any religious value to their holy Scriptures, because they did not contain two levels of meaning, i.e. they were neither worthy nor capable of allegorical interpretation. Origen however demonstrates that Moses already was a true educated author, "who everywhere brings forth carefully the doubling of the expression (*diploe tes lexeos*)" (CC 1.18). Here then Origen emphasises only two levels of meaning, but that need not mean any rejection of the possibility of the threefold meaning of scripture. He does not however content himself with the proof that the biblical writings are of equal rank with heathen literature, but demonstrates their superiority. Plato because of his highly literary style was directly useful only to a few, namely the educated, but to the great mass at most indirectly; Epictetus on the other hand was read by simple people too, at any rate by those who sought some benefit (CC 6.2). "Our literature is aimed also at the mass of the simpler sort, about whom the Greek poets did not trouble themselves" (CC 4.50). Origen thus here understands the Bible as a single work; but he does not simply presuppose this unity but demonstrates it, indeed emphasises the agreement of Old and New Testaments precisely where one might perhaps assume contradiction between them: "The Gospel does not contradict the Law of God, even in wording...the Father when he sent Jesus had not for-

29. For further detail on what precedes in Part 3, see H. J. Vogt, *Origenes. Der Kommentar zum Evangelium nach Matthäus*. Eingeleitet, Übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen versehen. Vol. I = Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur (BGL) 18, Stuttgart 1983, 10–44.

gotten what he prescribed to Moses; also he did not perchance change his mind” (CC 7.25).

The question of the relation of the New Testament to the Old leads Origen to a new insight. The Christians appeal to the NT (at all events already in the time of Origen) and bear witness for Christ, as the Jews appeal to the OT and at the same time bear witness for Moses. But whereas the Jews “have no proof to offer for Moses,” the Christians can produce “from the Law and the prophets the evidences for Christ.” But then there follows the totally unexpected conclusion, that the proofs which can be drawn “for Jesus from the Law and the prophets” demonstrate in their turn “that Moses also and the prophets were actually prophets of God” (CC 1.45).

The Holy Spirit wishes not only to give understanding for God’s activity, for the events of salvation and disaster in human history, but also to grant insight into God’s nature and the nature of all his creation, the things which are purely spiritual, those that are both spiritual and corporeal, and those that are merely corporeal. Where the faith handed down is clearly expressed, allegorical exposition is on a safe track; but where the prevailing tradition of faith has left many questions open, the mind that is exploring the Bible must make use of the concepts and methods of thought thus far available to him. Even when Origen wishes to draw all his answers from Holy Scripture itself, he is already pre-conditioned by the whole philosophical and theological tradition of the Greeks, which also left its mark upon the Christians. Despite his study of philosophy, Origen is indeed very cautious over against the assertions of the philosophers, but at the same time, like the Apologists before him, he is convinced that all the truth that is to be found in philosophy derives ultimately from Holy Scripture, because the Greeks owed their true insights to the much older Moses and to the prophets of Israel. Origen himself does indeed think that he has drawn from scripture, or at least tested against scripture, all the answers to the great questions which he himself names, but for example the teaching on the pre-existence of all souls, which he still resolutely defends in his late commentary on Matthew,³⁰ still probably derives from Plato. The insight which he was the first to express, that the begetting of the Son by the Father within the Godhead should not be

30. In the parable of the labourers whom the owner sent to his vineyard at different times of the day (Mt 20:1–16), Origen sees hidden “the mysterious teaching about the soul” (*MtCom* 15.34). He who affirms that “the soul is sown with the body” cannot explain the parable. Quite indignantly he challenges the opponents of his view that God created all human souls at the beginning: “Let them tell us what the whole day means, and ... the calling of the workers at different hours!” (cap. 35).

assigned to any point of time whatever, even a point before time itself, but must be understood as eternal, has also been described as “a Platonic form of thought,” since Plotinus also (V 1.6) wholly excludes “origin within time” for the nascence of the Second from the One.³¹ Origen does develop the idea philosophically in the *De Principiis* (I 2.2), but also gives it an exegetical basis, probably about the same time, in the first book of his commentary on John (cap. 29, 304); there he says that the “today” of the Psalm verse (2:7: “Today have I begotten you”) means the eternity of God, which knows neither stars nor morning. And in his ninth homily on Jeremiah he appeals to Prv 8:25b: “before the hills he begot me,” which in LXX has the present *genna me*; even what is described by us as past is in God eternal present.

Almost everywhere, when Origen refers to another of his works, he lets it be known that he is holding to interpretations advanced earlier. But in at least one passage in his late work, in the sixth book against Celsus (cap. 51), he indicates that he has gained new insights: several years before he had expounded the six days of Creation as he was at that time able to comprehend it. At that time he had discussed the questions what heaven and earth are, what the abyss and the darkness, what the water and the Spirit of God that moved over it, what was the light that came into being, and what the firmament that was different from heaven. Now Origen refers to the fact that the Logos through Isaiah promises to the righteous days in a situation (*katatasis*) “in which not the sun, but the Lord himself will be for them eternal light, and God will be their glory” (cf. Is 60:19). Unfortunately Origen says nothing further on the subject, but merely comments that “the creation of the world and the Sabbath rest thereafter, reserved for the people of God, would need a teaching extensive, mysterious, deep and difficult to explain” (CC 5.59). This teaching he has not given us; nor can one discern where he would have sought to present it; but this much is clear: the aged Origen was no longer satisfied with the questions about the (static) nature of things, about whatever lies behind the visible, and the possible answers to them. Now the Heilsgeschichte, the tension between now and the days to come, between the already and the not-yet, are especially important to him. This makes one think of Augustine, who only towards the end of his life grasped the true meaning of the Heilsgeschichte and therefore in his *Retractationes* (I 3.2) wrote of his early work *De ordine*: “Now it displeases me also, that I so spoke of two worlds, that of the senses and the spiritual...as if the Lord

31. So H. Görgemanns (*Origenes. Vier Bücher von den Prinzipien*. Übersetzt und erläutert von H. Görgemanns und R. Karpp. Darmstadt 1976) 125 note 5.

had wished to express this when he said 'My kingdom is not of this world' (Jn 18: 36), where one would be better to understand by the other... world that in which there will be the new heaven and the new earth."³²

IV. CRITICAL

Even in his lifetime Origen already met with opposition—his exclusion from the Alexandrian community probably also had its reasons in the content of his teaching and theology³³—but he experienced also much assent and admiration. He even had influence beyond the bounds of Christianity; he not only obtained from rabbis information about Hebrew names, but himself had an influence on rabbinic exegesis. Rabbi Yohanan of Tiberias, who in Origen's time frequently visited his teacher Hoshaya Rabba in Caesarea, led "the exegetical battle against the Christologizing of the Song of Songs" by Origen, although here and there he followed him. As for Origen what Christ the Bridegroom brings to the bride surpasses all that she had previously received from the Law and the prophets, so Rabbi Yohanan exalts the teachings of the scribes above the written Torah, in order to refute the assertion that only Christianity could be meant by what excelled the Torah. Indeed, Rabbi Yohanan appears to have been stimulated by Origen even for his emphasis upon Abraham, through whom the sins of Adam were made good, for Origen also found this role of Christ expressed in the Song of Songs.³⁴

A few decades later Eusebius helped his teacher Pamphilus, imprisoned during the Diocletianic persecution, to write the defence of Origen already mentioned, in five books, to which he himself after Pamphilus's death added a sixth; only one however has survived. Another half-century later the two monks Basil and Gregory put together that anthology of the works of Origen which has been preserved for us as the *Philocalia* and mediated the most important thoughts of Origen not only to wide circles of monasticism. About the same period Origen's exegetical methods were made known to the West by Bishop Hilary of Poitiers, who in 355 had been banished to the East by the arianizing emperor Constantius, and there was able to make himself familiar with the riches of Greek theology. His commentary on the Psalms,

32. For further details on what precedes cf. H. J. Vogt, *Origenes. Der Kommentar zum Evangelium nach Matthäus*, vol. II = BGL 30, Stuttgart 1990, 1–23.

33. Cf. above, note 5.

34. Cf. Kimelman, R., "Rabbi Yohanan and Origen on the Song of Songs. A third century Jewish-Christian Disputation," *HThR* 73, 1980, 567–595, esp. 580f. and 590.

which he composed after his return to the West, is so strongly influenced by Origen that Jerome, probably exaggerating, describes it simply as a translation. One recognises how much Hilary learned from Origen when one compares with his commentary on the Psalms the exposition of the Gospel of Matthew which he composed before his exile; the exegesis here is mainly typological.

It has already been mentioned that the homilies on Luke by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, were influenced by Origen; but Ambrose also expounded the OT allegorically in his sermons. This was of quite vital significance for his most famous hearer: Augustine, at that time a professor of Rhetoric in Milan, was still wavering between inclination to the Catholic Church and the rationalistic criticism of the Manichaeans, particularly with regard to the OT. Ambrose showed him that the Catholic Church did not understand the anthropological statements about God literally, but found support for its spiritual understanding of God in the OT also. There Augustine learned from experience that “the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life” (2 Cor 3:6b); Ambrose himself frequently quoted this verse and “then... where the letter seemed to teach perverted things... opened up the spiritual understanding.”³⁵ Augustine himself, like Origen,³⁶ made this word of Paul into a rule of exegesis. Certainly in his debate with the Pelagians later he understood that Paul was not in the first place making a hermeneutical statement, but one of a theology of grace; but still he allowed the exegetical application of the saying to have a continued validity³⁷ and so through his own work, which has stamped Western theology to this day, he handed on the methods of Origen.

Origen however also had a direct influence upon later generations. This is shown not only by the Latin translation of his commentary on Matthew, which probably belongs to the period and circle of Cassiodorus,³⁸ and by its partial adaptation in the mediaeval *Commentariorum Series*, which has

35. So Augustine reports in his *Confessions* VI 4.6.

36. E.g. in the book against Celsus VI 70 and VII 20; *Commentary on Matthew* XV 1 and XVI 15.

37. In *De spiritu et littera* 6 Augustine says that what kills is the prohibitive letter of the Law, and what gives life the Spirit's gift of grace, but also further on wishes “not to conceive literally an expression used figuratively, the literal meaning of which is contrary to sense, but to consider another meaning.”

38. Cassiodorus, minister to three East Gothic kings, founded a monastery in Italy about 550 and wished to bring together a complete commentary in Latin on the whole Bible.

already been mentioned, but also by the fact that Paschasius Radbertus, abbot of Corbie who died before 860, in his great commentary on Matthew, arranged in twelve books (*Patrologia Latina* 120, 31–994), depends so much upon Origen that we can improve many corruptions in the text of the *Commentariorum Series* with the help of his text. However, he also seems at several points to enter into debate with Origen.³⁹ He does not once mention him, but appeals to Hilary, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great and John Chrysostom. Whether he knew nothing about Origen, or did not wish to mention the name of one who had been repeatedly condemned in the course of the centuries, especially in the East, remains unclear. In later centuries also, not only in the Middle Ages but down to the beginning of modern critical exegesis, people have drawn sustenance from Origen, but without giving him the honour that is his due. Only this century now drawing to its close has truly done him justice; he was indeed at first still treated as a philosopher who made use of biblical expressions and ecclesiastical resources to convey his own ideas to initiated pupils, but then he was appreciated as what he really wanted to be, a *homo ecclesiasticus*. This is chiefly due to the works of H. U. von Balthasar,⁴⁰ J. Daniélou, H. de Lubac,⁴¹ H. Chadwick,⁴² Marguerite Harl, H. Crouzel,⁴³ R. Gögler, G. W. Butterworth,⁴⁴ E. Corsini and

39. For at least a brief account, see H. J. Vogt. *Origenes. Der Kommentar zum Evangelium nach Matthäus*, vol. III = BGL 38, Stuttgart 1993, 1f.

40. *Origenes. Geist und Feuer. Eine Aufbau aus seinen Schriften* by H. U. Balthasar (Salzburg 1938, 3 Einsiedeln/Freiburg 1991) opens up the whole work systematically.

41. The programme of J. Daniélou (*Origène*, Paris 1948, 310 pp.) is given by the title of the series “Le Génie du Christianisme.” H. de Lubac (*Histoire et Esprit. L’Intelligence de l’Ecriture d’après Origène*, Paris 1950, 448 pp.) describes the position of Origen in the history of exegesis.

42. Origen. *Contra Celsum*. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Henry Chadwick, Cambridge 1953, 531 pp. So this work of Origen, which is very important even for exegesis, was newly presented and made accessible.

43. M. Harl has appended a detailed list of literature (pp. 33–68) to her *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe incarné* (Paris 1958); so also H. Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance mystique*, Paris 1961 (pp. 538–78); in addition he published in 1971 the *Bibliographie critique d’Origène* (*Instrumenta Patristica* VIII, 685 pp.) and continued it in 1982 with “Supplement I” (337 pp.); he regularly reviews the further literature in the “Chronique Origénienne” in *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, Toulouse.

44. R. Gögler (*Zur Theologie des biblischen Wortes bei Origenes*, Düsseldorf 1963, 400 pp.) cites J. Daniélou, H.-I. Marrou, H.-Ch. Puech; the work was completed in 1953, but only appeared in 1963. G. W. Butterworth (*Origen on First Principles*, New York 1966) cites de Lubac and offers a detailed introduction.

M. Simonetti.⁴⁵ But many others could also be mentioned, who again and again have raised their voices in the International Conferences on Patristic Studies held every four years in Oxford⁴⁶ and the “Colloquia Origeniana” and whose contributions have appeared in Origeniana I–VI. The *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte* (1962) appraises Origen as “the founder of an already richly developed Christ and Bride mysticism.” And finally the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in 1993 has not only taken up the mediaeval rule of the four senses of scripture,⁴⁷ which ultimately goes back to him, but quotes him by name in ten places, which are also indicated in the index.

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45. E. Corsini, *Commento al vangelo di Giovanni di Origene*, Turin 1968 (982 pp.); the first complete translation into a modern language appeared, surprisingly, in the series “Classici della Filosofia.” M. Simonetti (*In principi di Origene*, Turin 1968, 612 pp., in the series “Classici delle Religioni”) has prepared the way for a new evaluation of Rufinus’ performance in translation.

46. All the papers of the first ten conferences were published in the series “Texte und Untersuchungen” of the Akademieverlag, the following ones in other publishing houses.

47. No. 118 of the *Catechism* quotes the following mediaeval distich:

*Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.*

Its origin from the Greek is already betrayed by the two expressions *Allegory* and *Anagoge*.

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IV

DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (D. CA. 264/5)

Born in Alexandria near the end of the second century to a well-to-do non-Christian family, Dionysius received an excellent education. He explored different Gnostic traditions (*Letter to Philemon*) and finally converted to apostolic faith after a thorough study of Paul's letters. (*Chronicon orientale*) Origen may have prepared him for baptism. Soon a presbyter, according to Jerome, *de vir. inl.* 69, he replaced Heraclas as the head of the local school for the catechumenate in 231–232 (Eusebius of Caesarea *HE VI*, 29, 47; *contra Nautin*, *DPAC*). He must have belonged to Origen's local opponents, in particular in denouncing Origen's doctrines of pre-existent souls and of the eternity of the world. In 247/248 he again replaced his friend Heraclas, this time as bishop of Alexandria, only to suffer persecution under Decius (249–251) and Valerian (257–258), and to find himself involved in the subsequent controversies about the *lapsi*. His moderation allowed for a balanced decision about the baptism of heretics. Basing his opposition to Egyptian millenarism on a critical study of the Johannine Apocalypse (which he attributed to a John different from the Apostle) paradoxically Dionysius confirmed the inclusion of the Apocalypse in the NT canon. In letters exchanged with Dionysius of Rome he discussed scriptural symbols used in his trinitarian statements and introduced the generic use of *homousios* which would prevail in fourth century traditions in line with Origen's doctrine of three divine *hypostaseis*.

For a study of Dionysius' attitude to scripture, his two preserved *Festal Letters* show in particular how he combined biblical thought and classical culture. His letters on penance and baptism suggest how he linked scriptural references with ecclesiastical discipline. His *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* survives in a few fragments. His *Letter to Basilides*, a fellow bishop from Lybian Pentapolis whom he had befriended, focuses on the interval between the death and the resurrection of Jesus, and on the date of that resurrection.

On the Promises (Eusebius of Caesarea, *HE VII*, 24–25) examines the nature and authorship of the Apocalypse. This work documents his exegetical method: Book 1 ridicules popular beliefs about the thousand years of Christ's final reign on earth, and censures Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses V*; Book 2 discusses the Apocalypse, its current status in the church, the difficulty of its interpretation ("the way of interpreting each passage is entirely hidden and extraordinary"). First, he stresses the difference of "style" between the Gospel and the (first) Letter of John on one side, and the Apocalypse on the

other. The latter is due to an author “inspired by God” also called “John” and who never missed an opportunity to give his name, whereas the Johannine Gospel writer remains anonymous. Themes, vocabulary and Greek syntax are shared by the Gospel and Epistles, but not by the Apocalypse. Dionysius’ exercise in literary criticism on the Book of Revelation was to remain unparalleled until modern times.

The discussion of the precise hour of Christ’s resurrection in the *Letter to Basilides* shows the same clarity of judgement and open-mindedness: in comparing the wordings on that issue of all four Gospel writers, Dionysius concludes that the resurrection happened only after midnight; therefore fasting seemed more convenient until Easter Sunday morning. In answering other questions of Basilides, Dionysius quotes Matthew 9:20 and Luke 8:44, when recommending that women should abstain from communion during menstrual periods. He invokes Paul for letting husband and wife decide themselves whether to avoid intercourse during times of prayerful retreat.

On Martyrdom to Origen opposes the latter’s essay on the same topic, in particular chapter 29. Dionysius dedicated a more philosophical essay *On Nature* to his “son” Timothy. He anticipated the theological debate around Arianism in his four books, *Apology and Defence*. As Dionysius of Rome had commented on Prv 8:22 as a solid basis for his monarchian subordinationism, Dionysius expressed his own opinion on the vexed verse, but in the surviving fragments (Athanasius, *De sententia Dionysii*, 15) he only quotes implicitly Wis 7:26 when claiming that the Logos is “the radiance of eternal light” (PG 25, 501c), and he cites Prv 8:30 (501d) and Wis 7:25 (504a). His reservation about *homoousios* conforms to his usual hermeneutic: “Though I did not find that word in the scriptures I knew, by collecting the sense (τὸν νοῦν) of those very scriptures that as Son and Logos he could not be alien to the Father’s substance (τῆς οὐσίας)” (509b). The careful checking of literal data in scripture is always a priority, but it is always more important to keep the sense (τὸν νοῦν).

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GREGORY THAUMATURGUS (210/13–270/75)

Gregory, surnamed the “Wonder-worker” soon after his death, was born into a non-Christian family, but he became interested in Christianity before he went to Beirut with his brother, Athenodorus, in order to complete his law studies. On his way, he met Origen in Caesarea, and his life was turned upside down. He studied with Origen for five years. As a farewell speech, he delivered in 238 an *Encomium* (or *Thanksgiving Address*) of his beloved master, with quotations from OT and NT including the Book of Revelation (E. Marotta). It was the most solemn rhetorical performance of that sort, as far as we know, addressed to any church father. Soon after his return to his hometown in Pontus, Gregory became its bishop. In 250, he escaped with his community into neighbouring mountains during the persecution of Decius, but he could not avoid the ravages caused by the Goths and other Barbarian invaders in 258. His *Canonical Epistle* faces with a firm and sound judgement the dramatic situations imposed on men and women during the invasion. Scripture, with extensive quotations from Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy and Joshua, and also from Matthew, 1 Corinthians and Ephesians, is the sole authority dictating the bishop’s attitude in the ten authentic canons.

A *Metaphrase of the Book of Ecclesiastes* in twelve chapters was translated into English by S. D. F. Salmond in mid-nineteenth century, but received from A. Cleveland Coxe, its American editor of 1886 (ANF 6), at least for its last chapter, a less than flattering notice: “The incomparable beauty of our English version of this twelfth chapter of Koheleth is heightened not a little by comparison with this turgid metaphrase. It fails, in almost every instance, to extract the kernel of the successive stivcoi of this superlatively poetic and didactic threnode. It must have been a youthful work (ANF 6, 17). More recent critics (Noakes, Jarick) offer different and complementary insights on Gregory’s *Metaphrase*.

To Theopompos is an apologetic essay transmitted only in Syriac. In the form of a dialogue, it discusses with a pagan interlocutor the question of God’s impassibility. If Christ is said to have suffered, it means that he volunteered to do so in order to overcome suffering and death, which safe-guards the principle of God’s impassibility. A *Confessio fidei*, or *Symbolum*, transmitted under the name of Gregory Thaumaturgus, is a work of Gregory of Nyssa (L. Abramowski). A few other dubious or apocryphal writings are known, such as the *Letter to Philagrius* and a short essay *De anima*.

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Encomium of Origen:

PG 10, 1049–1104.

S. D. F. Salmond: *ANF* 6, 21–39 (English).

H. Crouzel: *SC* 148 (Text and French translation).

P. Guyot, R. Klein: *FaCh* 24 (German, with *Letter* 2 of Origen to Gregory, exhorting him to persevere in the study of scripture after his return from Caesarea to Neocaesarea).

E. Marotta: *TePa* 40 (Italian).

M. Slusser: *FaCh* 98 (English 1998).

Canonical Epistle:

PG 10, 1020–48.

S. D. F. Salmond: *ANF* 6, 18–20 (English).

P. P. Joannu, Rome 1963 (Text and French translation).

K. M. Phouskas, Athens 1978 (Text).

M. Slusser: *FaCh* 98 (English 1998).

To Theopompos:

P. Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, Osnabrück 1967 = Berlin 1858.

V. Ryssel, Leipzig 1880 (German).

M. Slusser: *FaCh* 98 (English 1998).

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VI
AMMONIOS OF ALEXANDRIA (MID-3RD C.)

Ammonius, who “seems to have been a contemporary of Origen, wrote a *Harmony between Moses and Jesus*, probably in order to prove against Gnostics (Marcion?) the unity of both Testaments” (Quasten II, 101).

VII
THEOGNOSTOS (SECOND HALF 3RD C.)

Successor to Dionysius as head of the school of Alexandria, ca. 265–282, Theognostos is known thanks to a long extract from Photius, *cod.* 106 quoting the *Hypotyposeis*, a systematic summary of Christian beliefs in seven books, of which four fragments are preserved (PG 10, 240f.).

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Harnack, A., *TU* 24/3 (1903) 73–92.

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VIII
THEONAS OF ALEXANDRIA (LATE 3RD C.)

Little is recorded of Theonas, who succeeded Theognostos as bishop of Alexandria in the final decades of the third century (281–300).

IX
PETER I OF ALEXANDRIA (D. 311)

Bishop of Alexandria (300–311) during the persecution of Diocletian, Peter was martyred in 311. His conflict with the rigorist Melitius concerning the *laspi* generated a number of letters and homilies. An essay *On the Divinity and Humanity of Christ*, a *De anima*, a treatise *On the Resurrection* against Origen, are relevant for Peter's hermeneutics.

EDITIONS

PG 18, 509–522. PG 86, 961B.

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METHODIUS OF OLYMPUS (D. CA. 311)

The writings of Methodius of Olympus span the closing years of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century. There is considerable uncertainty about this Christian writer. An itinerant teacher rather than a bishop with fixed location (R. Williams), it is possible that Methodius was martyred in 312 during Maximinus's visit to Caria.

His main work, also one of his earliest, *The Banquet* or *On Virginity*, (CPG I, 1810) is entirely preserved in the original Greek. Another essay, *On Free Will* (CPG I, 1810) is partly transmitted in large extracts by Eusebius of Caesarea PE VII, 22; Photius, Cod. 236; and in the *Sacra parallela* by John of Damascus. It also reads in Armenian (Ezrik of Kolb) and in a complete Old Slavonic version of the 11th century, under the more adequate title, *On God, Materia and Free Will*. A third essay, *On the Resurrection*, or *Aglaphon*, also survives in Old Slavonic. Parts of it are quoted by Epiphanius, Photius, John of Damascus, Justinian, and in several catenae. Other exegetical fragments are known through the *catenae*. They deal with the book of Job, the "red heifer" of Numbers 19 (*De cibis*), the leprosy mentioned in Leviticus 13 (*Sistelius: De lepra*); the leech of Prv 30:15 (*De sanguisuga*) and with Ps 18:2, "The heavens show forth the glory of God." Among the last works of Methodius figure commentaries *On Genesis* and *On the Canticles* which Jerome still records among the known works.

Methodius belongs to the hermeneutical tradition of Origen, whom he criticizes about the pre-existence of souls and the resurrected body. He denounces literalism as "Jewish" (*Symp.* 235f., 238–240) and favours allegorical interpretations of the OT, in particular the passages of the Pentateuch including legal or ritual regulations. He stresses free will, with a vision of salvation centred on the theme of divine image-likeness in human beings. Adam's humanity is still in an early stage: people were called to grow in grace by contributing their own generosity. Irenaeus of Lyon was a strong inspiration for Methodius.

The *Banquet* celebrates the legitimacy and beauty of human sexuality. Methodius, unlike the Apostle Paul, finds in it the best comparison for contemplating the union of Christ and Church. The celebration of virginity is bound with Methodius' millenaristic certitudes: virginity secures a new harmony between earthly and heavenly condition, and prefigures the final reign of Christ on earth (R. Williams).

The first of the eleven “Speeches” (*logoi*) of *The Banquet* is anticipated, in the Introduction by a mention of the “Bridegroom” (2 Cor 11:2), announcing the basic orientation of the whole work:

Logos 1 is a spiritual meditation on scripture, filled with numerous biblical quotations and references. Marcella, who delivers the *Logos*, stresses biblical history in a sweeping survey of human sexuality.

Logos 2, delivered by Theophila intends “to give scripture its proper place” (1), in showing that a Christian focus on the human condition calls for a biblical recourse in which scripture would inspire the whole argument. *Logos 2* insists that the truth about virginity can only be reached by allegorizing scripture.

Logos 3 is entirely dedicated to a critical comment on Pauline texts. It starts by directly questioning 2 Cor 11:2 on the relevance of allegory, and with quotation of Eph 5:28–32 claims that one has to follow “the Apostle, teaching us to take the text in a more spiritual sense as referring to Christ” (1). The literal sense should never be neglected: “For it is a precarious procedure to disregard utterly the actual meaning of the text as written, particularly in the book of Genesis” (2), but in some cases “let us inquire more deeply into the text and explain its corresponding spiritual sense” (2). Such remarks do not deviate from Origen’s own hermeneutics.

Logos 4, interested in “the senses of the soul” (also an Origenian topos) and in what “the Holy Spirit tells us” according to Psalm 136 (2 and 5), refers insistently to Christian scholarship: “as the scholars tell us” (4) probably also with Origen in mind.

Logos 5, delivered by Thallusa seeks “to explain to you by true reasoning the spiritual meaning of scripture” (2). Her argument is simple, repeating Origen again: “If, according to the Apostle, ‘the law is spiritual’ and contains within itself the images ‘of the good things to come’, then let us remove ‘the veil’ of the letter which is spread over it and contemplate its true meaning stripped bare” (7). What is proper to Methodius is the way in which Thallusa combines spiritual exegesis with chiliastic faith, again the global history of salvation serving as a background.

Logos 6 becomes utterly allegorical: “For the oil represents wisdom and righteousness (3), “Midnight stands for the reign of the Antichrist” (4), “These, my fair maidens, are the secret rites of our mysteries, the mystical rites of initiation into virginity” (5).

In *Logos 7*, Procilla maintains the global vision, dear to Methodius, in celebrating “all those who have been outstanding in righteousness from the beginning throughout the course of history” (4).

Logos 8 turns Thecla's attention towards the Apocalypse, "relying on Him who has bidden us to search the scriptures" (Jn 5: 39) (4) and "without flinching before the tremendous obscurities of scripture: (9).

Logos 9 scorns the Jews for missing the spiritual meaning of their own scripture: "For the Law is a shadow and type of the image, that is to say, of the Gospel, and the image, the Gospel, represents the truth which will be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ" (2). Again, in these stages and in a vision close to the mind of Origen, the status of exegesis and the Gospel event are contemplated in the light of global history.

The same happens in *Logos* 10, when Domnina explains why there are four Gospels, and in *Logos* 11, more exactly, in Thecla's final hymn.

The elaborate treatment in *Banquet*, *Logos* 9, of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lv 23: 35–43) "is commonly recognized as the first evidence of the Christian use of Jewish millenarian interpretations of the feast," but "the common notion that Methodius is an adherent of a millenarian tradition is quite misleading" (Patterson, 106). Daniélou (*Gospel Message*, 289–300) had characterized Methodius's exegesis as consistent with the typological approach of Asia Minor. Patterson objects convincingly "that is far as Methodius sets forth a rationale for the treatment of the scriptures, that rationale is indebted to Origen rather than to anyone else. His approach is at once both typological and allegorical, as his use of Hebrews 10:1 shows. But so is Origen's" (Patterson, 128). Patterson also discusses "the introduction of the excerpt from Origen on Ps 1:5" (151–152), the exegesis of Pauline quotations (160–166). A thorough examination of Origen's thought, as criticized by Methodius, on the "days of Creation" (Ps 90:2–4) completes his study (201–214).

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- . "Der edessenische 'Pseudo-Methodius.'" *ByZ* 83 (1990): 31–45.
- Riggi, C. "Teologia della storia nel 'Simposio' di Metodio di Olimpio." In *Epistrophe*, edited by B. Amata, 481–504. Rome, 1985.
- Simonetti, M. "Il millenarismo (Apc 20,2) in Oriente da Origene a Metodio." In *Corona Gratiarum Fs. E. Dekkers*, 37–58. Brugge: Gravenhage, 1975.
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CHAPTER SEVEN
THIRD-CENTURY LATIN
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

CONTENTS

- I. Minucius Felix 591
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I
MINUCIUS FELIX (EARLY 3RD C.)

The *Octavius*, composed between 197 and 250 C.E., takes its name from the title given by a copyist who counted it as “eighth” book of Arnobius, *Adversus nationes*. This mistaken attribution probably preserved a work which transmits a conversation between three friends on Christian apologetics concerning divine providence and monotheism, and on ethics. There are no biblical quotations, but affinities with scripture, which help to shape its Christian style: “a scriptural impregnation which, though very discreet, is the more noteworthy and certainly the more efficient with regard to any potential reader.” (J. Fontaine, *Aspects*, 119; affinities with scripture, 114–117). The relationship between Minucius and Tertullian remains a matter of scholarly discussion.

EDITIONS

Beaujeu, J., 2nd ed. 1974.
Halm, K.: CSEL 2.
Kytzler, B., 2nd ed., 1992.
Naia de Silva, M. A., Lisbon 1990.
Solinas, F., 1992.

TRANSLATIONS

French: Beaujeu (see above).
English: Clarke, C. W.: ACW 39, 1974.
German: Heck, E., Tübingen 1981; Kytzler, D., Darmstadt 1993 = Munich 1965.
Italian: Solinas (see above).
Portuguese: Naia de Silva (see above).

CONCORDANCE

B. Kytzler, D. Najock. Hildesheim 1991.

STUDIES

Becker, C., *Der Octavius des Municius Felix*. Munich 1967.

Buchheit, V., "Die Wahrheit im Heilsplan Gottes bei Municius Felix": *VC* 39 (1985): 105-9.

Rizzi, M., "Amicitia e veritas: il prologo dell' Octavius": *Aevum antiquum* 3 (1990): 245-68.

Siniscalco, P., "Minucio Félice," *DPAC* II 2259-62.

Wiesen, D. S., "Virgil, Minucius Felix and the Bible": *Hermes* 99 (1971): 70-91.

Windau, B.: *LACL*, 2nd ed. 1999, 441-42.

II TERTULLIAN (D. CA. 220)

Tertullian, traditionally seen as a jurist and advocate of some renown (an opinion broadly denied by modern experts; see Rankin), converted in Rome ca. 193. A prolific writer, Tertullian went back to his native Carthage, where he became a priest according to Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 53). “With a profound knowledge of philosophy, law, Greek and Latin letters, Tertullian combines inexhaustible vigor, burning rhetoric, and biting satire. His attitude is uncompromising. Forever a fighter, he knew no relenting towards his enemies, whether pagans, Jews, heretics, or, later on, Catholics” (Quasten, II, 247).

We know of forty-two treatises, composed by Tertullian between 195 and 220 C.E., eleven of them being lost. “Except for St. Augustine, Tertullian is the most important and original ecclesiastical author in Latin” (Quasten II, 247). On occasion, he also wrote directly in Greek. In all his tractates and pamphlets, this passionate advocate of personal religious beliefs carried scripture in his brief as the decisive piece of evidence. The Bible not only served as proof-text, but Tertullian found in it the very language appropriate for his pleas. Based on Old Latin translations of Hebrew scripture and on his own reading of Greek versions of the scriptures, Tertullian’s style and vocabulary inaugurated “Christian Latin” (C. Mohrman). He quotes all canonical writings, except 2 and 3 John.

Surveyed in their most probable chronological order, Tertullian’s tractates offer a rich variety of insights into his use of the Bible:

193 C.E., *De pallio*

Scripture is not quoted in this treatise.

196(?) C.E., *Apologeticum*

Again, no scripture is quoted in this Apology addressed to the governors of Roman provinces (*Romani imperii antistites*).

196 C.E., *De idololatria*

This treatise argues against Christians who were, in one way or another, involved in activities linked with the cult of the idols. After a reference to 1 Jn 3:15, *sicut Iohannes docet* (2; 32, 3), denouncing idolatry as evil, the OT prohibition of idols is asserted by quoting Ex 20:3, Dt 5:8; Is 44:8–9,

20; Ps 115:8 (4–8). All social or professional activities directly or indirectly related to the cult of idols are declared inappropriate for Christians (9–12). The exhortation, punctuated by NT quotations, disqualifies all forms of the established cult of idols, Tertullian's final argument calling on biblical typology: *serte idololatres in arcae typo non habetur. Nullum animal in idololatren figuratum est. Quod in arca in fuit, in ecclesia, non sit* "For sure no practitioner of idolatry can be found in the type of the ark. No animal (in it) prefigures an idolator. What was missing in the ark should not be accepted in the church" (24; 58, 5–8).

EDITIONS

Nat, P. G. van der, *Q.S.F. Tertulliani De idolatria, Pars I (chap. 1–9)*, with introduction, translation and commentary. Leiden 1960.
Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 30–58.
Waszink, J. H., SVigChr 1.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Nat (see above); Waszink (see above).
German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7, 137–74.

STUDIES

Nat (see above).

197 C.E., *Ad nationes*

The liturgical use of scripture is discreetly mentioned here: *coimus ad litterarum divinarum commemorationem—certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiducium figimus, disciplinam praeceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus*, "With those holy words we feed our faith, we lift up our hopes, we confirm our confidence; and no less we reinforce our teaching by inculcation of God's precepts..." (39, 3). Except for II. II. 3, *divina alias enunciata Solomonis*, "sacred pronouncements by Solomon made elsewhere," a possible allusion to Eccl 1:16, or Prv 1:7, 9: 10, or Ps 1:10, and II. IV. 4, an allusion to Acts 17:23, *ignotis deis*, there are no biblical references in the text.

EDITION

Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 59–133.

TRANSLATION

French: Schneider, A., BHRom. Giessen 1968.

197 C.E., *De spectaculis*

This is a pastoral admonition without a single reference to scripture(!).

197 C.E., *De testimonio animae*

A tractate that briefly expands the argument of *Apologeticum* about the *testimonium animae naturaliter christianae*, “the testimony of the soul Christian by nature.” Despite a possible allusion to scripture (*notris litteris* 1; 135, 9), the pamphlet addresses educated non-Christians in dispensing from biblical quotations or references.

EDITIONS

Kroymann, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 134–43.

Tibiletti, C., Florence 1984.

TRANSLATIONS

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7, 203–14; Waszink, J. H., Munich 1980.

Italian: Tibiletti (see above).

197 C.E., *Ad martyras*

Tertullian exhorts imprisoned Christian catechumens to exercise *perseverantia* and to prepare for the supreme sacrifice. One notes in it only a close paraphrase of Mt 6:21 in chap. 2, a partial quotation of 1 Cor 9:25 in chap. 3, and a reference to Mt 26:41, *scimus ex dominico praecepto* (Dekkers 6, 10), “From the saying of Our Lord we know” (Thelwell, 694).

EDITIONS

Dekkers, E., CCL 1 (1954): 1–8.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930.

Mohrmann, C., *Monumenta christiana* 1, 3. Utrecht – Brussels, 1941, 183–95.

English: Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 693–96.

German: Kellner, H., BKV 2nd ed. 7 (1912).

STUDIES

Campanhausen, H. von, *Die Idee des Martyriums in der alten Kirche*. Göttingen 1936, 17–28.

197 C.E., *Adversus Iudaeos*

Based on Justin's *Dialogue* (other opinion, J. Daniélou, *Les origines*, 217–24), it was composed before *Adversus Marcionem* III. Only chapters 1 to 8 are authentic. Biblical quotations were probably added at a later date.

EDITIONS

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942).

Tränkle, H., Vienna 1964.

TRANSLATIONS

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7, 300–323.

ca. 197–201 C.E. *De cultu feminarum*

Cosmetics and other beauty artifices are diabolic inventions. In this treatise there are references to Genesis, Matthew and Paul. For adding the authority of the *Book of Enoch*, Tertullian argues that Noah could have saved the work during the Deluge, or re-written it by memory soon after (chap. 3–4).

EDITIONS

Isetta, S., Florence 1986.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942): 59–95.

Turcan, M., SC 173.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Thelwall, S., *On the Apparel of Women*, ANF 4 (1885, 1995): 14–25.

French: Turcan (see above).

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7, 175–202.

Italian: Isetta (see above).

ca. 198–200 C.E., *De oratione*

In both parts of this Exhortation, the first on the Our Father, the second, commencing like a poem with practical advice for prayer life, Tertullian addresses the Christian community in keeping his attention constantly directed to scripture.

EDITIONS

Dekkers, E., CCL 1 (1954): 255–74 = Diercks, G. F., StPM 4. Bussum 1947.

Evans, E., London 1953.

Gramaglia, P. A., Rome 1994.

Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 180–200.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1931.

English: Evans (see above); Sutter, A., London – New York 1919; Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885–1995): 681–91.

French: Hamman, A., *Le Pater expliqué par les Pères*, Paris 1959 (extracts).

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7 (1912): 247–273.

Italian: Gramaglia (see above).

STUDIES

Moffat, J., “Tertullian on the Lord’s Prayer”: *ET* 18 (1919): 24–41.

Pétre, H., “Les leçons du *panem nostrum quotidianum*”: *RSR* 38 (1951), Fs. J.

Lebreton, 63–79.

Schäfer, O., “Das Vaterunser, das Gebet des Christen. Einer asketische Studie nach Tertullian *De oratione*”: *ThGl* 35 (1943): 1–6.

ca. 198–203 C.E., *De baptismo*

The anti-Gnostic explanation of Christian baptism starts by celebrating water in the original creation of the world. It describes the baptismal symbolism of water as prefigured in the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 8), in the water from the rock (Ex 17) and in John's baptism. New Testament data are scrutinized in order to demonstrate the validity of the rite: in chaps. 5–6, the healing power of baptismal water was signified in advance by the angel of Bethesda (Jn 5:1–9).

EDITIONS

Borleffs, J. W. P., CCL 1 (1954): 275–295.

Evans, E., London 1964.

Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 201–18.

Refoulé, R. F. and M. Drouzy, SC 35 (1952).

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930; Mohrmann, C., *Monumenta christiana* 1, 3. Utrecht, 1951, 241–71.

English: Evans (see above); Souter, A., London 1919; Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885–1995): 669–79.

French: Refoulé (see above).

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd. ed. 7 (1912): 274–299.

STUDIES

Amann, E., “L'ange du baptême dans Tertullien”: *RevSR* 1 (1921): 208–21.

Borleffs, J. W. P., “Zu Tertullian *de baptismo*”: *Philologische Wochenschrift* 51 (1931): 251–25.

Dölger, F. J., “Die Eingliederung des Taufsymbols in den Taufvollzug nach den Schriften Tertullians. Zu Tertullian *De baptismo* 2, 1”: *AC* 4 (1934): 138–46.

198–203 C.E. *Ad uxorem*

The editor of *Ad uxorem* in SC, C. Munier, dedicates a section of his introduction to “L'interprétation scripturaire” (45–57). If OT references and quotations are spread over both parts of the letter/pamphlet, the commentary of 1 Cor 7 is the letter's centerpiece. Tertullian reaches an important conclu-

sion: Should the chosen partner be a Christian, a second marriage can be accepted.

EDITIONS

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942): 96–124 = CCL 1 (1954): 371–94.
 Munier, C., SC 227 (1980).
 Stephan, A., The Hague 1954.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Mohrmann, C., *Monumenta christiana* 1, 3. Utrecht-Brussels 1951, 329–56.
English: Le Saint, W. P., ACW 13.
French: Munier (see above); Quéré-Jeaulmes, F., in *Le mariage dans l'Église ancienne*, Paris 1969.
German: Kellner, H., BKV 2nd ed. 7 (1912): 60–84.

STUDIES

Braun, R., “Tertullien et l'exégèse de I Cor. vii”: J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser, eds., Fs. J. Danielou, *Epektasis*, Paris 1972, 21–28.
 Glaue, P., “Die Vorlesung heiliger Schriften bei Tertullian”: *ZNW* 23–24 (1924–25): 141–52.
 Rambaux, C., “La composition et l'exégèse dans les deux lettres *Ad uxorem*, le *De exhortatione castitatis* et le *De monogamia*—ou la construction de la pensée dans les traités de Tertullien sur le remariage”: *REAug* 22 (1976): 3–28, 201, 217; 23 (1977): 16–55.

Shortly after 200 C.E., *Adversus Hermogenem*

In this anti-Gnostic affirmation of Creation, Hermogenes is refuted on the basis of a critical examination of his interpretation of scripture (19–34). Genesis serves as the tonic chord with calls on Psalms, Isaiah, Matthew and the Apocalypse. “*Adversus Hermogenem* demonstrates the profound coherency of Tertullian’s use of scripture; he constantly applies principles of interpretation as prescribed by himself” (Chapot, 46).

EDITIONS

Chapot, F., SC 439 (1999).

Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 126–176 = CCL 1 (1954): 395–435.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Waszink, J. H., ACW 24.

French: Chapot (see above).

STUDIES

A bibliography on Hermogenes and Tertullian's *Adversus Hermogenem* is offered by Chapot, 66–67.

ca. 202–203 C.E., *De carne et anima*

Again, there are no biblical quotations.

203 C.E., *De praescriptione*

“The most finished, the most characteristic, and the most valuable of Tertullian's writings” (Quasten, II, 272), in which Matthew and Paul are dominant. Heretics are not able to interpret scripture correctly, according to 1 Tm 6:3–4 and Ti 3–10. The Bible belongs to those who comply to the “rule of faith.”

EDITIONS

Bakhuizen van den Brink, J. N., The Hague, 1946.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942): 1–58.

Martin, J., *Florilegium Patristicum* 4. Bonn 1930.

Refoulé, R. F. and P. de Labriolle, SC 46 (1954).

TRANSLATIONS

English: Holmes, P., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 243–65; Le Saint, W. P., ACW 8 (1959).

French: Refoulé (see above).

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 24, 303–54.

203–204 C.E., *De paenitentia*

Originally an oral presentation to the whole assembly, the treatise presents a refined rhetorical argument, aiming at elegant persuasion. Reminiscences of scripture are pervasive but there are few actual quotations. Among the latter, only a small number are formally introduced as scriptural, e.g. IV, 20; VIII: 1–2; XI, 7.

EDITIONS

Borleffs, P., *Mnemosyne* 60 (1932); The Hague (1948) CCL 1 (1954): 319–40; CSEL 76 (1957): 140–170.
Munier, C., SC 316 (1984).

TRANSLATIONS

English: Le Saint, W. P., ACW 8; Thelwall, S., ANF 4 (1885, 1995): 657–66.
French: Labriolle, P. de., Paris 1906; Munier, C. (see above).
German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. (1915): 224–46.
Italian: Sciuto, F., Catania 1961, 71–113.

STUDIES

See the general bibliography in SC 316.
Aalders, G. J. D., *Tertullianus' citaten uit de Evangelien en de oudlatijnsche bijbelvertalingen*. Diss. Amsterdam 1932.
Geest, J. E. L., van der, *Le Christ et l'Ancien Testament chez Tertullien* 1972.
Hanson, R. P. C., “Notes on Tertullian’s Interpretation of Scripture”: *JThS* 12 (1961) 273–79.
O’Malley, T. P., *Tertullian and the Bible*. Nijmegen – Utrecht 1967.
Rönsch, H., *Itala und Vulgata*. Marburg 2nd ed., 1875 = Munich 1965.

204 C.E., *De patientia* (cf. Seneca)

There are more NT than OT quotations, with Matthew quoted thirty-eight times, more than three times as much as the other Gospels. Equal in frequency are the Pauline quotations. Heroic examples of patience can be found in OT and NT, such as those of Isaiah and Stephen in their violent deaths, but the “patience” of Christ surpasses all. Patience is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

EDITIONS

- Borleffs, J. W. P., The Hague (1948).
Fredouille, J.-C., SC 310 (1984).
Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 1–24.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Mohrmann, C., Utrecht – Brussels 1951, 303–28.
English: Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1870, 1963): 707–17.
French: Fredouille (see above).
German: Kellner, K. A. H., BKV 2nd. ed. 7 (1912): 34–59.
Italian: Sciuto, F., Catania 1961.

STUDIES

- Carlson, M. L., “Pagan Examples of Fortitude in the Latin Christian Apologists”:
CPh 43 (1848): 93–104.

207 C.E. *Adversus Marcionem* I

Tertullian refutes the Marcionite opposition between OT and NT.

EDITIONS

- Braun, R., SC 365 (1990).
Evans, E., OECT, Oxford 1972.
Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 290–650 = CCL 1 (1954): 441–74.
Moreschini, C., Testi e documenti per lo studio dell’ antichità, 35 Milan 1971,
1974 (review *Gnomon* 46, 1974 166–74).

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Meyboom, H. V., Leiden 1927.
English: Evans (see above); Holmes, P., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 271–95; AN
Christian Library 7, Edinburgh 1888.
French: Braun (see above).

STUDIES

- Aalders, G. J. D. (see above *De paenitentia*).
- Bill, A., *Zur Erklärung und Textkritik des 1. Buches Tertullians adversus Marcionem*. TU 38, 2. Leipzig 1911.
- Colson, F. H., "Tertullian on Luke VI. Two Examples of Literary and Rhetorical Criticism in the Fathers": *JThS* 25 (1924): 364-77.
- Higgins, A. J. B., "The Latin Text of Luke in Marcion and Tertullian": *VC* 5 (1951): 1-42.
- Naumann, J., "Das Problem des Bösen in Tertullians zweitem Buch gegen Marcion": *ZKT* 58 (1934): 311-363, 533-51.
- Soden, H. von, "Der lateinische Paulustext bei Marcion und Tertullian": *Fs. A. Jülicher*. Tübingen 1927, 229-81.
- Stengel, M., "Zum Wortschatz der neutestamentlichen Vulgata": *VC* 6 (1952): 20-27.
- Tenney, M. C., "The Quotations from Luke in Tertullian as Related to the Texts of the Second and Third Centuries": *HS* 56-57 (1947): 258-60.

207-209 C.E., *Adversus Valentinianos*

Tertullian presents a polemical entertainment, based on the premise that *congruet et veritate ridere, quia laetare; de aemulis suis judere, quia segura est*, "truth can laugh, she is happy; she can laugh at her competitors, she has nothing to fear" (6, 3). The satirical rejection of Gnostic genealogies includes a discussion of the notions of *forma* and *persona*. There are no biblical references, except in the introductory section where the *simplicitas* of Christians is eulogized. Tertullian takes over large sections of Irenaeus's refutation of the Valentinians, but drops the biblical elements because of the satirical genre of the essay.

EDITIONS

- Fredouille, J.-C., SC 280-81 (1980-81).
- Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 177-212 = CCL 2 (1954): 751-78.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1942, 78-111.
- English*
- Riley, M. T., Diss. Stanford University 1971 (Univ. microfilms, Ann Arbor).
- Roberts, A., ANF 3 (1870, 1963): 503-20.

French: Fredouille (see above; vol. 281: continuous commentary and indices).

German: Kellner, K. A. H., BKV (1882).

Italian: Marastoni, A., Padua 1971; Moreschini, C., Turin 1974.

208 C.E. *De corona*

Scriptural reminiscences are pervasive but with only a few explicit quotations. Among numerous arguments against the acceptance of laurel crowns by Christian soldiers, Tertullian invokes an example of biblical prefiguration: in the OT, no “crown” is ever mentioned in reference to the Temple, the Ark: *At quin si figurae nostrae fuerunt—nos enim sumus et templa dei et altaria et luminaria et vasa—, hoc quoque figurate portendebant, hominis dei coronari non oportere*, “but indeed, as a prefiguration of us—for we are God’s temple, altar, lampstand and vase—they also predicted in a symbolic way that God’s people ought not to be crowned” (IX, 2; Kroymann, CCL 2, 1052).

EDITIONS

Fontaine, J., Paris 1964.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942): 153–88 = CCL 2 (1954): 1037–65.

Marra, I., 2nd ed., Turin 1944.

Ruggiero, F., Milan 1992.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1931.

English: Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (188, 1995): 93–103.

French: Fontaine (see above).

German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 24 (1915): 230–63.

Italian: Ruggiero (see above).

STUDIES

Plinval, G. de, “Tertullien et le scandale de la Couronne”: *Fs. De Ghellinck*, 1951, 183–88.

Ryan, E. A., “The Rejection of Military Service by the Early Christians”: *TS* 13 (1952): 1–32.

210 C.E., *De Anima*

This treatise, Tertullian's longest, presents indirect references to scripture in the author's own exposition. Only in sixteen passages, does Tertullian find himself compelled to quote scripture explicitly, his leading reference being the Book of Genesis (III, 4, XI, 3-4, XXI, 2, XXVI, 5, XXVII, 6, XXXVII, 3, XLV, 3). Tertullian feels free to introduce his quotations in various and imaginative ways: III, 4, *muniti et illic divinae determinationis in obscurabili regula*, "we relied even there on the clear direction of the inspired statement which informs us how"; XI, 3-4 *in sequentibus instrumentis*, "in such passages as the following" (XI, 2, 25; Holmes, 191) namely Gn 2:7 and other verses called by it; XV, 4: a constellation of elements from Psalms, Wisdom, Proverbs, Matthew, John, Romans; XVI, 6: a polemical constellation of biblical references and allusions; XVII, 14: *recita Johannis testationem*, "Read (loudly!) John's testimony," 1 Jn 1:1; XVIII, 12: *Quia et apostolus nobis scribit*, "for the apostle writes for us," Rom 1:20; XXI, 2: *si quia prophetavit* (Adam) *magnum illud sacramentum in Christum et ecclesiam*, "It is because he prophetically declared 'the great mystery of Christ and the church' (Eph 5:32)," in Gn 2:23f.; 4: *apostolus scribens*, "the apostle writing," Eph 2:3, 5:8 and 1 Cor 6:11 by association of thought; XXVI, 5: *Sic et ad Hieremiam legis dei vocem*, "Accordingly let me call on Jeremiah to account for God's law," in Jer 1:5, followed by Gn 2:7, Mt 26:32; XXVII, 6: Gn 1:26-28.

EDITIONS

Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 298-396.

Waszink, J. H. Amsterdam 1947 = Munich 1980 = CCL 2 (1954): 779-869.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930.

English

Holmes, P., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 181-235.

Quain, E. H., FaCh 10 (1950): 179-309.

French: Genoude, M. de, Paris 1852.

German

Kellner, M., BKV, Kempten 1871.

Waszink, J. H., *Tertullianus. De anima. Mit Übersetzung und Kommentar.*
Amsterdam: J.M. Menlenhoff, 1947.

208–209 C.E., *De fuga*

The theme of flight has already been touched on in *De corona*. Mt 10: 23 refers only to the apostles. This treatise was written to a friend. Now a Montanist, Tertullian forbids flight in times of persecution.

EDITIONS

- Bulhart, V., CSEL 76 (1957): 17–43.
 Marra, J., Turin 1933.
 Thierry, J. J., Hilversum 1941 = CCL 2 (1954): 1133–55.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1932; Thierry (see above).
English: Thelwall, S., ANF 4 (1885, 1995): 116–25.

STUDIES

- Castiglioni, L., *Ad Tertullianum adnotationes*. Studi Ubaldi. Milan 1937, 260 ff.
 Waszink, J. H., *Museum* 1 (1943): 168–78.

208–209 C.E., *Adversus Marcionem* II, III

Adversus Marcionem II presents a systematic justification of the God of the OT: God is truly Creator, innocent of Adam's sin, of which the latter is solely responsible because of free will. Though severe, the God of the OT is benevolent. Tertullian mentions the fact, but abstains from a deeper inquiry: *ut nihil de aeternis arcanis adtingam significantiis legis, spiritualis scilicet et propheticae et in omnibus paene argumentis figuratae*, "not to mention the mysterious meanings of the Law, spiritual as it is, and prophetic, and in almost all topics figurative" (XIX, 1; 118, 8–9). He thinks that to understand the fact, *simpliciter*, "in its literal sense," is enough for now (XIX, 2; O'Malley, 169f.). Against other Marcionite objections, Tertullian explains divine legislations concerning Sabbath and sacrifices, and dealing with all vicissitudes of sacred history, with both the repentant and the wicked involved in it. Some quotations of scripture furnish historical confirmation. Most of the time they are only reminiscences.

After Quispel, Prigent, and Tränkle, Braun emphasizes the influence of Justin and Irenaeus on Tertullian's use of scripture in *Adversus Marcionem* I and II. In Book III, "the biblical references outnumber by far those of Book

I and II: 264, of which 95 are explicit citations” (SC 399, 30). A most helpful analysis by themes of the biblical references in Book III fills up a set of “Notes complémentaires” in SC 399, 270–306.

Adversus Marcionem III, like I and II, betrays the influence of Justin and Irenaeus in Tertullian’s use of scripture.

EDITIONS

Braun, R., *Adversus Marcionem* II, SC 368 (1991); III, SC 399 (1994).
For other editions and translations, and for the rest of the bibliography, see above, *Adv. Marc.* I–II. Note, in particular, G. Pfligersdorffer, *De Tertulliani adversus Marcionem libri tertii argumento sententiarumque connexu*. Diss. Vienna 1939.

209 C.E., *De virginibus velandis*

Female ascetics should not ask for special privileges in the community. There are twelve biblical quotations and a thin layer of scriptural reminiscences, mainly from Genesis and the Pauline letters, in this short pamphlet.

EDITIONS

Bulhart, V., CSEL 76 (1957): 79–103.
Dekkers, E., CCL 2 (1954): 1207–26.
Diercks, F., StPM 4, Utrecht 1956, 38–60.
Schulz-Flügel, E., Diss. Göttingen 1977; *Fontes Chr.*
Mattei, P. and E. Schulz-Flügel, SC 424 (1997).
Stücklin, C., Diss. Basle. Bern – Frankfurt 1974.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 27–37.
French: Mattei (see above).
German: Kellger, K. A. H., 2nd ed., 1882 Cologne; Schulz-Flügel (see above).
Italian: Gramalia, Turin 1984.

STUDIES

Bibliography in SC 424. In particular note: V. Morel, “Deductor omnis veritatis. Het vers Joh. 16, 23 bij Tertullianus”: *Stud. Cath.* 16 (1940) 194–206;
J. E. L. Van der Geest, *Le Christ et l’Ancien Testament chez Tertullien*.

Recherche terminologique (Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva, 22) Nijmegen 1972.

208–212 C.E., *De exhortatione castitatis*

This is a polemic against second marriage. Tertullian reworks *Ad uxorem* in favour of Montanist encratism. 1 Cor 7:9 literally means “to burn” in Hell! Once more, Tertullian privileges the combined quotations of Genesis and Paul.

EDITIONS

Friedrich, H. V., Stuttgart 1990.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 70 (1942): 125–52 = CCL 2 (1954): 1013–35.

Moreschini, C. and J.-C., Fredouille, SC 319 (1985).

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1931.

English: Thelwall, S., ANF 4 (1885, 1995): 50–58; Le Saint, W. P., ACW 13 (1951): 42–64.

French: Moreschini: above.

German: Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 7, 324–46; Friedrich, (see above).

STUDIES

Braun, R., “Tertullien et l'exégèse de 1 Cor 7”: J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser, eds. *Epektasis*, Fs. J. Daniélou. Paris 1972, 21–28.

Ford, J. M., “St. Paul the Philogamist”: *NTS* 11 (1965): 326–48.

Koch, H., *Virgines Christi*. Die Gelübde der gottgeweihten Jungfrauen in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten. TU, 31 2. Leipzig 1907.

O'Malley, T. P., *Tertullian and the Bible*. Nijmegen – Utrecht 1967.

Rambaux, C., “La composition et l'exégèse dans les deux lettres *Ad uxorem*, le *De exhortatione castitatis* et le *De monogamia*”: *REAug* (1976): 3–28; 201–217; (1977): 18–55.

Rönsch, H., *Das Neue Testament Tertullians*. Leipzig 1871.

210–211 C.E., *De ieiunio adversus psychicos*

A narrative illustration and rejection of Catholic indulgence, seen from a Montanist viewpoint. The OT and NT are called to testify in favour of a more rigorist diet and more frequent fasting.

EDITIONS

Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 274–97 = CCL 2 (1954): 1255–77.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U. Leiden 1931.

English: Thelwall, S. ANF 4 (1885, 1995): 102–19.

German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 24 (1915): 519–59.

STUDIES

Arbesmann, R., “Fasting and Prophecy in Pagan and Christian Antiquity”: *Trad* 7 (1949): 32–71.

Schümmer, J., *Die altchristliche Fastenpraxis, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Schriften Tertullians*. LQF 27. Münster/W 1933.

210–213 C.E., *Adversus Marcionem* IV

The treatise is almost as long as the three former books together. In II, 1, the *evangelicum instrumentum* is declared older than Marcion since it was handed over by apostolic tradition. Tertullian offers an argumentative paraphrase of Gospel narratives with abundant quotations showing how Jesus vindicates and fulfills ancient prophecy.

EDITIONS, TRANSLATIONS

see *Adv. Marc.* I. Also:

Alès, A. d., “Tertullien, IV *Adv. Marcionem* 21”: *RSR* 26 (1936): 99–100, 585–86; 27 (1937): 228–30.

Corssen, P., “*Tertulliani Adversus Marcionem in librum quartum animadversiones*”: *Mnem* 51 (1923): 242–61; 390–411; 52 (1924): 225–49.

211 C.E., *De resurrectione carnis (mortuorum)* CCL

Tertullian’s intention is *ad muniendos sensus omnium scripturarum, quae carnis recidivatum pollicentur*, “to lay a foundation for the defence of all the scriptures that promise resurrection of the flesh” (XVIII, 1; Holmes, 557), in particular, Genesis 1, Ezekiel, with strong quotation of the NT, specially 1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians and the Apocalypse. Tertullian gives a

preliminary warning: *Nacti enim quidam sollemmissimam eloquii prophetici formam, allegorici et figurati, plerumque, non tamen semper, resurrectionem quoque mortuorum manifeste adnuntiatam in imaginariam significationem distorquent, adserentes ipsam etiam mortem spiritaliter intellegendam*, “for some, when they have alighted on a very usual form of prophetic statement, generally expressed in figure and allegory, though not always, distort into some imaginary sense even the most clearly described doctrine of the resurrection of the dead” (XIX 2; Holmes, 558). His notion of a spiritual exegesis was different from gnostic speculation, as he kept a realistic view of prophetic utterances, even if some of them needed allegory. Chap. XVIII to XX expose a forceful summary of anti-Gnostic hermeneutics.

There is an exegesis of Mt 12:49 “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” VII, 1–13; of Rom 6:6, XVI, 1–5; of Jn 1:13, XIX, 1–5, and scriptural proofs on the “mother of God” virginal and non-virginal, XXI–XXIII.

EDITIONS

Evans, E., London 1960.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 25–125.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Evans (see above).

Holmes, P., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 545–594.

Souter, A., London 1922.

STUDIES

Davies, J. G., “*De Resurrectione Carnis LXIII*. Note sur l’origine du Montanisme”:

JThS, n. s. 6 (1955): 90–94.

Sevenster, G., “De ‘opstanding des vleses’ bij Tertullianus en het Nieuwe Testament”:

NThT 9 (1955): 364–72.

211–212 C.E., *To Scapula*

In a manifesto addressed to Scapula, proconsul of Africa (211–213), the author pleads for religious freedom; he limits his views of scripture to three allusions in the introduction, and another one in 4, 8. His recourse to the Bible is discreet enough for being only detectable to the eye of the modern critic.

EDITIONS

- Bindley, T., Oxford 1893.
 Bulhart, V., CSEL 76 (1957): 17–43.
 Dekkers, E., CCL 2 (1954): 1125–32.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930.
English: Arbesmann, R., FaCh 10 (1950): 151–61; Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 105–8.
German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G. BKV 2nd ed. 24 (1955): 264–274.
Spanish: Pellicer, de Ossau, J., Barcelona 1639.

211–212 C.E., *De scorpiace*

The latinized *skorpiakoun*, “remedy against the sting of a scorpion,” served as an appropriate title in Tertullian’s mind for an anti-Gnostic pamphlet, in which he defends the merits of martyrdom.

EDITIONS

- Azzali Bernadelli, G., Florence 1990.
 Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 144–79 = CCL 2 (1954): 1067–97.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch*: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930.
English: Thelwall, S., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 633–48.
German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 24 (1915): 183–229.
Italian: Azzali Bernadelli (see above).

STUDIES

- Buonaiuti, E., “L’Antiscorpionico de Tertulliano”: *RR* 3 (1927): 146–52.
 Cassiglioni, L., “*Ad Tertullianum adnotationes*,” St. Ubaldi. Milan 1937, 256–60.
 Waszink, J. H., “*Tertulliana*”: *Mnem* 3 (1935–36): 165–74.

212 C.E., *Adversus Marcionem* V

See above *Adv. Marc.* I–IV

213 C.E., *Adversus Praeexean*

J. Moingt, *Théologie*, I, 242–264, “Analyse de l’argumentation scripturaire,” makes the following points:

1) *Sermo* is identical with *Sophia* in Prv 8:22. The Word’s generation is also mentioned in Gn 1:3, Ps 2:7 and 44: 2.

2) Plurality in the Godhead is revealed by Gn 1:26 and 3:22, with prosopographic verses such as Ps 30:18, 44:7–8, 109:1, Is 42:1, and 49:6. These same verses were already noted by Justin, Tertullian being more systematic and literalistic in his treatment of the topic.

3) The theophanies mean that the Son is visible and the Father is invisible.

4) 1 Cor 15:24–28 is quoted in support of the claim that divine monarchy remains preserved in the economy of salvation. The Gospel of John stresses at length the distinction between Father and Son.

EDITIONS

Evans, E., London 1948.

Kroymann, A., CSEL 47 (1906): 227–89.

Kroymann, A. and E. Evans, CCL 2 (1954): 1157–1205.

Scarpat, G., CorPat 12, 2nd ed. 1985.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch: Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1930.

English: Evans (see above).

Holmes, P., ANF 3 (1885, 1995): 597–627.

Souter, A., London 1920.

Italian: Scarpat (see above).

STUDIES

Camelot, Th., “*Spiritus a Deo et Filio*”: *RSPHTh* 33 (1949): 31–33.

Moingt, J., *Théologie trinitaire de Tertullien*, I–IV. Paris 1966–1971.

Turner, C. H., “*Tertullianea* I. Notes on the *Adversus Praxean*”: *JThS* 14 (1913): 556–64.

Verhoeven, Th., L., “*Monarchia* dans Tertullien, *Adversus Praxean*”: *VC* 5 (1951): 43–48.

214–215 C.E., *De monogamia*

Well written and composed (Sider, Fredouille, Rambaux), the essay presents an exegesis of the “two Adams” 1 Cor 15:45, in a global theology of history with a christocentric interpretation of numerous examples from OT and NT. Genesis, Matthew and Pauline literature are predominant.

EDITIONS

Bulhart, V., CSEL 76 (1957): 44–78.

Dekkers, E., CCL 2 (1954).

Mattei, P., SC 343 (1988).

Uglione, R., CorPat 15, Turin 1993.

TRANSLATIONS

English: Le Saint, W. P., ACW 13 (1951).

French: Mattei (see above).

Italian: Moreschini, C., Turin 1974; Uglione (see above).

STUDIES

See bibliography in SC 343, 124–129.

210 C.E., *De pudicitia*

This polemical treatise attacks clerical hierarchy in the name of a spiritual hierarchy understood in Montanist terms. Tertullian had an individual bishop in mind, whose identity remains unknown. He denies the fact that the power of forgiving sins had only been given to the hierarchy instituted by Peter. The treatise includes a careful discussion of NT references (*apostolicum instrumentum*) with a special stress on their literary sense. R. D. Sider underlines the rigorous and rational structure of the treatise.

EDITIONS

- Dekkers., E., CCL 2 (1954): 1279–1330.
 Labriolle, P. de, Paris 1906.
 Micaelli, C. and C. Munier, SC 394–95 (1993).
 Reifferscheid, A. and G. Wissowa, CSEL 20 (1890): 219–73.

TRANSLATIONS

- Dutch:* Meyboom, H. U., Leiden 1931.
English: Le Saint, W. P., ACW 28 (1959); Thelwall, S., ANF 4 (1885, 1995):
 74–101.
French: Labriolle (see above); Micaelli (see above).
German: Kellner, H. – Esser, G., BKV 2nd ed. 24 (1915): 375–472.

STUDIES

See bibliography in SC 394, 132–140.

To recapitulate, critical editions of Tertullian's works can be found essentially in CSEL 20, 47, 69, 70 and in CCL I–II. The series Sources Chr tiennes includes thirteen titles published in eighteen volumes and aims at a complete edition with commentaries: SC 35 (*De baptismo*), 46 (*De praescriptione hereticorum*), 173 (*De cultu feminarum*), 216, 217 (*De resurrectione carnis*), 273 (*Ad uxorem*), 280–281 (*Adversus Valentinianos*), 310 (*De patientia*), 316 (*De paenitentia*), 319 (*De exhortatione castitatis*), 332 (*De spectaculis*), 343 (*De monogamia*); 365, 368, 399 (*Adversus Marcionem*); 394–395 (*De pudicitia*). Other translations are available in English, German, Italian, Spanish, etc.

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- . "The Ray, the Root and the River: A Note on the Jewish Origin of Trinitarian Images (*Tert. Adv. Praxeas* 8, *Cyprian, De Unitate* 5) and *Philo* on the *menorah*." *StPatr* 11 (1972): 158–65.

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III COMMODIAN (EARLY 3RD C.)

Possibly from Syria, but settled in the West, most probably in Africa, Commodian belongs to a Jewish-Christian group in conflict with rabbinic authorities. In his poetic works, he celebrates the order of Creation and salvation in Christ, and also of the millenarian ending of times. His writings betray monarchian overtones (Daniélou, 104) and the Jewish background of the *Sibylline Oracles* and of the *Apocalypse of Baruch*. His *Instructiones*, eighty poems in acrostic form, address both pagans (Book 5) and Jews (Book 2). His *Carmen apologeticum* addresses the same double audience in rhythmic prose, with a more poetic inspiration in the description of the end of times. Commodian is the first commentator of the Apocalypse of John, which he interprets in a millenaristic and materialistic (Jewish) way. His remarkable development on Antichrist announces Tyconius's *Liber regularum* and his *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. At the end of the third century, Commodian's eschatology would be taken over by Victorinus of Pettau.

The *Instructiones*, in forty-three verses in Book I and sixty-eight in Book II, provide implicit references to scripture (see CSEL). A free adaptation of biblical phrases underscores Commodianus' poetic diction. He knows *Liam typum synagogae fuisse, mysterium verum et typum ecclesiae nostrae*, "Liah was a type of the synagogue, a true mystery and type of our church" (I, 38, 1-4); *in tot profatorum volumina vox Domini proclamat*. "in the many books of the prophets God's voice proclaims" (II, 15); *Mitis et in illo (Christ) hilaris, nam saeculo tristis*, "gentle and joyous in him (Christ), because stern for the world" (II, 17). He presents *Tabilha clarissima quondam*, "a certain very famous Tabillah," as a model for matrons (II, 18:18), a suggestion repeated by Cyprian, *De opere et eleemose*, 6. In quoting Isaiah 3: 16, he acclaims *caeliloquax Esaias doctor et auctor*, "the heavenly eloquent teacher and writer Isaiah" (II, 18:3; see Cyprian *De habitu virg.* 13) and he refers to Sirach 22:13, *in Salomoniaco libro* (II, 32:4). (Daniélou, 1978, 93-111, 224-234).

His *Carmen apologeticum* is a hymn to God Almighty, with a condensed account of the biblical story of salvation, including Creation, the first parents, the flood, the tower of Babel, Abraham, Moses, the prophets (allowing *adversus Judaeos*-motifs), Daniel, David, Solomon, divine incarnation, salvation for the nations, victory over Satan, the cross (through a series of Testimonia), the resurrection, apparitions to Thomas and others, and the ascension. Commodian ends in observing that his presumed pagan readership would probably prefer the classics: *Vergilius legitur, Cicero et Terentius item* (verse

583). His unshakeable expectation of an End (soon to come?) includes a lively terror of Antichrist and unusual expectations of some remnant Jewish tribes being called from the Orient to fulfill divine promises before the final collapse of the world.

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Durel, J., Paris 1912.

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English: Wallis, R. E., ANF 4, 1887, 201–19.

French: Durel: above.

Italian: Salvatore: above.

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IV
CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE (D. 258)

Bishop of Carthage for ten years, Cyprian was a highly educated rhetor before converting to Christianity. He embarked on an ascetic lifestyle, distributed much of his wealth to the poor and engaged into the study of scripture by compiling a vast collection of quotations, *Ad Quirinum*, put under a set of rubrics and provided with short comment. This earliest form of scholarly exegesis in the Latin West was conceived as a resource for preachers. Book I, an Apology against the Jews, counted twenty-four headings; Book II, a compendium of christology, counts thirty headings. Book III, with its own preface, was added at a later time on the request of Quirinius; it seems to date from before 249, and counts a hundred and twenty headings, dealing with the Christian way of life.

In 252, Cyprian's comments on the Lord's prayer *De dominica oratione*, more balanced than those of Tertullian, were carefully pastoral in tone, embedded in the liturgical use of scripture, centred on the eucharist, and furnished with an eschatological epilogue. At the beginning of the persecution of Valerian in 258 (shortly before the persecution of Gallus in 253 (Koch, 172–182) his exhortation, *Ad Fortunatum*, presents a collection of biblical extracts, generously commented on and inspired in particular by the Book of Maccabees, in which his attention is focused on martyrdom. His Apology, *Ad Demetrianum*, responds to pagan claims denouncing the Christians as responsible for public calamities, but it is addressed to the Christian community itself, as evidenced by numerous references to scripture. A pamphlet, *De zelo et livore*, dismisses envy as having its origin in Satan, who brought Adam to fall by it.

M. A. Fahey (1971), provides a detailed analysis of “Cyprian's terminology for Scripture, canon, inspiration, unity of the Testaments” (25–56); “Cyprian's OT and NT quotations and allusions” in the order of biblical books (57–554); “Cyprian's biblical figures, and passages on salvation history (555–611), and he adds an “*Excursus: Cyprian's Vocabulary for Typology*” (612–622). Cyprian's most cited books are: Matthew, Psalms, John, Isaiah, and Apocalypse. Hebrews and James are absent from his canon. Like in Tertullian, his interpretation is mainly christological against Marcion. From NT, Cyprian quotes almost exclusively “sayings,” *praecepta* of Jesus. Typology is usually based on persons. Most of the time Cyprian remains independent of Tertullian in the choice and interpretation of biblical texts.

H. Koch (1921) examines the dating of *Ad Fortunatum* (149–183), and

“*Ad Quirinum* (Testimonia)” (183–210): Book III is authentic (same opinion in H. von Soden, *Das lateinische NT in Afrika zur Zeit Cyprians*, 1909, 18); 207–209, list of biblical quotations in *Ad Quirinum* III, compared with *Ad Fortunatum*, letters and other writings of Cyprian.

M. Réveillaud (1964) formulates the hypothesis that a collection of unpublished “Testimonia” was used by Cyprian for *Ad Quirinum*. He was easily refuted by M. M. Sage, *Cyprian* (Patristic Monograph Series 1), Philadelphia, 1975: Appendix V: “Did Cyprian Compile His Own *Florilegium*?” 395–397. “Le ‘De Dominica Oratione’ et l’Écriture sainte”: a third of the text quotes scripture with sixty-eight explicit quotations and more than fifty allusions. The written Gospel is the foundation of the church. In scripture the Holy Spirit speaks to the church. The prayer for “bread” in the *dominica oratio*, like all the scriptures *potest et spiritaliter et simpliciter intellegi*, “can be understood in a spiritual sense and according to the letter” (*De dom. orat.* 18). Both senses, the literal and the spiritual, are equally necessary. Typology is important: it enables the commentator to *figuram exprimere, typum ostendere, imaginem expressere*; *Anna, ecclesiae typum portens*, “represent the figure, to show the type, to express the image, Anna carrying on the type of the church.”

Still missing is a detailed study of the use of scripture in Cyprian’s *Letters*.

Ps.-Cyprian. De duobus montibus Sina et Sion

The Pseudo-Cyprianic sermon, *De duobus montibus Sina et Sion*, African, 3rd century (PL 4, 990–1000; CSEL 3, 3) belongs to the genre of *Adversus Iudaeos*. It “exhibits the same features that characterized other early Christian treatises: a christological interpretation of scripture, biblically based argumentation, the use of typology, allegory, and etymologies, and the typically dualistic contrast between Christians and Jews” (J. A. Kraus, *J ECS* 7, 1999, 621, reviewing A. M. Laato, *Jews and Christians in the De duobus montibus Sina et Sion: An Approach to Early Latin Adversus Iudaeos Literature*. Diss. Abo Akademi Univ. Press 1998).

The preacher comments on the two parables of the evil tenants (Mt 21: 33–46; Mk 12:1–12; Lk 20:9–19) and the wedding feast (Mt 22:1–14; Lk 14:16–23), with a special reference to the two sons (Mt 21:28–32). The description of Christ’s Passion serves as a rhetorical climax binding together the comments on the different parables. Contemplating the rejection of the “unbelieving Jews” and the election of the nations leads to a hymnic profession of faith. The homilist ends by celebrating the fact that some Jews reached salvation thanks to Christ’s compassion and to baptism. Pseudo-Cyprian was

a rhetor and a gifted writer, familiar with the classics. He was also trained as a jurist; the notions *vetus* and *novum testamentum* keep a strictly juridical sense when he claims: *hic est qui rupit vetro suum testamentum et scripsit novum, quo gentes ad possessionem bonorum suorum vocavit*, “He is the one who annulled his former covenant and wrote a new one, by which he called the nations to take possession of his goods” (par. 61). The homily witnesses several literary contacts with a very early text form of the *Diatesseron*. It comes close to Irenaeus and to Melito’s homily *On the Passion*. Quoted are Gn 9:3 (par. 14); 17:5b and 8 (par. 15); Is 1:2 (par. 29); 13b–14a (par. 41); 15:16, 18 (par. 71); 2:3b–6 (par. 73); 3:1–3 (par. 57); and 8:6–7 (par. 55). The sermon alludes to Jer 2:27, 33; 6:17–18 (par. 63); and Is 35:5–6 (par. 63).

Chronica Tertulliana et Cyprianea (1986–1999)

Thanks to the initiative of P. Petitmengin and J.-C. Fredouille, a small group of specialists engaged into a thorough critical review of publications concerning Cyprian: the *Chronica Tertulliana*, which had started in *REAug* in 1976, expanded into a *Chronica Tertulliana et Cyprianea* 1985, reviewing publications up to that year. For instance, n. 22 discusses a thesis of J. Ziegler (1985), and n. 28, P. Monat, BTTL, who insists that the books *Ad Quirinum* do not represent a proper collection of “Testimonia.” *Chronica* 1986, n. 14, highlights K. B. Schnurr, “Hören und handeln,” stressing the juridical character of the very notion of *Pater*, in *De oratione dominica*; it also examines the articulation of the literal and spiritual sense based on the hermeneutical *regula fidei*. *Chronica* 1987, n. 17 deals with Y. Frost. *Chronica* 1989–1992.

One finds new critical precisions about Pseudo-Cypriana in *Chronica* 1989 (*REAug* 1990), n. 2: according to J. Schwind, the pseudocyprianic *Carmen de pascha seu de ligno crucis*, a poem of 68 hexameters (CPL 1958), was probably composed in northern Italy ca. 400; it is close to Chromatius of Aquileia. A. Roncoroni, 1976, is also mentioned. *Chronica* 1992 (*REAug* 1993), n. 3: *Cena Cypriani* (CPL 1430), 640 verses in strophes of four, with rhymes and assonance, pictures a burlesque dinner party with OT and NT figures, using a Latin translation of the Bible from before Jerome. The enigmatic poem engaged medieval culture into allegorism. It dates from the last third of the fourth century. *Chronica* 1992 (*REAug* 1993), n. 5, presents G. W. Clarke, “Cyprian,” the Anchor Bible; S. Deléani observes: “Cyprian does not limit himself to quoting strictly scripture; he paraphrases it by announcing his quotations and adding to them his own comments. His style seems marked by the *lectio divina*.”

Chronica 1993 (*REAug* 1994), n. 3, singles out *De excidio Sodomae et Ninive*, a fifth century diptych of 166 hexameters, and mentions R. Cacitti.

Chronica 1993, n. 9, quotes Fr. Trisaglio, "Cipriano uomo . . .," noting that the proper originality of Cyprian's *Letters* depends principally on their use of scripture. In n. 20, A. Felber, *Ecclesia ex...* (1992) specifies the meaning of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*; it concerns only people who *leave* the church, the "schismatics."

Chronica 1994 (*REAug* 1995), n. 3, presents to the readers *Pseudo-Cypriani, I due monti Sinai e Sion*, which the editor, Clara Burini (1994), dates, vs. J. Daniélou, from the second half or the first half of the fourth century. *Chronica* 1994, n. 10, mentions M. Poirier, "Dans l'atelier . . ." (1993). In n. 12, Th. Ricklin observes that *Cena Cypriani* is not necessarily contemporaneous with Zeno of Verona (vs. Chr. Modesto). *Chronica* 1995 (*REAug* 1996) includes among other issues a discussion by R. Braun of O. Schmid, *Marcion und sein Apostolos*, and a review of P. Mattei, "Recherches sur la Bible à Rome vers le milieu du III^e siècle: Novatien et la *Vetus Latina*," *RBen* 105 (1995), by P. Petitmengin. In *Chronica* 1996 (*REAug* 1997), P. Petitmengin reviews S. Deléani, "La syntaxe des titres dans les recueils scripturaires de saint Cyprien": *REAug* 29 (1996): 91–112, and R. Braun, "Les avatars de Rom 11:33 chez Tertullien," *Fs. Weiss, Nice* 1996. F. Chapot examines two contributions by W. Turck, "L'influsso di Paolo nell'evoluzione del concetto di speranza": *Atti del IV Simposio su S. Paolo apostolo*, Rome, 169–186, and "La prima lettera di Giovanni negli scritti di Tertulliano": *Atti del VI Simposio di Efeso su S. Giovanni apostolo*, Rome 1996, 199–213. Finally, in *Chronica* 1997 (*REAug* 1998), includes a detailed review of K. Sallmann's "ouvrage fondamental" (311), *Die Literatur des Umbruchs. Von der römischen zur christlichen Literatur*, 117–284 n. Chr. (Hb. d. lat. Lit. der Antike, 4). Munich 1997. Three recent studies on *Perpetua's Passion*, by A. Wypustek, J. E. Salisbury and K. B. Steinhauser, all three emphasizing the Montanist character of the document, are critically reviewed by F. Dolbeau.

A separate publication of the whole set of *Chronica* crowns this collective work by P. Petitmengin, J.-C. Fredouille and their colleagues: *Chronica Tertulliana et Cyprianea 1975–1994. Bibliographie critique de la première littérature chrétienne*. Paris 1999.

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NOVATIAN (FL. MID-3RD C.)

The intellectual leader of the Roman presbyterium ca.250 C.E., Novatian failed to become bishop of Rome in 251, when Cornelius was elected. He created a schismatic church of the "Pure," which extended from Spain to Syria and still merited refutation by Eulogios of Alexandria in the seventh century. Only in the late twentieth century did Novatian, for the very first time, figure as a quoted authority in a papal document (John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor* (1993), par. 108: Novatian, *De trinitate* 29, 9–10, CCL 4, 70).

In Rome, Novatian inaugurated a dogmatic form of exegesis. He wrote in a "careful, elaborate and brilliant style," Quasten II, 230. In *De trinitate*, his main work from before 250 C.E., he intended to communicate the riches of the "rule of faith" in the wake of Irenaeus's theological synthesis, and in emulating Tertullian's rhetorical talents. He tacitly opposed Marcionism, probably known through Tertullian; but he ignored all forms of Valentinian gnosis. His "heretics" were Docetists, Ebionites, Adoptionists, Modalists and Patripassionists, all archaic forms of christology. However he explains with the clear and vigor of the best classical prose that he is not so much interested in polemics as he is in showing the truth of scripture: *Et puteram quidam omnium scripturarum caelestium eventilare tractatus et ingentem circa istam speciem Christi divinitatis, ut ita dicerim, silvam commovere, nisi quoniam non tam mihi contra hanc haeresim propositum est dicere, quam breviter circa personam Christi regulam veritatis aperire*, "And I could discuss the books of all heavenly scriptures, and displace, if I can say so, their immense forest about the form of Christ's divinity, had I not less the intention to speak out against that heresy than to expose briefly the rule of truth concerning the person of Christ" (*De trinitate* XX, 1:121, 3).

The central section of *De trinitate*, XII–XVII, consists of an ample argumentation on Christ's divinity, exclusively based on scripture. The twenty-seven times repeated question "*Si homo tammodo Christus*" receives in it a negative answer, each time in form of a biblical quotation or a biblical paraphrase. These proofs, sounding like dogmatic statements, intend to convince the reader by their literal content and divine authority. They are supposed to do so because of their rational consistency. Only a "heretic" (*aliquis haereticus pertinaciter oblutans adversus veritatem*, "some heretic stubbornly fighting against the truth" (XX, 1, p. 117) would deny them, "heresy" consisting precisely in refusing to admit the basic principles of scriptural rationality: the principle of non-contradiction, the principles of deductive logic, etc., in short the *veritas* as understood in Novatian's hermeneutics.

It is the “truth” which “faith” contemplates in scripture as in a mirror, the source of the believer’s unshakeable strength which Novatian invokes at the start of his argument: *Cur ergo dubitemus dicere quod scriptura non dubitat exprimere? Cur haesitabit fidei veritas in quo scripturae numquam haesitat auctoritas?* “Why would we hesitate to say what scripture expresses without a doubt? Why would the truth of faith be hesitant in what the authority of scripture never hesitates? (XII, 1, p. 62). Novatian reiterates the same affirmation at the completion of his christological argument: *Sed enim scriptura divina haereticorum et fraudes et furta facile convinxit et detegit*, “but divine scripture has easily demonstrated and disclosed the deceptions and tricks of the heretics” (XXIV, 6, p. 137): *cum ratio et temperamentum scripturarum caelestium Christum ostendunt deum, sed qua filium dei*, “As the logic and the disposition of heavenly scriptures show Christ as God, indeed as Son of God” (XXIII, 6, p. 133), precisely because of the rational consistency which “right faith” (according to the “rule of truth”) reads into it.

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VI
VICTORINUS OF POETOVIO (D. CA. 304)

Victorinus, who died a martyr probably in 304 C.E., was bishop of Poetovio (modern Ptuj, Slovenia), in Pannonia Superior, a flourishing Roman city where the amber traffic from the Baltic reached the Danube Valley. Though he possibly received a Greek education, he wrote the very first exegetical commentaries known in Latin. He may have “missed the cycle of classical studies, as Jerome suggests (*licet desit eruditio*). He rather enjoyed an education of a Semitic type, possibly through a church tradition linked with a Judaeo-Christian milieu, the hexameral tradition of the past to which he alludes when describing the literary genre of his work” (M. Dulaey, 32).

Of all his commentaries, only one survives, the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* which stresses Victorinus’s strong belief in the thousand-year reign of Christ at the end of time. The same conviction becomes vocal in a short fragment of his *Tractatus de fabrica mundi* (CSEL 49, 3–9), whose content is well announced by the author’s opening statement: “As all celestial and temporal realities are regulated by the number seven of the days, I shall start by contemplating that week which is the mother (the ‘queen’) of all weeks; after that, in the measure of my ability, I shall try to comment on the ‘Day of Wrath’ according to its fulfillment” (*De fabrica mundi* 1). The initial meditation covers chapter 2 to 6; the consideration of the number seven occupies chapter 7–8; a recapitulation of the seven days centered on divine incarnation follows in chapter 9, and chapter 10 presents a general conclusion.

Jerome, *De vir. inl.* 74, enumerates his works: *On Genesis*, *On Exodus*, *On Leviticus*, *On Isaiah*, *On Ezekiel*, *On Habakkuk*, *On Ecclesiastes*, *On Canticle*, *On the Apocalypse of John*, *Against All Heresies*, and many others. Of all the commentaries only one survives, the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, which stresses Victorinus’s strong belief in the thousand-year reign of Christ at the end of times. The same conviction is stressed in a short fragment of his *Tractatus de fabrica mundi* (CSEL 49, 3–9).

References to Victorinus’s writings are scattered throughout the medieval period:

Commentary on Genesis: specially on the benedictions of the Patriarchs in Genesis 27, 29 and 49; typology prevails. This commentary was still used by Isidore of Seville.

Commentary on Leviticus: It is still mentioned in the catalogues of medieval libraries.

Commentary on Isaiah: a work only known through Jerome's allusions.

Commentary on Ezekiel: referred to by Jerome.

Commentary on Ecclesiastes: attested for Ecclesiastes 4 and 12 by allusions of Origen and Hippolytus. It still influenced Jerome.

Commentary on Matthew: Jerome sent a copy of it to Paula and Eustochium in 389.

Adversus omnes haereses is mentioned by Optatus of Milevis ca. 364.

Victorinus's exegesis is possibly based on Papias, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and more probably on Cyprian, whose *Ad Quirinum* dates from 248–250.

In *De fabrica*, he plays with the numbers of Genesis 1: the six days of Creation, each of them, (in particular "Day Four"), bringing back to memory other uses of the same number in scripture, and number "seven" engaging into a contemplation of Christ, because of the "seven" spirits of Is 11:2–3. This sort of biblical numerology includes neither typology, nor allows for allegory; it speaks for itself as a feature of scripture, due to the inner unity of scripture.

The same attention to numbers is at work throughout the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, in which it also gives space for traditional allegorism as used in baptismal initiations: *aquae multae* (cf. Rv 1:15) "means many people," and *pedes eius* "refers to the apostles" (I, 5). Number "seven" receives again a privileged treatment (in chapter *seven!*): the sixth category of people in Rv 3:8, signifies those *humiles in saeculo et rusticani in scripturis* (41, 13–14), "the simple of the world, uneducated in the scriptures," but the seventh category opens the cosmic vision and the contemplation of biblical salvation-history in which the Gospel event is central, being the reason for the breaking open of the OT for the benefit of the NT. The "opening of the seals" means the interpretation of the OT in the light of the NT: *resignatio sigillorum, ut diximus, apertio est veteris testamenti praedicatorum et praenuntiatio in novissimo tempore futurorum*, "the opening of the seals, as stated, means an access given to the spokesmen of the Old Testament, and an anticipated announcement of last times" (67, 18–19). In this context, a first mention is made of Antichrist (6, 5, p. 70, 8). The woman of Rv 12:1–2 is the church, *ecclesia est antiqua patrum et prophetarum et sanctorum apostolorum*, "She is the ancient church of the fathers, the prophets, and the holy apostles" (106, 1–2), and the "dragon" means *diabolus*. "The tail of the dragon, sweeping away a third of all the stars... is interpreted in two ways" *bifarie hoc accipitur* (116, 2).

Two additional fragments are: the *Chronological Fragment*, PL 129, 1369; CSEL 49, Hausleiter; Dulaey, 1993, 37–39, and *De decem virginibus* (Mt 25:1–13), ed. A. Wilmart: BALAC 1 (1911): 35–38 = PLS 1, 172–174; Duleay,

1993, 39–42. For the $\sigma\tau$, Victorinus used a Greek translation closer to the original Hebrew than the LXX, such as the translation by Theodotion. For the $\nu\tau$, his Latin text is strictly local, characterized by a certain attempt at a harmonization of the Gospels, but without any parallels in the *Vetus Latina*. For both, $\sigma\tau$ and $\nu\tau$, he occasionally corrected the Latin translation at his disposal by checking the Greek text.

His hermeneutical attitude rested on a firm sense for the inner coherence of all scripture, a coherence which mainly meant for him the harmony between both Testaments, their christo-centric focus, their “spiritual” meaning being directly bound to the initiatives of the Holy Spirit as the author of the Bible. Victorinus’s special appreciation of the Apocalypse was due to the fact that he saw in it a theological and literary recapitulation of the rest of scripture (M. Dulaey, 1993, 103–105).

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 Haussleiter, J., CSEL 49 (1916): 3–9: *fabr. mund.*; 11–154: *in apoc.*
 Kroymann, A., CSEL 47, 213–226 = CCL 2, 1401–10: *haer.*
 Wallis, R. E., ANF 7 (1886 = 1994), 344–360: *in apoc.*
 Wilmart, A., PLS 1, 172–174: *de decem virg.*

TRANSLATIONS

- English*: Wallis: above.
French: Dulaey: above.

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CHAPTER EIGHT
MANI (216–276) AND MANICHAISM

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I
THE LIFE AND WORKS OF MANI AND
THE EXPANSION OF MANICHAISM (216–276)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Albert Viciano

I. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Mani or Manes (*Manikhaïos*, *Manichaeus*), the founder of Manichaeism, was born on the 14th of April, 216 C.E., the son of Pattig (*Patekios*, *Patecius*), from Hamadan in Media. Mani was born in Madinu, a city in the region of Nahr Kutha in northern Babylonia situated on the canal which joins the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to the south of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Mani began his preaching in Persis, Mesene, Assuristan, Media and in the land of the Parthians at the beginning of the reign of Shapur I, who had been proclaimed king on the death of Ardashir, founder of the Sassanian dynasty. Under the protection of Shapur for thirty years, Mani was free to prepare his disciples, write his scriptures, organize his church and send missionaries to the east and west. On the death of Shapur in 271–272, his son Vahram I was crowned king. During his reign, the Kirdir Chief, Mobed, the staunch enemy of all foreign cults, made repeated attempts to establish Mazdeism, also known as Zoroastrism, as the state religion. Mobed's influence led Vahram to order the detention of Mani who, on being tried, was imprisoned at Gondeshapur (Bet Laphat) in Susiana. Mani died on a Monday, most probably the 26th of February, 277, physically broken after twenty six days of torture.¹

II. MANI, CHRISTIAN HERETIC AND FOUNDER
OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

Until the discoveries of the twentieth century the only biographical data available were from the works of Christian writers who unanimously presented Mani as a heretic and imposter. The anti-Manichaean treatises, such as the *Acta Archelai*² by Hegemonius written around the year 325 C.E., were mainly responsible for this image.

1. Ries, Julien. Art. Mani, manichéisme: Poupard, Paul (ed.). *Dictionnaire des Religions*, Paris 1984, 1023–38.
2. Hegemonius. *Acta Archelai*, ed. by Charles Henry Beeson (CGS 16), Berlin 1906.

With the Age of Enlightenment and the discovery of the texts of certain outstanding Arabian historians (Sahrastani and al-Nadim), the negative image created by patristic sources of Mani as a Christian heretic was critically revised to the extent that he came to be considered the founder of a universal religion. In this new context it was debated whether Mani was a religious genius or a mere compiler of a synthesis of Zoroastrian doctrines, Buddhist morality, and the cult of Mithras, along with certain elements taken from Christianity.

The Coptic Manichaean texts discovered at Medinet Madi in 1930 cast new light on the life of Mani.³ In the *Kephalaion* 1, the introduction to his doctrinal treatise, the prophet described himself as the seal of the messengers of salvation. He evokes the major stages in the historical development of salvation by citing the names of some of his predecessors: Seth, son of Adam, Enosh, Enoch, Shem, son of Noah, Buddha, and Jesus. He goes on to refer to the key role of the apostles, of the mission of Paul, of the crisis brought about in the Church immediately following Paul's preaching and, finally, mention is made of the two justs ones, probably Marcion and Bardaisan, who attempted to redeem the world. Mani makes explicit reference to himself as the Paraclete foretold by Jesus (*Kephalaion* 1.14.3–10). Modifying Jn 16:8–11 by means of the introduction of a gnostic perspective, Mani alludes to his pre-existence, claiming that the living Paraclete descended upon him for the Aeons and Generations (*Kephalaion* 1.15.1–3a). This autobiographic note, inserted into a formulary of gnostic doctrine, shows that the basic mystery of Manichaeism consists in a radical and universal dualism, revealed by the promised Paraclete and made known by his twin spirit, Mani.

In 1970 the successful decipherment of a tiny Greek parchment codex in the manuscript collection of the University of Cologne (*P. coln. inv. nr. 4780*) signalled a new era in the study of the origins of Manichaeism. The *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis* (CMC), as the document is now called by scholars, is the smallest parchment codex yet discovered. Its pages measure only 4.5 cm. x 3.5 cm. and the writing on them is 3.5 cm. x 2.5 cm. Despite its minute format, the Manichaean scribes, at least four in number, managed to copy an average of twenty-three lines of Greek immaculately onto each page. This codex of the fifth century bears the title “*peri tes gennes tou somatos autou*,” “*On the Genesis of his* (sc. Mani's) *Body*.”⁴ The title itself

3. Ries, Julien. *Les études manichéennes. Des controverses de la Réforme aux découvertes du XX siècle*, Louvain-la-Neuve 1988, 215–28.

4. Heinrichs, Albert – Koenen, Ludwig (ed.). Ein griechischer Mani-Codex: *ZPE* 5 (1970) 97–216; Idem. Der Kölner Mani-Codex: *ZPE* 19 (1975): 1–83, 32 (1978):

places us squarely in a Gnostic frame of reference: the fall of Mani into matter. The CMC includes a biography of Mani which is mainly limited to his formative years, that is, from age four to twenty-four, during which time he is influenced both by the Elchasaites, a Judaeo-Christian sect referred to by Arab historians as the *almughtasila* (those who wash themselves), and by the Syrian tradition *menaqqede* (the purified ones) or *halle heware* (the white tunics). Greek and Coptic texts refer to this group as *baptistai*, celibates who abstain from meat and wine. The CMC quotes Mani as saying that at the age of four he was admitted into the Elchasaites and grew up under the protection of the “maidens of light” and the special powers established by “Jesus the luminous.”

The CMC cites Elchasi, the founder of the Elchasaites or *baptistai*, as claiming that Mani’s youth was marked by a series of celestial interventions. In the early pages of the CMC can be found references to the Manichaean tradition which relates certain episodes of the amazing childhood of the prophet: through a series of visions taking place from the age of four to twelve, Mani received elementary Gnostic instruction related to the *signaculum manuum* or seal of the hands: the reverence given by the “living soul” to the “cross of light.” Such reverence and respect involved the prohibition of cutting down trees, uprooting plants, polluting the water one bathed in, since these particular actions were thought to destroy the light particles imprisoned in matter.

At the age of twelve Mani received a heavenly vision. It was the moment of the first revelation by which the prophet was instructed and prepared for his mission by the Paraclete. That revelation took place on the 14th day of Nisan in the year 539 (7th April, 228). Mani, though for a time continuing to externally observe the law of the Elchasaites, kept his secret to himself, listened to the Paraclete and thus gradually severed his former allegiance. According to the idealized biography of the CMC which, according to Tardieu,⁵ makes use of names and legends taken from Syrian Christian accounts of the life of St Thomas the Apostle, the second apparition of the angel was to mark the break with Elchasaism and the founding of the “church of light” on the 24th of April, 240. The celestial Paraclete, a luminous being of whom the twenty-four-year-old Mani was the replica, descended to confirm him in his prophetic mission: the moment of the definitive revelation had arrived.

87–199, 44 (1981): 201–318, 48 (1982): 1–59; Koenen, Ludwig – Römer Kornelia (ed.). *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex. Über das Werden seines Leibes*, Opladen 1988.

5. Tardieu, Michel. *Le manichéisme*, Paris 1981, 14.

Mani was not only a theologian but an accomplished artist as well. He made use of the literary form of the myth to express his revelation which was habitual among the Gnostics as it had been for the philosophers, e.g., Plato in the *Dialogues*. Along with his poetic genius, Mani was also highly gifted as a painter, so that the Manichaean mission was eventually to develop characteristic art forms.⁶

III. CANONICAL WORKS OF MANI AND OTHER MANICHAEAN SCRIPTURES

Manichaeism was a religion of the book. To Mani's mind, the failure of Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus centered on the fact that they themselves had not personally written down their revelation. This explains the considerable effort made by Mani as the author of his own scriptures, which resulted in the creation of a canon of books containing the revelation destined to be transmitted by his church.

Mani wrote a canon of seven works in the Aramaic dialect of southern Mesopotamia. They are: (1) the *Living Gospel*, (2) the *Treasure of Life*, (3) the *Pragmateia*, (4) the *Book of Mysteries*, (5) the *Book of Giants*, (6) the *Letters*, (7) *Psalms and Prayers*. In addition, he made a summary of the main points of his teaching in Middle Persian, which he presented to Shapur I. This work, the *Sabuhragan*, was so important that one sometimes finds it listed in the canon in place of *Psalms and Prayers*. Not one of these works has survived in its complete form, but a considerable number of citations from them can be found in the writings of the Church Fathers and in Syriac and Arabic writers who used them to demonstrate the absurdity of Mani's teaching. Fortunately, we are now no longer entirely reliant on these polemical writers for information on Mani's teaching and the text of his works. The extant corpus of genuine Manichaean texts has grown considerably since the end of the last century. From 1904 to 1914, in four expeditions to Central Asia, German archaeologists brought back to Berlin from sites of ruined Manichaean monasteries at Turfan in Sinkiang (China) several thousand fragments of Manichaean texts. These once constituted handsomely bound and beautifully illuminated manuscript codices but they had been mutilated by zealous Islamic conquerors in the fourteenth century. The texts are written in a number of Central Asian languages, but Middle Persian,

6. Klimkeit, Hans-Joachim. Vom Wesen manichäischer Kunst: ZRGG 34 (1982): 195–219.

Parthian, Sogdian, and Uighur predominate. In 1905 came the news of the discovery of a large hoard of manuscripts, mostly Chinese Buddhist texts, in the Temple of the Thousand Buddhas at Tunhuang. Among them were three Manichaean texts in Chinese as well as a long confessional for the Manichaean Hearers in Uighur.

The West too made its contributions to this growing body of Manichaean texts. I have already mentioned the *Codex Manichaicus Coloniensis*.⁷ A Latin Manichaean manuscript was found in a cave near Tebessa (Theveste) in Algeria in 1918.⁸ More significantly, a sizeable collection of Manichaean codices in Coptic was shown to Professor Carl Schmidt in 1930 by an Egyptian dealer in Cairo, and their place of origin was eventually traced to Medinet Madi in the Fayoum near the former Hellenistic military settlement of Narmouthis. The find, totalling some two thousand leaves, contained: (1) the *Letters of Mani*, (2) the *Psalm-Book*,⁹ (3) the *Kephalaia of the Teacher* (i.e. Mani),¹⁰ (4) *The Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani*, (5) *Synaxes (commentary) on the Living Gospel*, (6) a historical work which gave a life of Mani and the early history of the sect, (7) the *Homilies*,¹¹ (8) some unidentifiable leaves. Part of this find was acquired by the Chester Beatty collection in London (now Dublin),¹² but the greater part of it went to the Prussian Academy in Berlin. The *Letters* and the historical work which were housed in Berlin were unfortunately lost in the chaotic aftermath of the Second World War before they could be properly examined and studied.

These newly discovered texts have greatly enriched our knowledge of Manichaeism, although they have not yielded a canon of Mani's writings.

7. Vide footnote 4.

8. Merkelbach, Reinhold (ed.). *Der manichäische Codex von Tebessa*: Bryder, Peter (dir.). *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism*, Lund 1988, 229–64.

9. Allberry, Charles R. C. (ed.). *Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection, Vol. 2: A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Stuttgart 1938.

10. Polotsky, Hans Jakob – Böhlig, Alexander (ed.). *Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin. Kephalaia, Vol. 1*, Stuttgart 1940; Böhlig, Alexander (ed.). *Manichäische Handschriften der staatlichen Museen Berlin. Kephalaia, Vol. 2*, Stuttgart 1966.

11. Polotsky, Hans Jakob (ed.). *Manichäische Handschriften der Sammlung A. Chester Beatty, Bd. 1: Manichäische Homilien*, Stuttgart 1934.

12. Giversen, Søren (ed.). *The Manichaean Copti Papyri in the Chester Beatty Library. Facsimile Ed.*, Geneva 1986–1988; Idem. *The Manichaean Texts from the Chester Beatty Collection*: Bryder, Peter (dir.). *Manichaean Studies. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Manichaeism*, Lund 1988, 265–72.

The loss of the *Letters* from Berlin has deprived us of possessing a canonical work in its entirety. However, the texts from Turfan have so far yielded a number of fragments from the canonical works, especially from the *Book of the Giants* and the quasi-canonical *Sabuhragan*. No doubt, when it is fully published, the *Synaxes on the Living Gospel* in Coptic will shed some light on the text of the *Living Gospel* itself.

On the other hand, the new texts, even if most of them are not of canonical status, are genuine writings of the sect and touch upon many fundamental aspects of its doctrines and history. The *Kephalaia of the Teacher*, for instance, purports to be a record of Mani's discourses delivered to his inner circle of disciples, and a Manichaean work titled *Kephalaia* is listed by Epiphanius (*Panarion* 66)¹³ as one of the most important works of the sect. The *Psalm-Book* has furnished us with one of the finest anthologies of Manichaean poetry, and the *Homilies* contain a great deal of new information on the early history of the sect. These genuine Manichaean writings allow us to reconstruct many important aspects of the original teaching of Mani without fear of misrepresentation by the sect's enemies. Surprisingly, these texts have shown that some of the polemicists, especially Augustine, have been remarkably accurate in their presentation of Mani's teaching.¹⁴

IV. THE EXPANSION OF MANICHAISM

Mani believed that by making a synthesis of the three great religions of Christianity, Zoroastrism, and Buddhism he could create a common religion for the Sassanian Empire. This empire was in a period of expansion to the east and west. Towards the west was to be found Christianity whereas to the east, Buddhism dominated in Central Asia and Zoroastrianism in Iran, and everywhere were enclaves of paganism. Although Mani was not able to convert his doctrine into a state religion, he and his disciples carried out a missionary effort which took in practically all of the Roman Empire, as well as Central Asia and China.

In the century which followed his death the religion achieved amazing missionary success in the Roman Empire and came to be attacked at first as a subversive foreign religion and later as one of the most pernicious forms

13. Epiphanius. *Panarion*, ed. by Karl Holl (CGS 25, 31, 37), Leipzig 1915–1933; Riggi, Calogero. *Epifanio contro Mani*, Roma 1967.

14. Lieu, Samuel N. C. *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China*, 2. ed., Tübingen 1992, 8–10.

of Christian heresy. Although it was largely wiped out by severe persecution in the fifth and sixth centuries, it left a legacy of fear and hatred among mediaeval churchmen both in the Latin West and the Greek East. The term “Manichaeism” was used by church leaders to stigmatize the teachings of a number of Christian heretics such as the Messalians, the Paulicians and the Mages in Byzantium, and the Paterenes and the Cathars or Albigensians in the West, who had in common the view that the human body was intrinsically evil and therefore could not be the creation of a good God. In the east, Manichaeism had established a firm base in eastern Iran by the end of the fourth century and from there it would eventually be conveyed even further eastward along the Silk Road to Bactria, Tochara, and the Tarim Basin. In the eighth century it became the state religion of the Uighur Turks, one of the main military powers on the northern frontiers of China. After the eclipse of the first Uighur Empire in the ninth century, the religion continued to thrive in the Tarim Basin until the rise of Genghis Khan. In China it also survived as a secret religion in the southern coastal regions and traces of it can be found in the province of Fukien as late as the sixteenth century.¹⁵

15. *Ibid.*, 7–8.

II A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE MANICHAEAN DOCTRINE

Manichaeism is a dualistic Gnostic system with a basic doctrine of two co-eternal principles radically opposed to one another: light and darkness. Mani's theological point of departure is man's plight in the world, his needs and suffering which originate from an existence developed out of good and evil. Mani presents himself as the ultimate revelation and seal of the prophets, charged with founding the Church of the Last Days, the Church of the Kingdom of Light. Mani considers himself the Paraclete sent to reconstruct the true church of Jesus Christ. This dualistic gnosis is an absolute Gnosticism that in itself embraces all knowledge and all existence and which Mani managed to establish as an organized church with its own scriptures, hierarchy, and institutions.

The *Kephalaion* 1 contains both a clearly delineated Gnostic creed which sets out a synthesis of the Manichaean faith in twelve articles as well as a second creed relative to the Gnostic mission: twelve articles which define Mani as the revealer of the celestial mysteries. We now know from the CMC that, in the thinking of Mani, the Christian element is neither secondary or late-coming but rather must be considered a principle element from the very beginning and the basis of his religious reflection.

Mani's call to salvation—*tochme*—was made so that man would adhere to the mysteries revealed by him. The Gnostic, immersed in a world of light and darkness, has to choose at every moment between the two in order to continue on the road to the "kingdom of heaven." The Manichaean tradition distinguishes between two types of believers: the Elect or Chosen Ones, that is to say those who have reached perfection or sanctity, and the Catechumens or Hearers, those initiated into the stage of catharsis which leads to the liberation from matter. The Elect and the perfect Catechumens are assured of entering the kingdom without having to undergo reincarnation into another body. Other Catechumens are destined to the *metangismos* or modification of the receptacle, i.e., *metempsychosis*. The sinner who obstinately chooses to live in darkness is condemned to wander through the world until he is thrown into hell at the moment of the separation of light from darkness.

The *Kephalaia* 79, 80, 81, 84, 85, 87, 93 are a compendium of commandments grouped under one denomination, *dikaiosyne* or righteousness. Justice concerns above all the Elect or Chosen Ones who live according to the three *signacula* or seals. The seal of the abdomen ordains total continence and

prohibits procreation. The seal of the mouth forbids uncharitable words and establishes a series of dietary prescriptions: habitual fasting is broken only by two daily vegetarian meals prepared by the Hearers. The seal of the hands imposes respect for the “cross of light” as manual labor negatively affects the particles of light mixed in with matter. By these means the Chosen Ones grow in the wisdom—*sophia*—needed for effective preaching. The justice of the Hearers participates in that of the Chosen Ones. The Hearers also live according to the norms of the three *signacula* through fasting, prayer, and alms-giving, but unlike the Chosen Ones they are destined to procreate and to perform manual labor.

III NOTIONS AND METHODS OF EXEGESIS

Manichaeism had an unusual capacity for syncretism with other religions. As it spread throughout the Roman Empire it adapted itself to certain aspects of Christianity, particularly to the theology of the heretic Marcion, whose cosmology was dualistic whereas his Christology was permeated by Gnostic elements. Such coincidence with Manichaean doctrine, along with the fact that Marcionism, like Manichaeism, was organized as a church, facilitated such syncretism. Moreover, Mani himself admired Marcion in so far as their respective interpretations of the epistles of Paul had many points in common. Consequently, those Manichaeans living within the confines of the Roman Empire were not adverse to studying and commenting on the NT considered as a series of books of exceptional spiritual value.

Not surprisingly, such a situation led to an exegetical-doctrinal polemic between Catholics and Manichaeans with regard to the interpretation of the NT. This controversy was, for the most part, a prolongation into the fourth and fifth centuries of that earlier confrontation which the Catholic Church had maintained with Gnostics and Marcionites in the second and third centuries. In both circumstances the Catholic Church found itself under the obligation to reject cosmological dualism, to defend the unity between the Old and New Testaments and to uphold the historical reality of the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The historical interest and novelty of the Manichaean NT exegesis lies in its having given emphasis to certain principles which today would be denominated as "literary criticism." Tardieu¹⁶ systematised these principles mainly on the basis of material taken from the controversy maintained between the Manichaeans and Augustine.¹⁷

16. Tardieu, M. *Principes de l'exégèse manichéenne du Nouveau Testament*: Tardieu, M. (dir.). *Les règles de l'interprétation*, Paris 1987, 123–46. Cfr. Böhling, A. *The New Testament and the Concept of the Manichaean Myth: The New Testament and Gnosis: Essays in Honour of R. McL. Wilson*, Edinburgh 1983, 90–104.

17. The anti-Manichaean writings of Augustine include: Augustinus. *De utilitate credendi, de duabus animabus, contra Fortunatum, contra Adimantum, contra epistulam fundamenti, contra Faustum, contra Felicem, de natura boni, epistula Secundini, contra Secundinum* (CSEL 25, Vienna 1891); Idem. *De haeresibus* (CChr. SL 46, Turnhout 1969); Idem. *De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (PL 32, 1309–1378); Idem. *De libero arbitrio* (CSEL 74, Vienna 1956); Idem.

I. OBJECT AND STATUTES OF THE MANICHAEAN EXEGESIS

Only the NT constitutes an exegetical problem since Jesus abolished the OT because the God of the OT and that of the NT are not one and the same. Nor do the writings of Mani present an exegetical problem since Mani, unlike Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus, was the personal author of his works and consequently these are comprehensible in themselves, given the infallibility of the prophet. As a result, although for Manichaeism the NT has not the status of canonical scripture, the Manichaean faithful look upon the NT in much the same way as the Christian considers the Jewish scriptures: just as the OT for Christians foreshadows the fullness of revelation given in the person of Jesus, so Manichaeism holds that the NT is only partial in its relevance. The NT, according to Manichaeism, indicates what is necessary for salvation and thus signifies salvation, although it does not reveal the causes.

Any given NT text contains anomalies and incoherences due to the interference of the author. Faustus, one of the rivals of St Augustine, denominated this concept as *narratio obliqua* (Aug. *Contra Faustum* 17.1) in references to passages written in the third person. On this basis any NT text was to be submitted to a critical analysis to decide on its exact origin: from Jesus or Paul, authentic text; from any other author, not authentic.

II. THE EXEGETICAL AUTHORITIES: JESUS, PAUL, AND MANI

From the Manichaean point of view, the historical role of Jesus was to demonstrate through his words and works, within the framework of Judaism, the non-divine character of the Law and the Prophets. Paul, on abandoning the Law and founding the Church of the gentiles, inaugurated the Christian religion. The revelations that Paul received in visions, along with his epistles, testify to the coming of the Paraclete, whom Jesus had promised to send. Mani took the Apostle Paul as his model on the premise that both Paul and himself had broken off from Judaeo-Christianity in order to establish their own churches. Mani thus completed what Paul had begun: the Paraclete likewise descended upon Mani in order to reform the Church, which had become corrupt following the death of Paul.

De genesi contra Manichaeos (PL 34, 173–220); Idem. *De vera religione* (CSEL 77, Vienna 1961); Idem. *Enarratio in psalmum 140* (PL 37, 1815–33).

III. PRACTICAL RULES OF EXEGESIS

The exegete must take into account that each apostolic author has both a particular way of thinking—*mens*—and an intention—*propositum*—(Aug. *Contra Faustum* 23.2), so that the coherence of thought according to its expression in the order of the text be always respected. The principal problem arises in the ambiguous and obscure verses: in each case, it should be determined whether there occurred an interpolation post-dating Jesus or the Apostles. The same principle is to be applied when an author is found to contradict himself. To resolve these difficulties, one must go back either to the historical context in which the passage was written or, as well, to the different narrative contexts. Likewise important are the linguistic criteria: when an evangelist presents an event in the third person, it is highly probable that such a passage corresponds to the author of the Gospel designated under his name—*narratio obliqua*.

IV. THE CONTENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

According to the Manichaeans, the NT is bipartite, consisting of the Gospel and the Apostle. The Gospel has a heading without the name of the author—*principium*—and of the Gospel as such—*evangelium*—and of the crucifixion—*passio, staurosis*. The *principium* includes the initial phrase of Mk 1:1, followed by the prologue of John. The *evangelium*, based on Matthew, comprises the preaching of Jesus, begins with the imprisonment of John the Baptist (Mt 4:12), and concludes with the parable of the sheep and goats with which the eschatological discourse is concluded (Mt 25:46). The *passio* account, based on Luke, begins with the decision of the Sanhedrin to put Jesus to death (Lk 22:1–2) and ends with the ascension of Jesus into heaven (Lk 24:44–53). Thus, all that is excluded which refers to the infancy and preparation narration and, secondly, that which in the interior of the Gospel is written in the third person—*narratio obliqua*. The series *principium-evangelium-passio* describes chronologically the story of a life. Moreover, in spite of certain external similarities, the Manichaean Gospel is totally independent of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian. As regards the Apostle Paul, the Manichaeans consider his nine epistles written to the churches and his four personal letters as being authentic.

The Manichaean NT shows evident similarities to that of Marcion: a) bipartition Gospel/Apostle substituting bipartition Law/Prophets; b) the refusal to attribute authorship of the Gospel to any specific evangelist; c)

elimination of the infancy and preparation accounts. Nevertheless, the differences are likewise notorious: the Gospel of Marcion is limited to St Luke with the exclusion of the introduction along with other omissions and corrections, whereas the Manichaean Gospel is a Gospel harmony in the strict sense. The differences between the Manichaean versions of St Paul's writings and the Marcionite *Apostolicon* are equally disparate: compared to the thirteen letters recognized as authentic by the Manichaeans, the Marcionites recognize only ten. The sum of these differences excludes the possibility of merely literary dependence of the Manichaean NT on that of Marcion, given that the latter is recognizable as an exegetical and theological link between Paul and Mani.

IV
AN EVALUATION IN THE LIGHT OF
THE HISTORY OF EXEGESIS

The polemic which took place between Catholics and Manichaeans is of capital importance, not only for the history of theology and of exegesis, but also for the configuration of western philosophical thought.

I. PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS

As Osborn has shown so well in his recent book on the theology of the second century, the Christian apologists, making use of the Bible and of Greco-Roman philosophy, made of Trinitarian monotheism a sure response to the hostile environment which surrounded them. The intellectual enemies whom they confronted were not only philosophers of Middle Platonism or Jews, but also heretics: Gnostics and Marcionites.¹⁸

Thus, Christian theology originated in a polemical environment which did not prevent it from attaining a satisfactory systematisation both in its approach as well as in its solutions. The principal theological issues of the Apologists, following the intellectual structure of Middle Platonic philosophy, can be summed up under three headings: 1) the first principle or cause is the one God; 2) this God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; 3) this God is the first principle of (meta)physics, of ethics, and of logic, that is to say, of being, of goodness, and of truth. Osborn shows that the first problem (the one God) as well as the third (God as the first principle of metaphysics, ethics, and logic) find their clarification in the solution of the second problem (God in Christ): Justin, already a Platonist, finds safe and useful philosophy in the words of Christ and acknowledges the cross of Christ as the greatest symbol of divine power. Irenaeus believes in a God who became what we are in order to raise us up to what He is and centers his anti-Gnostic argumentation on the Pauline doctrine (Eph 1:10) of the *anakephalaiosis*, or the summing up, of all things in Christ. For Clement, the unknown God is declared in Christ and is approached from abstract unity through the dimension of Christ. Tertullian, so strongly monotheist, emphasises the total humility of his God, which is the sacrament of man's salvation.¹⁹

The apologists, on the basis of extensive modifications, then proceeded to incorporate various elements from the philosophical currents of Hellenism

18. Osborn, E. *The Emergence of Christian Theology*, Cambridge 1993.

19. *Ibid.*, 286.

which they made use of for responding to the major philosophical and theological questions which concerned them, while at the same time adapting the Christological perspective to that end. They thus distanced themselves from both the dualistic solution of Marcionism and the theological methodology of the Gnostics who from the very beginning, unlike the Christians, had abandoned the rational process, the dialogue between faith and reason, in their approach to the revealed mysteries.

As previously mentioned, the polemic between Catholics and Manichaeans, occurring in the fourth and fifth centuries, was the continuation of the controversy between Catholics and Gnostics in the second century. If the Manichaean or Gnostic side had held sway over the Catholics, western thought would not have as its basis the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God but rather a dualism which denies the inherent goodness of matter and, consequently, the reality of the Incarnation.

II. THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

From the theological point of view, this controversy has important consequences on the interpretation of Pauline doctrine. The Gnostic interpretation of the apostle Paul set forth by the Manichaeans was radically confronted and opposed by the Catholic Church. According to the Manichaeans, Paul is a dualist who set the spirit against the flesh. Already in the CMC, a Gnostic and Marcionite concept of Paul can be observed. Betz²⁰ and Decret²¹ showed that the Epistles to the Galatians and the Corinthians were preferred by Mani and his disciples and that Mani almost certainly inherited his Pauline concepts from the Marcionites. Likewise, the Epistle to the Ephesians, which found great favour among the Gnostics, is cited in the CMC as being Mani's formula of the dualistic doctrine. This Gnostic interpretation of Paul reappears with equal force in the Coptic sources²² and in North African Manichaeism.²³

20. Betz, H. D. Paul in the Mani Biography (CMC): Cirilo, L. (dir.). *Codex Manichaeicus Coloniensis. Atti del Simposio Internazionale*, Cosenza 1986, 215–34.

21. Decret, F. La figure de saint Paul et l'interprétation de sa doctrine dans le manichéisme: Padovese, L. (dir.). *Atti del I Simposio di Tarso su S. Paolo Apostolo*, Rome 1993, 105–15.

22. Ries, J. Saint Paul dans la formation de Mani: Ries, J. – Decret, F. – Freund, W. H. C. – Mara, M. G. *Le epistole paoline nei manichei, i donatisti e il primo Agostino*, Rome 1989, 7–27.

23. Decret, F. L'utilisation des épîtres de Paul chez les manichéens d'Afrique: *ibid.*, 29–83.

Indeed, the Fathers of the Church were well aware of this dualism in the Manichaean interpretation of Paul's writings. The Manichaeans denied the Incarnation of the Son of God and claimed that matter and the body were evil, that the Mosaic Law was likewise evil, thus concluding that man was obliged to commit sin. Even after the coming of Jesus, man cannot, even with the aid of grace, successfully overcome sin since such a struggle presupposes human freedom and the goodness of the passions. The rejection of this set of ideas was an important determining factor in the Fathers' perception of Pauline thought. They spared no effort to reach a deeper understanding of St Paul's Christological texts with their emphasis on the unity of the plan of salvation, as is the case of the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians, placing Christ, who is God and man, as the head of the Church and of the cosmos.²⁴

But the anti-Manichaean controversy also had its drawbacks for Catholic theology, especially in regard to reaching an understanding of the Epistle to the Romans.²⁵ Many Greek Fathers did not recognize the substantial inheritance of original sin as taught by Paul, but rather only its effects (death and concupiscence). Nevertheless, the Manichaeans erroneously argued their case for claiming that sin was man's destiny on the basis of Rom 5: 12–21. For this reason, not a few of the Greek Fathers defended the concept that man was free to choose between good and evil and that Paul made no denial of this truth. Nevertheless, they do not seem to comprehend all of the implications of the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.²⁶ In much the same way, to rank predestination with divine foreknowledge—albeit for the purpose of upholding human freedom of choice as opposed to Manichaean fatalism—prevents the Greek Fathers from reaching a full understanding of Rom 8:28²⁷ and 9: 6–33.²⁸ In the Latin Church the struggle against Manichaeism gave rise to Pelagianism, which carried these ideas of Greek theology to their extreme. The Pelagians held that human nature alone, without the aid of divine grace, could effectively overcome sin. The polemic between St Augustine and the Pelagian theologians was a key factor in reviving the controversy over the interpretation of the Epistle to the Romans to such an extent that the themes concerning the nature of sin and the relationships contrasting freedom-grace

24. Casciaro, J. M. *Estudios sobre la Cristología del Nuevo Testamento*, Pamplona 1982, 171–334.

25. Schelkle, K. H. *Paulus, Lehrer der Väter. Die altchristliche Auslegung von Römer 1–11*, Düsseldorf 1959.

26. *Ibid.*, 162–96.

27. *Ibid.*, 306–12.

28. *Ibid.*, 336–63.

and freedom-predestination would deeply influence the course of western theology from the Middle Ages to modern times.

III. EXEGETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This polemic led Catholics to make use of the principles of literary criticism in the interpretation of the Bible. Independently and prior to the struggle against Manichaeism, the Catholics had already begun to make use of a biblical exegesis patterned on the hermeneutic methodology proper to Hellenistic philology, thus giving due recognition to the importance of textual and literary criticism. As a consequence of the controversy, St Augustine, as well as other Catholic exegetes made use of techniques of textual criticism in order to demonstrate that the interpolations alleged by the Manichaeans did not, in fact, exist in the NT.²⁹

Moreover, from the Catholic point of view, the Manichaean exegesis interpreted the NT from presuppositions based on cosmological dualism and christological docetism. The result of such a theological perspective, not the stringency of the hermeneutic methodology, led to the distinctions made between the authentic texts of Jesus and Paul and the alleged interpolations of the authors. Consequently, the Fathers of the Church strove to demonstrate that the hermeneutic principles, systematised by Hellenistic philosophy, were perfectly compatible and adaptable to the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word.³⁰ Quite early on, Tertullian had written in an anti-Gnostic context that the Incarnation of the Son of God was the “*medulla Scripturarum*” (Tert. *Scorpiace* 12.1), and such a stance has always been the essential characteristic of Christian exegesis down through the centuries.

29. Basevi, C. *San Agustín. La interpretación del Nuevo Testamento*, Pamplona 1977. Decret, F. *Aspects du manichéisme dans l'Afrique romaine. Les controverses de Fortunatus, Faustus et Felix avec saint Augustin*, Paris 1970.

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CHAPTER NINE
THE FOURTH- AND FIFTH-CENTURY
GREEK CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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XVI. Hesychius of Jerusalem 878

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XX. Basil of Seleucia 919

I

INTRODUCTION: THE FOURTH CENTURY

The “golden age” of patristic literature extends from the end of the Diocletian persecution (311) until the Council of Chalcedon (451). During almost a century and a half, one generation after another of educated men and women turned to the church in all the provinces of the Empire, welcoming her message of salvation and securing their social status inside her institutional frame. In the era of imperial patronage, given to the church first by Constantine and his three sons (313–361), then by all their successors with the exception of Julian (361–363), the reception of scripture in ancient Christianity took a new course.

The exegesis of scripture became a major prerogative of the bishops, providing their public discourse with the resources of a sacralized language. Thus exegesis became primarily a pastoral duty. As the bishops engaged energetically into their task of interpreting scripture with their own faith-seeking-reason in biblical terms, it became a source of enlightenment for the faithful; at the same time, it also allowed the bishops to unify the crowds of new converts into a community of thought and behavior ruled by the Old and New Testaments. Thus the interpretation of the sacred word shifted from being the prerogative of charismatic individuals of the third century to the hierarchical institution of the imperial Church of the fourth century.

This shift of authority to more or less gifted clerical dignitaries had at least two dramatic consequences: *First, it created the conditions for a global reception and interpretation of scripture by non-specialists.* Very often trained in the rhetorical culture of their time, fourth century church leaders faced many challenging situations. Caught between the prudent respect due to past traditions of local churches and their innovative welcoming of new generations of catechumens, they had to develop a persuasive discourse of their own in order to communicate with their congregations and to be recognized by their peers as worthy pastors. The Bible was their deepest challenge. They had to reach out beyond the horizons of their own culture, catching God’s word and revelation in a far distant Hebraic past. Even the gospel narratives and other apostolic writings, a little nearer to their own times required thorough explanations because of their already alien context. Nevertheless, as former rhetors and men of law, many of the bishops were able to find the language to foster spirituality and to encourage values thanks to the higher education they had received in their youth.

They interpreted the “foreignness” of scripture as a very mark of its

divine revelation: through strange stories and unusual symbols, God's spirit delivered lessons for the present time. A code dictated by the ethnic and social needs of ancient Hebrews seemed in their eye to stress the originality of the Christian way of life. If read in the right disposition, even the bizarre Greek of the LXX translators, opened an access to treasures of wisdom and poetry. These somehow improvised church leaders, some already educated since childhood in Christian families, found in the Bible a language with inexhaustible resources for their religious imagination, and a legitimating authority for the daily exercise of their clerical authority. In short, scripture was all pervasive in the ministry of pastors for their congregations facing the realities of life. Through a correct interpretation, in conformity with the faith norms of the believing community, the biblical word brought consolation, sound judgment and reasoned reflection to the church at large.

Secondly, the placing of the hermeneutical task under the aegis of the bishops, not only linked exegesis to the episcopal pastoral charge, but *it also once for all established the scriptural foundation of their doctrinal statements*. Scripture, interpreted in imperial Christianity, did not limit itself to warranting social regulations. It became intrinsically theological. The church leaders' cultural background, especially when they authoritatively interpreted scripture, represented a millennium of philosophical and rhetorical civilization. By addressing audiences of newly converted men and women, the bishops, many of whom were themselves adult converts, proceeded to retrieve essential values of their own thousand-year-old culture. They would literally convert the past millennium in marking out, in terms precisely of *their* culture, a consistent definition of Christian beliefs. In strong contrast with the reception of the ancient scriptures among their Jewish contemporaries, Christian leaders and interpreters built up a powerful theoretical construct in defense of their faith which implied a radical metamorphosis of Greek thought at the same time as it actualized the message of Jewish scriptures in the context of the Greek-speaking churches.

The main metropolitan church centers of the Constantinian Empire participated actively and with spectacular results in this innovative reception of scripture, a reception that was at the same time hierarchical and pastoral. The intellectual atmosphere proper to each big city, would be conducive to a form of biblical exegesis, molded by earlier local tradition, but also calling for methodological creativity and theological clarification. In Alexandria and Antioch, Carthage and Rome, in Jerusalem and Edessa, in Milan and Cappadocian episcopal sees, and in Syrian Caesarea, biblical exegesis would flourish during the golden age of patristic literature in a variety of old and new literary genres.

II
 THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA
 (D. 339/340)

Eusebius was born in Caesarea ca. 263, and initiated into Origen's hermeneutics and exegesis by Pamphilus, with whom he wrote a lost *Apology for Origen* during Pamphilus's imprisonment during the Diocletian persecution. Eusebius himself was seized in the Thebais and imprisoned during the same persecution; however soon after Constantine and Licinius had published their edict of tolerance, Eusebius was elected to the see of his home town in 313. A moderately conservative Origenist, without a great deal of theological creativity, he was effectively compromised in the Arian controversy. His exceptional learning and indefatigable labors as an author made him the "father" of ecclesiastical historiography, an encyclopedic expert in Christian apologetics, a prominent theological adviser of Emperor Constantine, and an important link in the continuity of Origen's biblical scholarship into the fourth century. Only the last of these activities calls for an analysis in the present context.

In *The Chronicle*—*χρονικὸὶ κἀνονες* (*chron.*; CPG II, 3494), Eusebius drew upon the initiative of Julius Africanus, but on a much grander scale, and eliminated from this scientific endeavor any chiliastic overtones. Among his apologetic works a *General Elementary Introduction* (*introd.*; PG 22; CPG II, 3475) to the gospel, written before 313 in ten books, survives only in part (books 6–9), under the special title *Eclogae Propheticae* (*ec. proph.*; PG 22), presenting short notices on Messianic prophecies. The *Praeparatio Evangelica* (*p.e.*; GCS *Eus.* 8; CPG II, 3486), written in fifteen books after 314, refutes polytheism and demonstrates the superiority of Jewish religion. The *Demonstratio Evangelica* (*d.e.*; GCS *Eus.* 6; CPG II, 3487), in twenty books (of which ten Books and part of Book 15 are extant) shows the universal significance of the Old Testament, fulfilled in the New. Christianity relies on the religion of the Patriarchs before the dispensation of Mosaic law. The *Praeparatio* and the *Demonstratio* in the main refute Porphyry's treatise *Against the Christians*. Both works are reminiscent of Origen's *Contra Celsum*. The *Theophania* (*theoph. fr.*; GCS *Eus.* 3, 2; CPG II, 3488), in five books surviving only in a Syriac version dated from 411 C.E., is Eusebius's last apologetic work, probably from around 323; its fourth book treats of the fulfillment of OT prophecies. Only a few poor fragments are handed down of *Against Porphyry* in twenty-five books. In this work, Eusebius discussed

the discrepancies between the gospels denounced by the neo-Platonic philosopher, the genealogies of Jesus and the Resurrection stories.

Assisted by Pamphilus, Eusebius reproduced the fifth column of Origen's *Hexapla*, which had been preserved at Caesarea in a unique exemplar. He added to the Origenian column of the LXX, alternative readings from other versions in the margin. Constantine ordered him to send to Constantinople fifty copies of his copied fifth column. Another tool for biblical scholarship produced by Eusebius, is his *Evangelical Canons* (CPG II, 3465), showing which passages of each Gospel are paralleled in any of the others. In four columns, divided into numbered small sections, the text of the gospels can be read continuously. At the same time, the reader can refer the text to ten "canons," one for passages common to all four gospels, a second one for all those common to the Synoptics, etc. (Quasten III, 335). These *Eusebian Canons* or *Eusebian Sections*, in their Syriac and Latin version, played a basic role in biblical studies for centuries to come. The *Onomasticon* (*onomast.*; GCS 3,1; CPG II, 3466), on the place-names in the Bible, transmits a good deal of geographical and historical information. "Both the Greek original and the Latin version are extant and present even today the most important source for the topography of the Holy Land" (Quasten III, 336). Written before 331, the *Onomasticon*, was the fourth part of a larger study on biblical geography, which dealt with (1) an interpretation of ethnological terms of Hebrew scripture in Greek, (2) a topography of Judaea with the inheritances of the twelve tribes, (3) a plan of Jerusalem and of the Temple.

Among surviving fragments of the lost work *Gospel Questions and Solutions* (CPG II, 3470), one distinguishes the *Gospel Questions and Solutions addressed to Stephanus* (PG 22, 880–936), in two books discussing the childhood narratives; and the *Gospel Questions and Solutions addressed to Marinus* (PG 22, 937–57), in one book, dealing with the Resurrection narratives (a long fragment *On Passah* (CPG II, 3479) may belong to it). Greek (PG 22, 957–1016) and Syriac fragments, and a precious Epitome of the whole work survive. PG 22, 879–1006, Syriac; OC N.S. 12/14 (1922–1924) 30–70; third series 1 (1927) 80–97; third series 2 (1927) 57–69.

The *Commentary on the Psalms* (*Ps.*; CPG III, 3467), one of Eusebius's last works, was of gigantic proportions. It was translated into Latin by Eusebius of Vercelli, who omitted "heretical" passages (Jerome, *vir. inl.* 81; *Ep* 61, 2; 112, 20); the Latin version is lost.

In Ps 1–50 = PG 23, 72D–441C, of which only 160B–424C are reliable.

In Ps 37 = PG 30, 81–104

In Ps 50–95,3 = PG 23, 441C–1221C

In Ps 118 = 5C 189–90 (1972)

For *Com. Ps.*, in particular, see M. Richard (1957) and M. J. Rondeau and J. Kirchmeyer (1960).

The *Commentary on Isaiah* (*Is*; CPG II, 3468), announcing a division into ten books, and later on into fifteen, presents no such division in the manuscript tradition. It is known in its entirety since 1932, and was published by J. Ziegler in 1975 (GCS, *Eusebius Werke*, IX). It depends on Origen's similar work, and probably dates from the years following the Council of Nicaea, 325. Eusebius quotes and paraphrases Origen at length, his Isaiah text being therefore the one of Origen's *Hexapla*. He also quotes other biblical books, literally or by paraphrasing them, in such a massive frequency that his own writing seems entirely permeated by scripture. The biblical index in GCS covers fifteen pages.

Eusebius' exegetical method lacks Origen's distinction of a threefold sense of scripture. In the *Eclogae* he stresses the literal meaning of prophecies. In the *Demonstratio* he allows some allegorism, but only when forced by the symbolic language of scripture itself. In his later writings against Marcellus of Ancyra, *Contra Marcellum* and *de ecclesiastica theologia*, he strongly disapproves of Marcellus's allegories. Eusebius's own focus is on the biblical setting and relevance of biblical data. In his view, each biblical passage conveys a divine revelation to its immediate readership, as well as for future generations. The truth of the text, as determined by its *theoria*, always belongs to real history and dispenses from arbitrary allegorizing. Thus Eusebius exercises a critical vigilance in regard to Origen's spiritual interpretations. He anticipates the concerns of Antiochene exegetes (D. S. Wallace-Hadrill, 541).

He refers to the literal sense by phrases like *πρὸς λέξιν*, "according to the letter"; *καθ' ἱστορίαν*, "as the story goes"; *κατὰ τὴν πρόχειρον διάνοιαν*, "in its obvious meaning"; and he calls the spiritual meaning *διάνοια*, "meaning," or *θεωρία*, "exposition, vision." Positioned halfway between Alexandrian and Antiochene hermeneutics, he remains more inclined toward the former (C. Curti), his own attitude—no surprise—is conformed to the dealings of the Spirit in scripture.

For *Scholia*, on fifteen different biblical books, attributed to Eusebius in the *catenae*, see CPG II, 3469.

EDITIONS

PG 19–24.

GCS, *Eusebius Werke* 7, 9, 11, 14, 20, 23, 43, 47 (1902–1983).

Ps 49: R. Devresse, *RB* 33 (1924): 78–81.

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Prep. ev.: E. des Places, *al.*: *SC* 206 (1973), 228 (1976), 262 (1979), 266 (1980), 215 (1975), 369 (1991), 292 (1982), 307 (1983), 338 (1987).
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Prep. ev.: E. Gifford, Oxford 1903, 1981.
Quest. ev.: G. Beyer: *OC* 12–14 (1925): 30–70; 23 (1926): 80–97; 24 (1927): 57–69.
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III THE ARIAN CRISIS

I. ARIUS (D. 336) AND ARIANISM

If the scholarly achievements of Eusebius of Caesarea continued to influence the different church communities of his century, the majority of these churches were to be shaken by the doctrinal challenges and political consequences of the Arian crisis. A distinction needs to be made between Arius himself (died in 336) and the general crisis named after him. The Alexandrian priest, excommunicated by Bishop Alexander and his local synod around 318, was a sharp intellectual who promoted a Christological exegesis of his own, provoking thereby a grave scandal in his own church community. On the other hand, the Arian crisis was a political conflict between the metropolitan see of Alexandria and eastern Mediterranean churches fighting for privileged status under imperial patronage, for whom the Arian dispute was a pretext for imposing contradictory forms of "orthodoxy." The crisis, which lasted in the East until Theodosius (380) and in the West until deep into the 5th century, was unproductive as a whole in matters of biblical hermeneutics or exegesis, whereas the genuine initiatives of Arius himself rested on the peculiar logic of his own recognition of scripture.

Arius argued with scriptural phrases and allusions (Böhm, below) on the basis of his essential presupposition: "This principle proclaimed it necessary that the Godhead should be not only untreated but unbeaten. The logical sequence is that the Son of God, the Logos, cannot be truly God" (Quasten III, 8). Most of the biblical references in Arius's writings were familiar to Alexandrian theologians since Origen. One notes, in particular, the privileged place of Prv 8:22–25, not only in the tradition of Alexandria, but from the second century on, in the works of Athenagoras, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and others (Simonetti, *Studi* 8–89). Against this background, Arius's singular choice is striking: "Arius considered the verbs of vv. 22–25 as having the same meaning; he accepted *creare* of v. 22 and *stabilire* ('to establish') in their proper sense, and he took *generare* of v. 25 as synonymous with the two former verbs, thereby stating that in Christ sonship was not real, but only an addition. His interpretation relied on traditional opinions (concerning the link between vv. 22–25), but he completely altered their spirit by his emphasis on *creare*, to the detriment of *generare*." (Simonetti, *Studi*, 85–86). "This doctrine is a typical product of theological rationalism," according to one of Quasten's blunt statements (III, 8).

Only a few poor fragments of exegetic statements survive in the literary

remains of Arius's earliest supporters, the best known among them, in this regard being Asterius the Sophist, quoted generously by Athanasius (Kannengiesser, *Ath. d'Al.* 151–86, 202–08; M. Vinzent, 1993). A set of *Homilies on the Psalms*, attributed by M. Richard and others to Asterius in the 1940's and 50's, caused a real sensation (Quasten III, 196–197), but their attribution did not hold, among other reasons, for lack of a properly Arian content (see chapt. 9, XI, xvi).

In the last phase of the Arian crisis in the Greek-speaking East, Aetius and Eunomius witnessed to a more pointed interest of specific biblical texts (Simonetti, *La crisi*, 475–480; B. Sesboüé, *Dieu*, with texts in French translation). In this case, just as in earlier Arian recourse to scripture, only the biblical verses concerned and a few words of commentary are conveyed in anti-Arian refutations. Not even Athanasius in his voluminous *Contra Arianos* found it important to inform his readership about Arian hermeneutics. Very possibly neither Arius nor his followers ever elaborated a systematic theory of their biblical exegesis.

In the Western aftermath of the crisis, due in part to the Gothic migration from the eastern region of the Danube to northern Italy and the Gauls, Bishop Maximinus, who was not a Goth, but a strong defender of the Arian teaching of Ulfila, himself made a bishop by Eusebius of Nicomedia in 341, composed twenty-four *Expositiones de capitulis Evangeliorum*, fragmentary notes and short homilies expounding Gospel passages, with a few allegorical comments of a traditional style, mostly with moral applications drawn from the literal sense (M. Simonetti, in Di Berardino—Quasten, IV, 100). A remarkable *Opus imperfectum in Matthaëum* (stops at Mt. 25), the longest work in Latin known on the first Gospel from Antiquity, belongs to the same migrant minority-church as Maximinus. Its author remains unknown despite recent efforts at identification. Its original redaction was possibly in Greek, but the text was subsequently reworked in Latin with many borrowings from Jerome. Allegorism prevails in it, strongly reminiscent of Origen: “Symbolic interpretation of numbers, animals and plants; the importance connected for the purpose of allegory to the real or presumed etymology of Hebrew names; the contrast between letter and allegory compared to that between flesh and spirit; this shrewd method of interpretation is placed at the service of an understanding rich in suggestive themes and motifs which sometimes opens into a doctrinal element but more often prefers themes of a strongly existential coloring: man seen in the struggle between good and evil, between the devil, who has enslaved his flesh, and God, who with His grace aids the soul, which is free in its decision, but unstable and unable to realize its salvation without divine help” (M. Simonetti, in A. di Berardino—J. Quasten IV

102). Anti-Pelagian overtones may be stressed (Schlatter). The critical edition of this intriguing and moving piece of literature should provide more clues for its complete identification. (See chapter 11, XXV).

The *Anonymous in Job*, as far as Jb 3:79, in Latin, “makes sparing use of allegory, and the basic one is that which sees Job as a symbol of Christ in his suffering and passion” (M. Simonetti, in De Berardino, Quasten IV, 103); its literal interpretation, delivered with didactic gravity, leads to moral comments on faith, marriage, etc.

The *Tractatus in Lucae Evangelium*, fragments on some forty verses from chapters 1, 4, 5, and 6 of Luke, betrays a similar hermeneutic as the *Anonymous in Job*, but comes closer to the *Opus imperfectum* in some of its literary features.

EDITIONS

Arius: Athanasius, PG 26, 20C–24B. H. G. Opitz, *Athanasius Werke* II, 1, 231–78; III, 1; *Urkunden zur Geschichte des arianischen Streites*. Berlin 1934–35.

Asterius: M. Vinzent, *Asterius von Kappadokien. Die theologische Fragmente (VC, Suppl 20)*. Leiden 1993.

TRANSLATIONS – ARIUS

English

NPNF 10 (1891, 1994) 308f., 457f.

French

Kannengiesser, C., *Athanase d’Alexandrie évêque et écrivain*. Paris 1983.

Sesboué, B., *Dieu peut-il avoir un Fils? Le débat trinitaire du IV^e siècle*. Paris 1993, 31–43.

German

Seider, A, BKV, 2nd ed. 51 (1926).

TRANSLATIONS – ASTERIUS

French

Kannengiesser, above, 157–86, 202–8.

German

Vinzent, above.

II. THE EXEGESIS OF ARIUS:
BIBLICAL ATTITUDE AND SYSTEMATIC FORMATION

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Thomas Böhm

1. *Some Remarks on the Historical Context*

Before dealing with the exegesis of Arian texts as such,¹ some historical aspects have to be clarified;² suppositions concerning the context of the Arian crisis influence and sometimes even dominate the interpretation in certain ways. That Arius is supposed to have been a disciple of Lucian of Antioch is an important issue for some scholars when they locate the Arian theology.³ This relationship is deduced from Arius' own words in a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia: συλλουκιανιστὰ ἀληθῶς Εὐσέβιε.⁴ Some scholars

Note: This essay was completed in 1995. Literature which appeared later could no longer be taken into account.

1. Critical summaries on recent research: A. M. RITTER: Arius redivivus? Ein Jahrzwölft Arianismusforschung in: *ThR* 55 (1990) 153–87; T. BÖHM: Einige Aspekte zur jüngeren Arius-Forschung in: *MThZ* 44 (1993) 109–18.

2. The following points cannot be dealt with in this paper: origin from Libya (cf. R. WILLIAMS: *Arius. Heresy and Tradition*, London 1987, 29f.); the Melitian schism (cf. R. WILLIAMS: Arius and the Melitian Schism. In: *JThS* 37 [1986] 35–52; T. VIVIAN: *St. Peter of Alexandria. Bishop and Martyr*, Philadelphia 1988, esp. 23f.; A. MARTIN: “Les relations entre Arius et Melitios dans la tradition Alexandrine: Une histoire polémique”. In: *JThS* 40 [1989] 401–13; T. BÖHM: *Die Christologie des Arius. Dogmengeschichtliche Überlegungen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Hellenisierungsfrage*, St. Ottilien 1991, 37–39; R. WILLIAMS: Arius, Arianismus. in: *LThK*³ 1 [1993] 981–89, see 984; critical in this respect R. LORENZ: “Das vierte Jahrhundert [Osten]”. In: *Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte. Ein Handbuch*, ed. B. Moeller, Vol. 1, C2, Göttingen 1992, see C 113); the controversies connected with Hierax and Collothus (cf. T. BÖHM, op. cit., 40–42 [including bibliography]); and the chronology (cf. R. WILLIAMS, op. cit., 48–81; U. LOOSE: “Zur Chronologie des arianischen Streites”. In: *ZKG* 101 [1990] 88–92; T. BÖHM, op. cit., 43–52; J. ULRICH: *Die Anfänge der abendländischen Rezeption des Nizänums*, Berlin – New York 1994, 113).

³ On this problem cf., e.g., C. KANNENGIESSER: “Holy Scripture and Hellenistic Hermeneutics in Alexandrian Christology: The Arian Crisis”. In: *Colloquy 41 of the Center for Hermeneutical Studies*, Berkeley 1982, 1–40, see 1–5.

⁴ Urk. 1 (3,7f. Opitz).

conclude therefore, that Arius and Eusebius were disciples of Lucian⁵ and based on this supposed dependence upon Lucian a connection to the so-called literal interpretation of Scripture is made.⁶ The reality of such a link is, at best, tenuous: Not only does Philostorgius not mention Arius among the disciples of Lucian,⁷ he rather emphasizes that there were some essential differences between Arius and the Lucianists.⁸ Therefore, it is more probable that Arius, when mentioning the title “fellow-Lucianist,” thought only of a *captatio benevolentiae*. Another possibility of interpreting the phrase “fellow-Lucianist” is that Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Lucian had studied at the same place.⁹ It is necessary to explore these different approaches because hardly anything can be inferred from the primary sources about Lucian which gives us more information about him than does the hagiographical tradition.¹⁰ It is thus neither obvious that Arius was a disciple of Lucian nor can any conclusion be drawn in terms of Arius’ own exegetical tendencies. It therefore seems best to begin the study with other details concerning the preaching of Arius.

Epiphanius tells us in connection with the preaching of Arius that he was charged to explain the Scriptures in the church of Baucalis;¹¹ according to Epiphanius, Arius was a popular preacher.¹² One has to keep in mind

5. Cf. e.g. M. SIMONETTI: *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, Roma 1975, 27; A. M. RITTER: Arianismus. In: *TRE* 3 (1978) 692–719, see 698,700; B. STUDER: *Gott und unsere Erlösung im Glauben der Alten Kirche*, Düsseldorf 1985, 117, 130.

6. Cf. T. E. POLLARD: “The Origins of Arianism”. In: *JThS* 9 (1958) 103–111, see 103; M. SIMONETTI, 1975 [n. 5], 53f.; M. SIMONETTI: *Lettera e/o Allegoria. Un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica*, Rome 1985, 307.

7. Cf. Philostorgius, h.e. II 3 (14,7–8 Bidez); II 14 (25,10–14 Bidez); on this point cf. D. S. WALLACE-HADRILL: *Christian Antioch. A Study of Early Christian Thought in the East*, Cambridge 1982, 83.

8. Cf. Philostorgius, h.e. II 3 (14,7–8 Bidez); II 14 (25,10–14 Bidez).

9. Cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 31; R. P. C. HANSON: *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–81*, Edinburgh 1988, 5; T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 35.

10. Cf. H. CHR. BRENNECKE: “Lucian von Antiochien”. In: *TRE* 21 (1991) 474–79, see 475–78; H. CHR. BRENNECKE: “Lukian von Antiochien in der Geschichte des Arianischen Streites”. In: H. Chr. Brennecke / E. L. Grasmück / Chr. Marksches (Eds.): *Logos. FS f. Luise Abramowski zum 8. Juli 1993*, Berlin – New York 1993, 170–92; for a different interpretation of the role of Lucian cf. R. LORENZ, 1992 [n. 2], C 127.

11. Cf. Epiphanius, Pan.haer. 69,2,4 (153,26 Holl/Dummer).

12. Cf. Epiphanius, Pan.haer. 69,31 (154,12–16 Holl/Dummer); the fact that the interpretation of Scriptures was an essential point of difference, is mentioned, too, by Eusebius of Caesarea, in a letter by Constantine (cf. Urk. 17 [32–35 Opitz]); this

that Baucalis was a rather small church, perhaps even ‘extra muros’ (χωρα) and distinct from the culturally high-ranking, agricultural regions of the Mareotis in the Southwest.¹³ Especially the tradition of sympresbyters which at the time in question still existed in Alexandria¹⁴ as well as the division of Alexandria into different local sections¹⁵ lead to relatively disparate forms of communities, existing as local congregations with their own presbyters.¹⁶ The region around the docks, where Baucalis was, was characterized by its professions (seamen, merchants, etc.) and these perhaps influenced the ecclesiastical way of life as well, esp. by leading to the creation of a great number of ascetic groups.¹⁷ Very likely, the preaching of Arius met with some sympathy in such groups.¹⁸ According to Epiphanius¹⁹ and a very late source (Agapius of Menbidj)²⁰ the controversy began with an explanation of Prov 8,22. The interpretation of Scriptures was in this respect certainly an important factor and its different aspects need further research.²¹

reference is important even if some of the expressions and passages which Eusebius is claiming as the *ipsissima vox* of Constantine are not historically true in every respect (cf. T. G. ELLIOTT: “Constantine’s Preparations for the Council of Nicaea”. In: *JRH* 17 [1992] 127–37, see esp. 127; for Constantine cf. as well 1. NORDERVAL: “The Emperor Constantine and Arius: Unity in the Church and Unity in the Empire”. In: *StTh* 42 [1988] 113–50).

13. Cf. C. HAAS: “The Arians of Alexandria”. In: *VigChr* 47 (1993) 234–45, see 235.

14. Cf. Eusebius, h.e. VII 11,3 (654, 12 Schwartz); VIII 20 (674, 14f. Schwartz) for Dionysius of Alexandria; to this point R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 42.

15. Cf. Epiphanius, Pan.haer. 68, 4 (144, 6–9 Holl/Dummer); 69, 2 (153, 14–26 Holl/Dummer); Sokrates, h.e. V 22 (297–305 Hansen); cf. A. M. RITTER, 1978 [n. 5], 698; R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 42–45; C. HAAS, 1993 [n. 13], 236.

16. Cf. T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 40f.

17. Dressed as a monk and 700 nuns who surrounded him (cf. Epiphanius, Pan.haer. 69,3 [154,15–19 Holl/Dummer]); cf. C. HAAS, 1993 [n. 13], 237f.; the Thalia would support this argument: cf. T. BÖHM: “Die Thalia des Arius: Ein Beitrag zur frühchristlichen Hymnologie”. In: *VigChr* 46 [1992] 334–55); at the same time it should be mentioned that we are not dealing with a uniform group of ascetics here (cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 45; T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 41 to the role of Achilles).

18. Cf. beside the reference to Epiphanius mentioned above Theodoret, h.e. I 1,9 (6,14f Parmentier); Sozomenus, h.e. I 15,3 (33,2–9 Bidez/Hansen).

19. Cf. Epiphanius, Pan.haer. 69,12,1 (162,4–11 Holl/Dummer).

20. Cf. PO 7,544f.; cf. R. LORENZ: *Arius judaizans? Untersuchungen zur dogmenschichtlichen Einordnung des Arius*, Göttingen 1979, 67f.

21. R. C. GREGG correctly emphasizes that R. WILLIAMS (cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 107, 112, 213, 230) doesn’t pay enough attention to this problem although he solemnly declares that Arius was a biblical theologian with a scholastic (learned) exegesis (cf. R. C. GREGG: review R. Williams. Arius. In: *JThS* 40 [1989] 247–54, see 249, 251).

2. *The Exegetical Issue: Holy Scriptures and the Argumentation of Arius*

In order to find the most important references to Scriptures used by Arius, I propose to analyse Arius' letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (Urk. 1) and the confession of faith made by Arius and his followers and sent to Alexander of Alexandria (Urk. 6); however, I intend to disregard other sources, especially the *Thalia*, because the question whether the *Thalia* has been reworked or not is still controversial.²² Recent research referred to some of the scriptural texts,²³ but a general proof is still lacking.

22. One can, no doubt, refer to the point that there exists, all in all, a common style (cf. R. WILLIAMS: *The Quest of the Historical Thalia*. In: R. C. Gregg, ed.: *Arianism. Historical and Theological Reassessments*, Philadelphia 1985, 1–35), that the metre is uniform (cf. M. L. WEST: *The Metre of Arius' Thalia*. In: *JThS* 33 [1982] 98–105; this is a clear progress in comparison to the following papers: P. MAAS: "Die Metrik der Thaleia des Areios". In: *ByZ* 18 [1909] 511–15; W. J. W. KOSTER: "De Arii et Eunomii Sotadeis". In: *Mn* 16 [1963] 135–41; G. C. STEAD: "The Thalia of Arius and the Testimony of Athanasius". In: *JThS* 29 [1978] 20–52, see 40–51); furthermore, K. METZLER was able to show some remainders of an acrostic (cf. K. METZLER: *Ein Beitrag zur Rekonstruktion der "Thalia" des Arius*. in: K. Metzler/F. Simon: *Ariana et Athanasiana. Studien zur Überlieferung und zu philologischen Problemen der Werke des Athanasius von Alexandrien*, Opladen 1991, 11–45). But these three dimensions all together are not sufficient to exclude any interference of a redactor: this can be shown e.g. in respect to the concept of time (cf. T. BÖHM, 1992 [n. 17] 336f.; T. BÖHM, 1993 [n. 1], 117). This does not lead necessarily to the conclusion that we have to imagine a Neo-Arian redactor or compiler (cf. C. KANNENGIESSER, 1982 [n. 3], 16; C. KANNENGIESSER: "The Blasphemies of Arius: Athanasius of Alexandria De synodis 15". In: R. C. Gregg [Ed.]: *Arianism. Historical and Theological Reassessments*, Philadelphia 1985, 59–78, see 72–74; on this problem see S. G. HALL: "The Thalia of Arius in Athanasius' Accounts". In: R. C. Gregg, ed.: *Arianism. Historical and Theological Reassessments*, Philadelphia 1985, 37–58; T. BÖHM, 1993 [n. 1], 117f.).

23. Cf. R. LORENZ, 1979 [n. 20], 62, 67–72, 76, 136–40; R. C. GREGG / D. E. GROH: *Early Arianism. A View of Salvation*, Philadelphia 1981, 3–30, 89f., 95f., 104; R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 107–14; G. FEIGE: *Die Lehre Markells von Ankyra in der Darstellung seiner Gegner*, Leipzig 1991, 127.

The analysis of some biblical verses by R. C. GREGG / D. E. GROH and R. WILLIAMS was made because of the references of Alexander and Athanasius to the Arian exegesis; this method does give us some more biblical material (as does the *Thalia*) than the *Urkunden* alone; but one has to keep in mind that it has a polemical edge in respect to Alexander and Athanasius.

Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (Urk. 1)

At the beginning of his explanations, Arius defines the Son first of all *ex negativo*: the Son is not ungenerate, not a part of the Ungenerate and not derived from an underlying principle.²⁴ This negative statement about the Son has some remote connections in the first part with Rom 1,3 (made according to the flesh) and it operates like a theme which Arius intended to deal with, insofar as he returns to it again at the end of his explanations²⁵ (circular-composition). Arius tries to show that the Son cannot be ungenerate by using a series of scriptural references:²⁶

born out of the will (Ps 113,11 in connection with John 1,14);
 before all ages and aeons (Col 1,17 [plural], Hebr 1,2 [by whom God made the aeons], Prov 8,23 [singular in LXX]);
 full of <grace and truth> (John 1,14);²⁷
 <a> God (John 1,1);
 only begotten (John 1,14);²⁸
 unchangeable/immutable.²⁹
 Before he was produced (Prov 8,25),
 made (Prov 8,22),
 determined (Rom 1,4a),
 established (Prov 8,23),
 <therefore> he was not and must have an ἀρχή in this sense, consequently an origin, the God (John 1,1), who gave everything its origin and who himself has therefore to be without an origin (ἀναρχος).³⁰

24. Cf. Urk. 1 (2,10–3,1 Opitz).

25. Cf. Urk. 1 (3,5f. Opitz).

26. Cf. Urk. 1 (3,1–4 Opitz).

27. Complemented by K. HOLL (see the apparatus criticus of OPITZ ad loc.).

28. Cf. some similarities of this terminology in Rom 8,29 and Col 1,15.18 (first-born), which is—noticeably—not cited by Arius; this has to do with his understanding of μόνος (cf. below).

29. This term is especially difficult to explicate because it cannot be found in the Bible in this form and because Alexander and Athanasius polemicize vehemently against Arius insofar as he should have taught the Son as mutable (e.g. Athanasius, Or.c.Ar. 1,22 [PG 26, 57A–C]); on this topic cf. R. C. GREGG/D. E. GROH, 1981 [n. 23], e.g. 13–15); one may interpret the immutability in the context of Arius in different ways (e.g. moral immutability), but Arius could—just as implicitly Athanasius (cf. Or.c.Ar. 2,6 [PG 26, 157–60]; cf. R. C. GREGG/D. E. GROH, 1981 [n. 23], 13)—rely on Heb 13,8 (Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever); at the same time, he may have understood this verse differently from Athanasius when he refers to the generatedness of the Son.

30. This derives from Gen 1,1. See my interpretation below.

In his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia Arius, thus, uses a strictly biblical series for his argumentation in order to show that the Son has no part in the sphere of the Unbegotten.

Confession of Faith (Urk. 6)

A similar evidence as in Urk. 1 becomes apparent in the confession of faith by Arius and his followers, which they sent to Alexander of Alexandria (Urk. 6): Two lines of arguments can be differentiated: the first centers around God, the second around the Son.

There are some statements about the one God (εἷς θεός; cf. e.g. Mark 10,18) which are true for him alone (μόνον):³¹

alone ungenerate,³²

alone eternal and alone without beginning,³³

alone true (John 17,3; cf. Ex 33,6),

alone he who has immortality (1 Tim 6,16),

alone wise (Rom 16,27),

alone good (Mk 10,18),

alone Potentate (1 Tim 6,15),

judge of all (e.g. Rom 2,16), administrator as διοικητής (Wisdom 15,1)

and οἰκονόμος,³⁴

unchangeable/immutable (Mal 3,6),

just (John 17,15) and good (Mark 10,18).³⁵

In contrast, the Son is generated as only-begotten (John 1,14)

before eternal ages (Col 1,17; Hebr 1,2; Prov 8,23);

31. For the connection of εἷς and μόνος cf. E. PETERSON: *Εἷς Θεός. Epigraphische, formgeschichtliche und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Göttingen 1926; G. DELLING: "Μόνος θεός" in: *ThLZ* 77 (1952) 469–76.

32. This conclusion can implicitly be drawn from John 1,13f: the Son is the Only-begotten out of the will of the Father; thus, he is not ungenerate so that the attribute 'ungenerate' belongs only to the one God.

33. This position, too, is deduced *ex negativo*, i.e. that the Son exists before the ages and aeons, but not as ἀρχή of all things (cf. Gen 1,1); cf. Rom 1,23 as well (uncorruptible) and 1 Tim 1,17; 6,16.

34. This could implicitly follow from Is 22,19: someone is thrown out of his administration by God so that God is the proper administrator. Perhaps one has to see the close connection with διοικητής.

35. For the goodness of God as one of the most important attributes of God in the OT cf. as an introduction e.g. L. STACHOWIAK: "Güte." In: H. Haag, ed: *Bibel-Lexikon*, Zürich – Einsiedeln – Köln ³1982, 646.

through him all things were made (John 1,10; 1 Cor 8,6);
 generated not in respect to mere opinion, but in truth,³⁶
 subsisting according to the will of God,³⁷
 unchangable/immutable,³⁸
 perfect creature, but not as one of the creatures,³⁹
 generated (Prov 8,22) because of the will (Ps 113,11) before the ages
 and aeons (Col 1,17; Heb 1,2; Prov 8,23),
 he has life, being and dignity from the Father (John 17,3; Rom
 16,27).

The Father is the source of all (Ps 35,10),
 so that there are three hypostases.⁴⁰

36. Arius seems to avoid a conception of the logos as simply being a *flatus vocis*; on this problem—but in respect to Marcellus of Ancyra—cf. G. FEIGE, 1991 [n. 23], 16f., 217–26.

37. In connection with this issue two aspects have to be referred to: 1) Arius can be distinguished in *this* respect from Origen because for the latter the Son expresses the will of the Father so that Origen may have thought of an identity of will (cf. De princ 1,2,9 [142 Görgemanns/Karpp]; De princ 4,4,1 [784 Görgemanns/Karpp]; In Joh 13,36 [260,33f. und 261,11 Preuschen]; see R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 140). 2) The term ἰδιος was used by Alexander of Alexandria and Athanasius to explicate a close connection between Father and Son; moreover, Athanasius emphasizes: all that is created depends upon the will of the creator; the generation of the Son must, therefore, transcend the will (Or.c.Ar. 2,2 [PG 26, 150–152]); and Athanasius uses the term ἰδιος to express the connection of the divine and the human (on this problem see R. WILLIAMS: The Logic of Arianism. In: *JThS* 34 [1983] 56–81, see 58–62; A. LOUTH: “The Use of the Term ἰδιος in Alexandrian Theology from Alexander to Cyril”. In: *StP* 19 [1989] 198–202).

38. Cf. n. 29.

39. For the generatedness of the Son cf. e.g. Prov 8,22. Arius set himself apart from Valentinus, Mani, Sabellius, and Hierakas; this can be seen in (anti-)monarchian tendencies (cf. G. FEIGE, 1991 [n. 23], 126–34) and the attempt to avoid an implication of any materiality of God (cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1983 [n. 37], 63–66); on these aspects see R. LYMAN: Arians and Manichees on Christ. In: *JThS* 40 (1989) 493–503.

40. This mode of expression is clearly not biblical. In Heb 1,3 it is only implied that the Son is the express image of the hypostasis of the Father; I suppose hypostasis is used here in the sense of reality (cf. H. DÖRRIE: Ὑπόστασις. “Wort- und Bedeutungsgeschichte”. In: H. Dörrie: *Platonica Minora*, München 1976, 12–69, see 52). Arius could have come to this phrase of three hypostases by the following consideration: the Father is called hypostasis in Heb 1,3; according to Mt 28,19 one is being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit which could be connected with threefold naming of the ‘Lord’ in Num 6,24–26 (cf. L. ABRAMOWSKI:

God is the principle of all, but he himself is without beginning (John 1,1 in connection with Gen 1,1).

The Son is produced (Prov 8,25) outside any notion of time,⁴¹
made (Prov 8,22),
established (Prov 8,23).

Thus, he is not eternal with God; there are not two ungenerated beings.⁴² In this sense *the* God (John 1,1) has to be before all things as monad⁴³ and origin, thus before the Son as well. From the perspective of the Son, the Son is generated out of the God, out of the womb (Ps 109,3) and out of the Father (John 8,42).

An analysis of these two *Urkunden* of Arius shows that the argumentation is supported by many verses of Scripture; thus, one cannot reproach Arius of having constructed a doctrine purely informed by philosophy. In what follows, first, the very basis of the Arian theology can be inferred from the *connection* of different verses of Scriptures. Then, in a second step, the prerequisites of Arius' exegetical procedure in respect to his doctrine and the methodology are clarified. I am restricting myself to a single topic because it is impossible in the framework of this paper to throw light on further questions such as the subordination of the Son (generatedness) and creation through the Son.

Die Entstehung der dreigliedrigen Taufformel: ein Versuch. In: *ZThK* 81 [1984] 417–46). Because of the identity of names (Lord) one could conclude that Father, Son and Spirit are named as interchangeable; thus, having named the Father by the phrase hypostasis one could conclude that the Son and Spirit can be named hypostasis as well. But beside this construction some aspects concerning the content are especially important which belong to the history of the idea of hypostasis itself and the development of the trinitarian speculation as such.

41. In the sense of: before the time.

42. See also R. WILLIAMS, 1983 [n. 37], 66–81.

43. The notion *μονάς* need not be understood in the sense of showing the purely philosophical insights of Arius, but it can stress—as it did in Philo and others—especially the unity of God (understood in biblical terms) (cf. C. G. STEAD: “The Platonism of Arius.” In: *JThS* 15 [1964] 16–31, see 19; R. C. GREGG / D. E. GROH, 1981 [n. 23], 87). But in this case Arius emphasizes that the unity belongs to *the* God.

3. *The Technique of the Arian Exegesis*

3.1. Connections of some Key-Texts of the Bible—the example ‘Son as Creature’

As has been shown in the preceding analysis, Prov 8,22–25 is one of the central references for Arius.⁴⁴ In this respect answers to the following problems are crucial: How can the noticeable shift of emphasis between the Greek translations on one side and the Hebrew text on the other side be described? Which of the Greek translations does Arius refer to? And how does Arius interpret Proverbs as a proof for his theology? Which further connections has Arius drawn between the OT and NT?

Comparing the text of the Masorettes (MT) with the LXX⁴⁵ one can see that the LXX emphasizes the generation of Wisdom before the ages using terms like κτίζειν (v. 22), θεμελιοῦν (v. 23) and γεννᾶν (v. 25) and in this it differs from MT. The creation of the world is described by a different word, i.e. ποιεῖν (v. 24.26). The generation of Wisdom *before* the creation of the world is strongly shown in the LXX by a change of tense (present tense: γεννᾷ με—v. 25). Thus, the term πρὸ τοῦ which is used five times (v. 24f.) together with the final statement (he generates me: v. 25) are at the center of the whole passage. In striking contrast to nine instances in the MT, the LXX restricts first-person statements concerning wisdom to four instances; therefore one may conclude that the LXX restricted Wisdom in contrast to MT in order to set forth the generation of Wisdom (as a creature before the world). To emphasize the status of a creature the LXX uses the term κτίζειν and not the more common ποιεῖν; κτίζειν is related to הָקָה, but it doesn't interpret the sense of this Hebrew verb as an act of acquiring, but of generating; that this understanding is not self-evident can be demonstrated by comparing Deut 32,6 (LXX), Ps 139,13 (LXX) as well as by comparing Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in respect to Prov 8,22.⁴⁶ All of them translate

44. The aim is not to take the verse Prov 8,22 in isolation as the origin of the controversy, which is stressed correctly by R. WILLIAMS (cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 107).

45. According to M. Hengel the translator of the Proverbs is close to Aristobulus (cf. M. HENGEL: *Judentum und Hellenismus. Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh.s v. Chr.*, Tübingen ²1973, 294; cf. M. HARL: “La ‘Bible d’Alexandrie’ et les Études sur la Septante. Réflexions sur une première expérience”. In: *VigChr* 47 (1993) 313–40, see 332f.).

46. Cf. F. FIELD, ed.: *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt sive veterum interpretum Graecorum in totum vetus Testamentum Fragmenta II*, Hildesheim 1964 (repr.), 326.

יָנִי by ἐκτήσατο (he acquired), but not the LXX: ἔκτισέν με. A similar point can be made regarding Prov 873a (LXX). The word θεμελιοῦν renders only here in the whole of LXX the verb ἄσπασα (pour [I] or twist [II]) and strengthens it to “to lay a foundation.” More evident is the intervention in v. 24f. (MT): the first “was born/generated” (V 24a) is omitted, the second (v. 25b MT; in the form of *polal*) is translated here by the *active* γεννᾶν and thus emphasizes an active generation (cf. Ps 2,7).⁴⁷

When Arius refers to Prov 8,22–25⁴⁸—in view of the long history of interpretation of these verses⁴⁹—he may stress the *creaturehood* and the *being-before-the-world* by citing these verses of the LXX. At the same time, by using the verb κτίζειν, he might express the *otherness* in comparison with all that is being made (ποιεῖν).

Compared with the LXX text, some changes in the Arian conception can be detected: the first concerns the generation which, according to the LXX, is in the active voice and in the present tense (γεννᾶν), whereas Arius puts it and all the other verbs of Prov 8 into the passive voice, aorist tense; the harsh change of the LXX into the present tense (as a breaking through the different tenses and the structure of time) is, therefore, not taken up by Arius, but the sense of it can be found in the being before the world (before the ages and aeons). The four verbs Arius brings together by ἦτοι and ἦ are interchangeable for him;⁵⁰ insofar as he uses ὀρισθῆναι (from Rom 1,4a) in connection with the verbs of Prov 8,22–25 the status of the Son as a creature receives a nuance. This underlines that the definition of the Son is to be related to the works of God;⁵¹ thus, this word is not only introduced for rhythmic reasons.⁵² However, two notions cannot be deduced from the text of the Proverbs as such: Who does effect the act of creation in the sense of ποιεῖν? A creation *through* the Son is not mentioned here. Secondly, the theme of Prov 8 is only Wisdom

47. For different aspects of the problem see M. KÜCHLER: “Gott und seine Weisheit in der Septuaginta (Ijob 28; Spr 8)”. In: H.-J. Klauck, ed.: *Monotheismus und Christologie. Zur Gottesfrage im hellenistischen Judentum und im Urchristentum*, Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1992 (QD 138), 118–43, see 134–38.

48. Cf. Urk. 1 (3,3 Opitz); Urk. 6 (13,9 Opitz).

49. Cf. M. WILES: “In Defence of Arius”, in: *JThS* 13 (1962) 339–47; M. SIMONETTI: *Studi sull’Arianesimo*, Rome 1965, 9–32; B. STÜDER: “Die Soteriologie nach dem Konzil von Nizäa”. In: *HDG* III.2a (1978) 116–74, see 118.

50. Cf. M. SIMONETTI, 1965 [n. 49], 33–36; R. C. GREGG/D. E. GROH, 1981 [n. 23], 95.124 n. 70.

51. Cf. R. C. GREGG/D. E. GROH, 1981 [n. 23], 96.

52. Differently M. SIMONETTI, 1965 [n. 49], 33.

and not the Son. Thus, the equation of σοφία with the Son should be looked for referring to other sources.⁵³

The connection, especially of Wisdom as mediator for creation and of the ἀρχή from Gen 1,1 was already established long before Arius, so that he could rely on that tradition. The Son is the beginning of God's creation (first creature). Moreover, Arius emphasizes that God reigns over the Son,⁵⁴ a concept which is lacking in Origen although Origen thought of the Father as ἀρχή of the Son as well.⁵⁵ However, this concept can be found in Theophilus.⁵⁶ Here, it is important to see that Theophilus conceived Gen 1,1 in the sense that ἐν ἀρχῇ has the meaning of διὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς.⁵⁷ By such an interpretation one can establish a connection between Prov 8 and Gen 1,1: the being of Wisdom as creature before the ages does also mean that it is the beginning of all creation (as first creature) generated by God.

This opens a rich vein of interpretation: With regard to Gen 1,1, not only was the בְּרֵאשִׁית interpreted in the sense of Wisdom, in the tradition before Arius, but also of בְּרָא: The act of creation is effected by the "Word," found e.g. in the *Targumim*⁵⁸ and in a text of the *Epideixis* of Irenaeus. The act of creating is related to the Aramaic בְּרָא: in the beginning as the Son.⁵⁹ This is very interesting insofar as Irenaeus knows the other variation of the verse (in the beginning God created heaven and earth).⁶⁰ Moreover, if one realizes that even in Sir 24,4 Wisdom was identified with the creative Word of God and that Philo of Alexandria thought of Wisdom as mediator of creation (having taken the pattern from Prov 8,22)⁶¹ and that Wisdom could be

53. Cf. R. LORENZ, 1979 [n. 20], 68.136.

54. Cf. Urk. 6 (13,15–17 Opitz).

55. Cf. Origenes, In Joh 1,17 (22,10 Preuschen); see R. LORENZ, 1979 [n. 20], 136.

56. Cf. Theophilus, Ad Autol 2,10 (38/40 Grant).

57. Cf. Theophilus, Ad Autol 2,10 (38 Grant) and 13 (46 Grant); cf. Hilary of Poitiers, In Ps 2,6 (39,13–14 Zingerle): "Breshit... tres significantias habet, id est 'in principio' et 'in capite' et 'in filio'"; for these aspects see R. LORENZ, 1979 [n. 20], 137.

58. Cf. Targum du Pentateuque, ed. R. le Déaut, Paris 1978 (for Gen 1,1).

59. Cf. Irenaeus, Epideixis 43 (K. Ter-Mékérttschian and S. G. Wilson, with Prince Maxe of Saxony, eds. and Eng. trans.; French trans. by J. Barthoulot: *The Proof of the Apostolic Preaching, with Seven Fragments, Patrologia Orientalis [= PO] 12.5* [Paris, 1917; repr. Turnhout: Brepols, 1989]); see N. BROX: *Irenäus von Lyon. Epideixis. Adversus haereses I*, Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1993 [FC 8/1], 62 n. 22 (further literature).

60. Cf. Irenaeus, Adv. haer. 1,18,1 (272 Rousseau/Doutreleau); 2,2,5 (40 Rousseau/Doutreleau).

61. Cf. Philo, Ebr 31 (176 Wendland).

identical with the Logos,⁶² it would be understandable from the point of view of such a tradition that Wisdom *qua* Logos *qua* Son is thought of as mediator of creation and that it is at the same time the beginning of creation, though before all creation. The world could thus be made *through* the Son who is generated (cf. 1 Cor 8,6).⁶³

This argumentation can be further supported by the interpretation of John 1,1. For our context it is important to see that the word “God” is being used with and without an article in this verse. Origen especially tries to solve this problem by a recourse to the classic teaching about the article; in his commentary on John he stresses that the evangelist as a well-educated philologist had made use of a differentiation for θεός in respect to the article, but not for the “Logos.”⁶⁴ Although the grammarians of that time had not developed a proper theory of the complement without article,⁶⁵ the remarks of Apollonius Dyscolus are indeed sufficient⁶⁶ to understand the interpretation of Origen. Apollonius knows indeed that the article is missing in the case of the complement (e.g. in the case of εἶναι),⁶⁷ but the rule has one exception: the complement is being used with the article if it refers to

62. Cf. Philo, Leg.all. 1,65 (78 Cohn); see G. C. STEAD: *Philosophie und Theologie I: Die Zeit der Alten Kirche*, Stuttgart – Berlin – Köln 1990, 104f.

63. For such a series of prepositions: out of God, before the world, the world through the Son cf. H. DÖRRIE: “Präpositionen und Metaphysik. Wechselwirkung zweier Prinzipienreihen”. In: *Museum Helveticum* 26 (1969) 217–28; for Ps.Basil, Adv. Eun. IV–V cf. F. X. RISCH: *Pseudo-Basilii Adversus Eunomium IV–V. Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Leiden – New York – Köln 1992, e.g. 192; M. VINZENT: *Asterius von Kappadokien. Die theologischen Fragmente. Einleitung, kritischer Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Leiden – New York – Köln 1993, e.g. 96f., 211.

64. Cf. Origenes, In Joh 2,2 (54,12–22 Preuschen); see B. NEUSCHÄFER: *Origenes als Philologe*, Basel 1987, 203; N. BROX: “‘Gott’ mit und ohne Artikel. Origenes über Joh 1,1”. in: *BN* 66 (1993) 32–39.

65. Cf. CHR. SCHÄUBLIN: “Kenntnis des ‘artikellosen Prädikatsnomens’ in der Antike”. In: *WJA NF* 4 (1978) 69–74.

66. Cf. B. NEUSCHÄFER, 1987 (n. 64), 204; on the context in which Apollonius is set and the theory of syntax cf. D. L. BLANK: “Apollonius Dyscolus”. In: *ANRW II* 34.1 (1993) 708–30; J. M. VAN OPHUIJSEN: “The Semantics of a Syntactician. Things meant by verbs according to Apollonius Dyscolus Περὶ συντάξεως.” In: *ANRW II* 34.1 (1993) 731–70.

67. Cf. e.g. Synt. 1,72 (61,24–62,5 Uhlig).

68. Cf. Synt. 1,43 (38,11–39,1 Uhlig); for this aspect and further points see B. NEUSCHÄFER, 1987 [n. 64], 204 and 445 n. 476 (further literature!); this is emphasized in modern grammars as well, e.g.: F. BLASS/A. DEBRUNNER/F. REHKOPF: *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Göttingen ¹⁴1976, 223 (§273).

an exceptional well-known and praised person or somebody who is yet to be mentioned.⁶⁸ As Origen is interested particularly in the necessity of the article for the complement to express its ἐξοχή or ὑπεροχή, he emphasizes that John should have put the article in verse 1,1c in connection with θεός; for only in this case could he have expressed that the Logos, too, was the almighty God mentioned in verse 1,1b. Thus, according to Origen one can avoid the identification of the Logos and *the* God, and Origen tries to solve this in other cases by using the phrase ἕτερος θεός.⁶⁹ With this in mind, Arius could—possibly with recourse to Origen—maintain that the Son functions as *mediator* of creation⁷⁰ and that he can only be named by the word *a* God, but not *the* God.

By combining a series of different Scriptural verses (mainly before the outbreak of the controversy) Arius had the possibility of developing some facets of the creaturehood of the Son; he could have done this believing that he was well founded upon Scripture.⁷¹ Neither the biblical references used

69. Cf. N. BROX, 1993 [n. 64], 38 with the evidence for this thought; on the connection with the Stoic logic and the rejection of a modalistic monarchianism by the Origenistic interpretation see R.E. HEINE: "Stoic Logic as Handmaid to Exegesis and Theology in Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of John". In: *JThS* 44 (1993) 90–117, see 98–100; only a few aspects to the interpretation of Origen and the importance for the Arian exegesis: M. WILES, 1962 [n. 49], 342.

70. Such an interpretation fits well into the possibilities of the theology according to the prologue of John (cf. M. THEOBALD: "Gott, Logos und Pneuma. 'Trinitarische' Rede von Gott im Johannesevangelium". In: H.-J. Klauck [Ed.]: *Monotheismus und Christologie. Zur Gottesfrage im hellenistischen Judentum und im Urchristentum*, Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1992 [QD 138], 41–87, see 51–62.81), but especially in respect to Philo (cf. T. TOBIN: "The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation". In: *CBQ* 42 [1990] 252–69, see 258).

71. Cf. B. STUDER, 1985 [n. 5], 132; C. OSBORNE: "Literal or metaphorical? Some issues of language in the Arian Controversy". In: L. R. Wickham/C. P. Bammel/E. C. D. Hunter, eds.: *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity. Essays in Tribute to George Christopher Stead*, Leiden – New York – Köln 1993, 148–70, see 149. This is the aim of the Arians in the same way as it is for Athanasius, although the result of the exegesis is different in both cases: cf. J. D. ERNEST: "Athanasius of Alexandria: the Scope of Scripture in Polemical and Pastoral Context". In: *VigChr* 47 (1993) 341–62, see 341–44 (reference to Prov 8); on this problem see A. L. CLAYTON: *The orthodox recovery of a heretical proof-text. Athanasius of Alexandria's interpretation of Proverbs 8:22–30 in conflict with the Arians*, Diss. Southern Methodist Univ. Dallas, Tex. 1988 (microfilm).

Moreover, for the whole interpretation of Gen 1,1 and John 1,1 cf. J. C. M. VAN WINDEN: *In den Beginne. Vroeg-Christelijke Exegese van de Term ἀρχή in Genesis 1:1*, Leiden 1967; K. BEYSLAG: *Grundriß der Dogmengeschichte Vol. 1: Gott und die Welt*, Darmstadt ²1987, 126.

by Arius nor the technique of interpretation which is described here only by way of one example enable one to conclude that Arius was a so-called literalist.⁷² But at the same time such a technique makes certain presuppositions concerning the content of theology and the methodology.⁷³ This aspect can receive only abbreviated attention in the framework of this article.

3.2. Presuppositions around the Arian Exegesis

The Arian position can be recognized as one tendency within the richly varied biblical tradition. In respect to the explicit question of the creaturehood of the Son and his being a mediator of creation Arius' exegetical "behaviour" can be appreciated by relating his presuppositions to the history of theology and philosophy. Within the scope of my exposition it is impossible to deal with all the dimensions of the Arian theology, the more so since the issues have received detailed attention in recent research.⁷⁴ However, attention to the selection of biblical references by Arius and his emphasis on the necessity for the Son to have an origin insofar as he was generated whereas the origin itself is without an origin (ἀναρχος ἀρχή)⁷⁵ leads to an awareness of the introduction of a distinction of the three hypostases in the sense of subordination and the development of the divine attributes from those of the Son⁷⁶ (as a difference e.g. of μονάς and δυάς).⁷⁷ In this context one has to be aware of the fact that δυάς doesn't mean the twoness of Father *and* Son, but the "twofold" as non-monas and the second after the Father,⁷⁸ who has caused him. But the notion of causation has obviously ontological implications so that the Son can be assigned to a middle class.⁷⁹ The ontological dualism which is shown in this notion, as well as the will of God as cause of

A similar line of argumentation can be revealed in respect to the structure of time in the Arian texts (cf. T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 133f.).

72. Cf. R. WILLIAMS, 1987 [n. 2], 109, 112.

73. On this problem cf. C. KANNENGISSER, 1982 [n. 3], 36.

74. Cf. the summaries of T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 125–30 and 185–98.

75. Cf. Urk. 1 (3,4 Opitz).

76. Cf. T. BÖHM, 1991 [n. 2], 62; M. VINZENT, 1993 [n. 63], 66.

77. Cf. Athanasius, De syn 15 (243,1 Opitz); Urk. 6 (13,12 Opitz).

78. Cf. G. C. STEAD, 1964 [n. 43], 19.

79. Cf. F. RICKEN: "Nikaia als Krisis des altchristlichen Platonismus". in: *ThPh* 44 (1969) 321–41, see 330; F. RICKEN: "Zur Rezeption der platonischen Ontologie bei Eusebios von Kaisareia, Areios und Athanasios". In: *ThPh* 53 (1978) 321–52, see 339; R. M. HÜBNER: *Der Gott der Kirchenväter und der Gott der Bibel. Zur Frage der Hellenisierung des Christentums*, München 1979, 11.

everything that comes into being, have their equivalent not in the Bible, but in Plato's *Timaeus*⁸⁰ and the reception of the *Timaeus* e.g. by Attikos⁸¹ and Alcinoos.⁸² As cause of the Son, the Father is defined strictly relationally from his opposite, i.e. the Son: the Father, from this point of view, being as unity and Monas.⁸³ These considerations help us to see that the Arian exegesis (in its selection of biblical material and in its method of mutual interpretation of biblical references) is essentially influenced by certain presuppositions, e.g. the introduction of the category of cause or the exceptional determination of the Father as Monas whose attributes are deduced from that which is caused.

Beside these foundational concerns within Arian theology Arius established a methodological criterion: the biblical references can be interpreted through each other on a diachronic level and, thus, can be isolated from the respective synchronic context. This is the basis for combining Prov 8, Gen 1,1 and John 1,1 and further biblical verses. The *likelihood* of such a procedure was not argued for by Arius: It was a basis from which he could reckon with a broader agreement among the people of his time. This procedure can be found within the Jewish sphere as well as within the Christian and most of the pagan tradition of interpretation: It is extended from the explanation of Homer (Homer is to be interpreted by Homer)⁸⁴ to the Middle- and Neoplatonic interpretation of Plato⁸⁵ (the combination of singular δόγματα of Plato found e.g. in Justin Martyr⁸⁶ and Clement of Alexandria);⁸⁷ at the same time it is exemplified in the Jewish region, e.g. Philo of Alexandria⁸⁸ and the seven hermeneutical rules of Rabbi Hillel (גזירה שוה),⁸⁹ similarly in

80. Cf. Platon, *Tim* 27d–28a; 29e–30a; 41ab.

81. Cf. Attikos, *Frg.* 5 (Baudry).

82. Cf. Alkinoos (Albinos), *Didask.* 10 (165,1 Hermann); to these aspects see F. RICKEN, 1978 [n. 79], 338.

83. Cf. M. VINZENT, 1993 [n. 63], 64–66.

84. Cf. B. NEUSCHÄFER, 1987 [n. 64], 276–285.

85. For this technique see (e.g. in respect to Alkinoos) J. WHITTAKER: "Platonic Philosophy in the Early Centuries of the Empire". in: *ANRW* II 36,1 (1987) 81–123, see 91 and 108–110.

86. Cf. Justin, *Dial* 4,1 (95 Goodspeed).

87. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Protr* VI 68,1 (51f. Stählin/Treu) and *Strom* V 12,78,1 (377 Stählin/Früchtel).

88. Cf. I. CHRISTIANSEN: *Die Technik der allegorischen Auslegungswissenschaft bei Philon von Alexandrien*, Tübingen 1969, 146.

89. Cf. U. WILCKENS: *Der Brief an die Römer, Bd. 1* (EKK VI,1), Zürich – Neukirchen – Vluyn ²1987, 258.

Paul⁹⁰ and 1 Peter.⁹¹ Origen especially expounded this way of interpretation in some detail.⁹² Such a theory can only be practicable if one posits a special understanding of inspiration⁹³ so that Scriptures can be explained in a prosopographical way and, thus, the different biblical references can be connected through each other and isolated from their immediate context.

It is evident that Arius is able to support his arguments by different verses of Scriptures. However, this method of interpretation which has a long tradition before Arius as well as certain issues concerning the content dominate his exegesis. Only from this point of view is it possible to understand how Arius elaborated the attributes of the Father from the standpoint of the Son and to arrive at a clear distinction between Father and Son and to the subordination of the Son in relation to the Father.

In summary, two important sources of Arius—the Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (Urk. 1) and the Confession of Faith (Urk. 6)—show that Arius could have understood most of his statements in biblical terms. However, the presuppositions of his exegesis are, at least, twofold: 1) The references to the Bible must be understood as an isolation of Scriptural verses which are interpreted by Arius against the background of the tradition before him (e.g. Origen's interpretation of John 1,1). But only by combining a series of different Scriptural passages, Arius had the possibility of developing some of his central themes (e.g. the creaturehood of the Son). 2) The second presupposition belongs to the philosophical and theological categories which dominate the Arian exegesis, e.g. the difference between the generated Son and the Father as origin without any source for himself. Both aspects dominate the Arian reading of the Bible so that the biblical references have to be seen in these respects.

90. Cf. U. WILCKENS, 1987 [n. 89], 264, 273.

91. Cf. R. SCHNACKENBURG: "Christologie des Neuen Testaments". In: *MySal* III,1 (1970) 227–388, see 353; O. KNOCH: *Der erste und zweite Petrusbrief. Der Judasbrief*, Regensburg 1990, 60f.

92. Cf. I. CHRISTIANSEN, 1969 [n. 88], 146; B. NEUSCHÄFER, 1987 [n. 64], 263–85.

93. On the concept of inspiration and the foundation of the canon cf. K. S. FRANK: "Zur altkirchlichen Kanongeschichte". In: W. Pannenberg/T. Schneider, eds.: *Verbindliches Zeugnis I: Kanon—Schrift—Tradition*, Freiburg – Göttingen 1992, 128–55. The foundation of the canon presupposes a criterion defining the content in order to determine what is to be believed as canonical, i.e. we don't have to deal with de facto decisions of the different stages of the canon; the criterion defining the content has to be established, moreover, by arguments of a theology of revelation insofar as the word of God should be recognized within that canon—in other words: it is—systematically speaking—a categorical recording of a transcendental truth.

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IV
INCARNATIONAL HERMENEUTICS

I. MARCELLUS OF ANCYRA (C. 280–374)

Marcellus was born in 280. As late as 374, as local bishop, he was mentioned as presider over a general synod at Ancyra. He had known Constantine, who had at first planned the general synod of 325 in Ancyra, before convoking it to Nicaea. In 336 Marcellus handed to the emperor his *Opus ad Constantinum Imperatorem*, in which he denounced the heresy of Eusebius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Asterius the Sophist, Narcissius of Neronias, and Paulinus of Tyre. The synod of Constantinople condemned the work and deposed Marcellus. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote a response, *Contra Marcellum* and *De ecclesiastica theologia*. After the death of Constantine in May 337, Marcellus occupied his see again, but he was soon sent into exile, spending fifteen months with Athanasius in Rome, and then departed from Rome in the fall of 340, after a public statement of faith, the *Epistula ad Julium*. The Roman synod of spring 341 accepted his statement of faith, as did the western synod of Serdica (Sofia) in 342. He withdrew from the political scene, his theological position being known only through the writings attributed to him with more or less certitude by modern critics: *De sancta ecclesia*; *Ps-Athanasius*,—*Epistula ad Liberium*,—*Epistula ad Antiochenos* = *Sermo maior de fide*,—*De incarnatione et contra Arianos*.

Scripture was for Marcellus the divinely authorized proof-text for his theological ideas. With an expertise focused on the logic of scripture, he argued directly from scripture itself. Like Arius, but with a totally different notion of divine sonship, he assessed Christian faith in applying his own self-made hermeneutics. Hostile to the conservative Origenism of the two Eusebiuses (Nicomedia and Caesarea) and their group, he himself called upon the Origenian legacy in his interpretation of Christological proofs, such as Prv 8:22–25, 1 Cor 15:24–26, Ps 109:1, Heb 3:1–2, Acts 2:36.

Like Arius, he was basically a third century thinker. Still speculating with monarchian categories, in his theory of the Christian godhead he developed, in emulation of Eusebius of Caesarea, a triumphalist ecclesiology based on an archaic eschatology, “an exegesis of christological passages which is directly ecclesiological” (Seibt, 87, TRE 22). After 342 Athanasius kept a respectful distance from him. Marcellus’s impact on Athanasian exegesis of Prv 8:22, suggested by some critics, seems improbable both for chronological and doctrinal reasons. Marcellus reached old age in Ancyra and died in 374.

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II. ANTONY THE HERMIT (251–356)

See chapter 14, III, ii.

III. PACHOMIUS (292/9–346)

See chapter 14, III, iii.

IV. ATHANASIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (CA. 298/9–373)

Born in 298 or 299, Athanasius was elected bishop of Alexandria in 328, three years after the imperial synod of Nicaea to which he had travelled as a deacon with his elderly predecessor, Bishop Alexander. From the Nicene assembly Alexander succeeded in getting a confirmed condemnation of Arius, and a decree urging the schismatic Melitians to reintegrate the catholic church in Alexandria. Age and infirmity probably prevented him from acting efficiently against the Melitians after his return from Nicaea, and in any case, the new developments of the Arian crisis after the summer of 325 were beyond his control. Hence, in 328, his very young successor (not yet 30) assumed a church in disarray when entering the episcopal office; his tenure of forty-five years would be seriously pressured by adverse circumstances resulting from Alexander's heritage.

Every one of Athanasius's writings highlights his familiarity with holy scripture. At the same time, his writings also witness to his choice of very personal and unusual hermeneutics. For Athanasius, scripture was integrated in the spiritual reality of the Christian tradition in such a way that it was not as a classic from the past, requiring a commentary in order to be understood from one culture to another. Rather it was a message expressing the ecclesial actuality, announced in its essential content to catechumens and newly baptized, celebrated in liturgical activities, or constantly referred to and discussed by church members with regard to doctrinal matters. Obviously close to the Bible from his early teens, Athanasius had developed what can be best described as a "biblical mind-set": he was unable to face any situation, or assume any responsibility, without identifying himself in his thought and in his action through a reflex of biblical hermeneutics. More importantly, his knowledge of the OT and the NT, memorized "by heart" was centered on the revelation of God's incarnation.

The church was for Athanasius the visual actualization of the divine incarnation witnessed to by the NT. Without ever attempting any theoretical ecclesiology, Athanasius devoted himself to the people of his church community, fighting endless battles on them. The very experience of faith which united him with his community, was understood by him as the objective church-reality. It was an attitude of mind through which believers entered into communion with the incarnate Logos. Thus Athanasius's recourse to scripture was always "incarnational." Any biblical reference cited by Athanasius implied a link between the content of that reference or something noted in the immediate context of it and the global mystery of God's incarnation as he perceived it actualized in the church.

Athanasius did not author a single commentary on a biblical book. That surprising lacuna drove later generations of devoted admirers to fill the gap with pious forgeries (for instance CPG II 2141, 2181, 2238, 2247, 2260, 2272-76). The closest the Alexandrian post-Nicene bishop came to such a commentary was in his *Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalter* (CPG II, 2097). It presents a thorough analysis, in very condensed terms, of all the psalms; but, precisely, more than any other of his writings, it illustrates his genuine attitude toward the Bible. He knows by experience which psalms to recite for the variety of inner dispositions and external circumstances of life. He claims that all ups and downs of human existence find an echoing in specific psalmic verses. In other words that there is not a single experience of life and death without an appropriate psalm as a response to it. He explains to Marcellinus that he is not lecturing him in the abstract, because the psalms, far from exercising only the mind, become a playful body-language: psalms

are better sung than recited (perhaps better danced than sung!). In short, they engage believers into participating physically in the mystery of the incarnate Logos, who is suffering or rejoicing in the actuality of his church.

Thus the Athanasian understanding of scripture is always bound to the concrete experience of life and faith. The bishop gives a narrative twist to his statements, rather than couched in abstractions. His biblical mind-set imposes its own syntax on his style: the Athanasian sentence is usually long and subdivided, because the thought expressed in it always directs the attention from the immediate arguments or circumstances to the all-embracing church-reality of the actualized divine incarnation.

The word ἀλληγορία has found no entry into Guido Müller's *Lexicon Athanasianum* (1952). Even τυπός is used by Athanasius only with the concrete meaning of "impressed mark," and so is the verb τυπώ. Hardly any trace remains in the Athanasian writings of Origen's cosmo-psychological framework, thanks to which the latter could theorize on scriptural senses and read into scripture a description of the human soul's spiritual needs. Athanasius, himself never explicitly distinguishes between "literal" and "spiritual" senses; he conceives scripture less as a mirror of the soul, than as a revelatory source of meaning for the experienced reality of the church at large. Being the only bishop of his generation from whom we hear public praise of Origen, Athanasius obviously did not feel indebted to the great *didaskalos* of the third century for his own approach to scripture. The specific Athanasian approach to scripture was concretized in hundreds of biblical references, quotations or allusions, spread over his writings. More importantly, from the first instance in *On the Incarnation* to his very last doctrinal statements, it determined the bishop's intellectual endeavor.

The essay *On the Incarnation of the Logos*, joined to the apology *Against the Heathen* in 335 or later, seems adequately characterized as the first and programmatic, though non-polemical, response of the young bishop to the Arian heresy. Exclusively directed to members of his own church-community, Athanasius' *On the Incarnation* offers a new formulation of the Christian doctrine of salvation, as traditionally taught on the catechumenal level. In par. 8–10 the bishop introduces his own vital notion of divine incarnation, formulated exclusively in Pauline terms, and he interrupts thereby the sequence of par. 2–7 and 11–16 deriving from Origen's legacy, in which the image-likeness of the human being toward the divine logos determines the creation of Adam and the salvific manifestation of Christ. This Origenian schema allowed both the ecstasy of Adam's and Eve's mind in the prelapsarian paradise and a restored enlightenment of humankind by the divine Logos made man. The long development, indeed the bulk of the treatise

following after par. 16, expands the *first* (properly Athanasian) notion of the Incarnation, in par. 8–10, not the second (Origenian) one in par. 11–16, into a teaching on salvation, centered on the cross and the resurrection of Jesus (par. 17–32). A discreet allusion to the heretics and schismatics who misunderstand the mystery of the cross seems less significant than the anti-Arian stress on *Theos-Logos*, the truly divine savior fulfilling his salvific work in the flesh. Indeed, by his realistic focus on the human condition of the incarnate Logos the bishop responded for himself and in the name of his congregation to Arius's misleading christology which had been solemnly censured at Nicaea. Centering Christian theology as a whole on the Gospel event, rather than on a cosmo-theology in line with traditional Alexandrian teaching, Athanasius' argument was in line with his consistent approach of scripture throughout his writings.

In addition to opening a new, "incarnational" horizon for the doctrine on salvation, by the insertion of par. 8–10 and their following in par. 17–32, the young Alexandrian author of *On the Incarnation* took another initiative. Before adding a more conventional chapter *Against Greek Idolatry* (par. 41–54), in which he strongly underscores the divine titles of the Logos, again motivated by the same polemical context which he pretends to ignore in his whole treatise, Athanasius adds a final chapter *Against Unbelieving Jews* (33–40), also imposed by the apologetic genre. Amazingly, he adds a further innovation at this point, not in adding something original to inject life into the polemics themselves, but, on the documentary level of biblical proofs, in enriching the traditional "testimonia" produced in anti-Rabbinic pamphlets since the second century. Athanasius produces a synthesis of the three best-known collections of such testimonia, separately transmitted by Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea and Cyprian of Carthage (Kannengiesser, "Les citations"). In handling traditional data in this way, Athanasius was guided much less by a polemical motivation, than by the desire to educate his readership specifically in working out a deeper and more complete biblical argument.

The same concern is manifest in Athanasius' explicitly polemical treatises *Against the Arians* (CPG II, 2093), written a short time after *On the Incarnation*, probably around 339. Forced by the pastoral needs of his own people to become vocal against the Arian heresy, and just back in his town after his first exile (335–337), the bishop undertook the task of a prosecutor of orthodoxy, a task that he found a very unpleasant one, and totally unfamiliar to him, as he confides in a *Letter to the Monks* (CPG II, 2126) sent to Egypt from Rome with the first draft of his polemical treatise. His initiative in regards to scripture seems here, at first sight, less pronounced than in *On*

the Incarnation, as he limits himself to enter the arena of anti-Arian polemics by discussing only biblical proofs claimed by the Arians themselves. They are: Phil 2:9–10 and Ps 44:7–8, in *C. Ar.* 1:35–52; Heb 1:4, in *C. Ar.* 1:53–64; Heb 3:2a and Acts 2:36, in *C. Ar.* 2:1–18a; Prv 8:22, in *C. Ar.* 2:18b–43; 8:22a, in *C. Ar.* 2:44–61; Col 1:15 and Prv 8:22b, in *C. Ar.* 2:62–72, and Prv 8:23–25, in *C. Ar.* 2:73–77, and once more Prv 8:22 in *C. Ar.* 2:78–82. In fact, the reader becomes soon aware that these profuse expositions about biblical proofs are aimed less at discussing adverse interpretations than at educating Athanasius' own community of faith. By orienting each exegesis toward a fuller perception of the mystery of salvation in the process of its fulfillment in the church, and by calling on faith as instructed for baptism and celebrated in the “we”-talk of the actual community, the pastor (and improvising exegete) hoped to share with the common believer the dynamic of his incarnational hermeneutics.

His *Encyclical Letter* (CPG 2124) starts with a dramatic and impassioned account of the horrible story in Judges 19, where a senior Benjamite dismembers his raped concubine and sends parts of her body to all tribes of Israel. Athanasius's narrative paraphrase resounds throughout his vehement letter, in which he calls on all the churches in protest about the violence committed against his own church-community. Even highly political and diplomatic apologies, like the *Apology for Constantius* (CPG 2129), are loaded with biblical quotations, as are Athanasius' *Circular Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya* (CPG II, 2092) and his other doctrinal letters. Among them, the *Letters to Serapion* (CPG II, 2094) demonstrate the full divinity of the Holy Spirit, in repeating biblical arguments from *Contra-Arianos* I–II. The third *Oration against the Arians* has its own hermeneutical framework in discussing Jn 14: 10, Dt 32:39, Jn 17:11, 20–23 in order to assert the unity of Father and Son as the foundation of the transcendent unity of the incarnate Logos, not affected in his divinity by the limitations and sufferings of his assumed humanity (Kannengiesser *Athanase d'Alexandrie évêque* 310–366). The *Life of Antony* (CPG II, 2101) counts biblical allusions and quotations by the hundreds. It produces a paradigmatic picture of the ideal ascetic according to the bishop's wishes, in calling on the figures of Moses, Elijah and his disciple, Elisha, and in assimilating Antony to the figure of Jesus himself: “La vie d'Antoine est également une *imitatio Christi*” (Bartelink, 52). The *Festal Letters*, published whenever circumstances made it possible, announcing the dates of Lent, Easter and Pentecost, multiply exhortations for preparing the communities of believers to prepare “the” Feast. These *Letters*, witnessing a life-time of dedicated pastoral ministry, present a continuous texture of quoted and paraphrased biblical references, as a vivid confirmation of his

hero, Antony's declaration: "Scripture suffices for our instruction," τὰς μὲν γραφὰς ἱκανὰς εἶναι πρὸς διδασκαλίαν (16,1; SC 400,178).

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V. APOLLINARIUS OF LAODICEA (C. 315–C. 392)

Apollinarius was the son of an Alexandrian grammarian, also called Apollinarius, who emigrated to Berytus (Beyrouth) and started a family in Laodicea, Syria, where he also became a presbyter. The younger Apollinarius was still a lector in 346, when Athanasius, returning from his second exile, enjoyed the hospitality of his parents. Apollinarius deeply admired the Alexandrian bishop, ever considering him as his spiritual father. Elected bishop of Laodicea in 360–361, Apollinarius was active in neighboring Antioch as a teacher and exegete among monastic circles. He sent a delegation of monks to the Alexandrian synod of union organized by Athanasius in 362. As Emperor Julian had excluded Christians from the public teaching of rhetoric, Apollinarius’s father wrote poems in the homeric style based on narratives from the OT, and the son produced artistic dialogues based on the Gospels. As a commentator of scripture, Apollinarius’s renown extended beyond the borders of the Syrian church. Jerome attended his lectures in 377. In 377, on the request of Basil of Caesarea, the Roman synod censured Apollinarius’s

christology, a relatively harmless measure repeated in Antioch (379) and Constantinople (387). In 382, Gregory of Nyssa discovered Apollinarianism on his travel to Jerusalem, but only in 385 did he complete its refutation and exhort Theophilus, the mighty bishop of Alexandria, to condemn the new heresy.

According to Jerome, Apollinarius wrote commentaries to Qohelet (Jerome, *In Eccl.* IV 209–217), Isaiah (Jerome, *In Is.*, prol. 96–100), Hosea (Jerome, *In Os.*, prol. 114–119), Malachi (Jerome, *In Mal.*, prol.), the Psalms (Jerome, *ep.* 112, 20), Matthew (Jerome, *In Matth.*, preface 95), 1 Corinthians (Jerome, *ep.* 49, 3), Galatians (Jerome, *In Gal.*, prol.) and Ephesians (Jerome, *In Eph.*, prologue). All are lost, only fragments can be found in *catenae*, where more of Apollinarius's commentaries are signalled: on Job, Proverbs, Canticle, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Luke, the *Octateuch* (the first eight books of OT), John, Romans. Theodoret benefitted in particular from Apollinarius's exegetical method (Mühlenberg, 365). Probably before winter 382, Apollinarius wrote his Ἐπίδειξις περὶ τῆς θείας σαρκώσεως τῆς καθ' ὁμοίωσιν ἀνθρώπου, *Demonstration of the divine incarnation in similitude to humankind*. He also wrote a work *Against Porphyry* in thirty books, of which Book 26 discussed Porphyry's interpretation of Daniel; two books against Dionysius of Alexandria, in which he denounced the excessive spiritualism which he disliked in Dionysius's exegesis; possibly other books against Marcellus of Ancyra and Origen. Under the names of strong defenders of orthodoxy, some of Apollinarius' writings performed apocryphal circulation: *De unione*; *Ad Jovianum*; *Contra adversarios*; Ps-Julius, *De fide et incarnatione*—Ἡ κατὰ μέρος πίστις, Ἀνακεφαλαίωσις. Again, other writings are only witnessed by scattered fragments in the *catenae*: *Against Diodore*; a number of letters, in particular to Serapion of Thmuis; *Against the adversaries of the doctrine concerning the appropriation of a man by the Logos*; and two Dialogues; *On the Apparition of God in the flesh*.

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V

THE ORIGENIAN LEGACY

I. DIDYMUS OF ALEXANDRIA (313–398)

Blind from early childhood, Didymus committed himself entirely to studying Origen's legacy. Athanasius appointed him as lecturer at the Alexandrian school of Christian theology. His central concern was the interpretation of scripture. Unfortunately, because the anti-Origenistic decrees of 543 and 553, under Justinian, included him in their condemnations, his work survives only in fragments (PG 39). The discovery of 2000 pages of papyrus in Tura 1941, with writings of Origen and Didymus, offered a new access to the latter's exegetical work, in form of transcriptions by students of oral lessons on Genesis, Job, Zechariah, Psalms, and Qohelet.

Didymus' commentaries, known through fragments and short quotations in the *catenae* or through papyri, or again only as quoted by ancient authors, mainly Jerome, are on Genesis, Exodus, Kings, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Hosea, Zechariah, Proverbs, Canticle, Qohelet, Matthew, John, Acts, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Apocalypse.

Throughout his commentaries on scripture, Didymus keeps a didactic and learned pace in exploring first the literal meaning of the sacred text, secondly its spiritual relevance, whereby he discusses many issues related with the cosmos, material and spiritual, or with the human soul's origin, nature and ultimate destination.

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- . "Due passi della prefazione di Girolamo alla traduzione del 'De Spiritu Sancto' di Didimo." *RSLR* 24 (1988): 28–30.
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II. SERAPION OF THMUIS (D. AFTER 362)

As early as 339, Serapion was the learned head of a group of monks settled in the desert of Egypt, a close friend of Antony the hermit, before becoming bishop of Thmuis in Lower Egypt. Athanasius wrote to him from Rome at the start of his second exile, and again during his third exile, when, kept in hiding by the Egyptian monks, he addressed to Serapion the *Letters on the divinity of the Spirit*. In 356, Serapion wrote a letter to the disciples of Antony (*ep. Anton. disc.*). The bishop died after 362.

Serapion wrote *Against the Manichaeans* (*Man.*; CPG II, 2485), in which

he refutes the dualism evident in their exegesis of the OT and parts of the NT. Among fragments of other writings (CPG II, 2488–2494), note a few lines from a *Commentary on Genesis* in which the *arche* (“principle,” “beginning”) of Gn 1:7 is identified with Christ according to Col 1:16 (Devreesse, 104).

EDITIONS

PG 40, 900–25: *Man.*, *Eudox.*

R. Draguet, *Muséon* 64 (1951) 1–25: *ep. Anton. disc.*

STUDIES

Bardy, G.: *DTC* 14, 2 (1908–1912).

Dörrie, H.: *Paulys Realenc. der class. Altertumsw.* Suppl. VIII (1956) 1260–67.

III. EVAGRIUS PONTICUS (C. 346–399)

Ordained as a reader by Basil of Caesarea and deacon by Gregory of Nazianzus, Evagrius witnessed the Council of Constantinople in 381. He remained in the capital as an assistant of Bishop Nestorius, until he moved to Jerusalem and then ca. 382, to the monastic settlements in the deserts of Egypt. “He earned his livelihood by writing, ‘since he wrote the Oxyrhynchus characters excellently,’ according to Palladius (*Hist. Laus.* 38, 10), who was one of his disciples” (Quasten, II, 169). He declined episcopal promotion, offered by Theophilus of Alexandria.

Evagrius created a literary genre of monastic mysticism, with fertile ideas destined to influence spiritual masters in East and West through the centuries: *Kephalaia Gnostica*, *Praktikos*, *Gnostikos*, *Rerum monachalium rationes*, *Antirhetikos*, *De malignis cogitationibus* (transmitted under the name of Nilus), and more. He wrote commentaries, quoted in the *catenae*, on the Psalms, Proverbs (“The *Book of Proverbs* had greater influence in forming the sententious style of Evagrius than any other in the Bible; his *Mirror for Monks and Nuns* is a direct imitation of *Proverbs*” (Quasten, II, 175), Job, Luke, Numbers, Kings, and Canticles.

EDITIONS

PG 12, 40, 79.

schol. in eccl.: P. Géhin, SC 397 (1993).

- schol. in pss.*: PG 12, 1054–1686; 27, 60–545. J. B. Pitra *Analecta sacra* 2 (Frascati 1884) 444–83; 3 (Paris 1883) 1–364.
sent. mon./sent. virg.: H. Gressmann, TU 39, 4b (1913).
ep.: W. Frankenberg, Berlin 1912.
Ps.-Basilius, ep. 8: Y. Courtonne, Paris 1957, 22–37.
mal. cog.: PG 79, 1165–1200. I. Hausherr, *OCP* 5 (1939) 7–71.
pract.: A. and C. Guillaumont, SC 170–171 (1971). B. Sarghisean, Venice 1907 (Armenian).
keph. gnost.: A. Guillaumont, PO 28, 1, Paris 1958.
 W. Frankenberg, Berlin 1912, 48–422 (Syriac). Sarghisean, above.
antirrh.: W. Frankenberg, Berlin 1912. Sarghisean, above.
spir. mal.: PG 79. I. Hausherr, *OCP* 5 (1939) 7–71 (Syriac and Arabic).

TRANSLATIONS

English

Evagrius Ponticus. Practikos and Chapters on Prayer. Kalamazoo 1989.

French

Courtonne, Géhin, Guillaumont, above.

German

antirrh.: O. Zöckler, Munich 1893 (partial).

ep.: G. Bunge, Trier 1986

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- . *Akedia, la doctrine spirituelle d'Évagre le Pontique sur l'acédie.* Spiritualité orientale 52. Bellefontaine: Abbaye, 1991.
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- , *TRE* 10 (1982) 565–70.
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- , *RAC* 6 (1966) 1088–1107.
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VI
THEOPHILUS OF ALEXANDRIA (D. 412)

Patriarch of Alexandria from 385 to 412, Theophilus presents citations of scripture principally in three homilies, but they are lacking any distinctive exegesis: the *Homily on Death and Judgement* (2618), in Greek, Syriac, Arabic and Armenian; the *Homily on the Cross and the Thief* (2622), available in Coptic; the *Homily on the Institution of the Eucharist, In mysticam coenam* (2617), whose original Greek is well-preserved because it was handed down under the name of Cyril of Alexandria (PG 77, 1016–1024). To this list may be added two fragments of *Discourse on Providence*, two others *On the Woman with Haemorrhages* (Lk 8:43–48), and a *Consideration on Matthew 4:23*, of which a fragment is preserved in Greek (PG 65, 65A). Among unpublished homilies of Theophilus, Favale mentions *On the Immoral Woman*, of Lk 7: 36–50, in Armenian, and *On the Blind Man cured on the Sabbath*, of Jn 9:1–41 (Favale, 16–18). A. Favale, Teofilo d’Alessandria (biblioteca del “Salesianum”) Torino: Soc. Edit. Intern., 1958.

The “artful and violent patriarch of Alexandria” (Quasten, *Patrology* II, 284) condemned Origen at his local synod of the year 400, calling him in his Festal Letter of 402 the “hydra of heresies.” He expelled from Egypt the “Tall Brothers” and other monks who cultivated their own form of Origenism, among them Evagrius Ponticus, who escaped exile only by his (timely) death.

EDITIONS

fr.: PG 65, 29–68.

Letters, Festal Letters: Jerome, *ep.* 87, 89, 90, 92, 96, 89, 100.

in mysticam coenam: Cyr. Al., *hom. div.* 10; PG 77, 1016–29.

liber enormis: Jerome, *ep.* 113; Facundus of Hermiane, *in def. trium cap.* 6, 5.

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Chavoutier, L. *Querelle origéniste et Controverses trinitaires, A propos du Tractatus contra Origenem de visione Isaiæ*. *VigChr* 14 (1960): 9–14.

Crouzel, H.: *DSp* 15 (1991) 524–30.

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Grant, R. M. “Scripture, Rhetoric and Theology in Theophilus.” *VigChr* 13 (1959): 33–45.

Richard, M., “Écrits de Théophile d’Alexandrie”: *Muséon* 52 (1939) 22–50.

Favale, A., *Teofilo*. Tunis 1958.

VII
EUSEBIUS OF EMESA (C. 300–C. 359)

Born at Edessa, Eusebius' mother-tongue was Syriac. He learned Greek at school, and studied the scriptures with the Arian bishop Patrophilus of Scythopolis. He completed his biblical training at Antioch when Eustathius was deposed by the anti-Nicene community. In Alexandria, where he took a course in philosophy, he became a friend of George, later Arian bishop of Laodicea. He refused to serve as a replacement of Athanasius in 340, but accepted the small diocese of Emesa, in Lebanese Phoenicia. He was never a thorough-going Arian, though he disapproved of Nicaea. Jerome (*Chronicon*, GCS 7,1.236) stressed the popular success of Eusebius' *Homilies on the Gospels* and mentions his commentary on Galatians. Numerous fragments in *catenae* signal also commentaries on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Kings (R. Decresse, 55–103). His careful reading of the literary content of scripture inspires in him sound judgement and balanced observation about human behavior.

EDITIONS

fr.: E. M. Buytaert, *L'héritage littéraire d'Eusèbe d'Émèse*. Louvain 1948.
hom.: E. M. Buytaert, above.

STUDIES

Godet, P.: *DTC* 5 (1913) 1537–39.
Simonetti, M., *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*. Rome 1975, 187–98.

VIII
EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS (CA. 315–403)

Epiphanius knew Greek, Syriac, Hebrew, Coptic, and some Latin, according to Jerome (*Adv. Rufin.* 2, 22). He visited the monks in Egypt ca. 335, before founding his own monastery near his birthplace in the region of Gaza, Palestine. From there, in 367, the bishops of Cyprus chose him as metropolitan of their island. His writings “reveal a total lack of critical acumen and depth and are far too one-sided. Most of his treatises are hasty, superficial, and disorderly compilations of the fruits of his extensive reading. Their style is careless, verbose, and according to Photius (*Bibl. cod* 122), ‘like that of one who is unfamiliar with Attic elegance.’ This trait is no surprise because Epiphanius was an enemy of all classical education” (Quasten, II, 385). Hence it is not surprising that Epiphanius nourished a deep hatred for Origen’s exegesis.

In the *Ancoratus* (CPG II, 3744) written in 374, he used scripture as proof-text against Arians, Pneumatomachi, Manichaeans and Marcionites. In *De mensuris et ponderibus*—περὶ τῶν δώδεκα λίθων (CPG II, 3746), composed at Constantinople in 382 at the request of a Persian priest, Epiphanius discussed the Canon and the translation of the OT, biblical measures and weights and the geography of Palestine. In *De XII gemmis*—περὶ τῶν δώδεκα λίθων (CPG II, 3748), describing the breastplate of the high priest of the OT, in 394, Epiphanius allegorized the stones, assigning them to the twelve tribes of Israel and explaining their medicinal use (R. P. Blake – H. De Vis). Again ca. 394, he wrote a pamphlet against images, which was to play a role in the iconoclastic crisis of the ninth century. Finally, Epiphanius also calls on scripture in pamphlets against images, one of them addressed to Emperor Theodosius I (Thümmel). In one of his *Letters* he discussed the dating of Easter (Holl).

EDITIONS

PG 41–43.

anc., haer.: K. Holl, GCS 21, 31, 37. Berlin 1915–33. J. Dummer, 2nd ed. vol. 31, 37. Berlin 1980, 1985.

haer.: C. Riggi, Rome 1967.

de mens. et pond.: Dean, J. E., *Epiphanius’ Treatise on Weights and Measures*. Chicago 1935, Syriac. Moutsoulas, E., *Theol.* (A) 41 (1970)–44 (1973), Greek fragments. *Œuvre ‘De mensuris et ponderibus’ d’Épiphane*. Athens

1971. Van Esbroeck, M.-J.: CSCO 460–461. Leuven 1984. Georgian text.
- de XII gemmis*: R. P. Blake and H. de Vis. London 1934. Georgian and Coptic text, Armenian fragment.
- Against Images*: H. G. Thümmel, *Die Frühgeschichte der ostkirchlichen Bilderlehre*, TU 139. Berlin 1992, 298f.
- Letter on the Dating of Easter*: K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Tübingen 1928 = Darmstadt 1964, 204–24.

TRANSLATIONS

English

- Amidon, P. R., *The Panarion of Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis*. Selected Passages. Oxford 1990.
- Williams, F., *The Panarion of Epiphanius*. Book II and III, Sects 47–80, *De fide*. 2 vols. Leiden 1987, 1994.

French

Van Esbroeck, above.

German

Thümmel, above.

Italian

Riggi, C., *L'ancora della fede*. Rome 1977.

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- 64m70.5–17) Epiphanius' quotation from an apocryphon of Ezekiel." *JThS* 42 (1991): 125–38.
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IX
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I. BASIL OF CAESAREA (CA. 330–379)

Born ca. 330 in Caesarea of wealthy parents of senatorial rank, educated in the schools of rhetoric at Caesarea, Constantinople and Athens, Basil, after a short attempt as professional rhetorician in his hometown, embraced the ascetic life and was baptized. He visited monastic settlements in Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia, before starting a cenobitic experiment in the solitude near Neocaesara, during which he studied Origen's exegesis in particular, as shown in the *Philocalia* which he composed with his friend Gregory of Nazianzus. Eusebius, the metropolitan of Caesarea, ordained him ca. 364, and when he died in 370, Basil replaced him until his own death in 379.

A man of action and a born leader, Basil invested his biblical knowledge in his apologetic, doctrinal and ascetic endeavors. He wrote *Contra Eunomium* (CPG II, 2837) around 366, intending to include the theology of

the Holy Spirit in the ongoing trinitarian debate. Thirteen of his *Homilies on the Psalms* (Ps. 1, 7, 14, 28, 29, 32, 33, 44, 45, 48, 59, 61, 114: LXX); CPG II, 2836) and twenty-three other *Sermons*, one of the *Sermons* dealing with “Know yourself” (Rudberg) (CPG II, 2845–2868) are authentic. His nine *Homilies on Hexaemeron* (CPG II, 2835) date probably from the year before his death. Basil produced a collection of approximately 350 *Letters* (CPG II, 2900) and his *Rules* (CPG II, 2875–2887), the *Moralia*, or *Regulae Morales*, τα; ηϋϋικαυ; the *Detailed Rules*, *Regulae fusius tractatae*, and the *Short Rules*, *Regulae brevius tractatae*. All of them, the *Moralia* and the other *Rules* are dated after 373, and transmitted as Basil’s *Corpus asceticum*; a first draft of the *Detailed* and *Short Rules* is called the *Small Asceticum*. The treatise *Ad adolescentes, Exhortation to Youths as to How They Shall Best Profit by the Writings of Pagan Authors*, from his earlier years, completes Basil’s literary achievement. Like Athanasius, but for different reasons, Basil never engaged into writing a biblical commentary. To be complete, one should mention a *Prologue to the Hypotyposis* (*prol.*), essentially composed of biblical quotations, and the treatise “On the Holy Spirit,” *De Spiritu Sancto* (*Spir.*), dated 374/5, based on a biblico-patristic argumentation in dialogue with Eustathius of Sebaste, and dependent on Athanasius of Alexandria.

At the start of his homily on Ps. 1, Basil summarizes one or two ideas of Athanasius’ *Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms*: “The prophets teach one thing, the historical books another, still another is taught in the Law, and something else in the Sapiential Books. The Book of Psalms brings together what is most serviceable in all the others; it foretells the future, it recalls the past, it lays down the laws of life, it teaches us our duties,—in a word, it is a general treasury of excellent instructions” (*Hom. in Ps 1*, n. I; transl. J. Quasten II, 218). The moral interpretation of the psalms links Basil closely with Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Commentary on the Psalms*.

In the *Moralia* Basil presents a programme of reform for the Church at large: the Christian way of life needs to be radically changed in conformity with the image of the ideal community projected in Acts 4:32–37; each point in the programme receives the explicit support of the NT with a total of 1542 verses quoted. “A broadly comprehensive notion of Christian discipleship becomes the key of his thought, according to which biblical theology, early church tradition (mainly deriving from Origen) and Greek philosophy join together in a synthesis” (W.-D. Hauschild: TRES, 1980, p. 307). In the other *Rules*, Basil combines the literal application of evangelical precepts with strong social concerns as they inspired his own charitable and social action. “The secularization is conceived as a new kind of social behavior” (W.-D. Hauschild, 308).

The nine *Homilies on Hexaemeron* were preached within one week; they are of a great rhetorical beauty and they focus on the beauty of God's creation, against pagan ideas and Marcionite dualism. They witness to Basil's acquaintance with classical sources on natural sciences, as much as they engage into an exegesis of Genesis I.

EDITIONS

PG 29–32.

Corpus asceticum: PG 31.

Small asceticum: Rufinus, PL 103, 483–554. Zelzer, K.: CSEL 86 (1986).

prol.: PG 31, 1509–13.

bapt.: J. Ducatillon, SC 357 (1989). U. Neri, TRSR 12.

hex.: S. Giet, SC 26 (1949).

creat.: A. Smets and M. van Esbroeck, SC 160 (1970). H. Hörner, Leiden 1972.

Eun.: Sesboüé, B., *al.*, SC 299 (1982), 305 (1983). Vaggione, R. P.: Oxford 1986.

Spir.: Pruche, B.: SC 17 bis (1968). Sieben, H.-J.: FC 12.

Rudberg, S. Y., *L'Homélie de Basile sur le mot 'observe-toi toi-même.'* Stockholm 1962.

TRANSLATIONS

English

NPNF

hex. and *Spir.*: Blomfield, J. Grand Rapids, MI (1968).

Eun.: Vaggione, above.

French

Courtonne, Y., *Homélie sur la richesse*. Paris 1935.

Ducatillon, Smets and van Esbroeck, above.

Spir. I. Maignan and P. Th. Camelot, Paris 1979. Pruche, above.

German

Amand de Mendieta, above.

BKV 19–26; A. Stegmann, *hom.* BKV, 2nd ed. 47.

Frank, K. S., *Die Mönchsregeln*. St. Ottilien 1981.

Spir.: Sieben, above. M. Blum, Freiburg 1967.

Italian

Neri, U. and M. B. Artioli, *Opere ascetiche di Basilio*. Turin 1980.

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II. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS (CA. 330–389/90)

Gregory, born ca. 330, son of the bishop of Nazianzus, close friend of Basil of Caesarea and like Basil from a rich and aristocratic Christian family, received the best education available in Caesarea of Cappadocia, Caesarea of Palestine, Alexandria and Athens. After his return from Athens to Cappadocia, he was baptized and then he hurried into the wilderness to stay for a while with Basil in 358–359. Together they compiled the *Philocalia*, consisting of extracts from Origen, and Basil's *Moralia*. Ca. 362, his father called him back and ordained him against his will in Nazianzus. He fled again to his friend in Pontus, but finally assumed his responsibility in the priestly office. For reasons of ecclesiastical politics, Basil, then metropolitan of Caesarea, consecrated him bishop of a little village called Sasima. After the death of his father in 374 he administered for a short time the diocese of Nazianzus; a year later he retired into the area of Seleucia in Isauria for a life of contemplation.

In 379, called by the small Nicene community in the capital, he went to Constantinople. There he preached the highly celebrated *Five Orations on the Divinity of the Logos*. The Second Ecumenical Council, held in Constantinople under Theodosius, in May–June 381, declared Gregory bishop of the capital, but he resigned after a few days, wrote his last will, delivered a farewell sermon and returned to Nazianzus. In 384, after his friend Eulalius was elected as a satisfactory replacement of his father, Gregory spent the last years of his life on a quiet family estate at Azianzum; he died in 389 or 390.

Like Basil and Athanasius, Gregory wrote no biblical commentary. “He is the only poet among the great theologians of the fourth century. In his prose as well as in his verse, he always remains the great rhetorician with a perfection in form and style unattained by any of his Christian contemporaries” (Quasten, *Patrology* II 239).

His *Dogmatic Poems* (PG 37, 397–522) celebrate the mysteries of divine salvation-economy, at first by following the order of the topics discussed in Origen's *Peri Archon*: the Trinity, (*Poems* 1–3); then the world (4), divine Providence (5–6), the noetic substances (7), the human soul (8), the Testaments and the coming of Christ (9), the Incarnation (10), before focusing more closely on the sacred books, of which *Poem* no. 12 gives a list (without Deutero-canonicals and Apocalypse); *Poems* 13–17 evoke OT passages, *Poems* 18–28 paraphrase the Gospel stories of Jesus and *Poems* 28–38 end with hymns and prayers in a liturgical tone.

Like most intellectual talents of high rank in early Christianity, Gregory was a self-made theologian. His expertise in scripture resulted from personal studies. It enriched his literary and poetic productions without intending to

be biblical exegesis in the strict sense. In a total of forty-five *Orations*, including the five already mentioned (CPG II, 3010) and in his 400 *Poems* (the one *On His Life* counting 1949 verses) and 244 extant *Letters*, Gregory refers to scripture both as sacred proof-text and a source of spiritual enlightenment. He keeps more strictly in line with traditional uses of scripture when writing on doctrinal issues; elsewhere, he feels free to call equally on both Testaments according to his own inspiration.

Gregory considered no doctrine about divine mysteries as acceptable, if not found in scripture (*Or.* 42, 18). In particular, as Athanasius had already shown, he claims that the doctrine on the Holy Spirit derives entirely from scripture (*Or.* 31, 29–30). While rules need to determine the way of interpreting the sacred text, they consist essentially in rational prescriptions imposed by sound judgement and grammar: Scripture cannot be absurd, it never opposes the principle of non-contradiction, or natural evidence; it has its proper lexical data, in need of being clarified by a clear distinction of their different meanings (*Fourth Theol. Discourse: Or.* 30, answering Arian objections in conformity with Athanasius, *C. Ar.* I–III, and 5th *Theol. Discourse: Or.* 31, 21–24). Thereby Gregory was determined to keep his exegesis in the middle of the road, equally distant from the dullness of earthly thinking (as in “Jews”) and the excesses of theoretical exultation (as practiced by “interpreters of dreams”) (*Or.* 45, 12). In most cases his doctrinal statements repeat the basic teachings of Origen, Athanasius, Basil and the Antiochene theologians; but as he presents them, based on a lively and genuine contact with scripture, he highlights these teachings in an attractive way and occasionally enriches conventional doctrine. Neither the systematic allegorism of the Alexandrians nor the rationalism of Antiochene interpreters, and not even the essential and practical use proper to his admired friend Basil, imposed a distinctive mark on Gregory’s attitude toward scripture. He seems to come closer to Gregory of Nyssa in his symbolic imagination; he even indulges in some allegorical elements (*Or.* 20, 4, *Lk* 19:2; *Or.* 21, 29, *Lk* 19:35; *Or.* 28, 2; 43, 71, 72, 75; 45, 23; *Carm.* I, I, 8).

His truly personal reception of scripture is at once realistic and spiritual: he takes for granted the literal truth of the biblical history of salvation and applies it immediately to his actual experience of life shared with other members of the church. In short, he actualizes the biblical revelation in the wake of Athanasius’ incarnational hermeneutics. He reads in the OT prefigurations of NT “by cruel sacrifices prefiguring (‘announcing the shadows of’) the one to come” (*Or.* 6, 4). His *Dogmatic Poems* (PG 37, 397–522) celebrate the mysteries of divine salvation economy, at first by following the order of the topics discussed in Origen’s *Peri Archon*: the Trinity (1–3); then the

world (4), Divine Providence (5–6), the noetic substances (7), the human soul (8), the Testaments and the coming of Christ (9), the Incarnation (10), before focussing more closely on the sacred books, of which *Poem* 12 gives a list (without Deutero-canonicals and Apocalypse); *Poems* 13–17 evoke OT passages, *Poems* 18–28 paraphrase the Gospel stories of Jesus, and *Poems* 29–38 and with hymns and prayers in a liturgical tone.

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III. GREGORY OF NYSSA (C. 335–395)

Born ca. 335 and partly educated by his older brother Basil, Gregory was lector when he decided to marry and to teach rhetorics. After a period in Basil's little monastery in Pontus following the death of his young wife, he was obliged by Basil to accept episcopal consecration and to occupy the see of Nyssa in the interest of his brother's metropolitan administration. Outstanding as a speculative theologian and a mystical thinker, he played a prominent role at the Council of Constantinople in 381. He died probably in 394. His written work dates mainly from the last fifteen years of his life. With Origen, he is the most studied Greek Father in recent decades.

In his dogmatic treatises Gregory referred to scripture as a font of divinely authorized knowledge, a font securing the principles and the pre-suppositions which ruled his own thought: "Due to its inspired character scripture is 'canon and law' (*kanon kai nomos*) of piety. Indeed scripture fixes the norm for any real God-talk. For Gregory, that means that scripture primarily serves as the starting point (*aphormè*) of inquiries" (Canévet, 365). Hence, "Gregory's method by which philosophical notions are coherent with revelation and scripture (for instance 1 Cor 1, 24) and end in becoming strictly theological concepts" (Pottier, 117; see also Kannengiesser). His recourse to scripture is decisive in *Adversus Eunomium* (CPG II, 3150), *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarem* (CPG II, 3140), in the *Dialogus de anima et resurrectione* (CPG II, 3150), to mention only the most important of his doctrinal writings.

In his exegetical works Gregory usually follows Origen's hermeneutical method. *De officio hominis* (CPG II, 3154) was conceived as an addition to Basil's *Hexaemeron*, but with much less apologetic study of the material world, and deeper theological insights. *De vita Moysis* (CPG II, 3159) includes, in a first part, the summarized literal content of the biblical narrative in Exodus and Numbers, and in a second, and most important part, the allegorical interpretation of that narrative: Moses, lawgiver and spiritual leader of Israel, is seen as the symbol of the mystic migration and ascension of the soul to

God. *In inscriptiones psalmodum* (CPG II, 3155) presents the five books of Psalms as responding to the five steps on the ladder of perfection (ch. 1–9), the titles of the psalms having a distinctive ethical relevance (ch. 10–25). *In Ecclesiasten homiliae VIII* (CPG II, 3157) has the same mystical and allegorical purpose: through renunciation of all earthly things the spirit transcends the experience of the senses. In *In Canticum canticorum homiliae XV* (CPG II, 3158), on Sg 1, 1–6, 8, Gregory insists on the merits of Origen’s spiritual exegesis and develops his own theology with Plotinian overtones. His focus is on Canticles as symbolizing the mystical union with God, rather than allegorizing with Origen the bride of the Canticles exclusively as the church. *De oratione dominica orationes V* (CPG II, 3160) offers a commentary on the Lord’s Prayer from the moral point of view. *On the Witch of Endor: De engastrimytho* (CPG II, 3146) rectifies Origen’s exegesis of 1 Kgs 28, 12: the witch did not see Samuel’s soul, but a demon. *Orationes VIII de beatitudinibus* (CPG II, 3161) presents the mystical ladder to perfection in line with Plotinian spirituality, Christianized in Gregory’s genuine synthesis. Two *Homilies on I Corinthians* are: *Contra fornicarios* (CPG II, 3172) on 1 Cor 6:18 and *In illud ‘Tunc et ipse filius’* (1 Cor 15:28) (CPG II, 3151); the first one is tropological through and through; the second sounds more like a theological dissertation.

Other titles relevant for a study of Gregory’s use of scripture are: *Ad Ablabium quod non sint tres dei* (CPG II, 3135) arguing from scripture with rational criteria similar to those noted in Gregory of Nazianzus; *Adversus Macedonianos de Spiritu sancto* (CPG II, 3142), a substantial and eloquent sermon which repeats the traditional teaching of the Church based on scripture against the anti-Nicene group of people around Macedonius; *Ad Theophilum adversus Apollinaristas* (CPG II, 3143); *De infantibus praemature abreptis* (CPG II, 3145); *De iis qui baptismum differunt* (CPG II, 3147); *In sextum psalmum* (CPG II, 3156); *In illud ‘Quatenus uni ex his fecistis mihi fecistis’* (Mt 25: 40) (CPG II, 3170); sermons for Christmas, Epiphany, Easter and Ascension (CPG II, 3194, 3173–78; “the first reliable testimony for a feast of the Ascension distinct from Pentecost” Quasten III, 277); three formal orations (CPG II, 3180–3182).

The ascetic works of Gregory teach Christian spirituality in emphasizing Basil’s example and applying his *Rules* to the ordinary lay status. *De virginitate* (CPG II, 3165) benefits mainly from Origen and Methodius; it places spiritual “marriage” above the earthly one; in it Philo and Plotinus are sources of inspiration as much as scripture, which Gregory accomodates to his purpose: “A first group of texts calls for attention through the arbitrariness and the biases of their interpretations . . .; most of the time Gregory takes over biblical texts, concerning marriage, for the benefit of virginity” (Aubineau,

121–25), but in addition he stresses some verses, mainly Pauline, in which virginity is clearly recommended. *Vita s. Macrinae* (CPG II, 3166), concerning his sister who died in December 379, shows the little girl educated mainly in scripture (3, 15–26), filling her monastic lifestyle with “the meditation of divine mysteries, in uninterrupted prayer and continuous singing of hymns, throughout the day and night” (11, 29–32). *De instituto christiano* (CPG II, 3162) “combines all the leading ideas of the great Christian Platonist into a perfect and harmonious whole... The work is, therefore, the culmination of Gregory’s spiritual thinking” (Quasten II, 274). The sermons *In Basilium fratrem* (CPG II, 3185), *Encomium in s. Stephanum protomartyrem* I and II (CPG II, 3186–87) and in *XL martyras* I–II (CPG II, 3188–89) highlight Christian virtue with constant reference to scripture.

Scripture intervenes in Gregory’s expositions as the ‘infallible criterion of truth’ (κριτέριον ἀσφαλές τῆς ἀληθείας), in order to distinguish by its testimony opinions in conformity with it and others that are alien.... The testimony of scripture may entail ambiguities which it is right to clarify thanks to the arguments of a rational discourse. Actually, truth is established when two different discourses join and harmonize (συνδραμεῖν, συμφωνεῖν), the discourse of truth and the one of faith (τῆς πίστεως) or piety (τῆς εὐσεβείας). Without both of these orders meeting, doctrinal statement would be without either logic (ἀνακολούθος) or religious foundation (ἀσύστατος). The second type of discourse just mentioned, the one of faith, gets its strength ‘from its simplicity’ (ἀπλότης). It consists in explicit verses of scripture and lessons of the church tradition.” On one side, scripture speaks (paradoxically about the unspeakable) in clear terms when announcing “God’s unspeakable glory,” such a term being the title “Son”; on the other side, “scriptural language is used with condescendance to us and displays a metaphorical vocabulary in need of a transformation ‘to a higher level’ (πρὸς τὸ ὑψηλότερον) or ‘to a greater glory’ (πρὸς τὸ ἐνδοξότερον).

That metaphorical language is the specific object of Gregory’s spiritual interpretations, as it allows by its many meanings on different levels of reality, the appropriate formulation of his doctrine of a spiritual progress without end. (Canévet, 366)

Gregory’s biblical references have their limitations: Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Chronicles, as well as Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel, Amos, Jonas, Micah, in the OT; Titus, Philemon, 2 Timothy, 1–2 Peter, James, Jude, 1 John (2 and 3 John ignored), Apocalypse, in the NT, receive very little attention, whereas Genesis, Exodus, Canticle, and some Pauline letters play a decisive role in Gregory’s thought (Canévet, 366–368).

The “actualizing” exegesis of Gregory is no longer framed so much by the hierarchical institution of the church as in Athanasius, nor by the practical asceticism of established communities like in Basil. It is a call to perfection in the name of any Christian individual: “Then it should be one of the most urgent duties of Christians *to immerse themselves entirely in scripture*... Together with such a purpose is the need for *a proper explanation of scripture*. Gregory dedicated a large part of his life and work to scripture: he thought it over on a theoretical level, cleared the fundamental issues, and communicated his insights with a tireless zeal in homilies, discourses and commentaries” (Völker, 160–161).

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X
 AMPHILOCHIUS OF ICONIUM
 (CA. 344/345–CA. 403)

Born ca. 340–345 in a rich and aristocratic Christian family of Cappadocia, probably in Diocaesarea, where his father, Amphilochius, was a well-known rhetor. The younger Amphilochius fathered three sons, while his sister, Nonna, became the mother of Gregory of Nazianzus. He tried first to establish himself as a rhetor in Constantinople, before his kinsman Gregory befriended him together with Basil, who, in 373, did not miss the opportunity to place him on the see of Iconium under his own jurisdiction. The somewhat improvised bishop kept close ties with Basil, and after the latter's death, in 379, with both Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus. He was held in high esteem by the Cappadocian hierarchy until his death sometime before 403.

His theological legacy was innocuous enough for his being commemorated in favorable terms by Cyril of Alexandria *and* the theoreticians of the Antiochene school. In his still valuable study, Holl states: "Amphilochius would only be half (*sic*: nine pages before the end of a 266 page long essay) recognized, should one not add some attention to his exegesis...As an exegete he, who usually concedes the superiority of others, dominates his friends in many ways" (254).

The latest editor of Amphilochius's *Homilies* enumerates the following: *Homily 1* (CPG II, 3231), an *encomium* for the feast of Christmas; *Homily 2* (CPG II, 3232) on Lk 2:21–38, the meeting of Simeon and Anna with Jesus in the Temple; *Homily 3* (CPG II, 3233) on the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn 12: 1–11); *Homily 4* (CPG II, 3234) on the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with myrrh (Lk 7:36–50); *Homily 5* (CPG II, 3235) on Holy Saturday; *Homily 6* (CPG II, 3237) on Mt 26:39, against the Arians; *Homily 7* (CPG II, 3238) for Easter, anti-Eunomian; *Homily 8* (CPG II, 3333) on Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1–10), using, like *Homily 3* and *Homily 4*, the technique of introducing imaginary speeches, lively dialogues and many exclamations; *Homily 9* on Jn 5:3a; a *Homily* on Jn 14:28 (CPG II, 3241) handed down only in Syriac; a *Homily on Abraham* (CPG II, 3240) and on the sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22), in a truncated Coptic version; a *Homily for the Feast of Mesopentecost* (CPG II, 3236) dealing with Jn 5:1–16.

One must add a *Treatise on false asceticism*, denouncing in biblical terms local Encratites and some Apotactites, their dissident sub-sect, all fanatic vegetarians; a *Synodal Letter*, very close to the treatise *On the Holy Spirit*,

which Basil had dedicated to Amphilochius; *On the right faith*, the draft of a symbol transmitted in Syriac; and a series of fragments identified in some doctrinal and exegetical catenae (*Hodegos*; J. Reuss, CPG II, 3295). “It is remarkable that in the polemical homilies, as well as in the non-polemical ones, Amphilochius spends a great deal of effort in giving a full account of the text from which he starts. For instance, in polemical homilies where only one scriptural verse is at stake he deals with the whole passage in his explanation in order to justify the explanation as thoroughly as possible. The relevant exegesis is always literal; there is only one example of an allegorical exegesis” (*Hom.* 8, 96–103), (see Datema XXIX).

EDITIONS

PG 37, 1577–1600 col. *Seleuc.*; 39, 32–129: *ep. syn., or., fr.*

Datema, C.: CC3 (1978).

Seleuc.: Oberg, E.: PTS 9, Berlin 1969.

or. in Mt. 26–39: Holl, K., *Amphilochius von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zur den grossen Kappadoziern*. Tübingen-Leipzig 1904 = Darmstadt 1969, 91–102.

or. de recens. baptizitis et in resurrectionem: H. Gstrein, *Unedierte Texte zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Osterpredigt*. Diss. Vienna 1968, 111–20.

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or. in Joh. 14:28: C. Moss, *Muséon* 43 (1930) 317–64.

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or. de Abr.: G. Ficker, *Amphilochiana* 1. Leipzig 1906.

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XI
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I. EUSTATHIUS OF ANTIOCH (D. BEFORE 337)

Born in Pamphylia, and bishop of Beroea in Syria, until appointed in 323 or 324 to the see of Antioch, Eustathius welcomed Emperor Constantine at the synod in Nicaea in 325. The same emperor exiled him to Thrace in 330, after an Arian synod had deposed him in 326. Most of his writings are lost. Εἰς τὸ τῆς ἐγγαστριμύθου θεώρημα διαγνωστικός, *On the Witch of Endor against Origen*, 1 Kgs 28 (CPG II, 3350) rejects Origen's allegorism as such, in defence of historical truth. Fragments (some in Syriac) of commentaries survive on the titles of the Psalms (CPG II, 3352, 3355), on Ps. 15 and 92 (CPG II, 3356), and on Prov. 8:22 (CPG II, 3354), the latter quoted in Theodoret's *Eranistes* and *Ecclesiastical History*. Among other fragments, *De Melchisedech*, is translated in Greek and Syriac (CPG II, 3359); *In Joseph, In Samaritanum, In Proverbia, In Ecclesiasten* are quoted in Greek *catenae* (CPG II, 3364-3367).

EDITIONS

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engastr.: Klostermann, E., *Origenes Eustathius von Antiochien und Gregor von Nyssa über die Hexe von Endor*. Berlin 1912.

Simonetti, M., *Origene, Eustazio, Gregorio di Nissa. La maga di Endor*. Florence 1989.

fr.: Petit, F., CC 15, *Catena graeca in Genesim*, 210f., 227f.

Spanneut, M., *Recherches sur les écrits d'Eustathe d'Antioche avec une édition nouvelle des fragments dogmatiques et exégétiques*. Lille 1948.

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Phot.: Lorenz, R., "Gegen Photinus": *ZNW* 71 (1980) 109–28.

fr. Gen.: R. Devreesse, "Anciens commentateurs grecs de l'Octateuque: Eustathe d'Antioche": *RB* 44 (1935) 189–91.

TRANSLATIONS

German

Lorenz, above.

Italian

Simonetti, above.

STUDIES

Scheidweiler, F. "Zu der Schrift des Eustathius von Antiochien über die Hexe von Endor." *RMP* 96 (1953): 319–29.

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II. EUDOXIUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE (D. 370)

Some hypothetical fragments *On Daniel* figure in the *catenae* under Eudoxius' name (CPG II, 3470; Tetz).

EDITIONS

fr.: E. Diekamp, *Doctrina Patrum*. Munster 1907 = 1981, 64f.

STUDIES

Brennecke, H. C., *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer*. Tübingen 1988.

Spanneut, M.: *DHGE* 15 (1963) 1337–40.

Tetz, M., “Eudoxius—Fragments ?”: *StPatr* 3 (1961) 314–23.

III. MELETIUS OF ANTIOCH (D. 381)

The Armenian Meletius was a classmate of the future John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia in the centre of biblical studies founded by Diodore of Tarsus. Before occupying the see of Antioch in 360, he was bishop of Sebaste in Great Armenia. Despite his popularity in the Antiochene community, Constantius II banished him after he had delivered a homily on Prv 8:22 in conformity with the Nicene Creed. After his return from exile in 362, and given the troubled situation of the Antiochene church, Rome and Alexandria no longer recognised him as the legitimate bishop of the local church. In 363, he sent a synodal letter (*ep. syn*) to Emperor Jovian, in which he interpreted the Nicene Creed in order to reconcile the partisans of Paulinus with his own (and hence to end the Antiochene schism). In the Spring of 381, he presided over the Council of Constantinople but died soon after in May 381. Gregory of Nyssa (PG 46, 851–64) and John Chrysostom (PG 50, 515–20) delivered eulogies.

EDITIONS

hom (Prov 13:22): Epiphanius of Salamis., *haer.* 73, 29–33; Holl, GCS 37, 303–308 (CPG II, 3417).

ep. syn.: Socrates, *h.e.* 3, 25; PG 67, 453–64. Sozomen, *h.e.* 6, 4.

fr.: John of Damascus, *Sacra Parallela*, PG 96, 484f.

STUDIES

Richard, M., “Saint Basile et la mission du diacre Sabinus”: *AnBoll* 67 (1949) 128–202.

IV. EUNOMIUS OF CYZICUS (D. 394)

A pupil of Aëtius and literary defender of Neo-Arianism, Eunomius was placed on the see of Cyzicus by Eudoxius of Constantinople in 360. Several imperial edicts after his death ordered the destruction of his numerous writings. His use of scripture in his *Apology* and other doctrinal remains is small and is limited to dialectical purposes. His *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* is lost.

EDITIONS

Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*: W. Jaeger, GNO 1–2. Leiden 1960.
Vaggione, R. P., *The Extant Works*. Oxford 1987.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Vaggione, above.

STUDIES

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Böhm, T., *Theoria—Unendlichkeit—Aufstieg*. Leiden 1996.
Cavalcanti, F., *Studi Eunomiani*. Rome 1976.
Hanson, R. P. C., *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*. Edinburgh 1988,
611–36.
Risch, F. X., *Ps.-Basilius, Adversus Eunomium IV–V*. Leiden 1992.

V. ACACIUS OF CAESAREA (D. 366)

Acacius was the successor of Eusebius of Caesarea in 340. A commentary in seventeen volumes *On Ecclesiastes* is lost, except for a few fragments. His *Miscellaneous Questions* were of a biblical nature; only a passage on 1 Cor 15:57 survives, quoted by Jerome in his Ep. 119, 6. The *catenae* preserve quotations from a *Commentary on Romans* and another *On the Octateuch*. Acacius contributed to the renovation of the library of Caesarea, founded by Origen.

EDITIONS

- fr. Rom.*: K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*. Münster 1933, 53–56.
quaest.: R. Devreesse, *Les commentateurs de l'Octateuque et des Rois*. Rome 1959. Jerome, *ep.* 119–6.
fr. Marcell.: Epiphanius, *haer.* 72, 6–10.

STUDIES

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 Lienhard, J. T., “Acacius of Caesarea, *Contra Marcellum*. Historical and Theological Reconsiderations”: *CrSt* 10, 1 (1989) 1–22.

VI. TITUS OF BOSTRA

(D. DURING THE REIGN OF VALENS, 363–378)

From the mid-third century Bostra was the capital of the Province of Arabia. Titus is mentioned as bishop of Bostra in 362–363. He wrote *Against the Manichaeans* (CPG II, 3575) in which Book II focuses on biblical theology, while Book IV protests against the misuse of the NT by the Manichees. The work is available in a Syriac version executed within five years of the author's death. His homiletic *Commentary on Luke* (CPG II, 3576) is translated through the *Catena*. A *Sermon on Epiphany* (CPG II, 3578) is partially reproduced in the *Florilegium Edessenum* (Brit. Mus. Add. 12156).

EDITIONS

- Man.*: PG 18, 1069–1264.
 P. de Lagarde, *Titi Bostreni quae ex opere contra Manichaeos edita in codice Hamburgensi servata sunt graece*. Berlin 1859.
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fr. Lc., fr. Dan.: J. Sickenberger, *Titus von Bostra. Studien zu dessen Lukas-homilien*. Leipzig 1901, 140–245; 246–248.
serm.: I. Rucker, “*Florilegium Edessenum anonymum*”: *SBAW* 1933, 5, 82–87.

STUDIES

Amann, E.: *DTC* 15, 1 (1946) 1143f.

Baumstark, A., "Die syrische Übersetzung des Titus von Bostra und das 'Diatessaron'": *Bib.* 16 (1935) 257–99.

Solignac, A.: *DSP* 15 (1991) 999–1006.

VII. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (CA. 315–386)

Bishop of Jerusalem from 348, and expelled from his see three times by the Arians, Cyril took part in the Council of Constantinople, 381. His twenty-four *Catechetical Letters* (CPG II, 3585), preserved thanks to transcripts of his auditors (considered as authentic by F. L. Cross), demonstrate the pervading influence of scripture in the making of a Christian liturgy. The first prebaptismal catechesis urges the candidates for baptism to nourish their soul with reading the Bible; the second, third, and fourth elaborate beliefs about sin and penitence, baptism and faith, in constantly referring to scripture. The same is true of the *Mystagogical Catechesis* (CPG II, 3586), dealing with the ceremonies of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist. When announcing such catecheses in 18, 33, Cyril insists very specially on the biblical reference: "You will be given proofs from the Old and New Testaments, first, of course, for the things that were done immediately before your baptism, and next how you have been made clean from your sins by the Lord, ... then about the mysteries of the altar of the new covenant which had their origin here, what Holy Scripture tells us about them" (tr. LCC; Quasten *Patrology* II, 365).

A homily, delivered by Cyril when still a priest, *In paralyticum iuxta piscinam iacentem* (Jn 5:5) (CPG II, 3588), and four short quotations of other homilies are the only other remains of Cyril's literary activity. Only in the homily on John 5:5 does Cyril indulge in allegorism. His proper use of scripture is to call on it to deepen the sense of liturgical action. He finds in scripture all the needed examples and regulations for introducing neophytes and newly baptized believers into the symbolic realm of liturgy, where their Christian status is redefined and they are invested with new potential and new responsibilities. In the *Procatechesis*, or introduction to the *Catecheses*, again and again he urges candidates to read scripture and to pray it.

The first *Catechetical Lecture* shows clearly how Cyril's attitude toward scripture was entirely determined by his strong perception of liturgical values: he learned from scripture where liturgy came from and what was

its significance, and he saw liturgy actualizing symbolically the whole salvific message of scripture. His symbolic discourse is neither allegorical nor typological in the Alexandrian sense, because he is not precisely teaching how scripture needs to be understood, but how it is actually embodied in the baptismal experience:

You are receiving not a perishable but a spiritual shield. Henceforth you are planted in the invisible (= noetic, *noèton*) paradise. You receive a new name, which you had not before. Up to now you were a catechumen, but now you will be called a believer. You are transplanted henceforth among the spiritual (= noetic) olive-trees, being grafted from the wild into the good olive-tree, from sins into righteousness, from pollution into purity. You are made partaker of the holy vine.”
(tr. E. H. Gifford NPNF 7, 7)

From the first to the eighteenth *Catecheses* Cyril elaborates on the different articles of the Creed and the divine commandments, contemplated in the frame of the biblical salvation story. His quotation of Paul and other NT authors intensifies when he surveys, in *Catecheses* 10 to 15, the gospel narratives concerning Jesus; but he gives, at first, a long account on “the divinely inspired scriptures” by presenting their canonical list, in *Catechesis* 4. Thus he structures his lecture entirely around the scriptures, and their very content is filled with biblical testimonies.

EDITIONS

PG 33

Piédagnel, A., SC 126 (1966)

Röwekamp, G., FC 7.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Cross, F. L., ed.; R. W. Church, transl.: St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments: The Procatechesis and the Five Mystagogical Catecheses. London 1951.

Gifford, E. H.: NPNF, 2nd ser., vol. 3 (1894) 1–157.

French

Bouvet, J: Catéchèses baptismales et mystagogiques. Namur 1962.

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German

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- . "1 Gv 1:7 e 1 Pt 1:18–19 nell'esegesi di Eusebio di Cesarea, di Cirillo di Gerusalemme, di Epifanio di Salamina." In *Atti della VII. Settimana di Studi 'Sangue e antropologia nella teologia medievale'*, 853–93. Edited by F. Vattioni. Rome: Pia Unione Preziosissimo Sangue, 1991.
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VIII. THEODORE OF HERACLEA (D. 355)

Placed on the see of Heraclea, the ancient metropolis of Thracia, by Eusebius of Nicomedia soon after the Council of Nicaea 325, Theodore is known as an author through fragments of a *Commentary on Isaiah* (CPG II, 3561) and of commentaries *On Matthew, Luke, John, Acts, 1 Cor 15:58*, the *Psalms* (3562-3567).

EDITIONS

- PG 18, 1307-78.
- Pss.*: R. Devreesse, *Les commentateurs des Psaumes*. Rome 1970, 318.
- fr. Lc.*: J. Reuss, *Lukas—Kommentare*. Berlin 1984, 11.
- fr. Mt.*: J. Reuss, *Matthäus-Kommentare*. Berlin 1957, 55-95.
- fr. Jo.*: J. Reuss, *Johannes-Kommentare*. Berlin 1966, 65-178.
- fr. Act.*: J. A. Cramer, *CGPNT* 3. Oxford 1838 = Hildesheim 1967.

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IX. DIODORE OF TARSUS (D. BEFORE 394)

Born in Antioch, trained there by Silvanus, later the bishop of Tarsus, and Eusebius of Emesa, Diodore completed his education in Athens. He returned to Antioch, where Meletius (360-381) ordained him into his presbyterium. As a teacher in the local *askêtèrion*, Diodore became the first significant exponent of the Antiochene exegetical school; among his students were Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom. As a leader in the local liturgy, he in-

roduced a new way of singing the psalms during the office by two alternate choirs (Theodoret, *HE* 2, 24, 9). After an exile in Armenia, which gave him an opportunity to meet Basil of Caesarea with whom he kept a long-lasting friendship, in 378 Meletius placed him on the see of Tarsus, in Cilicia.

Over a century after his death in 499, he was condemned in Constantinople as a precursor of Nestorius, and his many writings were destroyed. Only fragments are known (3815–22).

Diodore wrote commentaries practically on all the scriptures, but also on apologetic and dogmatic issues. According to Basil, *Ep.* 135, he expended care on the literary form of his works. His *Commentary on Psalms* has been partially recovered, under the name of Anastasius, a metropolitan of Nicaea (Mariès, corrected by Devreesse). It ignores allegorism and allows a messianic relevance only for Psalm 2, 8, 44, 109 (Schäublin, TRE).

Its *editio princeps* by J. M. Olivier reveals Diodore at work. He intends to produce “an interpretation verse by verse” ἐκ τῆς κατὰ στίχον (6, 1; 33, 30). Each explanation of a psalm starts by a short introduction (ὑπόθεσις) about the situation and motivation which conditioned the psalmist, hence the very nature of the psalm is specified, if it is a ψαλμὸς ἠθικός (“ethical,” about human behavior), like Ps. 1, or a προεφητεία εἰς τὸν κύριον (a “prophecy about the Lord”), like Psalm 2, etc. The comments of one verse regularly ending with a word or phrase announcing the following verse, which gives the impression of a continuous and consistent exposition. Diodore never tires of stressing the poetic nature of the psalms, by making clear to which down-to-earth realities and aspects of the immediate experience of life the images, metaphors, and symbolic phrases of the psalmist refer. He does not denigrate psalmic poetry by rationalizing it, nor does he move away from the biblical text by moralizing through a paraphrase of his own; but he claims to interpret the psalms καθ’ ἱστορίαν (5, 1; 28, 12. 16. 19); he refuses τοὺς γραῶδεις μύθους τῶν ἀλληγορητῶν (6, 1; 32, 4), “the old wives’ tales of the allegorists.” Thus he paraphrases the verses with their own voice, in noting non-psalmic equivalencies for each of their elements: “he calls ‘way’ the behavior” (1, 1b; 9, 30); “the ‘will’ stands for ‘eagerness,’ ‘concern,’” etc. (1, 2a; 10, 40); “Just as the ‘tree’...so should the human person” (1, 3ac; 10, 51–56); again ‘the way’ means ‘human actions’ (πράξεις) or the ‘way of life’ (τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα) (1, 6ab; 11, 78–83), to quote only the comments on Ps 1, giving the tune of the whole commentary. Frequent mention is made of the verbal times inverted, speaking out in the present what should be said in the future, or the contrary: χρόνος ἀντὶ χρόνου ἐνήλλακται (6, 7bc; 35, 77); more generally: χρόνος ἀντὶ χρόνου χεῖται ἐν τοῖς στίχοις καὶ τοῦτο πλλάχον τῶν ψαλμῶν εὐρίσκεται “One time stands for another in the verses,

and this often happens in Psalms” (3, 5; 18, 33–34). The whole commentary, now available, deserves a thorough study.

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X. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (344/354–407)

Born of a well-to-do Antiochene family and initially educated by his mother who had been widowed at the age of twenty, Chrysostom became a student of the famous rhetorician Libanius, and studied theology with Diodore, the future bishop of Tarsus. A protégé of Bishop Meletius, for six years Chrysostom chose to undergo a severe ascetic experiment in the mountains neighboring Antioch before Meletius ordained him deacon in 381, and Bishop Flavian priest in 386, with a special preaching assignment. For ten years he fulfilled his duty, earning the title "Golden Mouth" (*chrysostomos*) for the brilliance and doctrinal substance of his eloquence. Forced by Emperor Arcadius in 397 to occupy the see of Constantinople, he soon became victim of court intrigues, and suffered much violence before dying in exile on September 14, 407.

John's idealistic disposition was permeated by his intense familiarity with scripture. He considered it his first obligation to deliver from the pulpit a genuine exposition of the biblical books. "Always anxious to ascertain the literal sense and opposed to allegory, he combines great facility in discerning the spiritual meaning of the scriptural text with an equal ability for immediate, practical application to the guidance of those committed to his care. The depth of his thought and the soundness of his masterful exposition are unique and attract even modern readers. He is equally at home in the books of the Old and the New Testament and has the skill to use even the former for the conditions of the present and the problems of daily life" (Quasten, II, 433).

Most of Chrysostom's exegetical homilies are delivered during the years of his Antiochene ministry, before his fateful move to Constantinople:

On Genesis, in a first set of nine homilies (4410) dating from Lent 386, eight of them focusing on Gn 1–3; and in a second set of sixty-seven homilies (4409), with a complete commentary on Genesis., dating from 388.

On the Psalms (4413), more precisely on fifty-eight of them, dating from his last years in Antioch: Ps 4–12, 43–49, 108–117, 119–150. Add other comments, not included in this series of homilies, on Ps 41, 48 (4414), 115 and 195 (4415). When discussing the literal content of the psalmic verses Chrysostom uses exceptionally the version of Symmachus, Aquila and Theodotion, next to the Septuagint.

On Isaiah (4417), only six homilies on Isaiah 6 survive in the original Greek, but the complete commentary is available in Armenian. There are Greek fragments on Isaiah 1–8, 10, 45 in Greek *catenae* (4416 and 4418).

On Kings: a few chapters are explained in five homilies “On Hannah” (PG 54, 631–676), in three “On David and Saul” (*ib.*, 675–708), and still another chapter “on Elijah and the hospitable widow” (1 Kgs 17) is one homily (4387).

On the Obscurity of the Prophecies (4420), deals with a more general quotation, in two homilies composed in 386.

Fragments in catenae, on Jeremiah (4419 and 4447), Daniel (4448), Proverbs (CPG II, 4446) and Job (CPG II, 4444).

On Maccabees: three homilies (4354).

On Matthew: ninety homilies (4424), with Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Latin, Arabic and Old-Slavonic versions.

On John: eighty-eight homilies (4425), with same versions except the Old-Slavonic.

On Acts: fifty-five homilies, with Armenian version (4426).

On Romans: thirty-two homilies; partial Armenian version (4427).

On 1 Corinthians: forty-four homilies, with Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, and Arabic versions (4428).

On 2 Corinthians: thirty homilies, with Syriac and Armenian versions (4429).

On Galatians: several homilies collected in a compact *Commentary*, like on Isaiah (4430).

On Ephesians: twenty-four homilies, with Syriac and Armenian versions (4431).

On Philippians: fifteen homilies, with Syriac and Armenian versions (4432).

On Colossians: twelve homilies, with Syriac, Armenian and Coptic versions (4433).

On 1 Thessalonians: eleven homilies, with Syriac and partial Coptic and Armenian versions (4434).

On 2 Thessalonians: five homilies, with partial Coptic and Armenian versions (4435).

On 1 Timothy: eighteen homilies, with Armenian and partial Coptic versions (4436).

On 2 Timothy: ten homilies, with Armenian version (4437).

On Titus: six homilies, with Syriac, Armenian and partial Coptic versions (4438).

On Philemon: three homilies (4439).

On Hebrews: thirty-four homilies, with Latin, Armenian and Arabic versions (4440).

A certain number of homilies comment on specific figures and narratives in phrases or passages of the OT and NT writings. In the OT, on Is 45:9 (4418), "On Eleazar and the Seven Young Men," 2 Mc 6-7 (4441:13); on the Ninivites in Jonah 3-4 (4442); and Jeremiah 10:23 (4419) "On Demons Not Dominating the World," three homilies (4332). In the NT:

Mt 3:16 (4495 14; and 4335) : the baptism of Jesus;

Mt 9:1-2 (4321): on the paralytic;

Mt 9:37 = Lk 10:2 (4441, 11): rich crops but scarcity of laborers;

Mt 18:23ff. (4368): the parable of the talents;

Mt 26:39 = Mark 14:36, Lk 22:42 (4369): the agony of Jesus

Mk 10:37 (4321) the mother of the Zebedees;

Lk 2 (4334): the birth of Jesus;

Lk 8:5-15 (4495, 24): the parable of the sower;

Lk 13:6 (4495, 18): the fig-tree;

Lk 16 (4329): Lazarus and Dives;

Jn 5:19 (4441, 12): "the Son can do nothing by himself";

Jn 11 (4322): Lazarus brought back to life.

On the betrayal by Judas (4336), the Cross (4337), the Cross and the two bandits (4339), the Resurrection (4341), the Ascension (4342), the Pentecost (4343), Eastertime (4408).

Finally, on Rom 8:28 (4374), 12:20 (4375), 16:3 (4376); 1 Cor 1:25 (4441, 14), 2:19 (4381), 7:2 (4377), 10:1 (4380); Gal 2:11 (4391); 1 Tm 5:9 (4386); 2 Tm 3:1 (4423); Ti 2:11 (4456); 1-2 Tm and Titus (4450); Hebrews (4495, 2).

Surely a record number of apocryphal writings are transmitted under the name of John Chrysostomos. These Pseudochrysostomica, well studied

(De Aldama, Carter, Aubineau, Sieben), are often referring to scripture in sermons for liturgical feasts (4500–5197). They can only be compared with the so-called “*Ephraem Graecus*,” remarkably inventoried in 3900–4175, which is another collection of anonymous homilies, ascetical texts, doctrinal essays, etc., put under the name of Ephraem. Among them, exegetical data are specially preserved in 3932, 3937–39, 3944–46, 3948, 3952, 3954, 3955, 3958, 3972–74, 3978, 3981, 3985, 4010–12, 4014, 4016, 4022–25, 4029, 4043, 4062, 4080, 4082, 4089, 4093–95, 4103–13, 4116.

Many “Chrysostomica” remain unpublished (4840–5079; *Elenchus...longe abest planus esse*); others are only available in ancient translations, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Arabic, Old-Russian and Old-Slavonic, most of them unpublished (5130–5197).

In Chrysostom’s “treatises and approximately six hundred sermons,” C. Baur reaches the total of 18,000 scripture citations: 7,000 OT, 11,000 NT. In the OT, the Psalms prevail with more than 1,500 citations over Genesis (more than 900); Isaiah (more than 700); Exodus, and Job (each more than 300). In the NT, Matthew is frontrunner with its own Commentary plus 2,400 citations in other works, compared with Mark (200), Luke (900), John (more than 1,300). Among Pauline epistles, 1–2 Corinthians head the list with more than 2100 citations, before Romans (over 900), and the other epistles (Baur).

Chrysostom’s canon of scripture includes canonical and deuterocanonical books alike. Ruth is never mentioned. Other books are seldom mentioned or quoted: Ezra (once), 1 and 2 Maccabees (twice each), Judges (eleven times), Nahum (twice), Tobit (twice), Esther (once). It is a canon similar to the one of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In the NT, 2 and 3 John are missing; again, a list comparable with Theodore’s canon which also excluded James. The recension of biblical texts derives from Lucian, through Diodore.

Divine inspiration and inerrancy of scripture were intensely revered by John. His interpretation rested on a historical-grammatical method in strict conformity with the tradition of Lucian and Methodius of Olympus, Eusebius of Emesa, and Diodorus. True to Antiochene “theory,” he emphasized the “direct historical sense of the prophecies” (Baur, 319) explained biblical history and applied the poetic images of Scripture in his moral teaching. As Baur states it: “he is often extraordinarily dexterous, and is inferior to none of the exegetes of more modern times” (321). In a few occurrences he calls on other interpreters, without naming them (*On Genesis* 6,2; *In Paralyticum* 5). Much more frequently he exhorts his listeners to become themselves experienced interpreters: “Very often he invited them to take the Bible in hand themselves and read diligently therein. The Holy Scripture, he said, is for us men [and women?] a most precious treasure house (*On Gn* 3, 1; 21,

1; 60, 3), from which we can obtain endless riches, a mine rich in gold (On Gn 8, 1), a meadow (*To the Antioch people* 1, 1; *de capto Eutropio* 1), full of beautiful and fragrant flowers, a paradise garden (*ad pop. Ant.* 1, 1), which bears the most precious fruits, an arsenal (*On Laz.* 3,1), out of which each one may take weapons against the enemies of the soul. The Holy Scripture resembles a quiet sea (*On Laz.* 6, 8), that hides many precious pearls in its depths; it is like a diamond (On Gn 14, 1; sermon on Gn 3, 1), which reflects the divine light, a cloud (*in princip. Actorum* 3, 2) bestowing shadows and rain, a pharmacy (*On John* 37, 1; 83, 3; *On Gn* 29, 1–2), which contains the means of healing for all (Baur, 322).

For John, “this is the source of all evil: ignorance of the Holy Scripture” (*On Col* 9:1). “The chamberlain of the Queen of Ethiopia teaches us that time and circumstances never need hinder us from reading the Holy Scriptures” (*On Gn* 35, 1; cf. *On Gn* 29, 2; *On Ps* 48, 1). He approved the custom of washing one’s hands before biblical readings, for “to open the Holy Scripture is to open heaven” (*Hom.* 2, 2 in: *Vidi dominum*, PG 56, 109). When scripture becomes too obscure, it requires not only an attentive listener, but also a wise teacher, in John’s understanding a priest or bishop. He often pays homage to such authorized interpreters (*On Gn* 54,1; *On Heb* 8,4).

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PG 47–62.

SC	13 bis	<i>ep.</i> : 1–17:	A. M. Malingrey.
	28 bis	<i>incomprehens.</i> :	F. Cavallera, J. Daniélou, R. Flacelière.
	50 bis	<i>catech.</i> 2/4–3/7:	A. Wenger.
	79	<i>scand.</i> :	A. M. Malingrey (1961).
	103	<i>laed.</i> :	A. M. Malingrey (1964).
	117	<i>Thdr.</i> 1–2:	J. Dumortier (1966).
	125	<i>virg.</i> :	H. Musurillo, B. Grillet (1966).
	138	<i>vid.</i> 1–2:	B. Grillet, G. H. Ettlinger (1968),
	188	<i>educ. lib.</i> :	A. M. Malingrey (1972).
	272	<i>ordin. sac.</i> 1–6:	A. M. Malingrey (1980).
	277	<i>hom.</i> 1–6 in <i>Is</i> 6:1:	J. Dumortier (1981).
	300	<i>laud. Paul.</i> :	A. Piédagnel (1982).
	304	<i>Is. interpr.</i> :	J. Dumortier, A. Liefoghe (1983).
	346, 348	<i>exp. in Job</i> :	H. Sorlin, L. Neyrand (1988).
	362	<i>pan. Bab.</i> 2:	M. A. Schatkin, C. Blanc, B. Grillet (1990).
	366	<i>catech.</i> 2, 1–2, 3:	A. Piédagnel, L. Doutreleau (1990).
	396	<i>anom.</i> :	A. M. Malingrey (1994).
	433	<i>in Gen.</i> :	L. Brottier (1998).

FontChr 6, 1-2.

catech. 2, 2-2: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus. London 1975.

educ. lib.: B. K. Exarchos. Munich 1958.

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NPNE, 1st ser. 9-14 (1888-1893).

FaCh, 33, 41, 68, 72, 73 and 74 (1957-86).

ACW 45 (1985).

catech.: P. W. Harkins, ACW 31 (1963).

French

All SC vols.: above.

A. Wenger, "A son retour d'Asie": *REByz* 19 (1961) 110-23; "Sur l'Épiphanie":
REByz 29 (1971) 117-35.

German

BKV: *a exil., ascens., bapt., eleem., ep. Innoc.* 1-2, *Eutrop., hom. in Mt., in Rom., in 1 Cor., in 2 Cor.; comm. in Gal; hom. in Eph., in Phil., in Col., in 1 Thes., in 2 Thes., in 1 Tim., in 2 Tim., in Ti., in Phlm., in Heb; kal., laud. Paul., Laz 6; nativ., ordin., p. redit.* 1, *pan. mart., pent.* 1-2; *poenit.* 1-9, *prod. Jud.* 2, *res. mort., sac.* 1-6, *stat.* 1-21, *Thdr.* 1, *virg.*

FontChr: above.

educ. lib.: M. Gärtner. Cologne 1985.

hom. 1-67 *in Gen.*: M. zu Sachsen. Paderborn 1913.

sermo 1-9: M. zu Sachsen. Paderborn 1914.

hom. 1-88 *in Joh.*: F. Knors. Paderborn 1862.

S. Haidacher, "Drei uneditierte Chrysostomustexte einer Baseler Hs.": *ZKTh* 30 (1906) 772-82; 31 (1907) 141-71, 347-60.

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XI. THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA (CA. 350–428)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Manlio Simonetti

1. *Life and Works*

The information which has come down to us from ancient sources concerning the events of the life of Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia (Cilicia) is scarce. The greater part, which concerns his youth, is learned from a letter to Theodore written by John Chrysostom, the addressee of which, according to the nearly universal belief of ancient and modern scholars, was precisely our Theodore.⁹⁵ To this can be added some meager data gleaned from the ecclesiastical historians and some other sources.⁹⁶

Theodore was born around the middle of the fourth century at Antioch in Syria. According to what we gather from the letter of Chrysostom, Theodore was well off. This allowed him to attend the school of the famous rhetor Libanius where, in addition to rhetoric, he also learned something of philosophy. His parents were probably Christians, as a good part of the population of Antioch already was around the middle of the century. Theodore's brother Polychronius was a Christian and would become bishop of Apamea. He had certainly already been baptized when, about sixteen years of age, he decided to abandon classical studies and the life of the world and to withdraw to a monastic community at Antioch, an *asketerion*. Here a group of upper-class youths, including John, the future Chrysostom, were educated in asceticism and in the study of Sacred Scripture. The school was directed by Carterius and Diodore. The latter was a priest, closely bound to Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, and was himself destined in 378 to become Bishop of Tarsus. Diodore was well versed in biblical exegesis, which he carried out in a literal manner and in open controversy with the allegorism which distinguished the exegetical tradition of Alexandria. This instruction was destined to mark in a decisive manner the future developments in Theodore's formation and in his intellectual activity in general and, especially, in his exegesis. First, though, according to what the letter tells us, Theodore underwent a crisis shortly after

95. This text is published in SCh I 17 (ed. Dumortier).

96. In addition to sources of minor importance, information on Theodore is also given by the Ecclesiastical Histories of Theodoret (5, 27.40), Socrates (6,3), Sozomen (8,2); the *De viris illustrious* of Gennadius, c. 12; the anti-Pelagian writings of Marius Mercator, ACO 1,5,1, pp. 3–70; the Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553, ACO 4,1–2; the *Ad Iustinianum* (= *Pro defensione trium capitulorum*) of Facundus of Heriniane, CCL 90A.

having entered the *asketerion*, and this drove him to abandon the monastic community and to return and occupy himself with family affairs. However, the grief-stricken invitation of his friend John and—we can suppose—of other companions as well had the effect of recalling the vacillating Theodore to his ascetic commitment, this time definitively.

From this point on, with the disappearance of the information furnished by the letter, the data on the activity and ecclesiastical career of Theodore are reduced to the essentials. When, in 378, Diodore was elected bishop of Tarsus, Theodore succeeded him in the direction of the school;⁹⁷ an eloquent sign of the expertise which was attributed to him in biblical studies. From this point on he dedicated himself to a literary activity destined to be of long duration and rich in many works, only a few of which were destined to come down to us. He was ordained a priest in 383. When, in 392, he was chosen as a champion of the Catholic party to defend the doctrine on the Holy Spirit in a meeting of Macedonian⁹⁸ bishops at Anazarba, he found himself staying with Diodore at Tarsus. Having been elected bishop, he emerged victorious from the dispute⁹⁹ and subsequently was given the See of Mopsuestia, a small town in Cilicia where paganism was still flourishing. Pastoral care did not draw him away from his dedication either to doctrinal matters in controversy against the last Arians and especially against the Apollinarians, or even more from exegetical activities. He distinguished himself also for his oratorical skills, on account of which he was called upon to preach outside of his own town, and even at Constantinople, probably in 394 on the occasion of the council which was held there that year. Later, between 415 and 420, he had the opportunity to engage himself in the Pelagian Controversy, which the arrival of Pelagius in Palestine had spread also to the East. As an advocate of free will, Theodore opposed Jerome and Augustine's teaching on original sin and was generous in support of Julian of Eclanum, the ardent defender of Pelagianism who, condemned and forced to leave Italy, found hospitality with Theodore around 421. A few years later, in 428, Theodore's earthly life came to an end.

In the course of this long career as pastor, writer and controversialist, Theodore was always on the side of Catholic orthodoxy, even in the Pelagian

97. This important notice comes to us from John of Antioch, as cited by Facundus 2,2,12.

98. This name, derived from Macedonius of Constantinople, was given in the final decades of the fourth century to those who, though not Arians, denied the full divinity of the Holy Spirit. They, too, were condemned by the Council of Constantinople of 381.

99. The account of the *Dispute with the Macedonians* has come down to us in Syriac translation in PO 9,5, pp. 637–67 (ed. Nau).

question, because his teaching on free will was in fundamental harmony, in spite of some radical points, with the general feeling of Eastern Christianity. Theodore's misfortunes *post mortem* did not originate from this area, but rather from his Christological efforts in an anti-Apollinarian direction, which led him to distinguish too sharply the divine nature and human nature in Christ precisely as two different subjects, with the result of placing their unity at risk. For the moment, this affirmation, although it was already contested by Cyril of Alexandria before the rise of the Nestorian crisis, did not involve significant consequences on the disciplinary level to Theodore's disadvantage. Later, however, when the differences in Christology degenerated from 430 on, first into the Nestorian then the Monophysite crises, even Theodore's name, together with that of Diodore, was called into question, inasmuch as the opponents of Nestorius considered them to be the instigators of the divisive Christology which was condemned at Ephesus in 431. On the other hand, Theodore's Christological teaching had developed the typical tendencies of the Antiochene school, and thus his memory found there a strong and determined defense. It was not, however, such as to prevent his memory, together with that of Theodoret and Ibas, from becoming involved in the so-called question of the Three Chapters, raised by the Emperor Justinian in an attempt, which remained fruitless, to put an end to the animosity of the Monophysites. Theodore was sacrificed to their hatred as the teacher of Nestorius and, in spite of the opposition which Justinian's decision aroused especially in the West, was condemned as a heretic in the ecumenical council held at Constantinople in 553.

The destiny which Theodore encountered *post mortem* has determined in a decisive manner the fate of his numerous writings and thus of the knowledge we are able to have of him today. Indeed, his involvement in the Nestorian and Monophysite Controversies, if on the one hand it has led to the almost complete disappearance of his works in their original language as a consequence of the condemnation inflicted on him by the council and subsequently reaffirmed several times, it has on the other exalted his memory and prestige in the schismatic Nestorian Church, which has esteemed him as The Exegete *par excellence*, so that in this way various of his works have come down to us in Syriac translation. Furthermore, two catalogues of Theodore's writings have come down to us from Nestorian sources. The first is included in the Arabic *Chronicle* of Seert (ca. 1100), the second is the work of the Nestorian bishop Ebedjesus in the fourteenth century.¹⁰⁰

Among the exegetical writings in their original language, the *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets* has come down to us, lacking only the introduction

100. *The Chronicle* is published in PO 5,2, pp. 284–91 (ed. Scher-Dib); the catalogue of Ebedjesus is in Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 3,1, pp. 30–35.

of a general nature.¹⁰¹ The *Commentary on the Psalms*, which was dictated before the aforementioned commentary and is the first work of Theodore, highly dependent on the similar commentary of Diodore, has been partially reconstructed by Devreesse for Psalms 1–80 on the basis of material retrieved above all from the exegetical chains.¹⁰² There remains of this commentary a Latin adaptation which today tends to be attributed to Julian of Eclanum.¹⁰³ The methodological introduction which Theodore had used as a foreword to his interpretation of Psalm 118 has recently been published in a Syriac translation which is damaged at the beginning.¹⁰⁴ The *explicit* of the Syriac translation gives this text the title *Against the Allegorists*. It is not, however, to be identified with the work of the same name listed in the catalogue of Ebedjesus, which consisted of a good five books. *The Commentary on the Gospel of John*, of which some fragments in their original language have also come to light, and part of the *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* have likewise been published in a Syriac translation.¹⁰⁵ *The Commentaries* on the so-called minor letters of Paul, i.e., from Galatians to Philemon, to which can be added ample fragments in the original language of the entire collection of letters, have come down to us in an ancient Latin translation which is dated to the fifth century.¹⁰⁶ Numerous fragments of the *Commentary on Genesis* are extant.¹⁰⁷ Of the non-exegetical works, only the *Catechetical Homilies* have survived in their entirety in a Syriac translation (14).¹⁰⁸ In the same manner had been preserved the *De incarnatione*, a doctrinally very important work, which was destroyed in the vicissitudes of the First World War before it was published.

101. For this text, Cf. PG 66, 123–632; ed. Sprenger, Wiesbaden 1977.

102. Cf. R. Devreesse, *Le Commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes (I–LXXX)*, Vatican City 1939.

103. It is published in CCL 88A (ed. De Coninck). In this text one must distinguish the true and actual translation of Julian, limited to the Pss 1–40, from a heavily abbreviated abridgment, which extends from Ps 16:11 to the end of the Psalter.

104. It is published in CSCO 435–36 (ed. Van Rompay). It is followed, also in Syriac translation, by various fragments on the interpretation of Ps 118 and of other Psalms.

105. For the *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* cf. the ed. of Strothmann, Wiesbaden 1988; for the *Commentary on John* the ed. of Vosté, CSCO II 5–116.

106. The commentaries in latin translation were published in two volumes by Sweete, Cambridge 1880, 1882. For the fragments, cf. K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, Münster 1933, pp. 113–212.

107. They can be read in PG 66, 635–46.

108. Cf. R. Tonneau, *Les Homilies Catéchétiques de Théodore de Mopsueste* (in collaboration with R. Devreesse), Vatican City 1949.

Among the works of an exegetical nature which, with the exception of a few fragments, have not come down to us, we know of *Commentaries on Exodus, I and II Samuel, The Major Prophets, The Gospels of Matthew and Luke*. It is uncertain whether Theodore expounded his bold conjectures on the *Song of Songs*, to which we will return later, in a commentary or, as seems more likely, in a letter. Among the lost non-exegetical works can be named, in addition to those mentioned above, *Against Eunomius, Against Apollinaris, Against Those Who Hold that People Sin by Nature and not by Will, Against the Teaching of the Persian Magicians, and Response to the Emperor Julian*, of which some new fragments have recently been discovered in addition to those few previously known.¹⁰⁹

2. Hermeneutical Theory

From antiquity until the present, Theodore has been and is considered the most significant representative of the Antiochene School, especially in its exegetical but also in its doctrinal aspect. It is advisable to make clear at this point that the so-called School of Antioch is not to be considered as an institution with teachers and administrators, such as was the School of Alexandria. Rather, it must be conceptualized as only a group of exegetes and theologians, some of whom, such as Diodore, were active in their own right as teachers, bound together by teacher-pupil relationships and by a common theological and exegetical outlook. Since the oft-repeated affirmation that the founder of this improperly defined school was Lucian of Antioch has been shown to be without foundation, it is sufficient to state at this point that this school was anticipated on the methodological plane in the exegetes active in the Syropalestinian region in the footsteps of Eusebius of Caesarea in the first half of the fourth century. Among these, Eusebius of Emesa is especially noteworthy for the clear literalist tendency of his exegesis. In any case, Diodore of Tarsus must be considered the first real representative of this "school," above all on the strength of his theoretical stand in favor of a literal exegesis against allegorism,¹¹⁰ and the consistency with which he applied his methodological principles in his exegesis. The disappearance of nearly all his works does not allow us to judge him adequately from the doctrinal point of view. Nevertheless, the recent partial publication of his

109. Cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Replica a Giuliano Imperatore*, ed. A. Guida, Florence 1994, with detailed notes on the life and works of Theodore.

110. Diodore had dealt with this question in *On the Difference between Allegoria and Theoria*, which has been lost. In any case, his thought in this regard is given also in the introductions placed before the *Commentary on the Psalms* in general as well as to the commentary on Psalm 118.

*Commentary on the Psalms*¹¹¹ allows us to come to know him as an exegete, and from this knowledge it becomes clear how profoundly Theodore was influenced by him.

Indeed, the representatives of Antiochene exegesis do not appear to us as a completely homogeneous block but, even if only on the basis of a common theoretical approach, they do give evidence in practice of specific characteristics which allow us to distinguish more or less radical tendencies. Diodore and Theodore stand out in comparison with John Chrysostom and Theodoret for the radical tendency with which they make use of the criteria of literal exegesis in open opposition to Alexandrian allegorism.

The recent publication of *Against the Allegorists* allows us to specify in some detail Theodore's critique of allegorizing exegesis. The accusation—far from new—of making the biblical text say, by means of this type of exegesis, what each interpreter wishes and not explaining what in fact is in the text is supported by two arguments:

1. The allegorists justified their practice by bringing forward biblical texts which appeared to be lacking an acceptable meaning and thus to be untenable according to the literal sense, and which therefore could only be interpreted allegorically. Theodore produces various examples of texts of this kind, among which are Ps 21:21 "Free from the hand of the dog my only begotten one," and Ps 97:8 "The rivers together will clap their hands." He observes that the pretended difficulty is only a use of figurative language, accentuated by certain characteristics of the Hebrew language. The two examples produced here become comprehensible if they are understood as metaphores which describe specific historical situations by making use of comparisons drawn from the world of animals and of nature (pp. 4ff.). It must in any case be observed here that the real interpretive difficulty and thus the motive of the opposition between the two exegetical tendencies arose not so much from cases of this type where it was clear to all that the biblical text had made use of figurative language, but rather where there was uncertainty—such as Augustine observed more or less at the time of Theodore in the *De doctrine Christiana III.5.9*—whether the biblical text ought to be understood in a literal or a figurative sense. This was the case above all for ch. 2–3 of Genesis, whose mythologizing flavor and the anthropomorphic presentation of God drove the Alexandrians to consider them to be expressed in figurative form, while the Antiochenes preferred to hold even here to a strictly literal sense.¹¹²

111. It is published in CCG 6 (ed. Olivier). Regarding Diodore's exegesis, cf my *Lettera e/o allegoria. Un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica*, Rome 1985, 159ff.

112. What little we know of Theodore's lost *Commentary on Genesis* on this ques-

2. Theodore observes that the pagan philosophers had used allegory to give a morally acceptable meaning to their myths, so that their allegorical interpretation in fact eliminated the literal meaning of the story to the exclusive favor of its symbolic importance. For that reason, Paul in Gal 4: 24 had spoken only improperly of allegory with regard to Hagar and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac presented as signifying the Old and the New Covenant, the Jews and the Christians, inasmuch as he had not at all intended to eliminate the historicity of these biblical characters by introducing this symbolism. Theodore is faithfully taking up again here the critique which already Diodore had brought forward against allegorism by comparing the use made of it by exegetes of the Alexandrian tradition to that of the pagan exegetes, and he finds the target for his critique in Philo and Origen (pp. 10ff.). In reality, both Philo and Origen had intended only in a few cases to eliminate the literal sense by use of allegory, and this only in those places where they considered that the biblical text had only symbolic value, such as in many details of Genesis 2–3. To the contrary, in many other instances they had carried out their interpretation precisely in the manner of Paul, that is, without denying the literal sense and superimposing the allegorical sense over it. Like Paul, neither Philo nor Origen had intended to deny the historical existence of the Patriarchs. However, in this different evaluation which Origen gives to the letter of the OT, Theodore sees only a sign of inconsistency,¹¹³ and finds support for his rejection of Origen's methodology by bringing forward the errors which, at his time, were being charged against the Alexandrian (p. 16ff.). The condemnation of his doctrine reinforces that of his exegetical method.

The goal of allegorical interpretation of the OT was to give to it a Christological significance. However, in the same way as Diodore,¹¹⁴ neither did Theodore, in criticizing that method, intend on the plane of theory to deny such a significance, but rather only to preserve the integrity of the literal meaning. In the preface to the *Commentary on Jonah* (PG 66, 317ff.) he, like Diodore, takes up the broadly traditional criterion of considering certain

tion confirms the author's strict literalism. With regard to the garments of skins of Gen 3:21, in order to avoid that one might think with untenable anthropomorphism that God Himself had made the garments of skins for Adam and Eve, Theodore proposes that it means that Adam made them himself with the bark of a tree: PG 66. 641.

113. Theodore appears to have little information on Philo and, regarding his use of allegory, gives only the most general judgments.

114. Theodore, however, gave up the most typical characteristic of the exegetical

historically valid events of the OT as *typoi* of Christ, prophetically anticipated in the old economy in function of the future Incarnation. He also expounds the conditions which must be verified for an event of the OT to be considered a *typos* of an event of the NT: "In such a manner we have found that the ancient realities are a type of the ones to come if they have some similarity with respect to them and at the same time demonstrate a utility in their own age; while from the same events it becomes clear how these realities are inferior [to the future ones]" (320b). On this basis, Theodore not only continues by presenting Jonah as the one who, better than any other, prefigured with his circumstances events of Jesus' human life. But he also specifies that most of the details (πλεῖστα) of the OT can be interpreted in this manner and proposes some examples.¹¹⁵ However, as we subsequently will see, Theodore in fact made very restricted application of this exegetical criterion in his commentaries.

3. *Inspiration and Canonicity*

In aiming at a literal appreciation of the biblical text considered from the historical and literary point of view, Theodore applied these criteria to the Song of Songs with such consistency and rigidity as to call into doubt or so it seems—its character as an inspired writing.¹¹⁶ In fact, the Song of Songs, inasmuch as it is made up of a collection of love songs which are exchanged between the two protagonists, can take on a religious significance only on the condition of a complete and exclusive allegorical interpretation. The Jews had recognized in it the symbol of Yahweh's love for Israel, and the Christians had made this interpretation their own, transferring it to Christ

terminology of Diodore, who, while criticizing Origen, had taken the very qualifying term of his own exegesis, θεωρία, and also ἀναγωγή.

115. Theodore proposes the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt (= liberation from sins), the bloody sacrifices of the temple (= the sacrifice of Christ), and the bronze serpent (= Christ crucified), and notes that the three events are given in the NT with explicit reference to Christ: I Cor 10:11; Heb 9:13; John 3:14.

116. For this and the following, the principal sources are: Leontius of Byzantium, *Against the Nestorians and the Eutychians*, PG 86, 1365ff.; the Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553, Mansi 9, 224ff., Junilius, *Instituta regularia divinae legis* 1,3–7. On this issue, cf. E. Amann, *Théodore de Mopsueste*, DTHC 15, 244ff.; D. Z. Zaharopoulos, *Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Bible: A Study of his Old Testament Exegesis*, New York 1989, 44ff.

and to the church. Theodore could not accept this radical allegorizing, and by considering the text in its literal sense as determined by historical circumstances, he made the most of the traditional attribution of the work to Solomon by considering it to be nothing more than a collection of love songs composed by the king for one of his wives, the daughter of pharaoh. We do not know to what extent this evaluation forced Theodore to call into question the very canonical status of the Song of Songs. This accusation was brought against him and extended also to the Books of Job and Ecclesiastes, as can be read in the Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553. Leontius of Byzantium even blames Theodore for having denied the canonical status of Paralipomenon, Ezra and Nehemiah as well and, with regard to the NT, also of the Letter of James and the other Catholic Letters. The accusation has great need of being put into a proper perspective. At the time of Theodore, the canon of the OT and the NT, which had for a long time been constituted in its essential parts, still showed marginal variations from church to church, and indeed the Church of Antioch did not recognize the canonical status of a great part of these books. Thus Theodore in substance did nothing more than to conform himself to the usage of the church in which he had been brought up in the Christian faith. With regard to the Song of Songs and Job, it is necessary to evaluate this accusation by keeping in mind as well another one which was brought against Theodore, that of distinguishing in Scripture different modes and levels of inspiration; a greater one defined by him as prophetic inspiration, and a lesser one, defined as the grace of prudence or wisdom. According to the accusation, Theodore would have considered Job as inspired by human wisdom. However, the very fact that we know that a commentary on this book was composed by him makes it quite difficult to maintain that he could have doubted its canonical status, even while admitting an inferior level of inspiration. With regard to the distinction of levels and modes of inspiration, this can be explained in light of the appreciation of a literary and historical character which Theodore was accustomed to give of the biblical books, in the sense that their specific characteristics themselves seemed to imply diverse modes of inspiration on the part of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of the different authors; a historical book has a quite different character than a prophetic one in such a way that divine inspiration influenced each author in a different mode. In this order of ideas, Theodore emphasized above all the prophetic type of inspiration as that which transmits the divine message more directly to the human being. While recognizing different modes also in this specific area, he emphasized above all the inspiration which arouses in the prophet a state of unconscious

ecstasy (ἔκστασις) through which the most important and secret revelations are made to him. In fact, only by finding himself in a psychological condition which isolated him completely from the surrounding environment was the prophet capable of bearing the terrifying and mysterious visions through which the Holy Spirit communicated divine revelation to him.¹¹⁷ This positive evaluation of ecstasy is to be judged from the historical point of view by taking into account that the term and the psychological state which it stood for had for a long time been considered in a completely negative manner in the churches of the East, inasmuch as they were considered characteristic of the prophecy of the Montanists. In this sense, it was affirmed that this manner of prophesying, defined as false prophecy and false ecstasy, were different from that which both the OT and the NT prophets had practiced.¹¹⁸ Since the Montanist danger had disappeared by this time, the consideration of ecstasy likewise changes from negative to positive with Theodore,

4. *Exegetical Technique*

In a passage of the *Commentary on John* (CSCO II 6,2), Theodore observes that the task of the exegete is to explain the difficult expressions of the biblical text without going on at length in the digressions allowed to the preacher. Indeed a constant character of all Theodore's commentaries which have come down to us is the greatest conciseness of expression: essential explanations, not without some doctrinal clarification where it is deemed necessary, but without a shadow of the wordiness and of the abundance of digressions typical of Origen's commentary and of the Alexandrian tradition in general. If we keep in mind the two types of commentary in use in Greek scholastic practice, the grammatical and the philosophical, the restriction to essentials and the conciseness of Theodore's commentary call to mind the character of the grammatical commentary, while that of Origen was inspired in various aspects by the philosophical commentary. It does not appear, on the other hand, that Theodore, like the other principal exegetes of the Antiochene School with the exception of Diodore, exercised any teaching responsibilities. Thus his commentaries, in contrast to those of Origen and Didymus, do not appear to be derived from the explanation of the biblical

117. On this question, in addition to the works cited in n. 22, cf above all: R. Devreesse, *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste*, Vatican City 1938, 78f.

118. On the attitude towards ecstatic prophecy in Catholic circles in the second and third centuries cf. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5,17, I.

text given at school. Therefore the adoption on Theodore's part of a method of commentary which echoes that of the grammatical commentary appears to have been not so much the cause as the actual effect of his having adopted a pattern of exegesis of a literalist type.

In fact, Origen and Theodore confront the biblical text from quite different points of view. For the Alexandrian, this text is difficult to interpret inasmuch as the deeper significance of the divine word is hidden under the veil of the literal sense in order to discourage the approach of a merely curious and superficial reader. For Theodore, on the other hand, the only meaning of the text is that which is transmitted to the reader by the literal sense, so that it is the responsibility of the interpreter to throw light on it and to state it with as much clarity and precision as possible, because it is a harmful and arbitrary act, as well as a useless one, to seek something other than that sense. From this point of view, the philosophical commentary in which the text of Plato and Aristotle or another great philosopher was interpreted by the teacher with the greatest possible liberty and prolixity offered itself as an instrument singularly adapted to the biblical exegesis of an Alexandrian character, while the conciseness and precise adherence to the literary text commented, characteristics typical of the grammatical commentary, corresponded well to the purpose of the Antiochene exegete.

Precisely because these commentaries habitually avoided weighing down the text commented upon with amplifications of various kinds (though not without significant exceptions). Theodore concentrates, in the introduction which he was accustomed to place before them, on the topics and on the questions of a general nature which the interpretation of that text posed to him. It is a question of exceedingly relevant introductions in the sense that their content is directed to an understanding of the specific and distinctive characteristics of the text under consideration. In this sense, as we will see better subsequently, the introductions placed before the interpretations of the prophetic texts are of a quite different tone from those placed before the Pauline texts or the Gospel of John. It is precisely in this section of the commentary that Theodore manifests most clearly that capacity for understanding the biblical text historically which modern scholars recognize as the most characteristic and valuable aspect of his exegesis.

Once he has established in this manner the specific nature of the interpretation which he is about to give, Theodore goes on to examine the text analytically. At this point, according to the canons of the grammatical commentary, to which corresponded as well the practice of interpretation of a philosophical type, there came the textual criticism. Nevertheless, Theodore does not seem to have given much attention to this aspect of interpretation.

In the *Commentary to the Twelve Prophets*, the only work to have come down to us entirely in the original Greek, there are, on the whole, very few examples of discussions of a textual nature, and one does not find recourse beyond the text commented, which is that of the LXX, to the other Greek translators. References to the Hebrew text and Syriac translation are extremely rare. Almost every trace of criticism in this sense is absent as well in the commentaries on John and Paul, which we only know, however, in translation. On the other hand, there are many references to the other translators, to Symmachus more than to Aquila and Theodotus, as well as some reference to the Hebrew text, to be found in the *Commentary on the Psalms*, to the extent and in the manner in which Devreesse has reconstructed it (25).¹¹⁹ In this regard, however, it must be noted that the recourse to the documentation furnished by Origen's *Hexapla* seems to have been a constant interpretative technique in the Greek commentaries on the Psalms known to us—a procedure which had already become typical. We read, in fact, some observations of this nature even in the interpretation of the Psalms of Chrysostom, an exegete as far removed as possible from every concern of a textual nature. In this sense, instances of this type found in Theodore's *Commentary on the Psalms* could be reflecting, rather than a typical tendency of the exegete, merely the accommodation to a practice which had become traditional. However, to the contrary, it could be observed that Theodore's texts which have come down to us in translation could have been relieved of discussions of a nature of textual criticism. On the whole, therefore, the general impression remains that the interest for textual criticism was less urgent for Theodore than for not only Origen and Eusebius but also for Theodoret.

The analytical interpretation of the text traditionally demanded, in both pagan and Christian circles, the breaking of the text under consideration into lemmata of a greater or lesser length, followed by the detailed explanation of each expression. In the course of this explanation some expressions of the lemma could be reconsidered for the purpose of a greater clarity of explanation. Such was obviously Theodore's practice as well, with some peculiarities which merit notice. Origen and Didymus, and already Hippolytus before them, were accustomed to follow the lemma, which could also be fairly long, with the explanation in such a way that the sequence of lemma and explanation would form a self-contained structure, which was followed by another likewise self-contained, and so forth. This method of structur-

119. For documentation, cf the index of Devreesse, *Commentaire*, under the name of the individual translators.

ing the commentary is well represented in Theodore, too. But on the other hand, if not in fact to an even greater degree, he prefers a more open form of structure in the sense that the explanation following the lemma, which itself is for the most part brief, indeed very brief, leads in its conclusion directly into the following lemma, and so forth. In this way, he sets up a succession of lemmata and explanations interrelated among themselves. A single example will suffice to illustrate the chain-like exegetical structure. In concluding the explanation of Gal 1:6, Theodore observes,

And since he does not seem to admit that there could be another gospel, he [Paul] has added, 'But there is no other' (1:6a). In what sense has he said 'other'? 'If not because there are some who are disturbing you and wish to subvert the gospel of Christ' (1:6b). He has said that another gospel is subversion of the gospel. Then, against those who considered that they had to oppose to him the persons of the apostles, 'But even if it is we' (1:7a), to show that he is not opposed to them but is affirming that freedom, outside of which he considered that even he was worth nothing. On which account, giving even more emphasis, he said, 'or an angel from heaven' (1:7b). He added 'from heaven' so that it might be understood that not even the dignity of place joined with the personage could be on the same level as the truth." (Sweete, 2.10ff.)

In this way Theodore, while maintaining the habitual conciseness of his explanations, seeks to lend a greater compactness to his exegetical discourse and to render it more fluid and continuous by avoiding splitting it up into units too small. In the *Commentary on John* this method of structuring the commentary is pushed to the point that some expressions of the gospel text are not even given in their entirety. Instead, allusion is made to them in the course of the explanation in an indirect, albeit explicit, way to such an extent that they are completely compacted into the exegetical discourse. For example, John 4:20 is paraphrased in the course of the explanation in this way: "But you, from ancient times, pretend that the mountain of Jerusalem is the place of God" (CSCO 116,44).

The explanation which follows the passage, the habitual conciseness of which we have already noted, interprets the text in question either by stating the direction and development of the thought, or by illustrating the details which merit a specific explanatory note in different areas: grammatical, rhetorical, historical, antiquarian, or doctrinal. The norms of the literary genre in which the Greek patristic commentaries generally fell, that of the ὑπομνήματα, did not demand particular effort from the rhetorical point of view so that Theodore felt himself authorized to develop the explanation

freely within the limits which the customary *brevitas* permitted. In such a context his predilection for some typical exegetical procedures becomes evident. The most characteristic is a type of paraphrase by means of which Theodore clarifies the meaning of the passage by relating it, usually in a slightly more extended form, with words which are his own but preserve the passage's manner of expression. For example, in the passage the author speaks in the first person and engages the readers directly, and Theodore, in the paraphrase, preserves the same manner of expression and often emphasizes it by means of a parenthetical (*φησί inquit*). In another example, again from *the Commentary on Galatians*, following the selection considered above with regard to the method of presenting passages, we read:

As I have already told you, and now I repeat it, if anyone will have announced to you a message different from that which you have received, let him be condemned" [1:9]. If all, whether it be I—he says—or whether it be the invisible powers, let us be of no importance in comparison to the truth which has already been announced to you. Then, proceeding to defend himself in order to show that he has spoken thus in order to defend the truth and not attributing any importance to those who are opposing him, he says, "Now, indeed, do I want to win approval from human beings or God? Or am I trying to please human beings"? [1:10] And showing by the facts themselves that he is not concerned with this, he adds, "If indeed I still wanted to please human beings I would not be a servant of Christ" [1:10b]. I was thus pleasing to human beings at that time when I was working in behalf of the whole Law. And I have considered this to be of no importance because I have preferred for the time at hand to place myself in the service of Christ. "But I tell you, brothers, that the gospel which I have announced to you is not in conformity with human beings" [1:11]. I tell you these things concerning me so that you may not believe that it is through human invention that I have received the doctrine of which I am taking advantage. (Sweete, p. 11 ff.)¹²⁰

Only occasionally, however, is the biblical text being interpreted such that a simple paraphrase is sufficient to explain it. Therefore heodore often consid-

120. Theodore made ample use of this type of paraphrase in all his commentaries which have come down to us. Clear evidence of it can be seen above all in the commentaries on the Letters of Paul, since the Apostle was accustomed to express himself habitually in the first person and to question directly his addressees. Sweete has marked all occurrences of this type with apices.

ers it opportune to integrate it with other explanations of varying content and length. It is in any case rare that he gives more than one interpretation for a single passage as, by contrast, Origen and Didymus were accustomed to do. In this sense one can mention the interpretation of Amos 5:8, "Who turns into morning the shadow of death and darkens the day into night," which strictly speaking means that God can turn danger into joy and vice versa, and in a more general sense (ἐκ τῶν καθόλου) indicates that God changes things as he wishes (PG 66, 273). When Theodore is wrestling with a text of the OT, oftentimes the explanation is of a linguistic and rhetorical character, particularly because Hebrew turns of expression, translated into Greek, can be obscure.¹²¹ He is also careful to point out figurative language by stating its meaning.¹²² In this context his care in indicating hyperbole can be noted, because the allegorists made good use of precisely this type of OT expressions to deny the literal meaning of the text or to consider it in a Christological sense. This was the way Origen had interpreted Zech 9:10, "He will rule from sea to sea, etc." (*Com. Io.* 10,32,206), while Theodore understood the expression as indicative, in a hyperbolic sense, of Zerubbabel's victories (PG 66, 561). Theodore displays similar attention in giving account of the passages in which the biblical text makes use of numerical indications. If we bear in mind the propensity of the allegorists systematically to attribute symbolic value to numbers, we may understand the significance of certain affirmations of Theodore which, at first glance, can appear banal and ingenuous, such as when he insists on pointing out that the number which he is examining from time to time signifies only a generic plural: the three and the four evil deeds of Damascus of Amos 1:3; the ten men of Zech 8:23; the thirty silver coins of Zech 11:13 (PG 66, 249; 5 5 2; 5 77). Only when a given number is part of a context which is symbolic in itself does it also assume such a meaning: the four chariots of Zech 6:1 symbolize the celestial hierarchies which preside over the four κλίματα of the world (537). Again, in the context of OT exegesis, explanations of a historical, geographical, and antiquarian character are frequent,¹²³ while in the context of the NT, doctrinal

121. For the documentation, cf. Devreesse, *Essai*, 58ff.; Zaharopoulos, *op. cit.*, 120ff.

122. For example, the grasshoppers and caterpillars of Joel 1:4-5 indicate the invasions by the Assyrians and Babylonians; the city of Zeph 2:15 indicates the pride of its inhabitants; Judah and Ephraim of Zach 9:13 indicate the entire Israelite nation (PG 66, 213, 465, 561).

123. For some examples in this regard, cf. my article, "Note sull' esegesi veterotestamentaria di Teodoro di Mopsuestia," *VetChr* 14 (1977) 73ff.

interests predominate, which on a few occasions demand a very detailed explanation. A typical example is in the interpretation of Gal 2:15–16 where, once he has finished his brief paraphrase, Theodore connects the passage relating to the Law with the Letter to the Romans and states that he wishes to treat at greater length what it means that justification comes from faith. He follows this with a treatise which, in contrast to his usual brevity, is quite long (Sweete, p. 24f.).

5. *Exegesis of the Old Testament*

All that we have pointed out up to this point regarding the technical procedures used by Theodore to develop his interpretation of the biblical text in a literal sense fits, more or less, all the surviving commentaries. But typical of Theodore's exegesis—as we have already observed—is the capacity to adapt his interpretation to the historical situation in which the biblical book came to birth. In this sense, each commentary has specific characteristics which we will describe in a summary fashion here.

The recent publication of sections of Diodore's *Commentary on the Psalms* has demonstrated that the principal innovative characteristics recognized in the similar commentary of Theodore had already been anticipated by his teacher. From him, Theodore inherited above all a critical attitude and very great freedom in relation to the rubrics which accompany the individual psalms in the translation of the LXX. In one surviving passage, at the conclusion of the introduction to Ps. 50, he states openly that he does not wish to make use of the rubrics but to take account of them only when they prove themselves true (Devreesse, 334). If we take into consideration that the Christological interpretation traditionally given of the psalms was based for the most part precisely on an evaluation of the rubrics in such a sense, it is understandable how not taking this into account would mean freeing the interpretation of the psalm from that traditional meaning. Indeed Theodore, who, like Diodore and unlike Origen and Eusebius, considers David the author of the entire Psalter, holds that David has expressed himself under various personalities, that is, presenting himself in the person, other than of his own self, now of the king and a human being, now of a prophet, also of the entire people, and that he concerned himself with events whether past, present, or future prophetically predicted. Thus Theodore refers some of the psalms to events of David's life, others to future events of Israel's history with special reference to the Babylonian Captivity, to Zerubbabel, to the Maccabees, while still others are considered to be of a general exhortatory or moral character. In this regard, Theodore observes that David wrote for

people's utility (ὠφέλεια) in such a way that, even when the text refers to a specific historical fact or person, its words can be understood as pronounced for the benefit not of one person alone but for the entire community (pp. 75, 205, 218f., 470). The application of these exegetical criteria brings with it a drastic reduction in the psalms of a Christological significance. Even where it is the crucified Christ who applies to himself the expression of a psalm, such as Ps 21:2 "God, my God, why have you abandoned me," it is a question of an adaptation to his own circumstances of a text which originally had another meaning (p. 120f.). In conclusion, only Pss 2, 8, 44, and 109 are considered by Theodore as messianic prophecies which have been realized in the incarnate Christ.

The interpretative complexity of the *Commentary on the Psalms* derived from the refraction of the author, David, into various personalities and, therefore, from the diverse destination of the various texts. The book on the *Minor Prophets* appeared, on the whole, much more homogeneous in spite of the plurality of authors, inasmuch as they are unified by the quality of prophet common to all of them. Consequently the *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets* develops with a simpler and more linear movement in comparison with the former work. The loss of the introduction to the entire commentary has undoubtedly deprived us of significant observations of a general character. In any case, the introductions to the commentaries of the individual books bring out very well that capacity for giving an historical character to the interpretation which has been mentioned several times above. The exactness with which Theodore establishes the chronology of each prophecy, either by connecting one prophet with another or by relating them to the historical circumstances in the context of which they had been pronounced, has the purpose of establishing from the beginning the meaning and the intent of the prophecy. The explanation which follows, lemma by lemma, unfolds the programmatic lines laid out in the preface in a coherent and homogeneous manner. One can examine, for example, the systematic manner in which Theodore, once he has interpreted King Gog of Amos 7:1 (LXX) in reference to the invasion of the Scythians, extends this interpretation to Joel 4:1ff. and Micah 4:11–13 (PG 66, 288, 233, 369). The historical context, which is that of the vicissitudes of Israel from the decline of the two kingdoms until the return from the Exile, tends, as we have already seen for the *Psalms*, to exhaust the realization of the prophecies within its own boundaries. In spite of the programmatic declaration contained in the introduction to the commentary on Jonah, the result is that here, just as for the *Psalms*, the application of the prophecies to Christ comes to be drastically reduced compared to the tradition, and is limited only to the passages in which this attribution was

supported in a very direct way by the authority of the NT (30).¹²⁴ In order to appreciate the novelty of Theodore's attitude, it will be sufficient to note that he did not accept the Christological interpretation for passages such as Micah 4:1–3, "In the final days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be raised up"; Zech 3:8, "Behold, I bring in my servant, Oriens"; Mal 4:2 (3:20 LXX), "And there will arise for you who fear my name the sun of justice" (PG 66, 364f. 525. 629),¹²⁵ whose Christological significance went back all the way to the very first days of the church.

6. *Exegesis of the New Testament*

The Gospel of John traditionally came to be considered as the spiritual gospel in contrast to the Synoptics, which were more interested in the human activity of Christ. Theodore, too, organizes his interpretation in this direction, pointing out in the introductory pages the fundamental significance of the text in the revelation of Christ's divinity, which had been left in the background by the Synoptics (CSCO 116, 2ff.). At his time, the danger which Arian doctrine had presented to orthodoxy was still present, and above all the Apollinarian Controversy was still active. Theodore touches on both these problems, the former above all in the interpretation of the prologue, the latter all through the course of his explanation with very problematic results, because too often the concern to distinguish the human nature in Christ from the divine drives Theodore to accentuate this distinction to the point of affirming two distinct subjects. But this is not the place to develop this matter further.¹²⁶ From the specifically exegetical point of view, Theodore's affirmation that his point is that of interpreting the Johanne text and not that of refuting the heretics (p. 149) is to be understood, considering the frequent anti-heretical thrusts, in the sense that he has not intended to linger too much on explanations of

124. For a comprehensive treatment (PG 66, 232f., 301ff., 320ff., 372, 493, 556ff.) cf. my article "Note," 80f.

125. In order to reject the Christological reference of the passage of Micah, Theodore observes that the words, "From Sion will go forth the Law and the word of God from Jerusalem," are in contradiction with John 4:21, where Jesus tells the Samaritan Woman that the time would come when the Father would no longer be worshipped in Jerusalem (PG 66, 364ff.). With regard to the other two passages, he does not justify his rejection.

126. Nevertheless, for some examples of expressions of Theodore which are clearly and excessively divisive, one can note the commentary at CSCO 116, 33, 14; 57, 34; 83, 32; 120, 19.

a doctrinal nature in the development of his exegetical discourse. In fact, his favorite procedure of paraphrase is put into use in this commentary in such a way as to bring into focus precisely but also concisely the doctrinal significance which he attributes to the Johannine words. A few examples will suffice to illustrate this peculiar character of Theodore's interpretation. John 1:16, "From his fullness we have all received," is expounded thus: "That is, we receive from his abundance the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is given to us as a gift. [John] says of his [i.e. Christ's] human nature that in it there is every grace" (p. 26). The emphasis given to Christ's humanity is to be noted. In explaining Jesus' words to the Samaritan Woman concerning adoration in spirit and truth (John 4:24), Theodore observes, "The time is at hand, indeed it has already come, in which God will be adored as is proper and suitable to His nature. Indeed God's nature is incorporeal and is not circumscribed in a place but is everywhere and is to be adored according to this concept" (p. 64f.). With regard to Jesus' words, "I am the living bread which has come down from heaven" (John 6:23), Theodore specifies in an anti-Apollinarian sense: "He does not want to signify therefore that his body has come down from there (i.e. from heaven), but speaks thus because his nature is the sublime gift of this action. He confirms his word by alluding to the greatness of the divinity" (p. 106).

In the development of his explanation, Theodore is concerned to establish the chronological relationship to the Synoptics. For example, when he treats the Wedding at Cana, recounted only by John, he considers it to be anterior to the episode of the Temptation, presented in Matthew (and Luke) and not in John, by observing that Matthew was not concerned with the chronological order of the facts he recounted (p. 39). With regard to the discrepancy between Matthew and John regarding the anointing of Jesus, Theodore harmonizes the two accounts: The woman has anointed Jesus' head and feet. Matthew, who gives a summary account, speaks only of the head; John has completed Matthew's account (p. 168). An analogous care is detected in the accuracy of some notations which serve the purpose of illustrating precisely the significance of words and gestures which in themselves are open to various interpretations. For example, the mud with which Jesus heals the man born blind (John 9:6) is connected with the mud with which God had created the human being. In this way Jesus showed that he was the creator of human beings (p. 133f.). Jesus' words "That all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you" (John 17:21) demanded much attention on the part of an interpreter sensitive to the terms of the Arian Controversy. Theodore observes that the meaning of "one" is variable, indicating "consensus," "similarity," etc., and thus he distinguishes the way in which the faithful

are one among themselves from the way in which the Father and Son are one (p. 152f.). Theodore's historical sensitivity is very much in evidence in this commentary as well. For example, one can note the explanation relative to the hatred drawn indiscriminately upon the Christians in times past because of the immoral excesses of certain Gnostics (p. 207); the care with which the thieves and bandits (i.e. Theudas, Judas the Galilean, etc.) are distinguished from the mercenaries (i.e., the Scribes and Pharisees) in John 10:8, 12 (pp. 142, 144); the observation that precisely the diversity with which the Evangelists recounted both the events of Jesus' arrest and passion as well as the facts subsequent to the resurrection gives evidence in favor of the certitude of the witnesses (pp. 235, 244). Completely removed from any temptation to allegorizing, Theodore is attentive to note the passages in which the Johanine text is expressed in a symbolic manner. In addition to the obvious interpretation of the Good Shepherd (p. 140), one can note the explanation that the water and the blood which flow from the pierced side of Jesus symbolize Baptism and Eucharist (p. 242). But John's symbolism is not always so obvious, and he prefers a masked expression which thus escapes the literalist Theodore. The fact that John had specified not once but twice that the well beside which the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan Woman takes place was the Well of Jacob (John 4:5, 12) does not take on any particular significance in Theodore's eyes. Likewise, the note that the royal official's son was cured at the seventh hour (John 4:52) is, for him, only a chronological detail (pp. 61f., 69).

The characteristics which mark Theodore's interpretation of John are found also in his interpretation of Paul's letters, with the distinction that, if Theodore at times does not seem to be at ease in dealing with the masked symbolism of John, that is not the case with the Pauline text, which is less problematic in this regard than that of John. And while the declarations of a Christological nature enjoined by the Fourth Gospel engaged the exegete in an area which for him, as an Antiochene, was quite difficult, the question in Paul certainly proved to be more congenial to him. The Gnostic danger which had constrained Origen to minimize excessively the contrast between faith and law was only a memory of the past, so that there is no impediment to Theodore in presenting it in its more authentic nature, all the more so as he tended, as we will see better shortly, to note more the rupture between the OT and the NT than the continuity.

Indeed, he knows how to adhere perfectly to the genuine Pauline thought regarding the major themes of his message: the rapport between Jews and Christians, between grace and freedom. Certainly, whoever is familiar with the interpretation of Paul given by Augustine will find the emphasis given

by Theodore to the human being's free will in contrast to the initiative of grace to be excessive. Note, for example, Theodore's interpretation of the crucial passage Rom. 9:14–21 (Staab, p. 144ff.).¹²⁷ But it is a question of an interpretation which is more or less common to all the Greek exegetes and is completely traditional in tone. In this area, Augustine is the one who made a profound innovation.

With regard to exegetical technique, let us note once again his capacity to bring into focus, in the prefaces placed before the individual letters, the material treated in them by the Apostle and to determine their arrangement with respect to one another in the context of the chronology and the events of Paul's life. It is precisely to the acute critical sense of this historical sensitivity that we owe the frank admission of the disagreement between Paul and Peter at Antioch (Sweete, p. 22f.) in harmony with the letter of the Pauline text; an observation which is obvious to us but not to the ancients, who were often embarrassed in the explanation of this episode.¹²⁸ In order to document his capacity to enrich the interpretation of one passage by means of an appeal to others of a similar significance, one can note, regarding the passage "Because, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ may be proclaimed" (Phil 1:18), the appeal to Tit. 3:10, "After a first and a second warning avoid the factious person,"¹²⁹ in order to show that Paul, with the words directed to the Philippians, had not intended to authorize every kind of liberty in the area of doctrine (Sweete, 1, 208f.). One can also note the connection of the passage "Scripture has enclosed everything under sin" of Gal 3:22 with "God has enclosed everyone in unbelief" of Rom. 11:32 to show the connection between law and sin (Sweete, 1, 50f.). With regard to his very precise care in

127. Cf. also Sweete, 1, 13 (God's foreknowledge); 101 (our cooperation with the Spirit).

128. One can note, for example, the commentaries of Jerome and Chrysostom *ad loc.* (PL 26, 263f.; PG 61, 64f.), which are derived from Origen. Theodore does not appear equally as fortunate in the rare observations of a text critical nature, to judge at least from the superficial manner in which he rejects the very ancient variant *χάρτι θεοῦ*) of Heb 2:9 in favor of *χωρίς θεοῦ*) (Staab, p. 204). Origen (*Com. Io.* 1,35,255–6) had been more prudent and had given an explanation for both variants.

129. Theodore understands *αἰρετικόν* in this passage in an anachronistic manner, a habitual occurrence in patristic exegesis, by giving the term the technically Christian meaning of "one who upholds erroneous doctrines," a meaning which the term began to take on only from the beginning of the second century. In the passage of the Letter to Titus it means generically one who provokes discord and dissensions in the community.

the explanation of details, let a pair of examples suffice. In connection with “A Hebrew of Hebrews” of Phil 3:5, Theodore observes: “He did not say, ‘A Jew of Jews,’ since this name was recent, but by saying, ‘Hebrew of Hebrews’ he confirmed the antiquity of his origin with the ancient name” (Sweete, 1, 234). In connection with “Prayers, supplications and petitions” of 1 Tim 2:1, he noted: “[Paul] changed the words according to the variety of the requests. In fact, either we ask that good things be granted us by God, and these he has called ‘prayers’; or we ask for the liberation from evils, and these he has called ‘supplications’; then he spoke of petitions in order to sum up both” (Sweete, 2, 85).

7. *Ideological Foundations*

As characteristic aspects of Theodore’s exegesis, we have noted, with respect to exegetical technique, his literalism, and with regard to his ideological result, his drastic reduction of the Christological interpretation of the OT. To appreciate these characteristics adequately from the historical point of view, we must keep in mind that allegorical technique and Christological significance of the OT appear as specific characteristics of Christian exegesis of the OT well beyond the Alexandrian sphere of influence, even back almost to the first origins of the church’s life. They are closely correlated with one another in the sense that the allegorical interpretation of the biblical text had precisely the purpose of bringing to light the Christological significance, which was not evident according to the literal sense. Very early on (Paul, Ps. Barnabas) use was made of this manner of interpretation in polemics with the Jews, who denied that meaning. Little by little, as the center of gravity shifted in the church from Jewish Christians to Christians of Gentile origins, that need not only did not lessen, but was felt even more, to the extent that, only by giving a Christological meaning to the OT was it rendered acceptable to many Christians who, inasmuch as they were of pagan origin, had no sympathy for Jewish traditions and were easily led to reject them. In other words, in the face of the Marcionite and Gnostic affirmation that the OT is the revelation, not of the Supreme God, the Father of Christ, but of the inferior god, the so-called Demiurge, Catholic polemicists (Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus) had gradually broadened the reference to Christ, always making use of the allegorical technique, in order to bind closely together the old and the new economy. In this sense, the Alexandrian exegetes, in spite of their further broadening of allegory, above all by means of the contribution from Philo’s exegesis, had remained in the substance of their exegesis in the mainstream of the tradition. The separation occurred later,

in the course of the fourth century, for various motives which interacted among themselves.

In the first place, we must take into account the cultural context in which Antiochene exegesis was exercised. The Council of Constantinople of 381, in addition to the ratification of the condemnation of the Arians and other heretics, had represented the triumph of Antioch at the expense of rival Alexandria, and even of Rome which supported the Egyptian metropolis. At the same time, Antioch had seen a growth in its dominant role also in the area of the administrative structure of the eastern part of the empire. The sense of the superiority now attained, accompanied by the unplacated memory of the long, painful polemics now victoriously concluded, imposed specific characteristics on the cultural flourishing which accompanied Antioch's political-religious ascendancy, in the sense that the Antiochene teachers were vividly aware of constituting, in the context of eastern Christianity, the witnesses and avengers of the authentic deposit of faith, augmented, clarified, and deepened with respect to the imperfect elaboration of the preceding era, which was dramatically pointed out by the Arian Crisis and the other crises which had accompanied it. It is precisely in the name of this "modern" advanced orthodoxy that these teachers do not hesitate to reject even solid traditions, which are now seen as erroneous and thus unacceptable. To limit ourselves to the area of exegesis and to our author, it can be noted with how much superficial disdain Theodore rejects (*Comm. Io.*, CSCO 116, 17) the traditional division of John 1:3-4 "Without him nothing was made. What has been made in him was life," in favor of the recent division with an anti-Arian and anti-Macedonian meaning, "Without him nothing has been made of that which has been made. In him was life,"¹³⁰ as he observes that not everything which has been made by means of the Logos was life. The articulation of the Johannean passage, constructed on the correspondence "through him/without him/in him," which Heracleon and Origen had caught so well, completely escaped Theodore.

Nevertheless, the reaction to Alexandrian allegorism had begun in the Syro-Palestinian region, as we have already noted, much earlier than Diodore and Theodore. To the programmatic opposition of the Antiochene sphere of influence, of an Asiatic formation, to the Alexandrian (one thinks of Eustathius) were added, on the one hand, the necessity of responding to the

130. The text was punctuated thus (Ambrose, Chrysostom) because the punctuation "without him nothing was made" offered an opportunity for the Arians to include among all things created by the agency of the Logos also the Holy Spirit, who thus turned out to be a creature and not God.

criticism of Porphyry, who had accused Christian exegesis of taking refuge in allegorism in order to explain texts of the OT which were untenable and absurd according to the literal sense, and on the other, a certain incipient historical sensitivity which *naturaliter* inclined toward a respect for the letter of the biblical text. Even an Origenist such as Eusebius of Caesarea had heeded both of these necessities and, albeit without renouncing allegorizing, had broadly rehabilitated the literal meaning of Scripture. His example set the trend for the region. In this sense, Diodore and Theodore had found the way well prepared before them and, probably taking into account as well certain characteristics of Jewish exegesis of the Scripture,¹³¹ they had accentuated and justified at the theoretical level the tendency which had been carried forward, after Eusebius of Caesarea, by Acacius, Apollinaris, and Eusebius of Emesa. Nevertheless, if the literal interpretation of the OT necessarily carried with it the reduction of Christological meaning, it was not indispensable to accentuate the extent we notice this in Theodore, since a great number of prophetic passages were open to interpretation in a Christological sense while respecting the letter of the biblical text, and in fact had been so interpreted since the earliest days of the church. The Eusebian interpretation of the OT had continued to be fundamentally Christological. It is necessary, however, to seek further and beyond literalism for the motivation which impelled Theodore in fact to remove Christ from the OT.

We have explained above how the tendency to interpret the OT in a Christological sense by making use of the allegorical technique had been imposed, in the second and third centuries, by the necessity of opposing the scriptural dualism of the Gnostics and Marcionites with a unitary and all-embracing interpretation of the Old and New Testaments in a Christological key. At the time of Theodore this danger had been remote for some time, nor does it seem that the danger, to some extent analogous, represented by Manicheism had been perceived in Catholic circles with the same intensity and sense of urgency. As the object towards which that interpretation was directed receded, its instrument, that is, allegorizing, saw a diminution of

131. From hints in some Christian exegetes beginning with Origen, there are notices that the Jews at that time were accustomed to modify the messianic interpretation, already traditional in their circles, of various OT passages by referring them instead to personages and events from their history (Ezekiel, Zerubbabel, the Maccabees), in opposition to the Christians who considered those prophecies to be realized in Christ. Cf. Origen, *Princ.* 4,1,3 for Gen. 49:10; Cyril, PG 72, 165 for Zach 10:4-5; Theodore, *Co. Ps.* p. 7 Devr. for Ps 2; Chrysostom, PG 57, 74 for Mic 5:1-2; Theodoret, PG 81, 1168. 1196 for Ezek 34:31; 37:22-25.

its own significance and a perception of how much there was in it which was arbitrary and forced. Theodore thus felt himself free to interpret the OT without having to be subject to external conditions. He did this directed only by his own personal *Vorverständnis*, which drove him in precisely the opposite direction, that is, to emphasize not so much the continuity as indeed the rupture between the Old and the New Testaments in the footsteps of Paul and John. In a passage of the *Commentary on Zechariah* Theodore interprets the rider who appears to the prophet in Zech 1:8 (PG 66, 501ff.) as an angel and excludes the possibility that it could indicate symbolically the Son of God, as instead the Alexandrian interpretation wished. He observes that the OT, in opposition to pagan polytheism, knew God only in His unity and not as Father and Son.¹³² Or rather, the latter was known in the old economy only as the future Messiah, that is, only in his human nature and not in his divine nature, which he revealed only through his Incarnation.¹³³ It is to be noted here that the clear distinction between the Messiah as a human being of the OT and the Son of God of the NT corresponded well to the Antiochene Christology and, in particular, to that of Theodore, who was so attentive in distinguishing the two even to the point of making of them two distinct subjects, as we have seen. Precisely on this account he would have scandalized any Alexandrian. In *Com. Io.*, CSCO 116, 221 Theodore confirms that the incarnate Christ revealed the Christian teaching as a third reality following on paganism and Judaism; opposed to pagan polytheism, more complete with respect to Jewish monotheism inasmuch as it revealed that the one God is articulated in a Trinitarian fashion in three Persons. Such a diachronic articulation of the concepts of the one and the triune God and of Christ as God and as human certainly did not invite a seeking of Christ in the OT, inasmuch as it tended naturally to emphasize above all the novelty represented by the NT with respect to the OT.

This propensity was intensified in Theodore by the doctrine, peculiar to him, which modern scholars have defined as that of the two ages. This doctrine, while clearly opposing the present age, characterized by sin and distress, to the future age which will see only perfection and happiness, takes into account that, during the present age, the fundamental event of salvation has been realized with the Incarnation. It has modified to such an extent the

132. Theodore observes that it is foolish to hold that, when the OT mentions an angel or a ruler, it intends to refer to Christ in his quality as the Son of God. In this way, he is able to deny the traditional interpretation which recognized Christ as the subject of the OT theophanies and applies them to angels.

133. In this sense, cf. as well *Hom. cath.* 2,2, p. 31 Tonneau.

course of this age as to constitute the anticipation of the future age. Even if, after the Incarnation, sin and death continue to fester in the world, a new phase has begun in the present age characterized by the economy of the Spirit and of grace, quite distinct from the preceding phase characterized by the economy of the Law. This new phase is totally oriented toward the moment of final consummation, of which it constitutes the foretaste and promise.¹³⁴ Thus even the doctrine of the two ages drove Theodore to emphasize more the rupture than the continuity between the two Testaments. If he continued to concern himself with the OT, he did so in the guise of a historian interested in the history of Israel considered as the pre-history of the Christian people, and also for the purpose of pointing out its contents of a moral character, which were perennially valid. The history of Israel, however, was considered by him to be a moment of divine revelation which had come to a conclusion. Founded on the doctrine of a very rigid monotheism, it was merely a propaedeutic moment with respect to the definitive revelation of God as Trinity, which occurred only with the NT. This is why Theodore was moved to interpret the two Testaments as two entities unrelated to one another. With this purpose in mind, his preferred exegetical instrument suited him perfectly, that is, a rigidly literal interpretation.

EDITIONS

Commentarii in Johannem: Preface Syriac: RB 32 (1923) 526–51.

In Genesim: Syriac fragment (B.M.Add 17.189, fol. 17–21): Muséon 75 (1962).

Tonneau, R.-M., *Théodore du Mospueste. Interprétation du livre de Genèse (Vat. Syr. 120, fol. I–V): Muséon 66 (1953) 45–64.*

134. Therefore it is not by chance that the doctrine of the two ages was proposed above all in the commentaries on Paul and John and, by contrast, was almost totally absent in the commentary on the Minor Prophets. Inasmuch as they were included in the OT economy, the prophets found themselves in the context of the present age before the Incarnation and did not participate in the new phase which began in this age with the coming of Christ. In this regard, it can be noted also that Theodore, who is as sparing as possible—with the exception of the preface to the *Commentary on Jonah*—in the use of *typos* to present the relationship between the OT and NT, by contrast uses this term quite frequently (*forma* in the Latin translation of the commentaries on Paul) to indicate the relationship of Christian baptism with the baptism of Jesus, since this had proleptically indicated the beginning of the future age: Cf. for example *Com. Rom.* 7,5, p. 1 25,9 Staab; *Hom. cath.* 14,7, p. 417 Tonneau.

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XII. ASTERIUS OF AMASEA (330/335–420/425)

Born in Antioch, according to Bauer, and also trained in Antioch, Asterius received a high rhetorical education (Speyer 1986, 632). His *ecphrasis*, or rhetorical exercise, celebrating Euphemia’s martyrdom in Chalcedon, dates from before his priestly ordination. Already an adult at the time of Julian, he became bishop of Amasea, succeeding Eulalius, possibly in 390, and reached

an old age. The date of his death is unknown, perhaps between 420 and 425. No contemporary notice of him is transmitted. He began to be invoked as an authority supporting the cult of icons only in the eighth century, at the Council of Nicea II in 787.

He was a highly educated and open-minded cleric, at ease in addressing an equally educated audience. Amasea (Pontus) was the birthplace of the geographer Strabo; it was a prosperous city in the fourth century C.E., with a strong Christian community, a military garrison, and a lively commercial and cultural activity (Wilson). Asterius's writings testify to a thorough knowledge of Greek literature and rhetorics, benefiting from the Second Sophistic, and demonstrating a broad familiarity with medicine and natural sciences. Photius included extracts from ten of Asterius's homilies in his *codex* 271. Fourteen authentic homilies (CPG 3260, 1) have been published by C. Datema, the first homily, incomplete, dealing with "The Rich Man and Lazarus" in Luke 16:19–31. Quotations of other homilies circulate in *catenae* (A. Mai 1937). Most of Asterius's homilies are lost.

In Datema's numbering of the *Homilies*, *Homily* I expands the story of Lazarus and Dives, in Luke 16; II also expounds Luke 16, the dishonest steward; III chastises avarice, with a wealth of biblical citations; V discusses Matt 19:3–12, on marriage and divorce; VI emphasizes Dan 13, with the edifying examples of Daniel and Susanna; VII comments on John 9 and the man born blind; VIII glorifies at length the apostles Peter and Paul; XII offers a biblical meditation on Stephen, the protomartyr; XIII states the meaning of penance, against Novatian; XIV exhorts to fast during Lent. Essentially they are "exhortations to lead a sober life and care for the neighbour" (Datema, xxvii). Asterius was "strongly influenced in his views on ethics by the cynical-stoical moral philosophy" (xxviii) and dependent on the Cappadocian Fathers, mostly Gregory of Nyssa. "His theological training can be called biblical. In the few passages where he steps into the breach for the purity of traditional doctrine, he does so with simple biblical arguments. He probably had no eye for the dogmatic controversies of his days" (xxxii).

The OT gave Asterius abundant reasons and constant examples for explaining the moral lessons of NT, for instance in *hom* 6 on Daniel and Suzanna. He stressed the superiority of NT over OT, of Paul over Moses (*hom.* 8, 31, 5). His anti-Jewish propensity is sharp and aggressive (& 2, 1; 14, 14, 2/17, 1). Jews are seen as the murderers of Jesus (14, 15, 2, based on Matt 27:25; cp. *hom.* 7, 8, 4/9, 3). A distinctive stance of Asterius's preaching is his protest against social injustice and against the discrimination of women.

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XIII. POLYCHRONIUS OF APAMEA (D. CA. 430)

Bishop of Apamea, in Syria, and a brother of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Polychronius wrote commentaries on several books of the OT, in particular on Daniel and Ezechiel (CPG II, 3878-80). He shared his brother's historical understanding of scripture, but in contrast to him firmly admitted the canonicity of the Book of Job. The fragments of his works belong to *Commentaries on Daniel, On Ezechiel, and On Job*. A pseudo-Chrysostomian *Commentary on Jeremiah* (PG 64, 739-1038), sometimes attributed to Polychronius, seems apocryphal. A reprint of Mai's edition can be found in the supplement of Migne, PG 162. The fragments on Job belong to the *catenae* P. Junius (Young), London, 1637, reprinted in PG 93, 13-470; a prologue to the *Book of Job* and a compilation of fragments concerning ten sources of obscurity in the LXX are rendered in Latin by P. Comitulus, *Catena in beatissimum Job absolutissima*, Venice, 1597, 35-38; the prologue, in Greek, is included in D. O. Wahrendorf, *Meditationes de resurrectione, speciatim Jobi*, Göttingen, 1738, 124; the compilation, in Greek also, is included in Photius, *Amphilochia, Quaestio CLII* (PG 101, 816).

Polychronius reproves Origenist allegorism: *On Ezechiel*, 28:2 (Mai, III). He shows a real expertise in the philological commentary of scripture: "He knows how to deepen his understanding of a given text, how to listen to its coherence hardly perceptible at the literal level. He combines a comprehension and a thorough training in history and archaeology, rare among his contemporaries, with a distinctive sense for (biblical) language" (Bardenhewer 1923). Like Theodore, he prefers explaining prophetic statements by applying them to data close to the prophet's time, rather than giving them a messianic relevance.

EDITIONS

PG 93, 13-470.

com. in Dan.: A. Mai, *Script. vet. nova coll.*, Rome 1825, I, 2, 105-60; 2nd ed.

I, 3, 1-27.

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XIV. NILUS OF ANCYRA (D. CA. 430)

The abbot of a monastery near Ancyra (Ankara), Nilus was a disciple of John Chrysostom, and a contemporary of Proclus, Palladius, Mark the Hermit, and Isidore of Pelusium. In his exegesis he closely followed Origen. Without intending to sacrifice the literal or historical sense (2, 223), allegories are privileged in an abundant correspondence reminiscent of Isidore of Pelusium, which include many letters giving answers to questions about scripture. "For Nilus scripture is predominantly a spiritual nourishment the longing for which testifies to our dignity as spiritual beings (PG 79, 213c), a living water quenching the thirst of a monk's life (136b), a dish with the delicious flavor of honey (180c). The books of the Bible may disappoint by their external appearance, and their style be an immediate deterrent, 'but due to the mysteries hidden in the teachings of Christ they become waters gushing forth into eternal life, which heal, purify, illuminate those who believe, supernatural and wonderful waters' (264d)" (Kirchmeyer 1960, 167). In the essay *Ad Agathium monachum*, Nilus discusses the bonds between scripture and prayer-life (PG 79, 825–49). His *Commentary on Canticles* (CPG 6051), mentioned in *Ad Agathium*, is lost; its remains survive only in *catenae* (Devesse), as do the scholies enumerated by Geerard, in *Clavis*, n. 6054.

CPG III 173–182: n. 6043–84.

EDITIONS

PG 79, 81–1093.

De magistris et discipulis: P. van den Ven, “Un opusculé inédit attribué à S. Nil”: *Fs. G. Kurth* 1. Lüttich 1908, 73–81.

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XV. SEVERIAN OF GABALA (D. 425/431)

Severian, bishop of Gabala near Laodicea in the region of Antioch, was influential in the circle of the Empress Eudoxia, the ambitious wife of Emperor Arcadius (395–408), the empress noted for her hostility to John Chrysostom. Though devoted to the Antiochene method of exegesis, Severian did not exclude frequent recourse to symbolic interpretation. His vocabulary derived from Diodore of Tarsus as did his distinctions between *theoria*, *tropologia*, and *allegoria* (Voicu 1990, 760). He interpreted OT poetry literally, using the Bible as a sourcebook for natural science. “Severian of Gabala can at times be an entertaining preacher. He knows how to cover theological points in agreeable language. Therefore, notwithstanding the judgment of so many previous scholars, in my opinion we are not justified to consider Severian as a fifth rank preacher. A third (or even second) rank would suit him better” (Regtuit, 4).

His numerous homilies on biblical data paradoxically survived under the cover of John Chrysostom’s name, after Severian’s legacy was at risk to be placed under a *damnatio memoriae* ordered by Justinian against Serverus of Antioch’s writings in 536. A comprehensive study of Severian of Gabala’s homiletic comments on the Bible is still lacking. “Severian has a vast knowledge of scripture and apparently likes to show this. Especially in the openings

of his homilies, he regularly quotes many verses. They form the basis for his arguments, both in the prologues and in the main part of the homily, and they often set the tone for a section. Almost constantly Severian contrasts biblical quotations with rational arguments...seldom one has the impression that a text is quoted simply for the sake of quoting (and demonstrating his knowledge), not to support his arguments" (Regtuit, 182).

Works:

Exegetical homilies of Severian according to *CPG* II, 4185–4295, are enumerated as reviewed by Voicu 1990:

Exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians (lost, but see 4295, 13).

On Baptism and the Feast of the Epiphany.

4185—*De fide et lege naturae*: PG 48, 1081–88.

Hom. de ficu arefacta: PG 59, 585–90.

4209—*Hom. de sigillis librorum*: PG 63, 531–44

4186—*De paenitentia et compunctione*: PG 49, 323–36.

4187—*Hom. in ascensionem d.n. I.C. et in principium Actorum*: PG 52, 773–92.

4188—*De Spiritu sancto*: PG 52, 813–26.

4189—*De Christo pastore et oue*: PG 52, 827–36.

4190—*In psalmum 96*: PG 55, 603–12.

4191—*In Psalmum 95*: PG 55, 619–30.

4192—*Hom. de legislatore*: PG 56, 397–410.

4193—*In illud: In qua potestate haec facis (Mt 21:23)*: PG 56, 411–28.

4194 (+4217)—*In cosmogoniam homiliae* 1–6: PG 56, 429–500, under the name of Chrysostom, and eight other homilies, in Greek.

4195—*Quomodo animam acceperit Adamus*: Savik 5, 648–53.

4196—*De serpente homilia*: PG 56, 499–516.

4197—*In Genesim sermo* 2: PG 56, 522–26.

4198—*In illud: "Pone manum tuam"* (Gen 24:2): PG 56, 553–64.

4199—*In meretricem et pharisaeum*: PG 59, 531–36.

4200—*In filium prodigum*: PG 59, 627–36.

4201—*In ullud: 'Quomodo scit litteras'* (Joh 7:15): PG 59, 643–52.

4202—*In Chananaeam et Pharaonem*: PG 59, 653–64.

4203—*In illud: "Non quod volo facio"* (Rom 7:19): PG 59, 663–74.

4204—*In incarnationem domini*: PG 59, 687–700. R. F. Regtuit, *Severian of Gabala. Homily on the Incarnation of Christ*. Amsterdam 1992.

4205—*In proditionem servatoris*: PG 59, 713–20.

4206—*De fide*: PG 60, 767–72.

4207—*Contra Judaeos in serpentem aeneum*: PG 61, 793–802.

- 4208—*De sacrificiis Caini*: PG 62, 719–22.
 4209—*De sigillis sermo*: PG 63, 531–44.
 4210—*In illud: 'In principio erat verbum'* (Joh 1:1) PG 63, 543–50.
 4211—*In sanctam pentecosten*: PG 63, 933–58.
 4212—*In theophaniam*: PG 61, 15–26.
 4213—*In pretiosam et vivificam crucem*: Savile 5, 898–906.
 4214—*Homilia de pace*: PG 52, 425–428 = PL 52, 598–99.
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 4218—*Fragmenta in Acta apostolorum*: I. A. Cramer, *Catena Gr. Patr. in NT*.
 4219—*Fragmenta in epistulas s. Pauli*: K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare*.
 Three authentic homilies are not yet edited:
 4230—*De centurione et contra Manichaeos et Apollinaristas*
 4231—*Hom. in caecum natum*
 4232—*In Noe et filios eius, de cherubim et in prophetam Oseam*.
 Other homilies circulate only in Armenian, such as:
 4243—*De pascha, deque catharis*.
 4244—*In illud: 'Libri aperti sunt'* (Dn 7:30).
 4246—*De adventu domini super pullum*.
 4247—*In illud: Vir quidam descendebat* (Lk 10:37).
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In illud: Secundum imaginem et similitudinem. Voicu 1990, 755.
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 More fragments: 4295, 1–21.
 Quasten, III (1960), 484–86.

In his contribution to *DSp* of 1990, Voicu adds another twelve homilies as authentic, which CPG counted as pseudo-chrysostomian, among them: *In Genesim sermo 1*, PG 56, 519–22; *In Job sermones 2–4*, PG 56, 567–82; *De*

tribus pueris sermo, PG 56, 593–600; *De caeco nato*, PG 59, 542–54; *De caeco et Zacchaeo*, PG 59, 599–610; *In illud* “*Quando ipsi subiciet omnia*,” CPG 4761; *In illud* “*Genimina viperarum*,” CPG 4947 = 4218; *In postremum iudicium*, CPG 4968; *In ascensionem Domini*, CPG 5028.

A final judgement by S. J. Voicu, EEC II (1992), 772 speaks volumes for the prolific legacy of this Syrian preacher: “His exegetical positions, still insufficiently studied, come across as a mixture of contradictory tendencies.”

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XVI. ASTERIUS OF ANTIOCH (FL. LATE 4TH C.—FIRST HALF 5TH C.)

Discovered by Marcel Richard ca. 1950 as the author of a set of thirty-one homilies, and identified by him as "Asterius the Sophist" (see ch. 9, III, i), from Cappadocia, whom Athanasius of Alexandria and others claimed to have followed Arius in the earliest stages of the Arian crisis, the unknown homilist actually flourished in Antioch or in its surroundings (Kinzig) near the end of the fourth century or during the first half of the fifth. His well-crafted sermons show some literal contacts with John Chrysostom's homilies, suggesting a direct dependence (Kinzig, *Erbin*, 69–73). Homily 31, whose end is missing, was probably delivered on a Good Friday (Kinzig 1996, 416, n. 16). Asterius interprets the psalms in line with traditional typology in exposing a christocentric exegesis. For instance, he compares the tree of Paradise with the Cross (*hom.* 1, 6; 5, 17; 20, 6; 21, 12; 31, 3). The descent of Christ to Sheol before his resurrection forms one of the distinctive themes of the homilies (2, 19; 11, 3; 16, 1; 20, 12; 31, 8).

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XII
CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA (CA. 375–444)

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, BIBLICAL EXEGETE

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Robert L. Wilken

His part in the Christological controversies of the fifth century has assured Cyril of Alexandria a prominent place in histories of Christian thought. But there is another Cyril who has been largely neglected. It is Cyril the exegete, a man whose mind and soul were shaped by the rhythms of biblical narrative, and whose thinking was permeated with the Bible's language and imagery. Adolf von Hamack once wrote that Cyril "stated his faith in what was essentially a polemical form only; he would not have taken long to have given a purely positive statement."¹³⁵ This assessment, however, is based wholly on Cyril's polemical and dogmatic writings; Hamack seems not to have read Cyril's commentaries. Indeed, in the *History of Dogma*, in a note in which Harnack informs the reader what works of Cyril he will draw on in presenting his theology, he says that Cyril's writings can be found in volumes 75–77 of the *Patrologia Graeca*. What Hamack failed to say was that Cyril's works filled ten volumes of the patrology, volumes 68–77. The first seven volumes are all exegetical.

Cyril is one of the most prolific commentators from Christian antiquity, and what remains of his writings on the Bible, either in their entirety or in fragments, is considerable. So perhaps it would be well to begin this essay by reviewing what is found in those first seven volumes of the collected works of Cyril in the *Patrologia Graeca* as well as in more modern editions of his writings.

First is a large work called *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* that fills volume 68. This work, written in the form of a dialogue between Cyril and a certain Palladius, is an exposition of select passages from the Pentateuch. Unlike his later commentaries that follow the Biblical text verse by verse, here Cyril treats biblical texts under theological themes (the fall of humankind, justification and redemption through Christ, love of God and love of neighbor) and under topics found in the Pentateuch (e.g. the tabernacle, the priesthood, festivals, etc.).

135. *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: 1931). 2:349.

The treatise opens as Palladius approaches Cyril with a book in his hand. Cyril asks him what book it is and Paladius replies that he is carrying two of the gospels: Matthew and John. He has come to Cyril for help in understanding certain puzzling passages. In Matthew, “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.” (Matt 5:17–18) In John, “But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24) The title of the book is taken from the latter text. *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate* was written to show that, with the coming of Christ, the narratives in the Pentateuch as well as the institutions and laws of ancient Israel, are to be understood in light of a higher, spiritual meaning, i.e., a form of worship “in spirit and in truth,” a devotion to God that is bound neither to place nor to a certain people. Using the Pauline image of the Law as a tutor, Cyril says that “the law properly leads us to the mystery of Christ.”¹³⁶

The second work dealing with the Pentateuch, found in volume 69 of the *Patrologia Graeca*, is entitled *Glaphyra*, elegant comments. This treatise, complementary to *De Adoratione*, is also an exposition of passages from the Pentateuch, arranged, however, not according to topics, but according to the order in which they are found in the books of the Bible. Thus the first section treats Cain and Abel, the second Noah and the ark, the third Abraham, Isaac, and Esau. *Glaphyra* includes a number of texts from Exodus, e.g., the institution of the Passover in Exod 12, the theophany on Mt. Sinai (Exod 19), as well as passages from Leviticus, e.g., the cleansing of lepers (Lev 14), Numbers, the sending of scouts into the land (Num 13), and Deuteronomy, treatment of female captives (Deut 21:10–11), et al. The *Glaphyra* is more strictly exegetical than *De Adoratione*, that is, it focuses more closely on the details of the text, but the interpretation it offers is no less christological and spiritual.

Besides these two exegetical treatises on the Pentateuch Cyril also wrote line by line commentaries on the prophets. Two are extant in their entirety. The first, on Isaiah, is a massive work covering the entire book of Isaiah (from 1:1 to 66:24) that fills more than 700 columns in the *Patrologia Graeca*.¹³⁷ The second is a line by line commentary on the twelve minor prophets beginning with Amos and ending with Malachi.¹³⁸ The commentary

136. *Ador.* 1; PG 68, 140a.

137. Text is in PG 70. No critical edition exists.

138. Text is in PG 71 and 72. Critical edition by P. E. Pusey, *Sancti Patris Nostri*

includes an introduction to the collection of twelve prophets and a prologue for each book.

In the prologue to each of the minor prophets (and also Isaiah), Cyril discusses the historical setting in which the book was written and the author's purpose or *skopos*. According to Cyril, Zechariah was composed after the exile, and was written with two different groups in mind. First, Zechariah wished to remind those who had been in exile what they had suffered because of God's wrath and, second, he addressed younger Israelites, ignorant of what had happened, to warn them that they too could fall into similar evils.¹³⁹ But Zechariah also has a christological dimension, says Cyril, for throughout the prophet treats of the "coming redemption through Christ in its proper time."¹⁴⁰

Cyril also wrote other commentaries on the LXX, but little remain of these works. The most extensive is a collection of fragments of a commentary on the Psalms edited by Mai and reprinted in PG 69. Not all these fragments, however, are authentic, and they must be used with care.¹⁴¹ The fragments from his other commentaries, on Numbers, Kings, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Job, Jeremiah, Baruch, Ezechiel, and Daniel are few.¹⁴²

As for the NT, Cyril's most important work is a large verse by verse commentary on the Gospel according to John. The commentary covers the entire book, though the section on chapters ten and eleven is fragmentary.¹⁴³ There is also extant a series of Homilies on the Gospel according to St. Luke, 156 in all, preserved in a Syriac translation.¹⁴⁴ Besides these works there are

Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in XII Prophetas (2 vols.; Oxford: 1878; repr., Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1965).

139. Comm. in Zach. prol. (Pusey 1:284, 17–21). For detailed discussion of Cyril's prologues to the books of the prophets, and comparison with other commentators, e.g., Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret of Cyrus, see Kerrigan, 96–110.

140. Comm. in Zach. prol. (P 184, 8–10).

141. See M. Assunta Rossi, "Ancora sul Commento ai Salmi di Cirillo. A proposito di un recente lavoro sui commentari patristici al salterio," in *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* (1984), 45–52.

142. For list of fragments from Cyril's exegetical writings see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (Turnhout: 1979), 3:2–9.

143. Text in PG 73 and 74. Critical edition by P. E. Pusey, *S.P.N. Cyrilli archiepiscopi Alexandrini in D. Ioannis euangelium* (3 vols.; Oxford: 1972); ET: *Commentary on the Gospel According to S. John by S. Cyril archbishop of Alexandria* (2 vols.; London: 1984).

144. J. B. Chabot, ed. *S. Cyrilli Commentarii in Lucam*, Pars Prior; ET: R. Payne Smith, trans., *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke by Saint Cyril of Alexandria* (1859; repr., Studion Publishers, 1983).

numerous fragments on the Gospel of Matthew as well as others on Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Hebrews. On other NT books, Acts and the Catholic epistles, few fragments are extant.¹⁴⁵

Besides these exegetical works, Cyril's other writings, dealing in the main with Trinitarian and Christological topics, include extensive discussion of biblical texts. For Cyril, as for other early Christian thinkers, theology is interpretation of the Bible. Further, in his encyclical letters announcing the date of Easter and in his *Contra Julianum*, a massive apology in defense of Christianity directed at the emperor Julian the Apostate, Cyril makes extensive use of the Bible.¹⁴⁶ Cyril is not simply a polemicist on behalf of the Alexandrian theology; he is a major figure among early Christian exegetes and his writings deserve careful study.¹⁴⁷

IN THE LAST DAYS

Where then to begin? A useful starting place is Cyril's interpretation of Isa 2:1–3: "The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be manifested as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many

145. Fragments edited by P. E. Pusey at end of volume three of *Sancti Patris Nostri Cyrilli Archiepiscopi Alexandrini in d. Joannis Evangelium* (Oxford: 1872; repr., Culture et Civilisation, 1965), 3:173–451.

146. A particularly interesting exegetical passage occurs in book 3 of the *Contra Julianum*. The text under discussion is Gen 3:5, "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Cyril explains that this knowledge can only be experiential. "In the Holy Scriptures," he writes, "the term knowledge does not refer merely to a simple knowledge of things, but to an actual knowledge based on experience." The knowledge Adam, our ancestor, had of good and evil was not simply "intellectual knowledge of evil, but a knowledge from actions and from experience." The term knowledge is used here as it in the passage, "Adam knew his wife Eve." Cyril then explains that it is for this reason that Christ became incarnate that he might have first hand experience of sin and "destroy sin in his flesh." (PG 76:636d and 640c–641a).

147. For studies of Cyril's exegesis see the following books and articles: Bertrand de Margerie, S.J., *Introduction à l'Histoire de l'Exégèse, I: Les Pères Grecs et Orientaux* (Paris: 1980), 272–303; Alexander Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, Interpreter of the Old Testament* (Rome: 1952); Robert L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Eady Christian Mind: A Study of Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis and Theology* (New Haven: 1971).

peoples shall come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'

Cyril notes that the prophet Isaiah introduces this oracle as a vision, what Isaiah "saw," and that this vision is distinct from the vision that preceded it in ch. 1. In contrast to the previous vision, this one designates a time, "the last days." In Cyril's view the phrase "in the last days" is the key to understanding the text.¹⁴⁸ Isaiah, argues Cyril, is speaking of a "time" when "the power of the devil will be cast down not in a part of the earth, not in one country, and the worship of idols will be wholly destroyed.... This sickness and the tyranny exercised by impure demons will be eliminated in every place under heaven ['all the nations']. This will take place among those living on earth in *the last days*, that is at the end of the age when the only Word of God shined forth, being born of a woman. At this time he will present to himself the spiritual Judea or Jerusalem, that is the Church, as a pure virgin, not having spot or wrinkle or anything of that sort as it is written, 'holy and blameless.' (Eph 5:27) Concerning the church he said that in the last days the mountain of the Lord will be manifest, and the house of the God of Jacob on the height of the mountains. It is said to us that Zion in Judea is situated on the mountain will be built. But this is not to be taken to refer to sensible things, but spiritually to the church which is compared to a mountain."¹⁴⁹

Several aspects of Cyril's exegesis are worth noting. First, the phrase "in the last days" (or variants on it) is used at several places in the NT. The most significant is Heb 1:1: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these *last days* he has spoken to us by a Son." (also Acts 2, Heb 9:26, et al.) The use of the phrase in this context indicates that with the coming of Christ the "last days" had begun. Hence Christian commentators drew the conclusion that one must interpret the oracles of the prophets in light of the new things that had happened in the last days, the birth of Christ, his baptism and temptation, his preaching and miracles, his suffering and death, and most important of all, his Resurrection. As we shall, see for Cyril the Resurrection of Christ is the key to the interpretation of the Bible.

148. Other Christian commentators made the same point. See Robert L. Wilken, "'In novissimus diebus': Biblical Promises, Jewish Hopes, and Early Christian Exegesis," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993): 1–20.

149. Comm. in Isa 2:2–3; PG 70.68c–d.

The second thing to note is that the term *spiritual*, as used in this passage, means interpreting the text in light of Christ. *Spiritual* does not mean esoteric. It refers to the kind of gifts brought by Christ, forgiveness, participation in the divine life, hope of eternal salvation, i.e., goods that cannot be discerned by the senses, hence *spiritual*. Cyril knows that the oracle, in its original setting, was speaking of the political restoration of Jerusalem and the return of the exiles. His argument is that the things promised there have not taken place, hence the oracle cannot be interpreted to refer to such things. Something else, however, did take place: God's Word appeared in human flesh and as a human being was raised from the dead. Faced with these new and unprecedented happenings "in the last days," the words of the prophets look different, and it is these new things that shape Cyril's interpretation of the passage. He insists on a "spiritual" reading of the text because he is attentive to a new set of historical events.

And this leads to the final point. What came about as a result of Christ's Resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit was the Church, a new kind of community devoted to the worship of the one God. This community is not confined to one people or place and is spread throughout the world. It claims no city or land as its own, and its hope is not centered on the restoration of a political kingdom. It is, in Cyril's vocabulary, a *spiritual community*, i.e., a community whose life centers on a spiritual birth in Baptism and a spiritual sacrifice in the Eucharist. As Cyril puts it elsewhere in the commentary on Isaiah (commenting on the term "Zion" in Isa 51:3): "The word of the holy prophets always represents things that can be seen and actions which are known by the senses. It contains, however, reference to things that are beyond the senses and which are spiritual. Hence when it uses the word Zion, it is not speaking solely to the earthly city, it also must be understood as referring to something that is spiritual, the church of the living God. If not, how would any know that the words of the prophets lead to truth."¹⁵⁰

In Cyril's commentary on the parallel to the oracle in Isa 2 found in Mic 4, Cyril cites Paul's words, "In Christ there is a new creation, the old has passed away" (2 Cor 5:17).¹⁵¹ With the coming of Christ, writes Cyril, all things are "transformed into what is better." 2 Cor 5:17 has a commanding role to play in Cyril's interpretation of the Bible. It occurs, for example, in his exposition of John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another." Cyril comments: "St. Paul is surely correct...when he writes, "Therefore if

150. Comm. in Isa 51:3; PG 70.1109b.

151. Comm. in Mic 4:1-3 (Pusey 1:657 and 662).

anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come.' For Christ renews us and refashions us to a newness of life which was untrodden and unknown to others who were devoted to a way of life according to the law and persist in the precepts of Moses."¹⁵²

Cyril is fascinated by the theme of "newness" in Christ. In his commentary on 2 Cor 5:17 he says that the phrase "the old has passed away" refers to the ancient curse in Gen 3:19, "You are earth and to earth you will return" and to the Law of Moses. All this has passed away, "For we are justified through faith in Christ, and the power of the curse has ceased. For Christ rose from the dead for our sakes striking down the power of death...bringing about worship in spirit and in truth."¹⁵³ Because all things are new in Christ, Cyril draws the conclusion that the interpretation of the LXX must be new. No longer can its words and stories be referred to sensible things, for example, deliverance from the Egyptians by passing through the sea, eating manna or drinking from a rock in the deserts. "All things are new," writes Cyril, hence we do not flee "Egyptian taskmasters but the tyranny of unbelief," and "we eat the spiritual manna and the bread from heaven." When the ancient texts speak "historically" their words must be "taken in another sense."¹⁵⁴

Cyril's exegesis of the LXX follows directly from his understanding of Christ. If all things are new in Christ, then everything, including the scriptures, has been transformed. The christological interpretation of the Bible does not come about through a gradual process of spiritual discernment. It comes all at once, "*subito*" in the term of the Venerable Bede.¹⁵⁵ In light of the new everything takes on a different meaning. In the words of Henri de Lubac, "c'est enfin un brusque passage, c'est un transfer global, c'est un changement de registre, par quoi tout prend un autre sens."¹⁵⁶ In ancient times things meant one thing, now they mean something else. "Aliter tunc...aliter nunc," says Rabanus Maurus, an early medieval commentator.¹⁵⁷

In setting forth a Christological interpretation of the LXX Cyril of course follows the direction set by the NT. In some cases his exegesis is shaped by explicit citation and interpretation in the NT of passages from the LXX. For example, following the book of Hebrews (Heb 7:1–10), he gives the story of Melchizedek in Gen 14 a christological interpretation. "The perfection that comes through Christ is clearly shown forth in the types found in Mel-

152. Comm. in Ioann. 13:34 (Pusey 2:384).

153. Comm. in Ep. II ad Corinthos 5:17 (Pusey 3:353).

154. Comm. in Isa. 42:10; PG 70.860–61.

155. PL 91, 1186a.

156. Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse Médiévale* (Paris:1959), 310–11.

157. In Num. 3.13 (PL 108, 631a).

chizedek.”¹⁵⁸ He interprets the account of the passover in Exod 12 as a type of Christ the lamb of God, citing John 1:29, “Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.”¹⁵⁹ He takes the bronze serpent in Num 21:9 to be a reference to Christ, citing John 3:14.¹⁶⁰ In other cases he draws parallels of his own making or derived from tradition, e.g., between the birth of Moses in Exod 2:1–10 and the coming of Christ as described in Phil 2, or between the ark of the covenant in Exod 25:10–16 and Christ’s body received from the Virgin Mary and in which he dwelled as in an ark or temple, citing Col 2:9.

Cyril, like most early Christian exegetes, has little to say about theoretical questions concerning biblical interpretation. Yet, in a few places he indicates that he has thought about the hermeneutical framework that supports his exegesis. For example, in his exposition of the bronze serpent fixed on a pole Cyril explains to the reader why it is not adequate simply to give a historical exposition of the text. “The letter does not satisfy the spiritually mature. They are satisfied only with mysteries hidden in types. By transforming the bare narrative, one moves the focus away from the particular thing [the type] to what is more general and universal, i.e. to what is true not simply historical.”¹⁶¹

It may seem obvious, especially in the Platonizing world of late antiquity, to say that “truth” can never be simply historical. But Cyril’s observation is not inconsequential. A historical account does not bear its own significance. To have meaning it must be related to something larger than itself, set within a framework of other events and statements about the events. In the case of a biblical narrative, however, more is required, because the Bible was not written to give us an account of what happened in ancient times. “The *scopos* of the inspired Scripture is the mystery of Christ signified to us through a myriad of different kinds of things. Someone might liken it to a glittering and magnificent city, having not one image of the king, but many, and publicly displayed in every corner of the city. Its aim [*skopos*], however, is not to provide us an account of the lives of the saints of old. Far from that. Rather its *scopos* is to give us knowledge of the mystery [of Christ] through those things by which the word about him might become clear and true.”¹⁶² The Bible is a book about God’s revelation in Christ, hence the interpreter must set the ancient stories within a frame of reference that includes Christ. Only

158. Glaph. in Gen. 2; PG 69,84a.

159. Glaph. Exod. 2; PG 69,424d.

160. Glaph. Numb.; PG 69,641a.

161. Glaph. Num.; PG 69,640b.

162. PG 69, 308c.

by relating what is written in the Scriptures to Christ who is the “truth” can one discover what is “true” in the text.

“ON THE ROCK THAT WAS STRUCK”

To see how Cyril went about the task of relating the stories of the Bible to the mystery of Christ let us turn now to his exposition of a particular text from the Pentateuch. A useful example is the section in the *Glaphyra* on Exodus entitled: “on the rock that was struck.”¹⁶³ This is a discussion of two biblical passages, Exod 17:1–7 and Num 20:1–13, that narrate the rebellion of the Israelites in the wilderness of Zin. The people found fault with Moses because he had brought them to a place where there was no water. God tells Moses to take the rod “with which [he] had struck the Nile” and to stand before the rock of Horeb. When Moses struck the rock it gave forth water and the people and their animals drank. The place was called Massah and Meribah because “of the faultfinding of the children of Israel.”

Cyril begins his exposition of these passages with a discussion of fortitude, citing, among other texts, Jas 1:12, “Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life,” and 1 Cor 4:9, “we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men.” Next he notes that Israel has been tested in many ways, e.g., in the stories of the quails and manna from heaven, and at the incident of the rock in the desert. Cyril first cites the account in Exod 17:1–7, and then explains that the passage in Numbers gives a fuller account which allows the reader to see the beauty of the spiritual sense. He cites Num 20:1–13, summarizes the story, and singles out v. 4, “Would that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord. Why have you brought the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness that we should die here, both we and our cattle?” Although the Israelites were only recently in bondage to the Egyptians, he continues, they have already forgotten Egypt and can think only of what they miss, bread, figs, wine, et al. They had given up hope and forgotten the promises to their fathers. Further, they do not realize that extraordinary gifts do not come without struggles. They needed to learn the virtue of fortitude.

Next Cyril says: “This account was not simply preserved for those under the law; it was also prepared for those in Christ.” With this introduction he proceeds to an exegesis of the text. In order to strengthen those of weak faith

163. *Glaphyra* in Exodum 3 (PG 69, 485–97).

(including Moses) God ordered Moses to strike the rock with a rod. The rod is identified as the one “with which [Moses] struck the Nile.” The reason is to give Moses courage by reminding him of what had happened in Egypt when he used this same rod. This is the rod that turned the river Nile into blood. Further the text continues: “Behold I [God] will stand there,” i.e., at the rock when you strike it. “For you will not be alone, nor will you [Moses] be the one who performs these wonders. I will show that the rock is the mother of many waters, I will make ready the wonder, and I will stand by your side as your helper. Speak to the rock and I will be the strength of your words.” God assures Moses that he will be with him, standing next to him.

Although Moses should have been encouraged by these words, he said to the people, “Listen you unbelievers. Shall we bring forth water for you from the rock?” Cyril takes this as evidence of Moses’ doubt as to whether striking the rod would bring forth water.¹⁶⁴ Moses, he says, struck the rock “twice.” In Egypt, when Moses extended the rod over the river in Egypt he only struck the river once. That he strikes it twice here, even though God said he would be standing next to him, means that Moses “did not expect anything to happen” when he struck the rock.¹⁶⁵ Because of Moses’ unbelief, he was not allowed to enter the promised land with the Israelites. “Because you did not believe in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the people of Israel [to strike the rock] therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.” (Num 20:12)

Cyril now turns his exegesis in a Christological direction. He writes: “Come, then, let us now transfer the form of this historical account to apply it to the mystery of Christ. Following the lead of the Holy Scriptures, let us say what things are appropriate and let us carefully direct our attention to the sense of the text that accords well with the Holy Scriptures.”¹⁶⁶ At this point one would expect Cyril to turn at once to the passage in the NT that refers to the incident of the rock, 1 Cor 10:1–4. But Cyril focuses on another detail in the text and only after he has explored that does he introduce the NT text. He observes that the passage about “striking the rock” begins with a reference to the death of Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. According

164. Origen took Moses’ statement in Num 20:10 as evidence of Moses’ doubt. The question, “Can we bring forth water from this rock?” indicates that “God did not believe in God’s power.” (Hom. Num. 6.3). See also Basil, On the judgment of God, PG 31:664a–b. For commentary on the passage see Origen hom. gen. 10.3, in Matt 17:2 (GCS 40, p. 583); in Rom. 10:6 (PG 13, 1260C).

165. PG 69, 492d.

166. PG 69, 492d–493a.

to Num 20:1, when the people came to the wilderness of Zin “in the first month...Miriam died there and was buried there.” Cyril observes that in Mic 6:4 Miriam is mentioned with Moses and Aaron. “For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.”¹⁶⁷ Miriam, says Cyril, was considered one of the three persons who led the people out of Egypt. This is clear because after the Israelites came through the Red Sea it was Miriam who “took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dancing, and Miriam sang to them, ‘Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.’” (Ex 15:20)

Miriam, like Moses and Aaron, was a type, Moses representing the Law, Aaron the priesthood, and Miriam “worship according to the Law.”¹⁶⁸ For this reason it is noteworthy that the text speaks of the “death” of Miriam, and in the first month, in connection with the striking of the rock. Cyril is struck by the conjunction of “first month,” i.e., the time of Passover, and hence a time of new beginning, and Miriam’s death. This reminds him that Christ too died at the time of Passover, the “month of new growth” (LXX; Hebrew has “month of Aviv”). The mention of new beginning in turn calls to mind spring, and Cyril cites a well-known text from the Song of Songs, “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come.” (Song 2:10–12) Winter is the time of the devil’s reign, spring the time of new growth. “When Christ comes we enjoy a spiritual spring, for in Christ we bloom again to newness of life and human nature is fulfilled as it comes to flower and bears fruit.”¹⁶⁹

Now that Cyril has provided a biblical framework in which to interpret the passage from Numbers he finally cites 1 Cor 10, where St. Paul had interpreted the rock in the wilderness to refer to Christ. Immediately after the report of Miriam’s death, the text in Numbers says that the people were thirsty. Cyril links the death of Miriam (and hence the end of the Law) with the people’s thirst. Their thirst could be quenched only by the water that comes from the rock which is Christ. “They drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ.” It has taken Cyril some time to get to this point, but the path he traversed is significant. He realizes that the passages from Exodus and Numbers need a context, i.e., a framework

167. PG 69, 493b.

168. PG 69, 493c.

169. PG 69, 493d.

of terms, ideas, and other biblical texts to support the interpretation. That he has provided by introducing the idea of newness, Passover as a spring festival, by citing Song with the overtones of rebirth and renewal. By the time the reader reaches Cyril's specific application of the text to the new life in Christ the interpretation seems natural rather than forced.

I have discussed this text at some length because it gives us a glimpse of how Cyril proceeded as an interpreter of the Pentateuch. What is noteworthy is that even though there is a firm exegetical foothold in the NT, namely the interpretation offered by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians, Cyril gives careful attention to what is actually written in Exodus and Numbers, specifically the detail (in Numbers) that Moses struck the rock twice. By focusing on this detail he is able to engage the story as it is presented in Numbers. The text has to do with Moses' unbelief, his doubt of God's power, and his punishment, namely that he would not be allowed to lead the Israelites into the promised land. Cyril's final observation to the Christian readers is that they too should not doubt God's promise. Unlike Moses, however, Christians rest their hope on a heavenly city, not an earthly land.

Cyril also exploits (with the help of Mic 5 and Exod 15) the mention of Miriam and uses her as a way of introducing an interpretation that moves in a Christological direction. Only when he has explored these matters does he introduce the passage from 1 Corinthians and develop a distinctively Christian interpretation of the text. Yet in doing so he remains faithful to the spirit of the biblical account, namely that the story about the "striking of the rock" has to do with Moses' unbelief.

It cannot be overemphasized that Cyril is interpreting the text for Christian readers. This means that the context for interpretation is not defined solely by its place in an ancient book, e.g., the book of Numbers. Its context is the Bible as a whole including the NT. For Cyril, as well as other early Christian exegetes, the books of the old covenant, the LXX, were read as part of a single collection. "The entire Scripture," he writes, "is one book and was spoken by the one Holy Spirit."¹⁷⁰

But context included much more than the books of the Christian Bible. For Christian interpreters the Bible was the book of the Church, a book which had been read and expounded in the Christian liturgy, used for instruction, edification, and prayer. Its interpretation could not be divorced from its use. The Bible was part of a living theological and spiritual tradition, a tradition, one should remember, that was itself formed by the Bible. Christian interpretation, then, was shaped by the theological and spiritual content that was

170. Comm. in Isa 29:11-12; PG 70.655a.

at the center of the tradition, notably the creeds and conciliar formulations, catechetical teaching and moral instruction, the Christian mysteries, Baptism and the Eucharist, et al.

Faced with a text that did not, at least on the surface, readily yield a Christological interpretation, Cyril fastened on words, phrases, images, that echoed other biblical texts and themes, to show, by a process of invention, how seemingly disparate parts of the Bible could be related to one another. In doing so he and other early Christian exegetes extend the range of words, phrases, and images (and hence texts) that could be employed to talk about what was central to the Biblical narrative, the “work of man’s restoration” to cite Hugo of St. Victor. Biblical exegetes expanded and enriched the vocabulary Christians could use to speak about matters of faith and life. And as people learned to use new words and images they discovered aspects of the Christian mystery that were previously hidden. Biblical exegesis is an art of discovery, and the best exegetes have always been those who were able to show that what is newly found was always there.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The NT is a Christian book, written by Christians for Christians. It is an account of the new things that have happened through the coming of Christ. For this reason its interpretation requires a different approach from that of the OT. In the OT everything is veiled, and the expositor had to speak about Christian things in terms of something else. That after all is the meaning of allegory, speaking about one thing in terms of another, and in the most fundamental sense all Christian interpretation of the OT is allegorical. The words of the NT, however, were able to be interpreted in their most immediate and obvious sense. As a medieval commentator, put it, in the NT the words are taken in their proper sense “as they are heard.” *Pro se star sicut auditur. Non est allegoria.*¹⁷¹

Yet the NT posed its own distinctive challenge. For one thing not all Christians agreed on how specific passages were to be understood. From the second century at least, theological and doctrinal disputes centered on the proper interpretation of key biblical texts. Polemical works such as Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses* or Athanasius’s *Orationes Contra Arianos* were largely exegetical, patient expositions of controverted texts in light of the *skopos* of the Scriptures as a whole. Cyril was very much part of this tradition of exegesis,

171. The words are from two Spanish commentators, Heterius and Beatus, in PL 96.958d. For discussion, see H. DeLubac, *Exégèse Médiévale* (Paris: 1962), 4:110.

and one of his tasks as a biblical commentator was to show how the Church's theological tradition offered a consistent and thoroughgoing interpretation of the Bible as a whole against his opponents. In Cyril's case the opponents were twofold. The Arian exegesis of the Bible still influenced the way some Christians read the Scriptures even though their teaching had been condemned at the end of the fourth century by the Council of Constantinople. The second opponent was Nestorius, Cyril's contemporary, whose teaching about Christ, in Cyril's view, did violence to the Scriptures. Sometimes, then, there is a polemical dimension to Cyril's commentaries on the NT.

Not all of Cyril's NT exegesis, however, is polemical. His homilies on the Gospel of Luke, for example, are homiletical and pastoral. Cyril's aim in these homilies is to draw a simple application of the text to the moral and spiritual life. Take for example his homily on the story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38–42.¹⁷²

Cyril sets the theme of the homily by citing Heb 13:2: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." The story of Martha and Mary is about hospitality, and Cyril's first point is that Christ teaches us not only how one should receive a guest but how a guest is to behave when received. To illustrate this point he cites Rom 1:11, "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you." Cyril uses St. Paul's relation to the community in Rome as an example of how one should conduct oneself when being received as a guest. A guest should bring a "spiritual gift" as Paul intended to do, and as the Lord did when he visited Martha and Mary. The first point then is that hospitality requires something of the guest as well as the host. The guest too brings an offering that is transmitted through his person.

Then Cyril turns to those who receive the guests. Because the guest brings a gift, the hosts need to cultivate receptivity, openness to what they will receive. For these hosts should not allow themselves to be "distracted by much service." Finally Cyril fills out the homily by reminding the hearers of the most famous case of hospitality, the time when Abraham received the three men at the oak of Mamre. Abraham's reward for his hospitality, that is his receptivity to the gift offered by his visitors, was the birth of his son Isaac.

What gives this exposition its distinctive character is not only Cyril's insight into human relations but his skill in drawing on other biblical texts

172. Hom. 69. in Lucam. Text in I. B. Chabot, CSCO, vol. 70 (Louvain: 1961), 273–77; ET: *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke by Saint Cyril of Alexandria*; (trans. R. Payne Smith; Studion Publishers, 1983), 291–93.

to illuminate the text at hand. By selecting texts that speak of the role of the guest, not simply that of the host, the story becomes a story not so much about the contrast between Martha and Mary, but preeminently a story about Christ, the one who is received. In hearing the story, then, the reader is encouraged to look to Christ as the model of Christian behavior. Cyril's exposition is imaginative, indeed it is an unconventional interpretation, one that would not be discovered by a more pedestrian exegete. It also presupposes a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and a capacity to recall appropriate passages supporting his interpretation.

Indeed it is Cyril's skill in relating the various parts of the Bible to each other that is one of his most conspicuous accomplishments as a Biblical interpreter. A particularly instructive example is his exposition of John 1:12–13.¹⁷³ The text adds: "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." Cyril begins his exposition by citing Rom 8:15, "You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship" whereby we cry "Abba Father." A person becomes a child of God by faith, writes Cyril, when one is "baptized into the Holy Trinity through the mediator, the Word, Mediator, who joined himself to human kind through the flesh to which he was united to him, at the same time, because he is by nature God, he was naturally joined to the Father." Through Baptism into Christ those who are joined to Christ by faith are "raised up to the dignity which is [Christ's] by nature."

Cyril's first step is to interpret the phrase "children of God" in John 1:13 by analogy to Christ's sonship. That is to say, just as Christ was "begotten" of the Father, so those who come to faith are "begotten" of God, i.e., they become "children of God." Christ's coming made it possible for human beings to enter into a new relation to God as children of God. This relation is similar to the relation between Christ and God, with one difference. Christ's relation to God is that of a son by nature, Christians become children of God by adoption, as Paul says in Rom 8.

To explain further what "children of God" means Cyril introduces the well-known passage from 2 Peter with the words "sharers of the divine nature." The phrase "begotten of God" means that those who are joined to Christ through faith become participants in God's nature, and are called "gods." Such dignity is only possible because God has become incarnate and dwelled

173. Comm. 1.9 in Ioann. 1:13 (Pusey, 1:134–38); ET Pusey, 1:105–108.

among us. To say, then, that we are “born of God,” says Cyril, does not mean that we wing our way to God by our own efforts but that God through the Incarnation comes to dwell within us and makes his lodging among us, as is spoken by the prophet, “I will dwell in them and walk in them.” The citation is from Lev 26:12 (whom Cyril calls a prophet), but it comes via 2 Cor 6:16 where Paul asks, “What partnership have righteousness and iniquity,” and answers: “We are the temple of the living God; as God said, ‘I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.’” (2 Cor 6:14–18) We cannot become temples of God unless the one who dwells among us is God by nature.

For Cyril the passage in 2 Corinthians, specifically the language, “I will dwell in them,” is understood to refer to the Incarnation, and is seen as parallel to John 1:14, “dwelt among us.” He interprets John with the help of Paul, and, one might add, Paul’s citation of Leviticus with the help of John. But then he returns to the Gospel of John and cites another passage that speaks of God dwelling in us. “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” (John 14:23)

Next Cyril adds a new note suggested by the earlier citation of Rom 8. Paul had written that sonship was a gift of the Holy Spirit. “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” When, then, we cry “abba Father,” says Paul, “it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” (Rom 8:14–16) There is of course no mention of the Holy Spirit in John 1:13, but by citing St. Paul he is able to show that it is only by being born of the Holy Spirit that one can be said to be born of God. To lend support to this interpretation he cites 1 John. “By this we know that we dwell in Him and He in us because he has given us his own Spirit.” The sign that we are children of God, born not of the flesh but of God, is that the Holy Spirit dwells in us. Through the gift of the Spirit, who is God, we come to share in the divine life.

Cyril’s use of parallel texts in his exposition of John 1:13 is very instructive. The first passage, Rom 8, is somewhat obvious because of the reference to divine sonship, but the citation of 2 Cor 6 and 2 Peter are not. They add depth and perspective to the interpretation by relating the phrase “children of God” to the ultimate end of human life, namely sharing in God’s life. And by citing 1 John Cyril secures a Trinitarian reading of the text, indicating that it is not only the incarnation of the Word but also the sending of the Holy Spirit that makes one into a child of God. The Son does not act on his own but is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. Even though John 1:13 speaks only of the relation of the divine word to God and the Incarnation

of the Son (not the sending of the Holy Spirit), Cyril shows that it requires a Trinitarian exposition.

What Cyril has done here is similar to what he did in the interpretation of the rock that was struck. His exegesis expands the context in which the passage is found. The specific text is lifted from its immediate setting so that it can be viewed in light of other texts and terms and ideas found in the Bible. Yet one might argue that Cyril's interpretation of John 1:13 is rigorously contextual. For John 1:13 is understood in light of John 1:14, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us," and in turn John 1:14 is seen in light of John 1:1, the God who brought the world into being and the divine Word who was sent from God. Only by taking into consideration the larger Trinitarian framework is it possible to interpret the immediate context.

THE SECOND ADAM

All biblical commentators invest certain texts, certain terms, and certain images with an interpretive power that transcends their specific setting. Augustine, for example, never tires of citing the words of Ps 73, "it is good to cleave to God." This one text gives unity and cohesion to Augustine's exegesis of the Bible as a whole. Likewise, Irenaeus' exegesis of specific texts in his *Adversus Haereses* is supported by the passage in Ephesians 1:10, "Christ recapitulates all things in heaven and on earth in himself." One text that recurs again and again in Athanasius's *Orationes Contra Arianos*, is John 10:30, "I and the Father are one." Spiritual writers loved Phil 3, "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own." But I know of no patristic commentator whose entire exegetical enterprise is controlled by a single biblical image as is Cyril. The biblical image is that of the second Adam or the heavenly Adam drawn from Rom 5 and I Cor 15. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22; cf. Rom 5:19 and 1 Cor 15:45). Further Cyril's use of the Adam-Christ typology is complemented by the text we have already discussed briefly, 2 Cor 5:17: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come." I have already mentioned this aspect of Cyril's exegesis, but it is time now to look, if only briefly, at Cyril's exposition of these texts in his commentaries on Romans, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians.

Though we possess only fragments of Cyril's commentaries on St. Paul, we do have fragments dealing with Rom 5, 1 Cor 15 and 2 Cor 5. At Rom 5:11ff., which includes the words, "therefore sin came into the world through one man," Cyril writes: "The ancient curse has become ineffective, the curse

which human nature endured in Adam as in a first fruit of the race and as in a first root." Adam's transgression was not the act of a solitary person; he was a representative human being and in humanity, "the entire human race," in Cyril's phrase, became subject to sin and death. Adam was the "first formed" among human beings, the "beginning of the human race," the root from which all others have sprung. In the same way, Christ too is a representative figure, a "new root," a "model of that which is to come," the "first fruits" of a new humanity, the "first born," "a new creation." "The Son has come from heaven justifying the impious by faith, fashioning anew as God human nature to incorruption and returning it to what it was in the beginning. In Christ all things are a new creation, a new root has been planted, for he is the second Adam."¹⁷⁴

By drawing on 2 Cor 5:17 Cyril's exposition of Rom 5 emphasizes the difference between Adam and Christ, and the newness that Christ brings. In what does Christ's newness consist? At Rom 5:16, "the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin," Cyril says that through Christ the second Adam "righteousness found for the first time a way to us," for Christ was the "first and only man on earth 'who knew no sin nor was guile found in his mouth.'" (I Pet 2:22)¹⁷⁵ Christ is new because he did things no man had ever done. In places, in an effort to explain what is unique about Christ, Cyril says that he lived a "holy life,"¹⁷⁶ that he "was stronger than sin,"¹⁷⁷ that he was "superior to all."¹⁷⁸ But the most significant thing about Christ was that he overcame death by the Resurrection. In a fragment on 1 Cor 15:20, "Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep," Cyril interprets the text as follows: "Christ was the first person on earth to strike down death,"¹⁷⁹ just as our ancestor Adam was "the first to introduce death." Until the time of Christ mankind was incapable of overcoming death. "Our natural life failed up to this time to crush the power of death and had not even destroyed the terror that it casts over our souls."¹⁸⁰

The Scriptures are filled with images for Christ, the good shepherd, the light of the world, the way, the life, the vine and branches, bread of life, morning star, paschal lamb, et at. Like other commentators Cyril used and

174. Comm. in Rom. 5:11 (Pusey, 3:181-2).

175. Comm. in Rom. 5:16 (Pusey, 3:184-5).

176. Quod Unus Christus Sit 724c (ed. de Durand, 34).

177. Comm. in Ioann. 16:33 (Pusey, 2:657).

178. Comm. in Ioann. 1:19 (Pusey, 1:170).

179. Comm. in I Corinth. 15:20 (Pusey, 3:303).

180. Comm. in Ioann. 13:36 (Pusey, 2:392).

exploited these images in his exegesis of the Bible. But he invariably returns to the parallels between Adam and Christ as the framework for his interpretation of individual passages. The Adam-Christ typology provided Cyril with an image that was at once particular and universal. It was particular in that it spoke of Adam and Christ as unique human persons. It highlighted what Adam and Christ *did*, thereby accenting the voluntary, hence human and moral, quality of their actions. But it was universal in that it presented Adam and Christ as representative figures (root of the entire race) whose actions have consequences for all of humanity. It allowed Cyril to speak about Christ as fully human, as Adam, yet to show in what way he was more than a man, as the heavenly Adam who conquered death.

The Bible is a very big book and many who have tried to read it without a guide have gotten lost along the way. All exegesis requires judicious forgetfulness, interpretation that quietly moves to the periphery matters which, in the larger scheme of things, are insignificant. Cyril's exegesis keeps the reader's attention focused on the Bible as a whole (Adam at the beginning, the heavenly Adam at the beginning of the end) and on what gives the entire biblical narrative its meaning, the Resurrection of Christ.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

How then did the Adam-Christ typology serve Cyril's exegesis of other books of the NT? Among his NT commentaries that on the Gospel of John is his most important. So I turn now to a few passages in that commentary to see how, in Cyril's hands, the Pauline imagery illuminates the fourth gospel. The gospels are of course narratives, and what makes Cyril's exegesis provocative is the way he employs the imagery of the second Adam to interpret key events in the life of Jesus. A good place to begin is John 1:31, John's account of the baptism of Jesus, in particular the descent of the Spirit: "And John bore witness, 'I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him.'"¹⁸¹ The phrase that forms the basis for Cyril's interpretation of the passage is "remained on him." Why does the text not simply say that the Holy Spirit descended on Christ, but adds that it "remained on him"?

Cyril first discusses the creation and fall of Adam and Eve. At the time of creation Adam and Eve were sealed with the divine image through the descent of the Holy Spirit. But Adam and Eve sinned and their descendants did not live in accord with the image of God implanted in them. Over time

181. Comm. in Ioann 1:32-33 (Pusey, 1:174-90); ET: Pusey, 1:134-47.

the image impressed on humans by the Holy Spirit began to fade until, as a consequence of man's continuing disobedience, the Holy Spirit "left for good."¹⁸² Human nature had become inhospitable to the presence of the Spirit.

To undo the work of sin, a new man was needed, one who could create a more congenial home for the Holy Spirit, a place in which the Spirit could remain. "Since the first Adam did not preserve the grace given to him by God, God the Father decided to send from heaven the second Adam to us. He sends in our likeness his own son who is by nature... not knowing sin in any way, so that by the disobedience of the first we became subject to God's wrath, so through the obedience of the second, we might escape the curse and its evils be destroyed."¹⁸³

By using the Adam typology Cyril is of course able to show how the actions of each man have consequences for the "entire human race."¹⁸⁴ But he wants to say more. To say that Christ is the "second Adam" is to say that he is a human being like other human beings, but also that he is not an ordinary man. He is a new man, one who will not repeat what others have done, and "who by receiving the Spirit as man will preserve it for our nature by rooting in us again the grace which had departed."¹⁸⁵ What then is the meaning of the phrase "remained on him" in John 1:31? In Christ the new man the Holy Spirit "became accustomed to abiding in us, having no occasion to depart or withdraw."¹⁸⁶

Later in the commentary on John, commenting on John 7:39 ("this he said about the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive"), Cyril expands on this same theme: "The divine Scriptures call the Savior the second Adam. For in that first one, the human race proceeds from not being to being; in the second, Christ, it rises up again to a second beginning, reformed to newness of life and returned to incorruption, 'for if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature,' as Paul says. Therefore the renewing Spirit, i.e., the Holy Spirit, has been given to us." This came about "after the resurrection when having burst the bonds of death and showing himself triumphant over all corruption, he came to life again, having our whole nature in him, in that he was man and one from us."¹⁸⁷

182. Pusey, 1:183, In. 16.

183. Pusey, 1:184.

184. Pusey 1, 184.

185. Pusey 1, 184.

186. Pusey, 1:184, Inn. 27-29.

187. In Ioann. 7:39 (Pusey, 1:691-2).

Note how the imagery of the second Adam allows Cyril to accent what Christ does, what in traditional theological language is called his work. Cyril, as an Alexandrian theologian, has sometimes been interpreted as making Christ's work incidental to his person, subordinating the historical account of Christ in the gospels to his role as mediator of divinity and humanity. In this view, what is significant about Christ is that the divine Logos became man, not what he did as a human being.¹⁸⁸ But Cyril's commentaries on the gospels present quite a different picture, in particular his discussion of Christ's passion.

The Gospel of John depicts Christ's suffering as the time of his glorification. For example: "Now is the son of man glorified." (John 13:31–32) This text caused difficulties for Origen¹⁸⁹ and it is never cited by Athanasius. Glory, it was thought, applied to Christ's resurrection, not his suffering. Cyril, however, realized that the term "glory" is used in John in a distinctive way. The more conventional meaning of glory is that it refers to divine power. For example it is evident that Christ's glory was displayed when he rebuked the waves of the sea, or brought Lazarus back to life, or satisfied the hunger of a crowd with five loaves and two small fishes. But John suggests something different. Why, asks Cyril, is Christ said to be glorified "now"? "The perfection of his glory and the crowning moment of his life is clearly this, when he suffered for the life of the world and made a new way by his resurrection for the resurrection of all."¹⁹⁰

Cyril's exegesis of John 13:32 is significant, for it shows how the text of the gospel shapes his understanding of Christ's work. Another example is his exposition of John 12:23, "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified." Here Cyril makes a similar point: "Finally Christ desires to come to the crowning point of hope, to put an end to death. There was no other way this could come about unless life underwent death for the sake of all so that we all might live in him. For this reason he calls death his own glory.... His cross was the beginning of his being glorified upon earth."¹⁹¹ In Cyril's

188. See in particular Adolf von Hamack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: 1931), 2:354; also Jacques Liébaert, *La Doctrine Christologique de Cyrille d'Alexandrie avant la querelle nestorienne* (Lille: 1955), 229.

189. Comm. in Ioann. 32.318–330 on John 13:30–32 (ed. C. Blanc, 5:324–28).

190. Comm. in Ioann. 13:31–32 (Pusey, 1:378). On this topic, see Augustin Dupré la Tour, "La Doxa du Christ dans les oeuvres exégétiques de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *RSR* 68 (1960): 521–42; 69 (1961): 68–94.

191. Comm. in Ioann. 12:21–22 (Pusey, 2:311). See also Comm. in Ioann. 13:36 (Pusey, 2:393): "For the saving passion of Christ is the first means that ever brought

view, the divine Word became man not simply to unite man and God in his person; he came to suffer and to die, and at the very moment that his suffering begins, the Gospel speaks of his glory.

Because he expounded the Gospel of John chapter by chapter, verse by verse, Cyril was forced to rethink aspects of the Alexandrian Christology. Christ's suffering was given a more central place, and this in turn led to a much greater emphasis on the work of Christ and on Christ's humanity. Even though the Alexandrian christology stress the role of the divine Logos in the person of Christ, Cyril is at pains to show that what Christ does he does as a man, i.e., as Adam. A particularly striking passage is his commentary on John 16:33, "I have overcome the world." The plain meaning of this text, says Cyril, is that Christ "appeared stronger than sin." "For our sakes Christ became alive again making his Resurrection the beginning of the conquest over death. For surely the power of his Resurrection will extend to us, since the one who overcame death was *one of us*, in so far as he appeared as man." Then Cyril makes the remarkable statement: "For if he conquered as God, then it is of no profit to us; but if as man, we are herein conquerors. For he is to us the second Adam come from heaven according to the Scriptures."

Paul's image of Christ as the second Adam provided Cyril with a set of biblical categories to interpret the central mystery of Christian faith: that the one who comes to save is God but he lived in this world as a human being. If Christ were not a human being, Adam, nothing he did would have significance for the rest of humanity. What he did, living in obedience to God, submitting to suffering and abuse, giving himself voluntarily over to death, and most of all, overcoming death, he did as a human being. At the same time he was no mere man, he was not simply Adam, he was the second Adam, the man from heaven. His Resurrection from the dead shows that it was God who lived this life, suffered, dies, and broke the bonds of death. "Though he became man he was no less from heaven," writes Cyril.¹⁹²

EXEGESIS AND THEOLOGY

Cyril is very much the theologian when he is expounding the Scriptures, His exegesis of individual passages is informed not only by parallel texts from elsewhere in the Bible but also by the Church's doctrinal tradition. No doubt

release from death, and the resumption of Christ has become for the saints the beginning of their boldness in facing it."

192. Arcad. 124 (Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum 1:1,5,95, 25-28).

this is one reason why he was read by later writers.¹⁹³ Yet Cyril seldom strays far from the language of the Bible, and even when he uses more technical theological language, it is the biblical imagery and language that shapes his thinking. One cannot disengage Cyril's theology from the Bible as though it could stand on its own as a theological system.

In his commentary on John Cyril makes frequent reference to the Arian interpretation of specific texts. For example, in his exposition of the Baptism of Jesus, he asks whether the descent of the Spirit on Jesus implies that Christ did not have the Spirit before that time. Does the coming of the Spirit on Christ mean that he receives "sanctification as something imported as though he does not possess it?"¹⁹⁴ Cyril's response is that one must distinguish two stages in the career of the Logos, the time before the Incarnation, and the time after the Incarnation. "Before the Incarnation he was in the form and equality of the Father, but in the time of the Incarnation he received the Spirit from heaven and was sanctified like others."¹⁹⁵ Prior to the Incarnation one could not ascribe human experiences to the son, but when he became man he experienced suffering, hunger, and for that reason he can be said to have received the Holy Spirit as did other men. Of course, Cyril then goes on to show, with the use of the Adam imagery, that there was a reason why the Spirit descended on Christ. He was the first man in whom he could once again take root and remain among human beings.

One task then of Cyril's exegesis of the NT was to provide a consistent interpretation of the many texts that had been disputed in the decades that the doctrine of the Trinity was being debated across the Church. By the time Cyril was writing most of the theological issues concerning the doctrine of the Trinity had been settled and the biblical basis for the Church's teaching was well established. Yet the Bible is not a collection of ancient texts stored in a library. It is a book that was read in the churches and the faithful continued to hear and read those texts that had been disputed in previous generations. Thus there was a continuing need for bishops to show how the Church's teaching was rooted in the Scriptures, how specific texts were to be understood in light of the Creed and the sacraments, to show how passages in one book of the Bible were related to passages in other books. Cyril's commentary on the Gospel of John is of enormous significance in the history

193. See P. Renaudin, "Le théologie de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie d'après saint Thomas," *RThom* 18 (1910): 171-84; 21 (1913): 129-36.

194. Comm. in Ioann. 1:32-33 (Pusey, 1:176).

195. Comm. in Ioann. 1:31-32 (Pusey, 1:179).

of exegesis because it is the first thoroughgoing Trinitarian interpretation of the entire Gospel.

In Cyril's day, however, a new dispute had arisen concerning the doctrine of Christ. In this controversy too appears very much the exegete (as well as polemicist), and his chief contribution to the debates was to present an overall interpretation of the NT account of Christ, particularly the things said about him in the gospels. The most important statement of Cyril's principle occurs in the fourth anathema in his third letter to Nestorius. Cyril writes: "Whoever allocates the terms contained in the gospels and apostolic writings and applied to Christ by the saints or used of himself by himself to two persons or subjects and attaches some to the man considered separately from the Word of God, some as divine to the Word of God the Father alone, shall be anathema."¹⁹⁶ What is at issue here is how one is to understand passages such as Luke 2:52, Matt 27:46, John 14:28, or Heb 3:1ff. Are they to be understood as referring to the divine Word who has become man or does one interpret them as referring solely to the human nature of Christ?

Cyril insisted that one could not understand the gospels without recognizing that all the things said of Christ are spoken about the divine Word incarnate. The Scriptures always conceive of Christ, whether depicted as Word or Son or Messiah or Lord or Jesus, as one person and one subject of predication. Whether the gospels are speaking about divine acts, e.g., healing the sick or stilling a storm, or human acts, growing in wisdom or feeling forsaken by God, all are attributed to the same subject, the divine Word who lived among human beings. In Cyril's words: "All the sayings contained in the Gospels must be referred to a single person, to the one incarnate subject of the Word. For according to the Bible there is one lord, Jesus Christ."¹⁹⁷

A good illustration of how this principle works out can be seen in the interpretation of Heb 3, in particular the phrase "made him."¹⁹⁸ Arian exegetes took these words to mean that the "son is created," hence they saw Heb 3 as an argument against the divinity of Christ. In a sermon preached on this text Nestorius sought to meet the Arian exegesis by arguing that that text does not refer to the divine Word but to the man Jesus. Immediately prior to this passage St. Paul had said that Christ is "made like his brethren in every respect." According to Nestorius, this indicates that the text refers to Jesus.

196. Ep. 17 (Third Letter to Nestorius) in Lionel R. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters* (Oxford: 1983), 30–31.

197. Wickham, 24–25.

198. On this text, see Robert L. Wilken, "Tradition, Exegesis and the Christological Controversies," *ChH* (1965): 1–23.

Does not Paul say that it is “not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham”? The “godhead” is not the seed of Abraham who suffers. This passage is to be understood in the way one interprets Luke 2:52. There we read: “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature.” Therefore, concludes Nestorius: “Humanity was anointed... not the divinity. This one [Jesus] is he who is made a faithful priest to God for he became a priest and did not exist as such from eternity.”¹⁹⁹

Cyril thought that Nestorius’ exegesis confounded the biblical account of Christ. For Cyril it is essential that the interpretation of the Bible be consistent, and it can be consistent only if one reads the Bible in the light of its overall skopos. With respect to the Gospels this means that they depict the divine Word under the conditions of human life and experience. The person presented in the gospels is a human being, but not a mere human being. Christ, according to Cyril’s interpretation, is the eternal Son sent from God. When the Scriptures speak about the human experiences of Jesus it is the the Logos who is subject of the experiences. To say, however, that Christ suffered, that he grew in wisdom, that he was abandoned by the Father cannot mean the same thing that such experiences mean for other human beings. This is why the second Adam was such a congenial way of speaking about Christ: the man whose life is depicted in the gospels is a human being like others, for he is Adam, but he is more than Adam, for he is the second Adam, a unique man among men, one who did what no other man could do. He was the man from heaven.

CONCLUSION

Cyril’s exegesis is seldom idiosyncratic. Whether he is expounding a story about Moses or one of the patriarchs, an oracle from the prophets, a theological text from St. Paul, or an incident in the life of Jesus from the gospels, his theme remains the same: the restoration of fallen humanity in Christ. One cannot read long in any of Cyril’s commentaries without coming across some form of the statement found at the end of his exposition of the “rock that was struck”: “In Christ we bloom again to newness of life.” For Cyril the renewal of all things in Christ is the central skopos of the Bible.

St. Paul provided Cyril with the key to the interpretation of the Bible. But his Paul was not the Paul of St. Augustine, the Paul of Rom 7 or Rom 9 (nor the Paul of justification by faith), it was the Paul of Rom 5, of 1 Cor 15 and of

199. See Friedrich Loofs, *Nestoriana* (Halle: 1905), 232–36.

2 Cor 5. From Paul Cyril learned to speak of the second Adam, the heavenly man, a new creation and, most of all, the centrality of the Resurrection in the biblical narrative. At the same time, the gospels, particularly the Gospel of John, offered him a concrete and nuanced portrait of what it meant for the eternal Son of God, Christ the second Adam, to live a human life. As Werner Elert once observed, “Cyril’s depiction of Christ (Christusbild) is as historical or unhistorical as that of the Gospel of John.”²⁰⁰

For Cyril the second Adam is theological reality as well as an exegetical tool. The subject of Cyril’s exegesis is never simply the text that is before him, it is always the mystery of Christ. He is less interested in understanding what Moses or Zechariah or Paul or Matthew “meant” than he is in understanding what Christ means. Exegesis is an occasion to discuss Christ as taught in the church’s creeds and worshipped in the church’s liturgy.

Christ is Cyril’s true subject matter. Yet without the Bible there is no talk of Christ. Cyril knew no way to speak of Christ than in the words of the Bible, and no way to interpret the words of the Bible than through Christ. His biblical writings are commentaries on Christ and only if one reads them in that spirit can one appreciate his significance as interpreter of the Bible.

EDITIONS

PG 69–77 = PG 69: *glaph.*, *Gn.-Dt.*, *fr. Kgs.*, *Ps.*, *fr. Sg.*; PG 70: *Is.*, *fr. Jer.*, *fg. Bar.*, *fr. Ez.*, *fr. Dn.*; PG 72: *fr. Mt.*; PG 72 and 77: *fr. Lk.*

hom. Lk 1–80: J. B. Chabot, CSCO 70 (Syriac); R. M. Tonneau, CSCO 140 (Latin).

PG 77, 981–1116 *hom. div.*

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dial. Trin. 1–7: G. M. de Durand, SC 231 (1976), 237 (1977), 246 (1978).

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XIII
ISIDORE OF PELUSIUM (CA. 355–CA. 435)

Isidore received a full rhetorical training in Pelusium, in the Nile Delta. Very possibly, he lived for some time in Alexandria where it is also possible that he belonged to the circle of the philosopher Hypatia before establishing himself in Pelusium with many students as a professional sophist. His first monastic experience led him to the desert of Nitria where the legacy of Origen still continued to foster learned forms of spiritual exegesis in contrast with the literalistic trend of Scete. Named as *didaskalos*, the official teacher in the local church of Pelusium, Isidore was probably ordained priest by Bishop Ammonios. Soon after 413, a conflict with Bishop Eusebius, the successor of Ammonios, drove him into a monastery near Pelusium where for over forty years he dedicated the rest of his life to prayer and intellectual work. For instance he copied the whole of the Bible, as well as one hundred and fifty-six writings of John Chrysostom, whom he held in great admiration. He was intensely involved as a counselor in spiritual and ethical matters, and his correspondence constitutes a corpus of two thousand letters in Greek, transmitted in numbered collections.

As an exegete, Isidore did not write any commentaries, but he taught scripture as *didaskalos* answering numerous exegetical questions in his letters. He distinguished between the obvious or literal meaning (which did not exclude traditional typology) and the deeper meaning of scripture, the mystical *theoria*, hidden in the text, only available for mystic interpreters, and occasionally calling for allegories. The elements of that exegesis, diverse and intensely pastoral, were collected for the first time by P. Éviéux (1997), from whose research the present notice derives (see also Éviéux 1995, 330–337).

The following quotations reveal something of Isidore's style and concerns: Let us discern in the prophets what is said about Christ and Solomon...we should not force the prophecies...let us understand what has been said according to the *historia* and admit what has been prophesied according to the *theoria* without pressing what has clearly been said historically, in order to see in it a *theoria*, but also without reducing to an historical meaning what obviously needs to be 'contemplated.'" (1574 = 4203; cf. 1139)

Anyone who tries to interpret the meaning of the sacred scriptures is in need of a noble and penetrating language, a pious and holy thinking: One must follow the scriptures, not precede them, nor press their meaning, in accordance with their own will. For those who dare to

falsify them or to interpret them wrongly expose themselves to a danger the more real as it concerns their very souls. (1092)

EDITIONS

PG 78.

Évieux, P.: SC 422 (1997).

TRANSLATIONS

Évieux, above.

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- . “‘Where, tell me, is the Jew...?’” Basil, Philo and Isidore of Pelusium”: *VigChr* 46 (1992) 172–89.
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XIV

PROCLUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE (D. 446)

Bishop of Constantinople in 434, Proclus “ranks among the best preachers of the Greek church in the fifth century” (but he missed his entry in the *TRE*). The identification of his homilies is still in process, their best inventory having been secured by A. Solignac (1986). Most of the homilies were delivered on liturgical feasts of Christ, while *Or.* 1, 5, and 6 are dedicated to Mary, the first on the *Theotokos* having been delivered in 428 or 429 in the presence of Nestorius. Other sermons, such as *Or.* 18, 19, 20, 25 are panegyrics. Proclus’s use of scripture is foremost a dogmatic contribution to the creedal definition of Ephesus 431, whose reception he promoted without becoming too involved in the christological controversy (Grillmeier 1979). In his *Church History* Socrates celebrated him as a peacemaker (VII 41; PG 67, 829c–932a).

CPG II, 5800–5915, critical editions and ancient versions.

EDITIONS

PG 31, 1713–21; 59, 681–881; 62, 727–30; 65, 680–850.

Amand, D.: *RBen* 58 (1948) 223–63.

Aubineau, M.: SC 187 (1972) 181–86.

Leroy, F. J., *L’homilétique de Proclus*. Rome 1967.

Rudberg, S. Y., “L’homélie pseudo-basilienne *consolatoria ad aegrotum*”: *Muséon* 72 (1959) 301–22.

Arm.: PG 65, 856–73.

ep. ad Johannem Antiochenum: PG 65, 873–77. J. M. Clément and R. Vander Plaetse: CCL 90A (1974) 231.

ep. ad Maximum deaconum: PG 65, 879–80. J. M. Clément and R. Vander Plaetse: CCL 90A (1974) 232–33.

ep. ad Domnum Antiochenum: PG 65, 881–84.

STUDIES

Aubineau, M., “Bilan d’une enquête sur les homélies de Proclus de Constantinople”: *REG* 85 (1972) 572–96.

—. “Citations de l’homélie de Proclus, *In Nativitatem Salvatoris* (CPG 5068), dans un florilège christologique des IV^e et V^e s.” *VC* 45 (1991): 209–22.

Caro, R., *La homilética mariana en el siglo V*. 3 vols.; Dayton, Ohio: 1971–1973.

Ensslin, W., “Proklos, Bischof von Konstantinopel, 434–446.” *PRE* 23:183–186.

Grillmeier, A. *Jesus Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, I (1979) 727–30.

Sauget, J. M., “Une homélie de Proclus sur l’Ascension de Notre- Seigneur”: *Muséon* 82 (1969) 5–33.

Solignac, A., “Proclus”: *DSp* 12, 2 (1986) 2374–81.

XV

HADRIAN (D. 440/450)

Hadrian has been identified with a Syrian monk and priest, one of the correspondents of Nilus of Ancyra, *CPG* III, 6043, *Epist.* II, lx; III, cxviii, cclxxi: PG 89 225. 437. 516; J. Gribomont, “La tradition manuscrite de saint Nil, I. La correspondance”: *StMon* 11 (1969) 231–267; A. Cameron, “The Authenticity of the Letters of S. Nilus of Ancyra”: *GRBS* 17 (1976) 181–196. Writing in Greek, Hadrian’s hermeneutics is marked by Antiochene influence. He expresses his thought with a stylistic precision and a consistent classification of exegetical data, as is demonstrated by his short treatise (with its modern-sounding title): *Introduction to Divine Scriptures*—Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὰς θείας γραφάς (PG 98, 1273–1312). The well-preserved text was first published by D. Hoeschel in Augsburg, 1602, and reprinted by J. Pearson in 1800, *Critici sacri* VIII. A critical edition by F. Goessling appeared in Berlin 1887.

Cassiodorus mentions Hadrian together with Tyconius, Augustine, Eucherius, and Junilius, as one of the best *introductores scriptorae divinae* (PL 70 1122). His hermeneutic is marked by Antiochene theory like that of his contemporary, Theodoret of Cyrus: “The distinctive features of Hebrew language (τοῦ Ἑβραϊκοῦ χαρακτήρος ἰδιωμάτων) are of three sorts, as found in thoughts (διάνοια), words (λέξεως), and composition (συνθέσεως).” Hadrian’s special interest in Hebrew ἰδιώματα links him with the Antiochene exegetical tradition: “Every line of Adrian can be illustrated from Theodore of Mopsuestria or Theodoret” (Bate 1923, 66). His threefold division of Hebrew terms is “Aristotelian” in the Antiochene style:

I. “*The Principle of the Distinctive Features in Thoughts.*”

“What results from thoughts is due to God’s acting as worked out by us, in good or bad; I speak about (1) members, (2) senses, (3) spiritual motions, (4) bodily movements, (5) bodily passions, (6) dispositions; or about (7) habits, (8) places, (9) dresses, (10) behavior, (11) appearance; or about (12) being alive (with flesh and soul)” (1273a). The thirteen possible anthropomorphic attributions are then illustrated by numerous scriptural quotations (1273b–77d).

II. “*Distinctive Features due to Words and Style*”

The same procedure is applied to the use of metaphors (“words”) classified in “specific phrases”—τῶν ῥηθέντων διαίρέσεως (a typical Aristotelian distinction: *Metaphysics* 4, 6, 10), as one speaks of God’s knowledge by using

the images of “eyes” or “vision”; of God’s compassion by mentioning his “ears”; of his will by calling it his “mouth,” etc. (1277d–84c): a detailed survey of anthropomorphic images found essentially in the Psalms. To these “specific phrases” are added similar examples belonging to “style” (ἐπι τῆς λέξεως) when God is said to “know,” or to “enjoy,” to “show,” to “say,” to “love” something or someone; or again when God “hides himself,” “sleeps,” feels “anger,” “punishes,” etc. (1284c–1300a).

III. *The Distinctive Features in Composition*

These distinctive features are due to “ellipsis” (κατ’ ἔλλειψιν) to the repetition of the same thing in different words (ταυτολογία) to “inversion” (ἀντιστροφή), “inversions and transpositions” (ὑπερβατὰ καὶ ὑπερθέσεις), “extension” (ἐπίτασις), or “pleonasm” (κατὰ περισσείαν). “In using these basic distinctions (ἀφορμαί) the students (σπουδαῖοι) should find in their love for learning a way and a door guiding them in their understanding of the sacred scriptures” (1301c).

CONCLUSION

The treatise ends by enumerating twenty-two figures of speech (*tropai*): metaphor, parable, comparison, synecdoche, example, metonymy, antiphrase, periphrase, recapitulation (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις) or return to the beginning, deception (ἀπόχρησις), prosopoeia, figuration, allegory, hypobole, reproof, irony, sarcasm, enigma, menace, explanation, reticence, correction. Again biblical citations illustrate the use of all of these figures of speech (1301c–09b).

In the conclusion of the treatise (1309b–12b) readers who follow the guidance offered to them in the introduction are promised to achieve a non-prejudiced and well-focused interpretation of scripture. Their care for the literal content, analyzed in all its logical connections and implications, will highlight its organic unity as a *sôma*, a “body” of discourse whose distinctive nature they would define according to the literary genre to which it belongs, be it the prophetic genre or that of Psalms, or again the literary genre of the Pentateuch (1312ab).

CPG III, 6527.

EDITIONS

PG 98, 1273–1312.

Gössling, F., *Adrians Eισαγωγή εις τὰς θείας γραφάς*. Berlin 1887.

TRANSLATIONS

German

Gössling, above.

STUDIES

- Bate, H. N., "Some Technical Terms of Greek Exegesis": *JThS* 24 (1923) 59–66.
 Mercati, G., "Pro Adriano": *RB* 11 (1914) 246–55 (= *Opere Minore* III, StT 78, Rome 1937, 383–92, with fragments of a *catena in Iob*).
 Pitra, J. B., *Analecta sacra* II. Tusculi 1884, 130–32, with additional fragments from a "chain" on Psalms.
 Schäfer, K. T., "Eisagoge": *RAC* 4 (1959) 900f.
 Schlüren, K. F., "Zu Adrianos": *JPTh* 13 (1887) 136–59.

XVI
 HESYCHIUS OF JERUSALEM
 (D. SHORTLY AFTER 450)

A monk and priest of Jerusalem, a preacher and theologian, Hesychius also became famous as a commentator on scripture. He wrote a *Commentary on Leviticus* preserved in a sixth century Latin translation, and a *Commentary on Job* handed down in an Armenian version. For Hesychius, Job was historical, but the Book of Job foreshadowed allegorically Christ and the church. On Isaiah, Hesychius produced 2680 glosses; on the minor Prophets, a set of *scholia*; and extended commentaries on the Psalms (in particular, see Pseudo-Athanasius, PG 27, 649–1344; and PG 55, 711–784, to be joined with PG 93, 1179–1340), all being preserved as fragments in *catenae*. Additional sets of Hesychius's *scholia* are transmitted on the canticles of OT and NT, on the Gospels, Acts, and the Catholic Letters. To these must be added a "Collection of Objections and Solutions" which probably epitomizes Hesychius's lost *Gospel Harmony*.

Strongly influenced by Origen in his biblical hermeneutics, Hesychius kept close to Alexandrian christology with a scriptural mindset. M. Aubineau (1978) sketches a fine picture of his exegesis: Hesychius cites scripture from memory without full consistency, as noted by Devos (Aubineau 1978, 306). He produces chosen biblical passages for apologetic vindication against the Jews (Aubineau 1978, 295–99). He scrutinizes the meaning of some scriptural phrases with insistent questions and glosses, his "commentary" taking on a questing tenor similar to what one may observe in the contemporary *De Genesi ad litteram* by Augustine. Customarily, Hesychius analyzes whole scriptural prophecies by following the text verse after verse, sometimes from one word to another, endlessly asking minute questions. Here and there he likes to couple two verses together by virtue of a common image or a same wording: "That '*concatenatio*' and the progress, step by step in the exploration of a biblical passage, are all too obvious in the panegyric of Stephen and in the whole body of Hesychius's writings, and thus serve as criteria of authenticity" (Aubineau 1978, 308). It would be worth describing more thoroughly the oratorical skills applied by Hesychius in his actualizing of OT figures; he identifies them with NT and later Christian heroes, such as Lazarus, the martyr Stephen, or Antony the Hermit.

EDITIONS

- PG 93, 1392–1560.
 Greek Menology: PG 117, 373.
 Quasten III (1950) 488–496.

STUDIES

- Aubert, R., “Hésychius de Jérusalem”: *DHGE* 24 (1993) 298–99.
- Aubineau, M., *Hésychius de Jérusalem, Basile de Séleucie, Jean de Béryte, Léonce de Constantinople. Homélie Pascales* (Cinq homélie inédites), SC 187. Paris 1972.
- . *Les Homélie Festales d’Hésychius de Jérusalem*. Vol. I: Les homélie I–XV (Subs. Hag., 59). Brussels 1978; Vol. II: Les homélie XVI–XXI (apocryphal or of dubious authenticity) 1980.
- . *Index verborum Homiliarum Festalium Hesychii Hierosolymitani*. Hildesheim-Zurich 1983.
- . “Hésychius redivivus, un prédicateur hiérosolymitain de la première moitié du V^e siècle.” *FZPhTh* 28 (1981): 253–70.
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- Duval, Y.-M., ed., *Gloses sur le prophète Jonas: Le Livre de Jonas dans la littérature grecque et latine*, II. Paris 1973, 629–45.
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- , “Mélanges d’homilétique byzantine I Hésychius et Chrysippe de Jérusalem”: *RHE* 35 (1939) 54–60.
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XVII
NONNOS OF PANOPOLIS
(CA. 400–AFTER 450)

Nonnos, originally from Panopolis in Upper Egypt was a poet and Christian exegete. His epic poem in forty-eight books! (“the longest extant Greek epic,” Quasten III, 115), *Dionysiaca*, was written in Alexandria between 440 and 451. Soon after, Nonnos composed a *Paraphrase of St. John’s Gospel*, again in an epic form, repeatedly calling Mary the *Theotokos* with Monophysite overtones, and quoting Origen, Gregory Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, and Cyril of Alexandria. His probable goal was to realize a synthesis of classical soteriology, as embodied by Dionysius, and of Christian soteriology, centered on the Alexandrian figure of Logos-Christ with slight traces of Neoplatonism. Livrea (1987) identified the poet with the bishop of Edessa, a strong defender of orthodoxy at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, and the main force behind the conversion of Pelagia. That identification seems highly improbable.

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XVIII

AELIA EUDOCIA (CA. 400–460)

About thirty manuscripts transmit *Homeric Centones* under the names Patrikios, Aelia Eudocia, Optimus, and Cosmas of Jerusalem. Patrikios remains unknown. His contribution may have preceeded that of Eudocia, who married Emperor Theodosius II in 421. In 440 or 441, she left Constantinople in disgrace and she spent the rest of her life in Jerusalem where she died in 460. In addition to a vast building programme, her imperial patronage resulted in the literary production of small “centones” probably written during the decade before the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Her Christian poems, paraphrasing Gospel narratives were exclusively composed with versified elements of Homeric poetry. “It is safe to say that no one would ever have heard of so minor a poet as Eudocia if she had not become Empress” (Cameron 1982, 279). On the other hand, Photius (*cod.* 183) admired her work for its clarity and its pedagogical value. In the ecclesiastical turmoil around the controverted teaching of Nestorius and Eutyches, Eudocia, shifting from one party to another, focused in her poetry on popular education and on freeing the education of children from pagan models. Another author mentioned in one of the manuscripts of *Centones*, Optimus the Philosopher, escapes identification. The fourth author in the title of the ms. *Parisinus suppl. gr* 388, Cosmas “of Jerusalem,” may have lived as late as the eighth century (Rey 1998, 39–59).

The *Homerocentra* develop the economy of salvation as a central theme, an economy fulfilled through the incarnation of Christ whose life and passion are narrated until the Ascension, when he returns to the heavens in which he was with the Father during the opening dialogue of the work. Hence the text contains essentially topics from the Gospels (with a complement from the *Proto-Gospel of James*), not from Acts, nor from the Epistles or the Apocalypse. Beyond the canonical models, some links with some apocryphal sources may be guessed, in particular about Christ’s descent into Shoel (Rey 1998, 64).

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XIX
THEODORET OF CYRUS (CA. 393–458)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Jean-Noël Guinot

I. THEODORET AND SCRIPTURE

1. Formative Years

a) *From infancy to adulthood (393–416)*. Theodoret was probably born in 393, in the vicinity of Antioch, of a Christian family of wealthy landowners. Consecrated to God even before his birth, which came about miraculously, as he tells us himself in the *Philothea History*, thanks to the prayers of the Hermit Macedonios, he received undoubtedly from his mother before his first Christian education, an early initiation into Scripture, of which we can get an idea from John Chrysostom's treatise, *On Vainglory and the Education of Youth*.²⁰¹ From his earliest years he accompanied this very pious mother in frequent visits she made to the solitaries around Antioch, of whose lives he will later come to write (*Rel. Hist.* IX, 4). Of these unusual men scripture was very often the only book and the whole of their culture. If they sometimes took the child on their knees while giving him bread or grapes to eat (*Hist. Phil.* IX, 4), we can imagine their recounting to him this or that biblical story, to instruct or delight him, and making him taste already the beauty of the psalms. The liturgy, in which he participated with his parents, must have made him familiar little by little with many scriptural texts, and if he did not understand everything in the homilies explaining them he could count on his mother's or father's explanations once they had all returned home. In any case, very early, around the age of sixteen, he exercised the functions of lector, a fact that would tend to prove that he already had a good knowledge of the scriptures (*Hist. Phil.* XII, 4). This man who makes only rare disclosures about his secular and religious upbringing nevertheless declares in the preface of his *Commentary on Daniel* that he has been nourished on scripture from his

201. In this treatise (SC 188), the author especially urges parents to tell their children edifying stories drawn from Scripture and adapted to their capabilities (# 39), and to bring them to church where they can hear these stories anew and recognize them (# 41); in this way Scripture will become familiar to them.

early youth (*paidothen*) and has entered into its meaning with the help of the commentaries of the Fathers that he was able to read (PG 81, 1257 A). On this point we should be inclined to trust him.

b) *The Monastic Experience (416–423)*. Theodoret's knowledge of scripture and training as a future exegete, due to the reading of patristic commentaries, were undoubtedly acquired during the eight or ten years which he spent in a monastery of Apamene at Nikertai (*ep. 80, p. 90 and 81, p. 196*). It was there that he withdrew at the death of his parents, after he had sold all his goods and renounced the world (*ep. 113, p. 66*), and it was there that he will wish to return at the time of his exile after his deposition (*ep. 119, p. 80*). If many hermits and monks were unlearned, the reading and explanation of scripture constituted for others an important activity.²⁰² This seems to have been the case in the monastery where Theodoret stayed before his accession to the episcopate.²⁰³ Moreover, the short distance between Nikertai and Apamea allowed frequent encounters during those years with the bishop of the place, Polychronios (d. before 431), the brother of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and like him an exegete of renown. Without going so far as to say that Theodoret owes him his vocation as an exegete, we might venture that he could have found in this representative of the exegesis of Antioch a first "master." We are reduced to suppositions about this, but Theodoret's stay in his monastery of Nikertai was undoubtedly a period of intense intellectual activity which helped him to acquire the vast culture and erudition to which most of his works give witness. This very likely explains his nomination as bishop of Cyrus in 423 at the age of thirty.

2. *The Exegetical Work*

The first years of his episcopate were, it seems, especially devoted to fighting against the numerous heretics of his diocese, Arians for the most part, but also Marcionites and Manicheans. By preaching, controversy, and the writ-

202. Certain monks were completely without learning and even seem not to have anything but the slightest acquaintance with the Scriptures, such as that Macedonios whom Theodoret frequently visited with his mother (*Hist. Phil. XIII, 8*). Others, in contrast, spent a great portion of their time in reciting the psalms (*ibid., II; XVII, 6*), in reading the Scriptures, even at night (*ibid. III, 6*), even in commenting on obscure passages in them (*ibid., IV, 6*). Certain ones were learned enough to be able to exchange with Theodoret "long conversations about philosophy" (*ibid., XX, 3*) or, as James to assist at a council (*ibid., I, 10*).

203. Cf. *Hist. Phil. III, 4*. On this see P. Canivet, *MST # 27*, p. 60 and *passim* for everything that concerns that period of the life of Theodoret.

ing of numerous polemical treatises, now lost, Theodoret declares that he has succeeded in a few years in bringing all these Christians to orthodoxy (*ep.* 13, 62ff.). Biblical exegesis must certainly have had a large place in these dogmatic controversies, each one likely using scriptural florilegia and trying to prove to the other the falseness of his interpretation. In any case, the commentaries of Theodoret attest that the heretics themselves called on a certain number of scriptural passages on which to base their conceptions. And it is above all to these contested verses that the exegete is solicitous to give an orthodox interpretation, either in destroying in advance any other interpretation, or in a more openly polemical manner in showing that the reading made by the heretics is tinged with dishonesty or fallaciousness. The odds are strongly in favor that in these first treatises against Arian, Macedonian, or Apollinarian heretics, he invited his adversaries to a close examination of the inspired text, the choice of terms or the order of the words, exactly as he does in his commentaries.

Shortly after these various polemical writings, Theodoret wrote an important treatise on the Trinity and the Incarnation,²⁰⁴ a sensitive subject on the eve of the Nestorian crisis and of the confrontation of the Easterners with Cyril of Alexandria at the council of Ephesus (431). There also the argumentation passes through a close examination of a certain number of scriptural texts, especially of the Gospel of Luke and the Epistle to the Hebrews. Up to the Act of Union (433), of which he was one of the principal architects along with Andrew of Samosata, Theodoret is mobilized by this conflict. This is one of the reasons leading to assigning to after 431 the redaction of all his exegetical commentaries. This is not to say that he did not collect before this date the material for certain of their number. He could for some time—during the years spent at Nikertai—have accumulated notes, put together documentation, assembled “files.” Still, it is doubtful that any of these commentaries had seen the light of day before the council of Ephesus. The chief argument in favor of a date later than 431 is drawn from internal criticism and rests on an examination of the Christological vocabulary: after the council of Ephesus, as has been well shown by M. Richard,²⁰⁵

204. Long attributed to Cyril of Alexandria and published among his works by Cardinal A. Mai, and reproduced by Migne (PG 75), this treatise has been restored to Theodoret in a definitive way by E. Schwartz, *Zur Schriftstellerei Theodorets*, Munich, 1922; see M. Richard, “Les citations de Théodoret conservées dans la chaîne de Nicéas sur l’évangile selon saint Luc,” *RB* 43 (1934): 88–96 (= *Opera Minora* II, n. 43).

205. M. Richard, “Notes sur l’évolution doctrinale.”

Theodoret seems, in fact, to have given up using a concrete vocabulary to designate the two natures of Christ, which could lend credit to the idea that he distinguished two persons in him: God and man. Thus the doctrinal debate in which he was engaged with Cyril would have progressively led him to recognize the ambiguity of this formulation and abandon it in exclusive favor of abstract formulas, which were themselves well familiar to him since before the council of Ephesus.

From the indications drawn from his commentaries, it appears that he explained successively the *Song of Songs*, the prophecies of Daniel, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets, the *Psalter* and the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. He would like to have begun his exegetical career with an explanation of the *Psalter*, he confesses in the preface to his commentary, for the very reason of the place held by the psalms in the Christian life, that of laypeople as that of monks. This would have been to follow in this the example of Theodore of Mopsuestia,²⁰⁶ and perhaps that of Diodore. But, if we are to believe him, various requests or friendly pressures obliged him to put off this project and to devote himself first to other commentaries of the OT:

I had the wish to interpret the prophecy of the great David before the other divine oracles, for the children of piety, whether they live in the city or the country, are especially attentive to this prophecy. Especially those who have embraced the monastic life have it day and night on their lips.... But this wish that was ours did not find its achievement: those who asked us about the interpretation of the other divine scriptures did not allow it. In fact, some entreated for an explanation of the *Song of Songs*, others desired to know the prophecy of "the man of desires;" others endeavored to have presented to them clearly and limpidly the predictions of the inspired Ezekiel, and others those of the twelve prophets, which are wrapped in obscurity. And now that the God of the universe...has allowed us to complete in full the interpretation of these divine books whose author he is, let us proceed! Let us call on the divine grace...and approach as well this prophecy with confidence! (PG 80, 860 AB)

The four commentaries composed before that of the *Psalter*, referred to in this preface, were likely composed in the order mentioned. It is certain, in turn, that the *Commentary on Daniel* was the first of all Theodoret's commentaries on the prophets, since its preface justifies a choice which might

206. We know from Theodore himself that his commentary on the psalms was his first work of exegesis, cf. Facundus of Hermiane, *Pro defensione trium capitulorum* III, 6, #13-14 (CCSL 90 A, p. 96).

be surprising, in the measure that it was the rule in the east to begin with an explanation of the minor prophets and then to follow the order of the Greek Bible (PG 81, 1257 D–1260 A). We also know for sure that his *Commentary on Jeremiah* completes his exegesis of the prophetic writings (PG 81, 805 B), and was preceded by the *Commentary on Isaiah* (*In Is. praef.*, 35–36).

If the preface of the *In Psal.* is to be believed, Theodoret would have written the majority of these commentaries to answer the requests addressed to him by friends desirous of penetrating the meaning of the scriptures. Certainly the reason advanced was not purely rhetorical, since the *Commentary on the Canticle* was in fact requested by Bishop John of Germanicia (PG 81, 28 AB), and the *Quaestiones* by a certain Hypatios (FM I, p. 3, 4 s.; FM II, p. 3, 7ff.), but it would nevertheless be imprudent to make this the only justification for his undertaking. Should we really believe Theodoret when he states that he had no intention of commenting on the prophecy of Jeremiah because of its clarity, and only yielded in the end to the express demands of some friends (PG 81, 496 A)? We are allowed to doubt that this was the only reason that pushed him to undertake this work. At the end of the preface of the *Commentary on Isaiah*, while noting that he has up to that point explained all the prophets with the exception of Jeremiah, does he not indicate, in fact, that his intention is to complete this cycle of prophetic commentaries (*In Is. praef.*, 35–36)? And does he not have any satisfaction in being able to say, at the end of the *In Jer.*, that with this work he “left no prophecy without a commentary” (PG 81, 805 B)? Thus in the manner of many other exegetes who preceded him, there is scarcely any doubt that Theodoret wanted to give a complete interpretation of the prophetic cycle.

Of the other OT books he has given no formal commentaries; but in the last years of his life, perhaps after the council of Chalcedon (451), at the request of his “very dear son Hypatios,” he drew up a series of *Questions on Scripture*, intending to explain certain difficult passages of the *Octateuch*, then *Kings* and *Chronicles*. This work is the only one of his exegetical writings to mention his *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul* (*Quaest. in Lev. 1, FM I, p. 151, 4–5*), considered for that reason as subsequent to his commentaries on the OT. It is very regrettable that we cannot date with more exactness the two letters he addresses to an anonymous correspondent to whom he had sent his commentary on Paul to look over and whom he thanks for having found some merit in his work (*ep. 1 and 2*). On the other hand, two other letters of the same collection (*ep. 82 and 113*), which can be dated with greater certitude, allow us to affirm that at the end of the year 448, Theodoret had finished the redaction of all his commentaries, with the exception of the *Quaestiones*. So that he might present them as manifest proof of an

orthodoxy which is not occasional or dictated by fear, these commentaries, including the one on the epistles of Paul, had to be in circulation for some time. Between 431 and 447/448, Theodoret probably composed the greater part of his exegetical work. We cannot be more precise than this. The indications provided by correspondence are hard to interpret. In his *Letter* 82 to Eusebius of Ancyra, Theodoret can very well list his works by declaring that some were written before the council of Ephesus and others after, “up to twelve years,” and to try in his *Letter* 113 to Pope Leo to specify the number of years elapsed since their redaction, but every attempt to establish an exact correspondance between the works mentioned and these bits of chronology can be very chancy: the order and content of the enumeration varies from one letter to another, and the mention of the number of years aims above all to establish the antiquity of his orthodoxy. It does not seem that we can accord any more credibility to the numbered estimate given by two commentaries²⁰⁷ of the time elapsed since the destruction of the Temple up to their redaction: the dates we arrive at would contradict the testimony of the correspondence and oblige us to extend too far the life of Theodore, who died probably in 459–460.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, we may receive more help from the probable allusions, in his *Commentary on Ezekiel* (PG 81, 1204 BC), to the attack of the Huns against the empire in 434, and in his *Commentary on the Psalms* (PG 80, 977 BC), to the invasion of the Persians in 441.²⁰⁹ If we accept this outlook, these commentaries would thus be respectively subsequent to these two dates. Consequently, the interpretation of the *Canticle*, the prophecies of Daniel, Ezekiel, and the minor prophets would fit in between 431 and 441; that of the *Psalter*, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the epistles of Paul, would form between 441 and 448 a second group of commentaries, the exegete’s career finishing off with the *Quaestiones* after 451, at a time when he declares himself to be weakened by sickness and age (FM I, p. 3, 5–6).

Naturally, the place accorded by Theodoret to scripture cannot be limited to his exegetical works alone. In fact, he never ceases to invoke its authority

207. *In Is.* 19, 233–234 and *Quaest. in Deut.* (FM I, p. 257, 6); another estimate of the same type is found in *In Dan.* (PG 81, 1472 A and 1485 B). Each of these datings would lead us to place the death of Theodoret around 470.

208. See Y. Azéma, “Sur la date de la mort de Théodoret de Cyr,” *Pallas* 31 (1984): 137–55.

209. See on this matter J.-N. Guinot, *L’Exégèse de Théodoret*, 54–57; M. Brok, “Touchant la date du *Commentaire sur le Psautier* de Théodoret de Cyr,” *RHE* 44 (1949): 552–56.

and to base his argumentation on it, whether as apologist with his *Therapeutic for Greek Illnesses* or as theologian with his treatise *On the Trinity and the Incarnation* or as polemicist with the *Eranistes*.

II. THE EXEGETICAL HERITAGE OF THEODORET

Like his contemporary Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret is one of the last great exegetes of the Greek language; after them comes the time of compilers and makers of *catenas*. On the basis of that fact he is the heir of a long tradition of scriptural interpretation, and his commentaries owe much to those of his predecessors. In general he does not seek to hide his borrowings; instead, he lays claim to that patristic heritage as his own, both to silence those who would reproach him for the little personal inventiveness he shows, or who would accuse him of plagiarism, and by the same token to situate his exegesis in the grain of a patristic tradition which confers legitimacy (*In Cant.*, PG 81, 48C). Without any doubt he brings in a good bit of rhetoric in the humility of his prefatory declarations, and for having forgotten it rather quickly, certain people have seen in Theodoret only a pallid imitator of the exegetes who preceded him. Still, even in the prefaces which contribute the most to forward this idea, his commentaries on the twelve minor prophets or the *Epistles* of Paul, Theodoret strives to justify his undertaking and to give reasons which led him to offer an explanation of these texts after so many others had done so.²¹⁰ He does this with all the more reason and with greater polemical force in the preface of his commentaries on the *Canticle* and the *Psalter*.²¹¹ Naturally, as with all the ancients, he never openly discloses his sources, and if he is dealing with the interpretation of other exegetes to contest it or to take it up for his own purposes he always uses the indefinite pronoun *tines* ("certain ones," "some"). This conventional plural should not deceive us: each *tines* ordinarily refers to a single exegete. Moreover, these

210. Cf. PG 81, 1545 B-1548 D and PG 82, 36 A-37 B: each one has to bring his stone in the construction of the building and benefits from the light of the Spirit for this; the wish to give in a single book the commentary on all the minor prophets and of the Apostle, in the measure where brevity can seduce even the most indolent readers.

211. In the preface of *In Cant.* (PG 81, 29-32) he intends to contest the opinion of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of those like him who refuse any inspired character to the *Canticle*, and in the preface of *In Psal.* (PG 80, 860 C) he opposes the exclusively or interpretation of Diodore and of Theodore.

models can also make him know the interpretation of other exegetes and dispense him from having recourse to the original: the *tines* then is nothing but a second-hand reference. As this type of reference is relatively frequent in his commentaries and it is possible in many cases to identify with certitude the exegete whose interpretation Theodoret is reporting, we can arrive at a rather exact idea of his readings and of his method of work.

1. *The Heritage of the Old Antiochians*

From the evidence he must have consulted first of all the commentaries of the great exegetes of Antioch and to have formed himself in their school. His monastery of Nikertai probably possessed the works of Diodore of Tarsus, the master of Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom, and it would be surprising if Polychronios of Apamea did not speak of him, if in fact they were in contact during this period. Did he ever meet Theodore, whose reputation as an exegete was so great in the east that he was surnamed "The Interpreter?" It is not certain, even if the chronology presents no problem. But books circulated, and great care was taken very early to preserve the work of these masters of Antiochian exegesis.

We have only to compare the preface of the commentary of Theodoret *On the Psalms* with that of Diodore to realize that he has the latter's commentary before his eyes and that his exegetical choices proceed in part from the critical reading that he is making of it.²¹² With regard to the master's interpretation his dependence is in any case much less than that of Theodore, whose commentary he may well also have consulted, even if as the author admits this youthful work was still very imperfect;²¹³ on the other hand, it is certain that he is using Theodore's commentary when he puts together his own on the twelve minor prophets, since he contests many of his OT interpretations. Certain indications of the same nature allow us to think that he also read his commentaries on the four great prophets, but their disappearance prevents us today from having indisputable proof of this.²¹⁴ But we

212. See our article, "L'In Psalms de Théodoret."

213. The judgment of Theodore of Mopsuestia on this first commentary is known to us through Facundus of Hermiane (see n. 6); cf. *Le Commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes (I-LXXX)*, Vatican City 1939, ed. R. Devreesse, p. IX.

214. In the same way, we think, there is an evident kinship between his rejection of the Judaizing interpretations of Theodore in his *In XII proph.* and also of the same type of interpretation in his *In Is.*; see our study, "La cristallisation d'un différend," 542-45.

can establish for sure that his *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul* is largely dependent on the interpretations of Theodore and of John Chrysostom,²¹⁵ of whom he modestly calls himself a pale emulator and whom he deems with admiration, “the torches of the universe:”

I know that I will not escape slanderous tongues when I undertake to interpret the teaching of the divine Paul; rather I may be accused of conceit and boldness when I dare to approach in the wake of the torches of the universe the interpretation of the Apostle. Still, I will set out, not trusting in my own strength but imploring the help of divine grace, to bring out the depth of the Apostle’s wisdom and to strip away the veils of the letter from it in order to offer to those who wish to have a share in it the benefit which is already there.... Thus there is nothing incongruous for us too, like mosquitoes in company with those wonderful bees, to make the apostolic meadows echo with buzzing. (PG 82, 36A–37A)

Finally, even though the preface of his *Questions on Scripture* acknowledges no borrowing, it is clear that the *Questions* of Diodore are here his main source of information, as those of Eusebius of Emesa were for the latter. The Antiochian anchorage of Theodoret’s exegesis is thus manifest. If the way in which he contests on certain points the exegesis of his predecessors is often the most evident sign that he had read their commentaries, we measure as well, each time the comparison is possible, everything his interpretation owes to theirs, and especially through them the knowledge of other exegeses.

2. *The heritage of Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea*

Nevertheless, Theodoret was not content with second-hand information provided to him by Antiochian commentaries to which he had access. In the preface to his *Commentary on the Psalms* he declares, in fact, that he sought to know different forms of exegesis and read, besides the too narrowly historical commentaries of his Antiochian masters, other commentaries excessively given over to allegory (PG 80, 860C). Those of Origen come immediately to mind. But is it very reasonable to think that someone who is Antiochian in training, warned against Alexandrian allegory, and Origen’s in particular, could have succeeded after many difficulties in procuring the voluminous

215. This dependence of Theodoret on Theodore and John Chrysostom is well proven by the numerous connections brought out by H. B. Swete in his edition of Theodore’s commentaries on the Pauline letters (*In epistolas b. Pauli commentarii*, Cambridge, 1880–1882); see also our study, *L’Exégèse de Théodoret*, p. 644ff.

commentaries of Origen on the *Psalter* or the prophets? We do not believe this. The single case where we can verify a close connection between Origen's interpretation and Theodoret's is that of the *Song of Songs*:²¹⁶ and here we can emphasize that Theodoret completely separates from Origen by refusing to recognize any literal sense whatever to the *Song*, surely an irony for an Antiochian. But the case of the *Song* is perhaps a special one to the extent that Origen's exegesis settled for subsequent patristic tradition a symbolic and mystical interpretation which could be challenged only by as independent a mind as Theodore of Mopsuestia knew how to be. In any case, in what concerns the other commentaries, no possible comparisons with Origen allow us to believe that Theodoret ever held in his hands the former's commentaries or homilies.²¹⁷ If he echoes an interpretation of Origen he probably knows it only indirectly, thanks sometimes to his Antiochian models who most often contest it, but especially to Eusebius of Caesarea, whose commentaries seem to have exerted a great influence on him, and to a certain extent as a counterbalance to theirs.

This influence of Eusebius is verified especially in the commentaries *On Isaiah* and *On the Psalms*. It is a good bet that the commentaries on the *Psalter*, which Theodoret claims to have read and whose excessive allegory he deplores, can be traced to that of Eusebius and what he makes him learn of Origen's interpretation. Of no importance is the fact that in this commentary the place accorded by Eusebius to the allegorical reading is not at all excessive and that the attention focused on the letter of the text is even greater than in his previous exegetical works.²¹⁸ An exegete who comes from the orbit of Antioch is expected to denounce the allegory of the Alexandrians, especially if he intends, like Theodoret, to contest above all the OT exegesis of the *Psalter* given by the great representatives of Antiochian exegesis. Such declarations cannot make us doubt the debt he owes Eusebius, whose *Commentary on Isaiah* he also made use of, even if the preface of his commentary makes no mention of the exegesis of his predecessors. Now in this case again, Eusebius is aided by Origen's commentary to compose his own, as is proved by many exact references to the Alexandrian's work.²¹⁹ Finally, it

216. See M. Simonetti, "Teodoreto e Origene sul *Cantico dei Cantici*."

217. See our article, "Théodoret a-t-il lu les homélies d'Origène sur l'Ancien Testament?" and our study, *L'Exégèse de Théodoret*, 207ff.

218. On this point see C. Curti, "La terminologia esegetica nei *Commentarii in Psalmos* di Eusebio di Cesarea," in *La Terminologia esegetica nell'antichità*, Bari 1987, 79–99.

219. In reference to the text of Isaiah Eusebius mentions in particular the place

is also from Eusebius and his *Demonstratio evangelica* that Theodoret most certainly borrows a large part of his argumentation and his information to explain the prophecy of the “70 weeks” (Dn 9, 24–27) in his *Commentary on Daniel*.²²⁰ He also undoubtedly finds in his *Chronicle* and his *Onomasticon* more than one precious bit of information for the explication of the scriptural text. Thus his frequent resorting to the work of Eusebius seems to have played an important role in his hermeneutical practice and more broadly in the working out of the larger orientations of his exegesis.

3. Other sources

Beyond the commentaries of Eusebius and those of his masters of Antiochian exegesis, especially Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, but also John Chrysostom, it is possible that Theodoret went from time to time to draw from other wells. Thus his correspondence (*ep.* 83) furnishes us with the proof that he read the writing of Cyril *On the Scapegoat*, and that his own interpretation of the rite in his *Quaestiones* bears the trace of this reading.²²¹ The Nestorian crisis, inducing the two protagonists to a reciprocal examination of their writings on the doctrinal level, allows us to think that his contact with Cyril’s exegesis could have been very broad. However, the links of dependence that can be glimpsed between their commentaries on Isaiah or the minor prophets are neither very numerous nor very close. The fullness of Cyril’s commentaries, notably on the minor prophets, was very likely little suited to Theodoret’s taste. On the other hand while his interpretation sometimes seems to approach that of Didymus the Blind, Eusebius of Emesa, Severian of Gabala, or even that of Jerome, it is difficult to believe in direct borrowings. Finally we can add that he could have made use of Flavius Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*, notably at the time of the redaction of his *Quaestiones*. This cannot be stated for certain for in his *Commentary on Daniel* everything seems to indicate that his references to the work of Josephus are second hand, borrowed from the *Demonstration* of Eusebius.²²²

In the majority of cases Theodoret likely uses only one or two models: a commentary of Diodore or Theodore, or another of Eusebius of Caesarea. It is through them that he comes to know other exegeses which dispense

where the different tomes of Origen’s commentary left off; see Eusebius, *Der Jesajakommentar*, ed. J. Ziegler, Eus. Werke IX, 1975, Introd., XXXII–XXXIV.

220. See our article, “Théodoret imitateur d’Eusèbe.”

221. See our article, “Lexégèse du bouc émissaire.”

222. See our article, “Théodoret imitateur d’Eusèbe,” 302ff.

him from having to consult numerous commentaries, a process both difficult and onerous.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE EXEGETICAL METHOD

1. *The method in operation*

In the fifth century, Theodoret certainly did not have to invent an exegetical method. To explain scripture by scripture, as to explain Homer by Homer, had long been a recognized hermeneutical principle affirmed from Antioch to Alexandria.²²³ With Origen and all the exegetes on the strong authority of Paul (2 Tm 3:16), Theodoret considers scripture as wholly inspired: everything in it has a meaning, nothing in it is without usefulness, everything is moral and bearer of a salutary teaching, everything in it is coherent beyond apparent contradictions. Within the commentary the role of the quotations is precisely to bring out this coherence—"the symphony of the scriptures"—as well as to explain a difficult verse with the help of illuminating parallels. As the work of a single Spirit the unity of scripture, Old and New Testaments, is therefore a presupposition which governs its whole interpretation. He is no less aware that the setting up of the prophetic collections has sometimes upset the primitive order of the oracles and scrambled the chronology. This is especially true in the case of the *Psalter* (PG 80, 865 A) or the *Epistles* of Paul:

The blessed Paul wrote fourteen epistles, but the order they take up in the books was not determined by him, in my opinion. In the same way, the divine David composed the holy psalms under the sway of the inspiration he had received from the most holy Spirit, but it was other persons who put them together later on as they saw fit. They surely give out the good spiritual odor, but do not respect chronological order. In the same way is this the case, as we can see, that the epistles of the Apostle in question were collected. (PG 82, 37 B)

Thus it is the task of the exegete to take into account this work of the "editors" to bring out, beyond an apparent disorder, the *akolouthia* of scripture and in this way to shut the mouths of its detractors who emphasize its incoherences.

223. See A. Viciano, "Homerom ex Homero saphenizein. Principios hermenéuticos de Teodoreto de Ciro en su comentario a las epistolas paulinas," *ScrTh* 21 (1989), 13–61; C. Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese*, Cologne and Bonn 1974, 159–60.

This said, while recognizing that the flow of ideas in the prophetic discourse does not always adopt a logical order and that its structure is freer than any narrative text, he generally refuses to lay this lack of logic to the prophet's account or seek to justify the order adopted. When two prophecies do not seem to have any link between them despite their proximity, as in *Is* 51:4–16 the announcement of the new law, the Gospel, immediately followed by the prediction of the return to Babylon, the responsibility for this incongruity falls on the editors of Isaiah and not on the prophet:

We should know that these announcements were not made at the same time, but that the former date from a certain time and the latter from another, and they were brought together later on to form a single book. (*In Is.* 16, 248–251)

Correspondingly, we should not be surprised of the presence in *Is* 2:1 of a second preamble which seems to repeat the one in *Is* 1:1; it is only the sign that the two revelations happened at two different times (*In Is* 2, 3–6). In the same way, we should not consider chapters 36–39 of *Isaiah* as adventitious on the basis that the account of Sennacherib's invasion and the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem can also be read in the fourth book of *Kings*. By including this narration of events in his prophecy, the prophet wants to underscore the truthful character of all his oracles: "Just as the declarations related to Sennacherib ended in being fulfilled, all the other prophecies that he uttered will be equally brought to their realization" (*In Is* 11, 5–17). This definitively conveys a profoundly unitary conception of scripture which Theodoret shares in fact with the whole of the patristic tradition and which obviously forbids him from imagining that Isaiah cannot help but be the single author of the prophecy that bears his name, or Moses that of the *Pentateuch*. Likewise, David's ascription of all the psalms is in his eyes the most likely hypothesis, whatever Origen or Eusebius may have said; but if he shows himself to be less categorical on this point than Diodore it is because he judges such a discussion as decidedly secondary, since their one and veritable author is the Holy Spirit (PG 80, 861 C). This explains the respect he has for the text of scripture in the LXX translation, which he regards as inspired as is the original. Certainly it happens that he notices some awkward renderings of the Hebrew, the consequence of the translators' too scrupulous fidelity to their model, or mistakes due to copyists.²²⁴ But when his version

224. On these renderings of the Hebrew as a source of obscurity cf. *In Cant.*, PG 81, 120 AB); *Quaest. in Reg., praef.*, FM II, p. 3, 8–11. Only on three occasions does Theodoret bring out or presume material mistakes due to the negligence of copyists: *In Ion.* PG 81, 1733 CD; *Quaest. in I Reg.* 59 and *in II Reg.* 23, FM II, p. 53, 7–12; 84, 15–17.

of the LXX presents an obscure or perplexing text, even different from that of other versions, he tries every time to justify it, to explain it and show its coherence with the setting in which it fits. Also, he judges as blasphemous the attitude of those who would dare to add or subtract anything at all to or from it, even to correct it. For the same reason, to contest the inspired character of the *Song* under the pretext that it makes use of a profane and erotic vocabulary is to his eyes “to give evidence of audacity” with regard to the Holy Spirit, who is its inspirer (PG 81, 32 A). It seems almost equally temerarious to suspect the validity of the titles of the psalms, for this is to call into question the status of the inspired text which the LXX enjoys:

But since certain ones have even declared deceitful the titles of the psalms, I think it is necessary to express myself briefly on this subject as well. For my part I think it is temerarious to reject the titles, which go back to the origin, to the time of Ptolemy, who reigned over Egypt after Alexander, and that all the seventy ancients translated into Greek as they did also for the rest of divine Scripture. Moreover, one hundred and fifty years before their translation the admirable Ezra, filled with divine grace, reworked the holy books of which the carelessness of the Jews and the impiety of the Babylonians had previously carried away into disappearance. Now if this latter, under the most holy Spirit’s working, restored these to memory, and if the former, surely enjoying divine inspiration, rendered them into Greek and also translated the titles as well as the rest of the divine scriptures, I think it is to prove one’s temerity and extreme audacity to declare them to be counterfeit and to presume that one’s own opinions have more of wisdom than the active power of the Spirit. (PG 80, 861D–864B)

To recognize in scripture the status of inspired text in each of its parts implies therefore a certain number of presuppositions of reading that Theodoret shares with the whole of the patristic tradition, but which yet lead him sometimes to contest interpretations which tend, in his view, to call this inspiraion into question.

The primacy given to the literal sense

This said, the Antiochian milieu where his formation took place made him particularly attentive to the letter of the text and to its historical dimension, and by the same token cautioned him away from the allegory of the Alexandrians. If he condemns its abuse in certain exegetes, especially in the preface to his *In Psal.*, he yet does it with less virulence than a Diodore of Tarsus and especially, it seems, to emphasize that he belongs to the “school of

Antioch,” at the very moment where he is challenging the exegesis, too literal in his eyes, of his Antiochian masters.²²⁵ Nevertheless, he remains basically faithful to the historical-literal method which guides their interpretation. Like them, he focuses first of all on the letter of the text, to the punctuation, sometimes even to the accentuation, at the way of arranging the verses, or joining the stichs, and generally of everything that constitutes the schema of the text, that is, its literary structure, the type of discourse used, the style or tone adopted by the sacred author. What are we dealing with, an organized historical account or a prophetic oracle, with the breaks and the mixture of perspectives proper to it? Ought we to read this verse in the declarative or in the interrogative mode, interpret this ambiguous grammatical particle (*mè*) as the mark of negation or interrogation? Is the prophet expressing himself in the tone of irony, or reproach, or of exhortation? These are so many questions that the exegete attempts to resolve to guide his reader in the deciphering of a sometimes difficult or obscure text.

To arrive at that point, he has to proceed to a meticulous grammatical examination of the text, appeal to etymology or semantics to nail down the exact meaning of a word, distinguish homonyms, give the definition of rare or technical terms and also those which have dropped out of current usage. He also has to call attention to and explain a certain number of twists proper to the language of the LXX or of Paul, considered as “idioms” (*idioma*)—that is, Hebraisms rendered into Greek by the translators—or simply as a stylistic “habit” (*ethos*). Thus this is the case, for example, in the LXX with the enallage of verbal tenses by virtue of which a past can have the value of a future or, less frequently, a future that of a past, or else of the particular value that affects certain temporal or final conjunctions in Paul. An unusual syntactical turn, a difficult construction, an abrupt change of subject, a rule of agreement not respected, a repetition, an apparent contradiction—all hold the exegete’s attention, not only because he seeks to render more immediately intelligible the text on which he is commenting, but because this analysis of the letter allows him more than once to determine the purpose (*skopos*) of the scriptural text, to draw argument from it against heretics, or to base a dogmatic statement on it. And so it is not without interest in order to combat Arian positions to draw attention to the use Paul makes of the prepositions *dia* and *ex*:

Moreover he (Paul) teaches us at the same time that he is making an indistinct use of the prepositions. Here (*I Cor* 1:1), in fact, he is using in speaking of the Father the preposition “by whom” (*di’hou*), that the

225. See our article, “L’In Psalms de Théodoret,” 104–5.

partisans of Arius and Eunomius refer to the Son. Now he would not have done this if, precisely, he had thought that the preposition “by whom” implied a lesser status than the preposition “from whom” (*ex hou*). (PG 82, 229 A)

Or even on the order of the words alone:

In this way also (2 *Thes* 2:16) he denounces the blasphemy of Arius and Eunomius and clearly teaches that even the placing of the words does not indicate a difference in dignity. For here he has placed the Son before the Father, not to teach that the Son is greater than the Father but to show by this change of place their equality of rank. (PG 82, 669 A)

This analysis of the letter also plays a determining role in the often delicate identification of the speakers (*prosopa*), especially in the case of a dialogue text as the *Song* or the psalms, to the extent that David can speak in his own name but also take the role of another by lending him his voice (*ek prosopou*). Thus this psalm of David will be placed in the mouth of the Jewish people deported to Babylon, this other one in that of King Hezekiah or Christ or yet another personage, since David’s prophecy, like that of Moses, embraces in Theodoret’s view the whole history of Israel, from its beginnings to messianic times.²²⁶ The establishing of the literal sense, then, presumes beyond the properly philological task recourse to numerous disciplines, history and geography included, which play in this type of exegesis a preponderant role. To do this the exegete uses various instruments. Thus at numerous points he mentions, especially in his *Questions on Kings and Chronicles*, a type of glossary of Hebrew words (*Hermeneia ton hebraikon onomaton*),²²⁷ and probably searches from comparable works the meaning of a rare word or a precise definition, even as on this point he draws much information from the commentaries at his disposal. His work as a historian is without doubt made easier by consulting Histories, and that as geographer by the existence of *Onomastica*. The information he borrows from them to establish dating, dynastic succession, the chronology of events, the care he uses to identify places mentioned by Scripture, especially if their name has changed since biblical days, does not proceed so much from a taste for erudition as from the desire to show, written into the facts or in a very real geography, the veracity of the scriptural text.

226. On the role of the explanation *ek prosopou* in the exegesis of the Antiochians see M.-J. Rondeau, *Les Commentaires patristiques du Psautier (II^e-V^e siècles)*, vol. II, *Exégèse prosopologique et théologique*, OCA 220, Rome 1985, 58–72, 275–321.

227. In *Is.* 9, 270–271; *Quaest.*, FM II, 44, 18–21; 46, 3–5; 52, 16–17; 167, 1–2; 230, 22–23; 240, 1–3; 248, 11–13.

Another very frequent way to safeguard the letter of the text is an appeal to “custom” (*ethos*), to the extent that the divinely inspired Scripture is expressed in human language and refers to very concrete human behavior, some of which belongs to bygone ages or a particular society, and some is universal, belonging to all time. Thus the ruin of Niniveh in *Zeph* 2:15 is prophesied in terms that Theodoret would understand in the proper sense:

“*Every man that will pass by her will hiss and shake his fists.*” In fact, most people are in the habit of hissing and shaking fists when troublesome things unexpectedly happen. (PG 81, 1852 C)

The fact that in his day it was the custom to address important personages with the title Lord allows him to hold that Daniel understands the one who appears to him only in that sense (*Dn* 10:16): it is not necessary to conclude that he has seen God (PG 81, 1500 C). In the same way, Jacob’s action in anointing with oil the rock which he used as a pillow and which he had just set up as a memorial stone (*Gen* 28:18) is explained with reference to a practice still in force in Syria in Theodoret’s time:

Even today we can see this done by many women who believe in the Lord. In fact, they have the habit in the divine sanctuaries of anointing with oil the railing of the enclosures and tombs of the holy martyrs. (*FM* I, 76, 24ff.)

Just as there are stylistic patterns proper to scripture that the exegete must explain to take account of the text in its literality, the recourse to “custom,” that is, to practices or behavior said to be habitual to human beings in general or in a given milieu, thus becomes a veritable hermeneutical method from the very fact of its frequency. As with grammar or history, it more often than not has no other function than to preserve or justify the letter of the text.

His Antiochian formation most certainly contributed in reinforcing the attention Theodoret gave to the letter, but his hermeneutical method also proceeds more broadly from that brought out by the Alexandrian grammarians. After their example, his explanations not only include rhetoric, grammar, history, and other disciplines capable of clearing up the meaning of a given passage; they are also based on a critical analysis of the text of the LXX, just as their commentaries on Homer presumed the “fixation” of a Homeric text, accompanied by critical marks and marginal annotations. On this point Theodoret clearly separates himself from his Antiochian masters, who are in general little interested in textual criticism.²²⁸ The fact that he

228. In his *Commentary on the Psalms*, Diodore of Tarsus makes only very episodic reference to the versions (CCSG 6, XCIX–C, ed. J.-M. Olivier); Theodore of Mopsuestia, who accords them an important place in his *Commentary on the Psalms* (ST 93, Vatican City 1939, ed. R. Devreesse), takes no subsequent interest

considered the LXX as an inspired text whose authority prevails over other translations from the Hebrew did not prevent him from consulting, on a relatively regular basis, the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and also to take into account the old Syriac version the Peshitta, because of its close kinship with the Hebrew text. He does not have the disdain that Theodore of Mopsuestia expressed for it nor any real suspicion of other translators even if sometimes he does accuse them, with the whole of patristic tradition, of having voluntarily denatured the meaning of the Hebrew text to prevent Christians from laying claim to it.²²⁹ Most of the time their versions, especially that of Symmachus, famous for its clarity, are brought in to shed light on the LXX, for whom they provided a sort of paraphrase, or to prove its correctness, to the extent that all the translators said the same thing, sometimes with different words. They are so to speak a first level of his exegesis. This confrontation of versions with the LXX does not aim, in fact, to find the textual form closest to the original Hebrew text—there is no *hebraica veritas* for Theodoret as for Jerome—but to explain, illustrate, or justify the translation in use in the Churches. This is why, after having noted the variations that can exist between his Antiochian text and the other translations, or even the LXX in the Hexapla edition, he almost always strives to show that there is no contradiction or divergence between these different textual forms, but rather a basic harmony. In any case, the LXX always has the last word, and while the exegete must compare its several copies (*antigrapha*) with each other, he generally accords preference to the one he is commenting on, the text in use in the Church of the region around Antioch.²³⁰ Despite the

whatever in his exegetical works. The *Commentary on Isaiah* of John Chrysostom preserved in Greek (SC304) offers no reference to versions (as contrasted to the part handed on in Armenian under his name); his *Homilies on the Psalms*, on the other hand, make constant appeal to the versions but without designating their authors other than by indefinite pronouns (*allos, alloi, heteros*).

229. Theodore tends to think that Symmachus' clarity is acquired at the price of a lesser fidelity to the Hebrew (*In Psal.*, ST 93, 364, 25–366,5), and in his *In XII proph.* he expresses for the “Syrian” a profound disdain (*In Hab.* 2, 11; *In Soph.* 1,5: ed. H. N. Sprenger, Wiesbaden 1977, 270, 22–26 and 283, 30–284, 19). Like all the Fathers, Theodoret can contest the “Judaizing” translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in *Is* 7:14 (*In Is.* 3, 360–385) or in *Is* 9:5 (*ibid.*, 3, 847–851), without ever manifesting any distrust or scorn toward them.

230. Thus in *Is* 60:8 (*In Is.* 19, 133–136), while Theodoret remarks that “certain copies” do not include the words “It is Zion,” and that these words are also absent from the Hexapla text, the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and even the Hebrew, he nevertheless continues on with the interpretation of the text he has in hand.

mention of the *Hexapla*, which makes of him a distant heir of Origen, the essence of his textual criticism seems to stem from the commentaries of his predecessors, notably those of Eusebius of Caesarea.²³¹ But to explain that he is for us the only one to transmit certain readings of “other translators,” is it perhaps necessary to admit that he had at his disposal, at least for certain books, a copy of the Hexapla Septuagint? In any case it seems that he did have a glossed Bible which allowed him on many occasions to compare the text of the LXX with other versions.

The recognized importance of the figurative sense

If an analysis of the letter (*gramma*) generally leads to an interpretation according to the literal sense, it requires us also, in numerous cases, to pass beyond the “obvious sense,” to lift the “veil” which covers it to reach the “hidden sense,” not to delay at the “surface” of the text, but to penetrate the depths of a meaning which conceals the density of the words. It is in proceeding to a precise analysis of the scriptural discourse, of its *schema*, of its stylistic particularities (*idiomata*), of its rhetorical structure that we can acquire the conviction that scripture is often expressed “in metaphor” (*ek metaphoras*) and speaks “a multitude of things in a figurative manner” (*polla tropikos*). Theodoret amply develops these views in the preface of his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, to refute the notion of those who refuse any inspired character to this text and consider it as a profane and dissolute writing:

In my reading of this work and its content—perfumes, kisses, thighs, stomach, navel, cheeks, eyes, lilies, apples, nard, stacten, myrrh, and everything of this nature—because of their ignorance of the modes of expression proper to divine scripture, they did not wish to go to the bottom of things, to go beyond the veil of the letter to reach the spirit and interior and, as in a mirror, to contemplate the Lord’s glory with unveiled faces; but for having understood these words in a carnal manner they were led into this discrediting. (PG 81, 32 D–33 A)

What seems to him to be beyond question here he sees as verified everywhere else in scripture in different degrees. Thus to the explanation according to the literal sense (*kata rheton*) there is often added an explanation according to the figurative sense, in which case the exegete clearly points out the passing from one mode of interpretation to the next. Indeed, while the historico-critical sense is clearly weighty in its own right, recourse to the

231. On the sources of his textual criticism see our study, *L’Exégèse de Théodoret*, 207ff.

figurative sense demands to be noted and sometimes justified. For Theodoret it is the adverb *tropikos* which generally indicates it, but he draws attention to it by indicating that “the text has also another meaning,” or “we should not stray from the truth” in understanding it differently, or even we should understand it differently “if we want to understand the exact meaning of the words.” Once the principle is established that scripture often makes use of a figurative language and again that there are in this area scriptural “habits,” it behooves the exegete to bring this to light. This is the reason for the numerous metaphorical equivalences provided by commentaries: God’s “hand” or “arm” signify his might, the “lion” or “eagle” designate the king, the “oak” or “cedar” or “cypress” those who are mighty, the “reins” secret thoughts, the “cup” or the “wine” punishment, and so forth. If almost all the words can, depending on their context, be given a metaphorical value, most of these equivalencies are codified and consecrated by tradition. The exegete, then, has only to dig into a kind of repertory to provide himself with a key to the reading, as different glossaries help him to find the exact definition or etymology. This also guarantees for his interpretation a real unity, for each term generally admits to only one metaphorical value. In the opposite case, the exegete must justify his choice. Thus, do we ordinarily understand “Lebanon” to be the nations and idol-worship, or even sometimes Jerusalem, as a certain number of scriptural references attest?²³² As this example shows, biblical geography, whose reality the exegete wants to safeguard, is often paired with a symbolic geography. Between Lebanon or the desert or the sterile woods, symbols of the nations and idolatry, and the other, Carmel or watered and fruitful hills, symbols of Israel at the time of the Promise, there comes about with the incarnation a complete change which makes of the nations a new Israel.

The occasions the exegete has for recourse to the figurative sense are thus many, but his explanations do not always have the same import. Every time he points out in his text the use of a metaphor, image, parable, hyperbole, he attempts to qualify the passage as *tropikos* as opposed to the literal sense, he most often does nothing but bring out the first sense of the text, and its only real meaning. The case is very different when, next to a first historico-literal meaning he adds a second, presented either as another possible reading which is not opposed by anything, as a deeper or more exact meaning which has his preference, or as the meaning that has to be adopted (*noeteon*) if the text is to be correctly understood. This second sense can be a spiritual sense (*pneumatikos*) as opposed to a “carnal” or “material” sense (*sarkikos, somatikos*), although this terminology does not appear much out-

232. Notably *Ez* 17:3ff.; cf. *In Is* 10, 402–408; 19, 203–210.

side the *Sommentary on the Song*. It is very often also a moral sense. But if Theodoret frequently invites his reader to pass beyond the letter of the text, he practically never speaks of “anagogy,” only exceptionally of a “mystical” sense (*mystikos*), even less of “allegory.” This is not at all surprising for an Antiochian, especially since at that period, as Cyril’s commentaries prove, the word allegory is scarcely used even in the Alexandrian milieu.²³³ Actually, the term *tropikos* has for Theodoret different types of interpretation, some of which would well merit the name allegory. Thus his speculation on numbers in the *Song* (PG 81, 124 A; 169 BC; 172 C–173) or the precious stones in *Is* 54: 11–12 (*In Is.* 17, 306–324), and the Christological interpretation based on a symbolism of colors: red for the flesh and human nature of Christ, luminous white his divine nature (*In Cant.* PG 81, 156 D–157 B), or perfumes, incense and myrrh (*ibid.*, 120 C; 133 BD; 144 A), or the meaning given the term “light cloud” in *Is* 19:1 (*In Is.* 6, 203–206) or to the word “quiver” in *Is* 49:2 (*ibid.*, 15, 226–230) to mean the human nature of Christ, while the “sword” would mean his divine nature, would not be surprising in Origen and there they would be certainly called allegory. In Theodoret’s case, then, it becomes artificial to attempt to oppose the literal exegesis of the Antiochians to the allegorical exegesis of the Alexandrians, as has too often been done.

The role of typology

The strangeness, poverty, or incongruousness of the literal sense are usually the signal urging us to go beyond it in favor of a figurative sense which is richer or more in line with the internal logic of the scriptural narrative. But an examination of the letter of the text, subject to the test of history and hard facts is at the origin of yet another form of interpretation: the typological explanation. The idea is still to go beyond the first meaning, not because it is ordinary or unworthy of God, but because it examines the scriptural letter only in a partial or imperfect manner. Based on the Pauline conception which makes the Old Testament a figure of the New (*Gal* 4:24), the typological explanation offers the advantage, to the eyes of Antiochian exegetes, of preserving the reality and historical dimension of the scriptural text. Unlike allegory, it does not propose a second meaning which would somehow come along to be substituted for the first, and in the end to empty it of meaning, but it offers it rather as a way of prolongation and fulfillment. Every prophecy which sees in the history of the Jewish people in the OT but

233. See A. Kerrigan, *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Interpreter of the Old Testament* (*AnBib* 2), Rome 1952, 114–15.

a partial fulfillment, must necessarily find in Christ, in the mystery of the Church or even at the end of time, a second fulfillment which will bring it to complete fulfillment and reveal its total truth. Thus it is essential for the exegete to determine precisely the “term” (*telos, peras, ekbasis*) of each prophecy, to subject its text to a rigorous grammatical and historical critique, since on the acknowledged “term” the recourse to a typological explanation depends or not. While the recognition of a literal sense, in competition with a figurative sense is sometimes only conceded, that of “type” or “figure” is here indispensable, otherwise we could not speak of typology but of allegory. “To climb from figure to truth” thus assumes two successive steps of the same nature aiming to establish that one and the same prophecy was fulfilled first of all imperfectly in the OT and again completely in the New. This comes about by reason of precise rules. Between the “figure” or “type” and the “truth” or “antitype” there must exist a sufficiently broad similarity to justify the passing from one to the other, but also a difference of nature or degree: the “antitype” always goes beyond the “type,” that there is established the relation of the smallest to the biggest, the particular to the general, the material to the spiritual.²³⁴

The binary structure on which this type of interpretation rests is generally emphasized by terminology. To the fulfillment of the prophecy “in figure” (*typikos, en typo, kata typos*) there is contrasted fulfillment “in truth” (*alethos, en aletheia, kata ten aletheian*). Often as well the exegete partially abandons this parallelism of terms to indicate in an even more insistent way that it fulfills the prophecy “truly and exactly” (*alethos kai kurios, akribos*) or in a “truer” or “more exact” way (*alethesteron, akribesteron*). With lesser frequency than the noun *typos* or the adverb *typikos*, the terms “image” (*eikon*) or “shadow” (*skia*) are contrasted with truth or “archetype” (*archetypon*). The pictorial comparison, in fact, is often used by exegetes to justify this type of interpretation. Just as the sketch (*skiographia*) allows the painter a faint glimpse of the reality he seeks to grasp but must await the full reality of the canvas and the interplay of colors to have a clear view of it, the figure allows us only a glimpse of the ultimate truth of the prophecy. Or again, to see things from the prophet’s point of view, we can say that he proceeds like a painter who would ignore perspective and represent different scenes on the same level:

Here again (*Is* 60:1), the prediction includes three subjects at the same time: it prophesies, as in a sketch, the reconstruction of Jerusalem which took place under Cyrus and Darius; then as in a painting which

234. See our article, “La typologie comme système herméneutique,” 18–23.

highlights a rather large number of colors it also shows the more exact contours of truth, the splendor of holy Church; at the same time it makes us also see in advance the painting's very original, that is, the future existence of the heavenly city. (*In Is* 19, 14–21)

Thus what the prophet contemplates simultaneously (*kata tauton*), under the influence of prophetic grace, “spiritual contemplation” (*pneumatike theoria*), must be replaced by the exegete in a biblical perspective to bring out the different levels. It is in this sense that Theodoret comes to speak of “double prophecy” or “double meaning” to designate the two successive fulfillments of the same pronouncement. We also recognize a typological interpretation when the exegete contrasts the obvious sense of the text (*to procheinon noema, to phainomenon*), represented by an OT reality with a sense which is “more exact and truer” (*kurioteron kai alethesteron*) discovered in the narrative of the NT. Sometimes he notes that a prophecy “applies better” (*mallon harmotetei*) or “fits better” (*diapherontos prosekei*) to this NT reality, so that the first explanation which attaches to the OT is immediately seen as a figure. Like the recourse to the figurative sense, the typological explanation allows us to go beyond the “surface of the letter;” but while in the first case there is a substitution of one meaning for another, even if the figurative sense is sometimes the only true sense of the text, it is indispensable to recognize the reality and the truth, however partial, of the “type,” since only this element authorizes the search and discovery of an “antitype,” which represents the genuine fulfillment (*telos*) of the prophecy, and thus of an even “truer” meaning.

2. *The broad orientations of Theodoret's exegesis*

From the point of view of method and the principles that govern it, Theodoret's exegesis remains faithful to the wide options of Antiochian hermeneutics. The attention he brings to the letter of the text, aided by grammatical and rhetorical analysis, the way in which he subjects it to the control of history or concrete realities stemming from geography or any other discipline, specific or universal human behavior, are a proof of this. On this point he can even be seen to be more demanding than Theodore of Mopsuestia. For example, without refusing to see in the locusts spoken of by Joel (*Jl* 1:4 and 2:4–5), a figurative way of indicating the Assyrian invader and its cavalry, he considers that it is possible to understand the text in a literal sense of an invasion of locusts, in the measure where the morphology of this insect evokes in miniature that of the horse:

Now whoever looks carefully at a grasshopper's head will see that it greatly resembles that of a horse. Moreover, it is equally possible to see

it fly without owing anything to the swiftness of horses and easily leaping over mountains and plains. and especially jumping on stalks like a flame which devours stubble. Furthermore, one would say they were an army set up to go to war, whether by flying or moving ahead on land—for everything they do they do cohering to each other—and they resemble a troop of advancing soldiers by locking their shields to each other in a line of battle. (PG 81, 1644 BC)

Another example: if the identification of the city of Tarshish, where Jonah tries to go, is in the end of very little interest to Theodore it has on the contrary a great interest for Theodoret, for there is only one solution for him which allows the text to keep its coherence and justifies a departure from the port of Joppa, and that is that Tarshish has to be a way of designating Carthage (PG 81, 1274 BC). The discussions of a historical nature, whether to situate an event, identify a personage, or establish a chronology, especially if this leads to the recognition of a messianic dimension in the text, as in *Dn* 9:24–27, assumes in his eyes an equal importance.²³⁵ This desire to explain and preserve the letter of the text does not draw him along the road of a narrow and reductionist literalism or historicism, as is often the case with Diodore or Theodore.

Nor does it lead him to restrain in his commentaries the share of figurative interpretation. If John Chrysostom only recognizes its legitimacy to the degree that the scriptural text provides *a posteriori* an indisputable proof of it, by the translation into clear language of what has just been enunciated in a figurative manner, as in *Is* 5:1–7, Theodoret on this point shows himself to be less formal.²³⁶ Thus, to illustrate their divergences of interpretation by a single example, he refuses to understand in its proper sense the accusation hurled by Isaiah (*Is* 1:22) against the tavern-keepers who water down their wine: the prophet is concerned, he thinks, with those who denature the Law by intruding their own views onto it (*In Is.* 1, 326–328). Not that Theodoret preceeds to the examination of the text with less rigor; on the contrary, on many occasions it is this examination which proves the impossibility of the literal sense and invites him to choose the figurative sense. Thus in the oracle of Isaiah against Babylon, the geographical situation of that city belies the literal interpretation of *Is* 13:2 (*In Is.* 5, 9–13) given by certain exegetes. Generally concerned with preserving the literal sense—as the example of

235. See our article, “Théodoret imitateur d’Eusèbe.”

236. Cf. John Chrysostom, *In Is.* V, 3, 64–67 (SC 304). This is why Theodoret often notes by a *saphos* or *saphesteron* a return to the obvious sense after a figurative interpretation.

Jl 1:4 proves—he yet sometimes gives the impression of doing it as a concession, and to accord to the figurative sense if not always a priority in the order of presentation of the different possible senses of the text, at least a clear preference. The leaning toward this mode of interpretation, stronger with him than with other Antiochians, finds particular expression in his *Commentary on the Song*. No doubt this plea in favor of the figurative sense of Scripture is also vigorous because the exegete wants to contest the view of those who, with Theodore of Mopsuestia, refuse to the *Song* the status of an inspired text. But this is probably not enough to explain why Theodoret in turn denies it any profane or historical reality, while Origen himself took pains in his interpretation to safeguard the reality of the *fabula*. For him the text has but one sense, in the same way as the allegory of the eagle in *Ez* 17: just as no one hesitates to see in this eagle Nebuchadnezzar swooping on Jerusalem, the love dialogue of the Bridegroom and Bride can only be understood of Christ and his Church or the believing soul. This is the first meaning of the text, its only meaning both historical and mystical.

Finally, in contrast with other Antiochians, who only have recourse to typological interpretation in a very limited number of cases, Theodoret throws his exegesis wide open to this type of interpretation. It is not that he observes less than they do, or less scrupulously, the laws of functioning. On the contrary, it is often a more rigorous analysis of the letter of the text or of the historical reality that commands this choice. Thus is it impossible to refer *Zech* 9:9 to Zerubbabel, as Theodore does, since he never bore the title of king, and no historical source attests that he came mounted on an “ass;” with Christ, on the contrary, the letter of the prophecy is found verified (PG 81, 1924 AB). Both in the commentary on the *Psalter* and in that of the twelve minor prophets, typology plays a considerable role in Theodoret, if we compare it to its position in Diodore or Theodore.²³⁷ This helps to reinforce further the messianic and New testament character of his exegesis, while the exegetical purpose of the old Antiochians only exceptionally transcends the historical framework of the OT and the Maccabean period.

This is where we find the real difference between his exegesis and theirs: the method used is the same, but the orientation is different. In reducing as they do the number of messianic prophecies or figures they come to indulge in a “Judaizing” exegesis and to do violence to texts, as the allegorizers do in their own way: respect for the letter leads them to a narrow and in the end deceptive literalism. Theodoret chooses a more open way, no doubt

237. On this point see the comparative tables in “La cristallisation d’un différend,” 547 and “L’In *Psalmos* de Théodoret,” 131.

suggested to him by the exegesis of Eusebius. Taking into account the letter of the text is no longer for him an iron collar imposed on exegesis; it is on the contrary often at the origin of a figurative or typological interpretation. But whatever interpretation is kept, it frequently leads him to recognize the messianic or NT character of a prophecy. In this matter Theodoret keeps a definite distance from the other Antiochians whose OT exegesis he more than once contests: he will not have these “masters of piety” unduly provide arms to the Jews.²³⁸ So many of the prophecies referred by them to Zerubbabel and to the return from exile, or again to the Maccabees, are for him directly or figuratively concerned with Christ or the Church. In his *In XII proph.*, there is even something rather systematic in the manner in which he interprets in the typical sense the prophecies that Theodore refers to Zerubbabel, and as messianic in a literal sense those he considers as figures.²³⁹

Besides the influence of Eusebius of Caesarea, it is not impossible to think that the doctrinal debate tied to the Nestorian crisis contributed in some measure to accentuate the NT character of Theodoret’s exegesis, and led him to a more Christic reading of scripture than that of his Antiochian predecessors. Against the background of a rather traditional polemic directed against pagans, Jews, and heretics, he strives to set forth the scriptural basis of the dyophysite Christology defended by the East against Cyril of Alexandria and the supporters of the “one nature of the Logos-God” after the incarnation. To do this, he leans as much on the literal sense of the text as on its metaphorical sense. But this he does without ever engaging in polemics with anyone else but Arians,²⁴⁰ who base their theory of a created and inferior God on verses of Scripture which seem to diminish the Son’s divinity by giving him the name of “servant” or “slave,” in showing him subject to fatigue, suffering, and dejection. To refute the Arian heresy, one had only to show that all these verses have reference to Christ’s humanity, as those bringing out his omnipotence or omniscience must be understood of his divinity.

This necessarily leads to a recognition in Christ of the existence of two distinct yet closely joined natures. Whatever his enemies may have said, this distinction of natures does not bring in for Theodoret a distinction of persons, or the acknowledgement of “two Sons.” If for a period he used a concrete vocabulary—the man and the God—to emphasize this dyophysism,

238. Cf. *In Dan.*, PG 81, 1436 B; *In Ez.*, *ibid.*, 1168 B; 1217 A; *In Mich.*, PG 81, 1760 D–1761 A; 1764 A.

239. See our article, “La cristillisation d’un différence,” 536.

240. Curiously, the Christological theories of Apollinarius are practically never under attack in his commentaries; cf. our article, “Présence d’Apollinaire.”

by distinguishing clearly between “assuming Word” and “assumed man” he seems to have taken stock of its ambiguity and abandoned it after the council of Ephesus. In any case, he does not ever use it in his commentaries, and this as we have said is an argument which leads us to place their redaction after 431. In the same way, the union of the natures is there denoted by the term *henosis*, with no further precision, rather than *synapheia*, which could make one think of a mere conjunction and loose union. But we have only to note that several times, especially in commenting on the texts which refer to Christ’s passion, he affirms that the divine nature “appropriates for itself” (*oikeiousthai*) the sufferings of the human nature,²⁴¹ or that “one single person” (*hen prosopon*) results from the union of two natures,²⁴² so that we can no longer with good faith suspect his Christology of Nestorianism. This is why, even if the term *theotokos* is practically absent from his commentaries, Theodoret could demand to be examined on it (*ep.* 82 and 113) to prove against those who were calumniating him and had obtained his deposition that he had never professed a separatist Christology. His exegesis, in any case, seems rather forcefully marked by the doctrinal positions of a committed theologian that he never ceased to be from the time of the council of Ephesus.

IV. THEODORET IN THE HISTORY OF EXEGESIS

The numberless citations borrowed from the commentaries of Theodoret from the composition of the first exegetical Chains seem to attest that from an early period he enjoyed a great reputation as an exegete. In the ninth century the patriarch Photius considers him as one of the greatest exegetes of the Greek language and a difficult model to equal; he judges him as superior to Hippolytus in his *Commentary on Daniel*, and finds in his style a clarity and concision lacking in a Theodore of Mopsuestia or a Procopius of Gaza.²⁴³ The fact that practically the whole of his exegetical work has reached us allows us to think that the judgment of Photius has been widely shared for a long time. On the other hand, modern criticism has generally shown itself more

241. Cf. *In Is.* 17, 56–58 (*Is* 53:3); *Quaest. in Levit.* 19 *9f* M I, 170, 16–17).

242. *In Is.* 12, 579–581; *In Psal.* PG 80, 1768 A; *In epist. Pauli*, PG 82, 697 D; *Quaest. in Gen.* 19 (*F M I*, 22, 23–24).

243. Photius, *Bibl., cod.* 203–5, ed. R. Henry, *Coll. Byz.*, t. 3, Paris 1962, 102–4; cf. on Procopius of Gaza *ibid.*, *cod.* 206 (p. 104) and on Theodore of Mopsuestia, *ibid.*, *cod.* 38 (t. 1, p. 23).

severe toward him and has sometimes admitted to seeing him as little more than a compiler. Perhaps he has been ill served by his own declarations in the prefaces where he lays claim to the heritage of his predecessors, especially in that of his *In XII proph.*:

Just like those women who spun and wove the linens which others had brought to produce the adornments of the Tabernacle, so also have we collected from here and there what was felicitously expressed to weave from all this, with God's help, a single work. (PG 81, 1548 B)

Taking these declarations literally would in fact be to recognize that this is the work method of a compiler. Yet we have only to read his commentaries to weigh how exaggerated is this judgment. Certainly if we were to compare him to Origen, Theodoret is not an inspired exegete and seems, in fact, to lack any great personal inventiveness. As much could be said of the apologist and church historian that he was, or even as a theologian of the stature of Cyril. But once we admit that he is not a mind of the first rank, that he has neither the talent nor the loftiness of views of an Origen, nor does he have the independence of character of a Theodore of Mopsuestia, less careful than he of putting his exegetical choices in line with the whole of patristic tradition, we must recognize for him an important place in the history of exegesis when the era of the great commentators of scripture is closing and there is opening that of the chain-makers and compilers. At the end of the double tradition of Antioch and Alexandria which he brings together and makes his own, he intends despite everything to extend in his way and for his time the reading of scripture made by his forebears.

Because of the attention he brings to textual criticism in comparing the LXX with the other Greek versions of the Hebrew text and in comparing their copies, his commentaries constitute an essential feature for the knowledge of the history of these texts, in particular that of the "Antiochian text" on which they are based. They also help us know the interpretations of other exegetes whose commentaries have since disappeared and of which we would know nothing if this heritage had not been collected and transmitted, either for purposes of support or contestation. Finally, besides their properly exegetical interest, they allow us to illuminate the Christological debate of the fifth century and to weigh the place held in it by the recourse to scripture, which alone could give it a sure basis and authorize its formulas. In this respect we may declare that for Theodoret as for Cyril exegesis aims less at delivering a moral or spiritual teaching than a dogmatic teaching, especially if we compare it with that of John Chrysostom in the previous century.

From the point of view of the history of exegesis, the chief interest of his work as an interpreter resides especially in that it offers a vigorous

synthesis of the exegetical traditions of Antioch and Alexandria. In this it serves as something of a conclusion and fulfillment. This exegesis, indeed, is situated equidistant from the excesses of an immoderate taste for allegory, on the Alexandrian side, and a too exclusive attachment to the letter on the Antiochian:

I have had occasion to read various commentaries and have found that some had recourse to allegory with little moderation, and that others placed prophecies in line with certain historical events in such a way that the prophecy spoke in favor of the Jews rather than in favor of the children of faith. And I thought that I would be well advised to avoid the want of measure on both sides. Everything that is appropriate for the events of ancient history has to be reported even now, but the predictions concerning our Master Christ, the Church formed from the nations, the manner of the evangelical life and the apostolic message, must not be assigned to others, as the Jews like to do... Likewise, the witness of the facts is sufficient to guide towards the truth of the interpretation the feet of those who wish to discover it. (*In Psal., praef.*, PG 80, 860 C–861 A)

Theodoret's interpretation, then, preserves what to our eyes is soundest in Antiochian exegesis, its desire to keep the historical reality of the text and to give its letter a rational, even "scientific" explanation. But it is more open than that of the old Antiochians, no doubt under the influence of Eusebius and what he teaches him of Origen's exegesis, to other ways of reading which in the end give him a general orientation very different from theirs. While these show themselves very reticent in seeing the prophecies fulfilled beyond the horizon of the OT, Theodoret does not hesitate to go beyond the frame of this "Judaizing" exegesis to underscore their messianic and NT content. The recourse to typology plays in this respect a capital role, just as the appeal to the figurative sense. But in many cases it is an analysis of the letter, more rigorous or better undertaken than that of the old Antiochians that allows Theodoret to establish the messianic or Christological dimension of Scripture.

Finally, the clarity of language, the cleanness of unstudied style, and the relative brevity of the commentaries, if we compare them to Origen or even Cyril, have without doubt contributed to the survival of his exegetical work. His interpretation is in short to the image of the man that he was: it has something measured and balanced, and solid more than brilliant. Rich with the whole patristic heritage it is also a personal meditation on the mystery of Christ already incarnate in scripture.

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XX

BASIL OF SELEUCIA (D. CA. 468)

Basil was archbishop of Seleucia in the mountains of Isauria from about 440. He changed camps several times in the christological controversies leading to the Council of Chalcedon of 451 and in its aftermath. Photius (*cod.* 168) found his exegesis deeply influenced by Basil of Caesarea and Chrysostom, but his literary legacy too much of a showpiece of classical rhetoric. Three of his forty-one homilies printed in PG 85 (*hom.* 38, 39, 41; CPG 6656) are possibly apocryphal. The authentic homilies present dramatic features proper to Basil, in particular they include biblical characters speaking in monologues or dialogues, some of whom one would meet again in the *kontakia* of Romanos Melodist. Six Pseudo-Athanasian sermons (PG 28, 1047–61, 1073–1108) are also attributed to Basil, as well as other sermons, some published (Camelot, Rohan-Chabot), others still unedited.

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CHAPTER TEN
SIXTH- TO EIGHTH-CENTURY GREEK
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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The universalist dream of the Roman Empire was materialized for the very last time under the reign of Justinian I (527–565). Between 533 and 554, by his expansionist politics in the West, Justinian succeeded in destroying the Vandal kingdom in Africa, the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy, and the Visigothic in Spain. But he achieved his short-lived victories at the cost of allowing the Slavs to occupy the Balkans, and Persia to impose its own conditions for peace on the eastern border. From Justin II (565–578) to Heraclius (610–641), his immediate successors never regained enough power for facing the decisive challenge of the future, the Arabic conquest which from 633 to 642 swept over the oriental provinces of the Byzantine empire. Under the government of Constantine IV (668–685) the failed Arab siege of Constantinople (674–78) stopped the Islamic groundswell. Again in the eighth century, Leo III (717–741) rescued the Empire from terror and chaos; he finally triumphed over the Arabs but he also initiated the fateful crisis of iconoclasm, the source of a violent and long-lasting unrest in church and society.

I
SEVERUS OF ANTIOCH (CA. 465–538)

Born in Sozopolis in the province of Pisidia, Severus received his rhetorical training in Alexandria and studied law in Beryt (Beyrouth) before asking for baptism in 488. He became a monk in the area of Gaza and was soon ordained a priest by Epiphanius, a Monophysite bishop of Magydos in Pamphylia. Sent on a mission to Constantinople in 509, he engaged in a lively controversy in favor of his Monophysite faith, which resulted in the removal of Patriarch Macedonius. His party engineered his election as Patriarch of Antioch in November 512. When the pro-Chalcedonian Justin replaced Anastasius as Emperor in 518, Severus fled to Egypt where, escaping a police search, he developed a strong campaign of letters and pamphlets in defence of his cause. After the death of Justin in 527 and his replacement by his nephew Justinian, Empress Theodora secretly supported the Monophysites and placed one of them, Anthimius, on the see of the capital. Severus was invited to Constantinople where he successfully negotiated a union between Anthimius, Bishop Theodore of Alexandria, and himself, until Agapit, bishop of Rome, arrived on a visit which occasioned denunciations as well as a synod in 536 confirming the earlier condemnation of Severus. Justinian approved the synodal decision, expelled Severus and his partisans from the capital, and proscribed Severus's publications. Back in the deserts of Egypt, Severus started his propaganda again, but he died on February 8, 538.

Severus's literary legacy survives only in *catenae* or in Syriac and in other non-Greek versions. It consists in (1) dogmatic essays, (2) homilies, (3) letters, (4) liturgical writings, and (5) hymns.

(1) *Dogmatics:*

- Two *Treatises to Nephalius* written ca. 508.
- Five treatises against Julian of Halicarnassus.
- The *Philalethes*, commenting on a dyophysite collection of quotations from 244 chapters of Cyril of Alexandria destined to confuse Severus.
- Three treatises *Against John the Grammarian*, a pro-Chalcedonian.
- Four letters *Against the Grammarian Sergius*, who was a Monophysite, a partisan of Eutyches.

Fighting on two fronts, the moderate Severus pleaded passionately for his middle-of-the-road stance in the christological controversy. His brilliant

and easy style facilitated the access to his writings for a broad readership. In Syriac and Armenian versions also, his writings became very popular.

(2) *Cathedral Homilies*

The *Cathedral Homilies* of Severus are sermons really delivered in Antioch between 512 and 518. They form a collection of 125 sermons, kept in their chronological order. They were first translated into Syriac ca. 530 by Paul of Kallineke, a contemporary of Severus, and a second time ca. 700 c.E. by James of Edessa (French translation in PO). Among them a set of exegetical homilies offers comments on Sunday readings. Their edition in PO includes:

Hom. 1-17	PO 38, 2	1976.
18-25	37, 1	1975.
26-31	36, 4	1974.
32-39	36, 3	1972.
40-45	36, 1	1971.
46-51	35, 3	1959.
52-57	4, 1	1906.
58-69	8, 2	1911 = 1972.
70-76	12, 2	1915.
77	16, 5	1922.

(Hom. 77 was also transmitted under the names of Gregory of Nyssa and Hesychius of Jerusalem, and were thereby preserved in Greek: PG 46, 628-52).

Hom. 78-83	PO 20, 2	1927 = 1972.
84-90	23, 1	1931 = 1974.
91-98	25, 1	1935.
99-103	22, 2	1930.
104-112	25, 4	1943.
113-119	26, 3	1947.
120-125	29, 1	1960.

(For more information: *CPG* 7035-36). A general introduction was provided by M. Brière: PO 29, 1. A study of the biblical exegesis and hermeneutic of Severus based on the *Cathedral Homilies* would be a rewarding topic for a Ph.D. dissertation.

(3) *Letters*

The *Letters* of Severus are handed down in their chronological order, preserved in twenty-three Books including approximately four thousand

pieces of correspondence. A selection of seven hundred of them was also divided into “Books,” of which Book VI, counting 123 Letters was translated from Greek into Syriac ca. 669 c.e., and from Syriac into English by E. W. Brooks in 1902–1904.

(4) *Liturgical Writings*

A baptismal ritual and a eucharistic liturgy are attributed to Severus.

(5) *Poems*

E. W. Brooks, *James of Edessa. The Hymns of Severus of Antioch and others.* Syriac and English: PO 6, 1 (1910); 7, 5 (1911); Janin et Puyade, *L’Octoéchos syrien: Oriens Christianus*, n.s., 3 (1913) 82–104; 277–298.

Prolix and volatile as he was, Severus always showed a deep knowledge of scripture and of the writings of the Fathers.

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II PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS (EARLY 6TH C.)

Four Greek treatises on liturgical and mystical theology appeared at the beginning of the sixth century under the pseudonym Dionysius the Areopagite. They were first mentioned in the first or second decade of the sixth century by Severus of Antioch in his third Letter to John Higoumen, then quoted in a colloquy held by Severian and other theologians in Constantinople in 533. They were immediately challenged by Hypatius of Ephesus as unknown to Cyril of Alexandria and Athanasius. Their original setting was neither Monophysite nor Chalcedonian, the author clearly refusing to get involved in contemporary polemics. "Dionysius seems to have deliberately distanced himself from any divisive area of debate in the Christian community, offering his support only to Christian (and Neoplatonic) themes favorable to unity" (Roques 1960, 275).

Translated into Syriac, the four treatises inspired an early sixth century commentary by John of Scythopolis. Neoplatonic in style, vocabulary and argument, they became broadly influential in the Latin West, mainly through the translation by John Scotus Eriugena. The real identity of Pseudo-Dionysius remains unknown. He is the patristic authority most often quoted by Thomas Aquinas.

The Divine Names deals with the knowledge of God revealed through the naming of God in scripture. According to Proclus, *Mystical Theology* introduces the reader into "the divine darkness" opening thereby the whole dimension of "negative theology." *The Celestial Hierarchy* states that scripture is our only sure guide from sensible to supernatural realities (chap. 1). Its symbolic language requires many clarifications, which may call upon highly complex spiritual interpretations. In Dionysius' understanding celestial realities were discussed through abstract speculations which remained anchored in scripture.

The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy explains that human knowledge of earthly institutions is, by necessity, fragmentary and partial. Faith is required for an adequate and comprehensive view of the church. "But the divine gift, intended to nourish the mind spiritually and so to sanctify it, is given exclusively through scripture, a scripture presented, explained, and completed by the priestly hierarchy whose goal is always to keep alive and unaltered the 'tradition of the origins' (*archaia paradosis*, *EH* 568a)" (Roques 1960, 283).

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III
 AMMONIUS OF ALEXANDRIA
 (FL. EARLY 6TH C.)

A continuous *Commentary on John*, a *Commentary on Acts*, exegetical scholia on Ps 3, an explanation of the Book of Daniel and a comment on 1 Peter 3:19f., by a presbyter, Ammonius of Alexandria, are known only through excerpts in *catenae*, published by B. Corderius (1630) and J. A. Cramer, vol. II (1844; PG 85, 1361–81, 1392–1609, 1823–26). A *Commentary on Matthew* is inauthentic. J. Reuss (1941) could add one-hundred other fragments to those already published in Corderius-Migne, thus almost entirely completing the surviving text of the *Commentary on John* (J. Reuss, *Johannes Kommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*).

In this work Ammonius refers to Ephesus 449 and Chalcedon 451. He mentions the “Patriarch Severus,” and quotes John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodore of Heraclea, Apollinarius of Laodicea and Didymus the Blind. His theological exegesis, centered on the theological issues of the time. He also expressly opposes Marcion, the Manichees, Paul of Samosata, the Arians, Messalians and Sabellians. He fights against Monophysism. He names Nestorius twice in his comments on Acts 16:17 and 20:29–30. The identification of Ammonius remains questionable: Is he the Presbyter and Econom Ammonius who in 457 signed a pamphlet against Timothy Aelurus addressed to Leo I, or the Ammonius of Alexandria, the adversary of Monophysism, whose work is known through Anastasius Sinaita?

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J. Reuss, “Der Presbyter Ammonius von Alexandrien und sein Kommentar zum Johannes-Evangelium”: *Bib* 44 (1953): 159–70.

IV
ROMANOS THE MELODIST (D. 555/565)

Born near the end of the fifth century in Emesa (Homs), Syria, of Jewish parents (Grosdidier 1977, 180), Romanos entered the order of the diaconate in Beryt (Beyrouth) before dedicating himself to the church of the Theotokos in Constantinople near the end of the reign of Emperor Anastasius I (d. 518). As a deacon, he remained there until his death. Soon after his arrival in Constantinople he started to write poetry by an express order of the Mother of God, though at that date he must already have been an experienced poet. His first *kontakion* (a versified sermon sung by the deacon, the refrain being repeated by the congregation), *Hè parthenos sêmeron*, was occasioned by a Christmas celebration. It consisted of a short *prooimion* and twenty-four strophes (strophe 19 seems to be a later addition), paraphrasing the gospel narratives on the birth of Jesus, with the inclusion of relevant OT prophecies. The sermon was punctuated with constant dialogues between Mary and others. The easy rhythm of counted syllables and accents gave the poem a lasting popularity. For centuries, it was to remain the only *kontakion* admitted for the Christmas liturgy. The same theme without dialogues, but with artistic invocations rich in biblical symbolism, is developed in thirty-three strophes spread over the office of Christmas. These strophes do not form a *kontakion*; they are a series of independent versifications, each ending with the same acclamation: "Blessed be the new-born"—Εὐλογημένος ὁ τεχθεὶς, and all of them together building up an acrostic with the initials of their first verses: ΑΙΝΟΣ ΤΑΠΕΙΝΟΥ ΡΟΜΑΝΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΤΑ ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΑ—"Song of humble Romanos for the Birth" (SC 110, 138–160).

Another acrostic coordinates the eighteen strophes of the *kontakion* for the Presentation of the Child Jesus (Luke 2:25–32), celebrated on February 2 (εἰς τὴν ὑπαπαντὴν τοῦ κυρίου, literally "on the meeting of the Lord"): ΤΟΥΤΟ ΡΟΜΑΝΟΥ ΤΟ ΕΠΙΟΣ—"This (is) the hymn of Romanos." One of the poet's most popular works, though a piece of popularized dogma dictated by the religious politics of Justinian (emperor 527–565), the poem amplifies in eighteen strophes the prophetic blessing of old Simeon. Obviously inspired by a homily of Cyril of Jerusalem (PG 33, 1188a–1204a) and a pseudo-athanasian homily (PG 28 974a–1000d), Simeon's lyrics as composed by Romanos, also call on a *Letter to Bishop Optimus* (Letter 260) by Basil of Caesarea (PG 32, 953c–967b), in order to glorify the radical transcendence of the divine Logos and his perfect union with humanity in the new-born

Jesus. Conceived as addressing first the mother of Jesus, then the child, the very eloquence of Simeon evokes the whole economy of salvation by referring to many OT and NT passages.

For the Feast of Epiphany, Romanos composed several *kontakia*, regularly signed with the acrostic TOY TAΠEΙΝΟΥ POMANOY—“Of the humble Romanos.” One of them amplifies Mt 3:13–15, expressing the reluctance of John the Baptist to baptize Jesus in the Jordan River. The poet introduces a dramatic suspense into the short exchange of words between the two protagonists, thereby highlighting the doctrinal intentions of the liturgical feast of Epiphany (SC 110, 236–58).

Romanos wrote a poem in twenty-three strophes with the acrostic TO ΕΠΙΟΣ POMANOY TAΠEΙΝΟΥ on the Wedding in Cana, apparently without using any sermon on the topic as a source. His commentary firmly states the dignity of Christian marriage in conformity with “the great Paul.” He dispenses from the use of allegorism and focuses upon apologetics facing questions of sceptical outsiders: How did Mary know that her son could do miracles? Why does Jesus wait for his hour, when he is in control of all circumstances? and so forth. His exegesis teaches the right answers to such questions in letting Mary, herself instructed by her son, explain the mystery of divine Incarnation (SC 110, 302–20).

Other *kontakia* deal with Jesus and the Samaritan woman (Jn 4:1–42), the healing of the leper (Mt 8:1–2; Mk 1:40; Lk 5:12), and with many other gospel episodes. They enriched the celebration of all major feasts of the liturgical year. In all cases they were pervaded by evocative paraphrases of the gospel narratives. New Testament quotations multiplied in them, reviving the biblical stories with a vivid imagination and a down-to-earth psychology. No allegorism was needed for this poetic actualizing whose purpose was to move and impress the faithful, much in the way a gifted movie director does today. A true artist, Romanos exercised a genuine and distinctive sense for human transcendency: his inspiration was conditioned by liturgical rules as well as being submitted to the severe metrical system of his poetry, but he constantly achieved an expansive celebration of the divine mysteries to enchant his auditors.

On OT themes, Romanos composed *kontakia* dealing with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, Elijah, the three children in the furnace, and one in seventeen strophes on Nineveh, each strophe ending according to old liturgical traditions with the word *metanoia*, “repentance” (all in SC 99). “He composed a thousand, or even more than a thousand of them (*kontakia*); one can see most of them written by his own hand in the church where he

was deacon. He died and was buried in that church of the district of Kyro, where his feast day is celebrated” (Grosdidier 1977, 163). In reality, eighty *kontakia* (seventy-nine with acrostics) have been handed down to us.

“In spite of the ample debt of Romanos to his (patristic) predecessors (in particular Ephrem), one cannot compare it with the debt which he owed to the Bible. Even in his self-understanding as a preacher, his constant proximity to biblical sources is what seems the most characteristic. When by any chance he ventures to handle a topic not directly dependent on an OT or NT story, his composition follows a firm and easy line by keeping in sight the biblical background where he could exploit a repertory of types and sentences able to nourish his teaching” (Grosdidier 1977, 255). As an illustration of his abundant use of scripture, “suffice it to mention that in the eighteen poems on the public life of Christ and on his Passion from the first hymn for Epiphany until the hymn on the Veneration of the Cross, we have counted 232 quotations more or less literal, to which are added 169 allusions...only in 31 of the 232 quotations does one find an introductory formula announcing a scriptural citation” (257).

CPG 3, 7570

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French

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German

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V
OECUMENIUS (6TH C.)

Count of Isauria, on the Asia Minor coast opposite the island of Cyprus, philosopher and rhetor, was a Monophysite in line with Severus of Antioch. He wrote his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* “five hundred years” after its composition. The complete work was published by Hoskier in 1928, a still valuable edition with complementary parts edited by Diekamp (1929) and J. Schmid (1931). Personal *glossae* of Oecumenius to a *catena* on the Pauline Letters, composed by someone else, are printed in Staab 1933, 422–69. The *Commentary on the Apocalypse* was massively quoted by Andreas of Caesarea (562–637) without the author’s name (because Oecumenius was a Monophysite).

The Commentary is the first continuous explanation of the Book of Revelation in Greek patristics. The author intends to establish a coherent progression in the visions and the whole structure of the biblical work, authored (in his view) by the Apostle John. He presents some original interpretations: the four animals are the four elements; the sealed book is God’s memory, etc. Dulaey concludes that the work represents an original composition; it is not a *catena*.

CPG 3 (1979): 7470–75; 4 (1980) C 165.

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VI
ANDREW OF CAESAREA
(LATE 6TH C.-EARLY 7TH C.)

When archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia between 563 and 614, Andrew wrote a *Commentary on the Apocalypse* in seventy-two chapters filling 120 columns of Greek text in PG 106 (1863): “We have divided the present work in six “sermons” (λόγοι), because of the threefold foundation (ὑπόστασιν) of twenty-four elders” (22ob). Each “sermon” ends with a doxology. Though never mentioned by contemporaries, Andrew’s work endured the test of time. The *Commentary on the Apocalypse* by Aretas of Caesarea (ca. 895) is a free adaptation of this work. Modern scholars found in it valuable information on one of the two later recensions of the Greek text of the Apocalypse (Schmid). An Armenian version is also well transmitted; it was published in Jerusalem in 1855. Other versions circulated in Georgian and Old Slavonic. A first printed edition of the Greek text appeared in Heidelberg in 1596.

In his Preface, a letter addressed to a certain Macarius, Andrew announces a concise commentary because much has been written on the Apocalypse by “Gregory the Theologian” (of Nazianzus), Cyril (of Alexandria), as well as by the older Papias, Irenaeus and Methodius” (22ob). He often cites these authorities (for instance in chap. 64). He also frequently quotes Oecumenius, the Thessalian bishop who, a few decades earlier, had written the very first Greek Commentary on the Apocalypse.

Without ever naming his predecessor, Andrew argues against him whenever he finds Oecumenius’s views expressed with an Origenistic flavor. Andrew himself reproduces Origen’s basic hermeneutical scheme in *Peri Archon*, according to which the divine inspiration of scripture adjusts to the three components of the human being, the body (σῶμα), the soul (ψυχή), and the intellect (πνεῦμα): the letter of scripture is its “body,” what is perceived by bodily senses (κατ’ αἴσθησιν); the “soul” of scripture is its spiritual meaning (ἡ τροπολογία), calling on the senses it leads the readers to intellectual realities (ἐξ αἰσθητῶν ἐπὶ τὰ νοητά). As “spirit” (πνεῦμα), it asserts the lifting up (ἀναγωγή) and the comprehension (θεωρία) of things to come and those beyond” (217c) The commentator intends to expose the meaning of scripture on all three levels showing how the sacred text addresses three categories of readers, those who still need the Law as an elementary teacher, those who live in grace, and finally those governed solely by the Spirit (217cd). By his emphasis on the divine inspiration of *all* scripture (πᾶσα θεόπνευστος γραφή 217c; add as an inclusion in chap. 72, 453a ἀγία καὶ θεόπνευστος) and his

thoughtful recapitulating of patristic authorities, Andrew firmly stated the canonical value of the Apocalypse which was still a matter of controversy in the later Greek tradition. In particular, his patristic argument, adjusted as it is to the christo-ecclesiological focus of his own exposition, carefully follows traditional lines of symbolic interpretation. Possibly it could provide an inspiring topic for a dissertation.

The series of twenty-four written “sermons” ends in chap. 72 with a summary of the main teachings found by Andrew in the Johannine Apocalypse. Rather than evoking a liturgical congregation assembled to listen to a homily, the *Commentary* presents the style of an address to either a monastic or a secular audience gathering in a conference hall.

CPG III 7479.

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VII
 GEORGE PISIDES (FIRST HALF 7TH C.)

George was *referendarius* and *skeuophylax* “deacon and keeper of ecclesiastical vessels” or archivist of Hagia Sophia. He wrote laudatory poetry in honor of Emperor Heraclius (610–641). Around 627 he offered a poetic exhortation to Heraclius’s son, Flavius Constantius, under the title *On the Holy Resurrection of Christ Our God*.

His *Hexaemeron*, or *Kosmourgiva* (PG 92, 1425–1578), also composed in the early 630’s under the reign of Heraclius and during the tenure of Patriarch Sergius (610–638), counts

1894 lines in correct iambic trimeter.... It echoes many classical writers, including Plato, Homer, Horace, Cicero and Seneca, and it frequently refers to episodes in Greek mythology. It even uses technical vocabulary from ancient medicine and biology to a degree of specificity not reached in the scientific handbooks. It also contains abundant theoretical discussion of astronomy, presenting the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic theory of the shape of heavens, for example, in a favorable light along side the biblical model.... In addition, despite its freedom from the narrative sequence of Genesis, biblical passages play a key-role in its structure (Nodes, 274).

Other poetic productions of George include an *Encomium of Anastatius Martyr*.

CPG III 7827–39.

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VIII
MAXIMUS CONFESSOR (580–662)

MAXIMUS CONFESSOR: THEOLOGIAN OF THE WORD

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by George C. Berthold

I. A MONASTIC EXEGESIS

Known as a brilliant and creative theologian, an intrepid defender of the full reality of Christ's human energy and will in the Monothelite crisis of the seventh century, the heir and synthesizer of widely divergent spiritual traditions as those of Origen and Evagrius on the one hand and Pseudo-Dionysius on the other,¹ Maximus the Confessor prefers to identify himself simply as, "a monk." The *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, his magisterial treatment of "various difficulties contained in Holy Scripture" sent to him by a Libyan abbot, begins, "From Maximus, Monk, to Thalassius, most holy Priest and Abbot (higoumen)."² In the list of signatures appended to the Lateran Synod of 649, whose *acta* have recently been shown to be the direct composition, in Latin retroversion, of Maximus himself,³ the name *Maximus monachus* appears with his companion and disciple Anastasius.⁴ Never a priest, bishop, or even abbot (although the last term is used of him honorifically), Maximus led a life of monastic commitment from about the age of thirty, when he left

1. Hans Urs von Balthasar underscores the many-sided genius of Maximus as the meeting place of divergent currents of thought in his influential *Kosmische Liturgie, Das Weltbild Maximus' des Bekenner*, 2nd edition Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1961, esp. 19, 48–49.

2. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca 7, Maximus Confessor, Quaestiones ad Thalassium I–LV*, edd. Carl Laga et Carlos Steel, Leuven, 1980, 17. This is the critical edition of the most significant exegetical work of Maximus. The second and final volume of the work is volume 22 of the same series (1990). This text will be referred to in this chapter as CCSG 7 or 22.

3. Cf. Rudolf Riedinger, "Die Lateransynode von 649 und Maximus der Bekenner," in Felix Heinzer et Christoph Schönborn (eds.), *Maximus Confessor. Actes du Symposium sur Maxime le Confesseur, 2–5 septembre, 1980*, Paradosis 27, Fribourg, 1982, 111–21. Also his valuable edition, *Concilium Lateranense a. 649 Celebratum in Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, second series, vol. 1, Berlin, 1984.

4. His is the 34th of 36 signatures at the second session of the council: Rudolf Riedinger, ed. *Concilium Lateranense a. 649 Celebratum*, 57.

the glittering imperial court in Constantinople, to his death over fifty years later in lonely exile.

In this whole period his residence was a series of Byzantine monasteries in both east and west from Chrysopolis, near the imperial capital, to Cyzicus, Cyprus, Crete, (perhaps Palestine), Carthage, Sicily, and Rome. His *fuga mundi* certainly implied no geographical stability and no abandonment of activity in favor of a solitary life but rather an intense and total commitment to Christian discipleship. Even as a monk Maximus is immersed in the maelstrom of religious (and therefore political) affairs. Whatever may have been his court duties before his monastic calling he put them aside to devote himself single-heartedly to the pursuit of Christian perfection. As events developed, however, he found himself in the thick of the most vexing theological controversies involving popes, patriarchs, and emperors on three continents. At the climax of his confession he is considered by the emperor to be the sole cause of the political and religious tumult embroiling practically the whole of both east and west.⁵ Yet this role involved no abandonment of his monastic vocation. For Maximus, monasticism was a radical call to follow Christ. It meant to pursue the crucified and risen Savior in single-hearted fidelity in whatever circumstances that presented themselves.⁶

It is precisely in the context of traditional monastic exegesis that Maximus approaches the sacred text. For the monk the Bible was the textbook of the dedicated Christian life. In it we read of the mysteries of the life of faith to which the obedient Christian is called, as well as the methods of attaining Christian perfection, which is union with God in deification. Thus there is a slant to the interpretation of scripture, which is not at all to be considered as merely an objective book in itself, with a meaning of its own. Not only is it God's revelation of himself and his ways. It is his revelation *to us*. The task of the reader (or hearer) of scripture corresponds to the task of reading this world in which we are placed. It is the task of deciphering the specific message God wishes him to receive as well as to find his proper place in this vast created universe. We ourselves are included in the understanding of the biblical narrative, Maximus states. Referring to biblical personages he writes,

5. *Vita ac Certamen* 22, P.G. 90, 101B; *Relatio Monitionis* 1, 112A; 11, 124D.

6. Pope John Paul II has recently called attention to this defining aspect of eastern monasticism in his Apostolic Letter *Orientalis Lumen* (n. 9): "Moreover, in the East, monasticism was not seen merely as a separate condition, proper to a precise category of Christians, but rather as a reference point for all the baptized, according to the gifts offered to each by the Lord; it was presented as a symbolic synthesis of Christianity."

“If anything happened to them in a historical sense this was written for us in a figurative sense as a spiritual lesson.”⁷ On both levels, the cosmological and the scriptural, the key is Christ, who is the principle both of the spiritual quest and of the scriptural text.⁸

Thus monastic exegesis, as exemplified in Maximus and other writers, is of a very special type. In fact, as Polycarp Sherwood notes, this use of scripture can be called exegesis only in a very extended sense.⁹ In his request that spurred the composition of his most famous scriptural work, Thalassius had asked Maximus to speak about the passions: their number, nature and purpose, from which bodily member or faculty of soul they arise, how and where they exist in us, their order and arrangement, how we find relief from them, etc.¹⁰ This seems a strange request to accompany an exegetical task, but for the monk devoted to the pursuit of perfection it was reasonable to link ascetical progress with scriptural study. The reading, or rather contemplation of scripture was supposed to be a transformative process, an uplifting, a spiritual progression, a journey in mystical insight. It was an *anagogy*. Ruminating on the word of scripture was a feeding on the bread brought by the angels.¹¹ If the monastic life was a flight from the world, then such a flight was taken from a world of instability, of distractions, and of ambiguity. The purpose of the monastic flight was to respond to a serious call, to set oneself clearly and with determination on the road leading to spiritual perfection. Thus the monastic way was a journey, a self-exile from the Egypt of servitude to the passions¹² to the arduous road leading to the promised land of enlightenment and fulfillment. One made progress along this treacherous route lined with tempting snares only with the aid of spiritual teachers and fathers, whose counsels were valued and followed closely. Their sayings, or *apothtegmata*,

7. *Qu. Thal.* 52, CCSG 7, 425.

8. *Qu. Thal.* 50, CCSG 7, 379–381. To him are attributed the three laws, natural, written, and spiritual: *Qu. Thal.* 19, CCSG 7, 119. Also Questions 64 and 65. On the parallelism of levels see Paul M. Blowers, “The Analogy of Scripture and Cosmos in Maximus the Confessor,” in *Studia Patristica* 27, Leuven: Peeters, 1993, 145–49.

9. Cf. Polycarp Sherwood, “Exposition and Use of Scripture in St. Maximus as Manifest in the *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*,” OCP 24 (1958): 24. See for this work the important study of Paul M. Blowers, *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus the Confessor*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 7, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

10. *Qu. Thal.* Prol., CCSG 7, 23–27.

11. *Qu. Thal.* 65, CCSG 22, 273. For Evagrius the bread of angels is the logoi of earthly things: *Kephalaia Gnostica* I, 23 (ed. Guillaumont).

12. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 17, CCSG 7, 111–14.

were distillations of wisdom worked out in the experience of the monastic desert. Often these sayings were collected in groups of one hundred, called centuries, which lent themselves to memorization and regular repetition by observant monks. Maximus' own collection of centuries had enduring influence in monasteries of the Byzantine tradition.¹³

In this connection the sayings of Evagrius of Pontus (d. 399) enjoyed particular success by reason of their pointedness and practicality. A student of the Cappadocians and greatly influenced by the thinking of Origen, this monk of the Nitrian desert in Egypt was able to combine traditional desert wisdom with bold speculations expressed in an involved polychronic style.¹⁴ This combination of the practical and the speculative, the ascetical and the gnostic, has assured Evagrius a very bumpy ride in the appreciation of posterity. Valued for their practical insight, his ascetical works survived within the confines of the empire by being transmitted under other names.¹⁵ John Cassian mediated his doctrine in the west while in the east his insights were spread by John Climacus and especially by Maximus himself,¹⁶ who salvages

13. Maximus himself ascribes his centuries on love not to his own meditation. "Instead, I went through the writings of the holy Fathers and selected from them whatever had reference to my subject, summarizing many things in few words so that they can be seen at a glance to be easily memorized." *Chapters on Love*, Prol., tr. George C. Berthold, *Maximus Confessor, Selected Writings* (Classics of Western Spirituality), New York: Paulist, 1985, 35. This translation will hereinafter be referred to as CWS.

14. His *Prakticos* and treatise on prayer would be examples of straightforward ascetical works from his pen. Cf. the edition of A. and C. Guillaumont in *Sources Chrétiennes* 170–71 (Paris, 1971); also *The Prakticos, Chapters on Prayer*, tr. J. E. Bamberger, Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian, 1978. These works are certainly theologically sound and traditional. The more speculative works, however, present problems. The *Kephalaia Gnostica*, recently published in Syriac and Armenian versions, lend themselves to an interpretation which is favorable to Origenist positions as they are outlined, for example, in the synodal letter of Theophilus of Alexandria written in 400, the year following Evagrius' death. This is found in Latin translation as Letter 92 of Jerome, P.L. 22, 759–769. Cf. also Jerome's biting reference in Letter 133, 3. It must be recognized that Jerome can hardly be treated as an unbiased and objective source in this matter. The ecclesiastical historians Socrates (4,23) and Sozomen (6,30) praise both the man and his work. For Palladius he is "the illustrious," *Lausiatic History* 38 (ed. Butler), vol. 2, Cambridge, 1904, 116.

15. For example, that of St. Nilus the Ascetic, the fifth century founder of a monastery near Ancyra. His works are in P.G. 79.

16. Cf. the study of Maurice Viller, "Aux Sources de la Spiritualité de S. Maxime, Les Oeuvres d'Evagre le Pontique," *RAM* (1930): 156–84, 239–68, 331–36.

them by placing them in an orthodox context. Coupled with these valuable maxims and psychological insights, however, was a more speculative body of works, represented by the deliberately obscure *Kephalaia Gnostica*, in which were read the traditional doctrinal positions associated with Origenism and which were the basis of the condemnations of 543 and 553.¹⁷ Because of its notoriety in the Origenist controversy this work disappeared in its original form but was preserved in Syriac translations.¹⁸

II. ANAGOGY

At root the errors perceived by opponents of Evagrius (and of Origen before him) are exegetical errors, and even hermeneutical ones. Origen and his various disciples were renowned for their allegorizing of the biblical narratives, and Evagrius in particular found this method to be very serviceable. The Easter letter of Theophilus of Alexandria points to this method as doing away with the truth of the scriptural word.¹⁹ Maximus is very much aware of the problems raised by a reading of Evagrius, and does not want

17. Cf. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, II.2, (Paris, 1908), 1182–98. Also F. Diekamp, *Die origenistischen Streitigkeiten im sechsten Jahrhundert*, Münster, 1899, especially 90–97; Antoine Guillaumont, *Les 'Kephalaia Gnostica' d'Evagre le Pontique*, Paris, 1962. The names Origen and Evagrius are opprobriously repeated in the sixth and eighth councils; see *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 2nd edition, Basel, etc., 1962, 101 and 111, also 137. Even the Lateran Synod of 649 includes their names in canon 18 among those condemned: Riedinger, ed., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum a. 649 Celebratum*, 380.

18. Compare the French translation by A. Guillaumont of the two Syriac versions in *Patrologia Syriaca* 28.1, Turnhout, 1984, and also the critical edition of the Greek fragments in SC 356 (1989). On this consult David Bundy, “The Philosophical Structures of Origenism: The Case of the Expurgated Syriac Version (S₁) of the *Kephalaia Gnostica* of Evagrius,” in Robert J. Daly, ed., *Origeniana Quinta*, Leuven, 1992, 577–84. See also Michael O’Laughlin, “The Anthropology of Evagrius Ponticus and Its Sources,” in Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen, eds., *Origen of Alexandria, His World and his Legacy*, Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988, 357–73. For a different perspective see Gabriel Bunge, “Origenismus-Gnostizismus, Zum Geistesgeschichtlichen Standort des Evagrius Pontikos,” *VigChr* 40 (1986): 24–54, and his *Geistliche Vaterschaft, Christliche Gnosis bei Evagrius Pontikos*, Regensburg: Pustet, 1988.

19. This text is found as letter 98 of the letters of Jerome.

to compromise the power of the written words.²⁰ While using many of his techniques and interpretations he is solicitous to avoid the Origenist ideas which compromised the orthodoxy of some Egyptian and Palestinian monasteries of the fourth to the sixth centuries and resulted in the condemnations of the fifth council.

Gregory of Nyssa, whose influence on Maximus is clearly discernible in several areas of thought, defended the search for a spiritual sense of Scripture in the preface to his commentary on the Song of Songs. Basing himself on the New Testament itself he saw anagogy, whether tropology or allegory, as required by the faithful interpreter of the mind of the sacred text. If St. Paul states that the Law is spiritual (Rom 7:14), he must be including all the biblical narratives along with the ethical laws, for both precepts and narratives “lead to a knowledge of the mysteries and to a pure way of life for those who have diligent minds.”²¹ Gregory bases his argument on the practice of Paul (Gal 4:24, 1 Cor 10:11, 13:12, 2 Cor 3:16, 3:6) and on Christ himself, who taught in parables, images, and obscure words, much to the consternation of his apostles.

Maximus sees anagogy as demanded by the nature of the human composite itself. Because of our dual character he lays this down as a principle of scriptural interpretation:

When those who are truly gnostic teach the principles of the mysteries in the scriptures, they use figures as patterns of the things that are historically narrated for the uplifting (ἀναγωγή) of their students, adapting the spirit of contemplation to the letter of the narrative. In this way there is preserved both the figure through the sense and the meaning through the mind for man who is composed of both soul and body. Both the literal and the spiritual senses are addressed to the one complete man.²²

In the *Quaestiones et Dubia*, especially, he uses this term to indicate what sort of exegetical method he is using.²³ In the *Mystagogy* the term is likewise used

20. Cf. *Schol. in Dion.*, P.G. 4, 173AB, 76. For a comparative exegetical study see my article, “History and Exegesis in Evagrius and Maximus,” in Lothar Lies, ed., *Origeniana Quarta*, Innsbruck, 1987, 390–404.

21. Gregory of Nyssa, *cant.*, prol., Werner Jaeger and Hermann Langerbeck (eds.), *Gregorii Nysseni in Canticum Canticozum*, Leiden, 1960, which is volume 6 of the collected works. A translation of this work has been made by Casimir McCambley, O.C.S.O. and published by Hellenic College Press, Brookline, Mass. in 1987.

22. *Qu. Thal.* 55, Scholion 2, CCSG 7, 515.

23. See *Qu. dub.* 8, 29, 30, 38, 44, 77, 162, 178, I.35; CCSG 10, pp. 7, 24, 26, 31, 37, 58, 113, 122, 151.

to relate letter and spirit of the scriptural texts: "... the historical letter of the entire Holy Scripture, Old Testament and New, is a body while the meaning of the letter and the purpose to which it is directed is the soul." In order to be properly understood, holy scripture must circumcise its own letter.²⁴

III. LOGOS AND LOGOI

According to Hans Urs Von Balthasar, "the idea of balance and reciprocity between the universal and the particular is perhaps the most important point in Maximus' entire philosophy."²⁵ This is seen in his vision of created reality as bound together in God's Logos, the second person of the Trinity.²⁶ Indeed, Maximus can be called a theologian of the Word, since this term can be used to encompass both the particularity and diversity of created reality on the one hand and its singularity on the other. From the Fourth Gospel he can fix upon the only-begotten Son as God's eternal Word through whom all things have come to be. The richness of the term Logos allows him to present Jesus as not only the *Word* of God and the fleshly *Expression* of his nature, but also as the *Principle* of all created realities and the essential *Meaning* of Holy Writ. "The Word of God made flesh" is an expression coming regularly from his pen, as do similar terms, to refer to Christ.

Correlated to this central idea of the creative Word is the whole universe of created realities which Maximus refers to as logoi, who have their being in him.²⁷ Creation, in fact, is a wondrous harmony of beings, each with its own distinctness, but all together making up a glorious universal whole by reason of their grounding in the Logos.²⁸

24. *Myst.* 6, P.G. 90, 684; CWS 195–96.

25. *Kosmische Liturgie* (= KL), 158.

26. Cf. *Amb. Io.* 41, P.G. 91, 1312AB. Like Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus emphasizes the created character of all beings apart from God. Their createdness is a positive relationship to him.

27. Cf. *Amb. Io.* 7, P.G. 91, 1077Cff. This ambiguum is a veritable treatise against the Origenist notion of the fall of a primitive henad into diversity and motion. On the notion of the logoi cf. I.-H. Dalmais, O.P., "La Théorie des 'Logoi' des créatures chez S. Maxime le Confesseur," *RSPT* 36 (1952): 244–49.

28. Maximus is heavily influenced in this thinking by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, although the idea was a favorite of the Stoics. Christian writers followed the example of St. Paul in his appropriation of the notion of "body" to describe the Church. Cf., for example, Athanasius: "The holy Word of the Father, then, almighty and all-perfect, uniting with the universe and having everywhere unfolded his own

For God who made and brought into existence all things by his infinite power contains, gathers, and limits them and in his Providence binds both intelligible and sensible beings to himself and to one another. Maintaining about himself as cause, beginning, and end all beings which are by nature distant from one another, he makes them converge in each other by the singular force of their relationship to him as origin. Through this force he leads all beings to a common and unconfused identity of movement and existence....²⁹

The *logos* of a being is its essential principle or reason, what defines it fundamentally and characterizes it as such. The Logos contains all these *logoi* in himself, and they subsist in him for all eternity as manifestations of God's creative will. Asked to reconcile the statement in Genesis that having created the world in six days God rested from his work with Christ's answer to the Jews in John 5:17 that his Father works up till now and that he himself is at work, Maximus replies by referring to this "logical" character of creation. God is at work bringing out the potencies of beings into act, realizing through providence and judgment (categories frequently used by Evagrius) the great plan of his creative and unifying will.³⁰ This, as Maximus makes clear, is a work of the holy Trinity.

As an illustration of this point Maximus offers an interpretation of Peter's experience in Acts 10 as a challenge to a Christian awakening. After his vision of the animals of every kind the apostle puzzles over the significance of the command to slaughter and eat. Interpreted allegorically the passage means that the visible world is seized in its *logoi* by the invisible world. The command to "Rise, Peter, kill and eat" is a call to rise from sensual habit and the righteousness according to the Law. By doing away with sensual images we are invited to appreciate worldly realities in recognizing them as types of spiritual reality. No created thing is impure, but rather "corruption resides

powers, and having illumined all, both things seen and things invisible, holds things together and binds them to himself, having left nothing void of His own power, but on the contrary quickening and sustaining all things everywhere, each severally and all collectively; while he mingles in one the principles of all sensible existence, heat namely and cold and wet and dry, and causes them not to conflict, but to make up one concordant harmony." *Contra Gentes* 42, NPNF 2nd series, IV, 26. The Wisdom of God, Athanasius states, handles the universe as a musician handles a lyre, producing in the end a marvelous and divine harmony.

29. *Mystagogy* 1; CWS, 186. Cf. *Chapters on Knowledge* II, 4, CWS, 32. cf. *Amb. Io.* 10. PG 91, 1120A.

30. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 2, CCSG 7, 51.

in the senses and in the war of beings among themselves, but there is no opposition at all among their *logoi*.³¹ Grace does not set aside the capacity of nature, Maximus states clearly. Rather, nature's force is taken away by the misuse of behavior (*tropoi*) in harmony with nature.³² While beings are stable in their fundamental principles, they are nevertheless in a fluctuating state in the working out of their relationships.³³

The distinction *logos-tropos* is used very often by Maximus to bring out the fundamental distinction between *principle* rooted in nature and *mode*, which is a disposition brought about by free will. Against the original henad of Origenist speculation Maximus is wont to stress the distinctiveness of beings, each with its own *logos* stemming from God's creative will. Multiplicity is not a sign of sin but rather a reflection of the benevolence and power of the Creator. The God of Genesis looks upon the things he has made and calls them good. Each created reality displays movement as a mark of its created character,³⁴ and the grandeur of creation is that in God's mind all these *logoi*, so different in nature, universally tend toward each other in a unity that does not compromise the distinctiveness of each.³⁵

Not only do things converge, but they mutually reveal themselves to those who contemplate them in their *logoi*. Their relation to each other is one of transparency, a doctrine that Maximus grounds in Ezekiel's image of the wheel within a wheel³⁶ as well as in the Pauline text that invisible things are perceived and recognized through things created.³⁷

31. *Qu. Thal.* 27, CCSG 7, 193. "For nothing that comes from nature is impure because it is God who is the cause of its existence." *Ibid.*, 201.

32. *Qu. Thal.* 59, CCSG 22, 51. Cf. *Char.* 3.4: "It is not food which is evil but gluttony, not the begetting of children but fornication, not possessions but greed, not reputation but vainglory. And if this is so, there is nothing evil in creatures except misuse, which stems from the mind's negligence in its natural cultivation." CWS, 62; also 3.3, CWS 61.

33. *Amb. Io.* 17, P.G. 91, 1228BC.

34. Cf. *Amb. Io.* 22, P.G. 91, 1256Dff.; 7, 1080.

35. "God in his Providence effects the growing assimilation of particular things to universal things to the point of coinciding the movements of particular freedom, by the movement of parts to well-being with the universal natural reason of spiritual being, to harmonize in this way particular spirits among themselves and in the whole and to give them an identity of movement, so that their will does not note the difference which opposes the part to the whole, but rather that a single identical principle might reign over the whole." *Qu. Thal.* 2, CCSG 7, 51.

36. Ez 1:15, 22; 10:9-17.

37. Cf. Rom 1:20. The language here owes much to Pseudo-Dionysius. See his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 1,2 and 1,3.

IV. TROPOLOGY

Asked about the difference between allegory and tropology Maximus replies that while allegory is concerned with inanimate things, tropology is concerned with the bodily members: head, eyes, etc.

The term is rooted in the verb *τρέπεσθαι*, to be turned, converted.³⁸ The moral dimension of scripture is basic to its message. It instructs, restrains, and corrects us.³⁹ Maximus frequently cites passages from both OT and NT where moral instructions and admonitions are given. When our Lord tells us that when we fast we are to anoint our head and wash our face (Mt 6:17) we are to understand this as a double prescription to cleanse our life of vice and anoint our mind with divine gnosis.⁴⁰ Scripture's word is a continuous call to moral conversion. Against any notion that the monastic state was intended to be a static enjoyment of the benefits of divine intimacy Maximus enjoins constancy and vigilance in the observance of the commandments.

Do not say, as the divine Jeremiah tells us, that you are the Lord's temple. And do not say that "mere faith in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me." For this is impossible unless you acquire love for him through works. For in what concerns mere believing, "even the devils believe and tremble" (Jas 2:19).⁴¹

The ladder leading to noetic contemplation is of no use if it is not firmly anchored in the solid base of human works. Love, the chapter says, has to be acquired through works. Scripture calls virtues *ways*, we are reminded, and the most excellent of these ways is love, as the Apostle instructs us.⁴² For Maximus, strongly influenced in this by the anthropology of Gregory of Nyssa,⁴³ the biblical doctrine of creation in God's image involves no merely static endowment with a faculty oriented to a spiritual goal. By virtue of creation we have an innate desire and love, *πόθος και ἔρωσ*, given to us by God as well as a faculty, the will, bringing them to fulfillment.

That man is made to the image and likeness of God means that he proceeds from God's will and bears the image of this origin by his being

38. *Quaestiones et Dubia* I,8, CCSG 10, 141.

39. *Char.* 4.66, CWS 82.

40. *Qu. D.* 70, CCSG 10, 54. Cf. *Char.* 1.77: "By means of the commandments the Lord renders detached those who carry them out; by means of the divine doctrines he bestows on them the enlightenment of knowledge." CWS 43.

41. *Char.* 1.39, CWS 39.

42. In 1 Cor 12:31. Cf. *Char.* 4. 74, CWS 83.

43. Especially in the *Life of Moses*, ed. W. Jaeger. See R. Leys, *L'Image de Dieu selon S. Grégoire de Nysse*, Paris-Bruxelles, 1951.

self-moving and self-ruling.⁴⁴ Through this liberty of being he is free to bring about the activation of the innate desire for God which drives his being.⁴⁵ It is to illustrate this dynamism that Maximus habitually, though not always, distinguishes between image and likeness, comparing them as the logos of nature and the tropos of virtue.⁴⁶ In creating human rational creatures God communicates to them four divine attributes. He grants being and eternal being to the essence of humanity, and then goodness and wisdom he bestows on the volitive faculty. Maximus gives this theological reason as the explanation of the biblical statement that man is created to the image and likeness of God, “to the image of his being by our being, to the image of his eternal being by our eternal being (even though not without a beginning, it is yet without end); to the likeness of his goodness by our goodness, to the likeness of his wisdom by our wisdom. The first is by nature, the second by grace. Every rational nature indeed is made to the image of God; but only those who are good and wise are made to his likeness.”⁴⁷

This distinction between image and likeness places the moral effort squarely on the human agent, with due regard for the explicit reality of grace, and specifically on human freedom. When he is not quoting the moral admonitions of scripture, especially of St. Paul, to the monk in full ascetical striving, Maximus calls for a tropological interpretation of the biblical narratives.

In this ascetical context, therefore, Maximus finds it necessary to focus upon the human will as the neuralgic center of the Christian ethical challenge. “To share in his goodness and wisdom or not to share depends on the will of rational beings.”⁴⁸ Man was made to the image of the supremely free God by proceeding from his will and by bearing the image of his origin

44. *Amb. Io.* 42, P.G. 91, 1345D; cf. *Chapters on Knowledge* 1.11, P.G. 90, 1088A, CWS 130.

45. *Ibid.*

46. In doing this he follows an old tradition: Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* II, 14, P.G. 7, 751BC; Clem. Alex., *Paidag.*, I, 4, P.G. 8, 260AB, *Strom.* II, 22, 1060C, *Coh. ad Gentes*, 10, 213B; Origen, *De Pr.* 3.6, *hom. Lev.* 4, P.G. 12, 436. Cf. Th. Disdier, “Les fondements dogmatiques de la spiritualité de S. Maxime le Confesseur,” EO 29 (1930): 296–313, and J. Meyendorff, *Le Christ dans la Théologie Byzantine*, Paris, 1969, 150–156. John Damascene will follow in this tradition: *De Fide Orthodoxa* 2, 12, P.G. 94, 920B.

47. *Char.* 3.25, CWS 64 (where a misplaced term is corrected in the present translation).

48. *Char.* 3.27, CWS 65; 4.13, CWS 76–77.

through his being self-moving and self-ruling.⁴⁹ Through this liberty granted by God's creative act he is free to bring about the energizing of the innate desire for God which drives his being. For this he found it helpful to stress the distinction between image and likeness. In the celebrated dispute with Pyrrhus at Carthage he is asked to explain the relationship between the faculty of the will and human nature. Maximus refers to the biblical text of Genesis 1:26 and says, "Thus if man is an image of the divine nature, and the divine nature is free, then so also must be the image. If it preserves its likeness to the archetype it realizes its independence of nature."⁵⁰

What is primary in our actions, then, is the intention with which they are performed.⁵¹ The purest human freedom, untainted by any ambiguous motive, was realized by Christ. Maximus' secure position in Christian history as the defender of the integrity of Christ's human will in the incarnation against the Monothelites was prepared for by his defense of the central role of the human will in the process of deification.

In this light the Bible offered, on the level of tropology, a wealth of examples to illustrate the freedom of the virtues or the servitude to the passions. In each biblical personage could be seen the dynamic of good and evil at work in salvation history. While not at all throwing out the literal sense of the narratives, we can discern a process of growth in or rejection of grace in the great figures of the Bible. Susanna's endurance in the face of slander, Job's courage, Joseph's chastity, Paul's humility, Christ's perfect example, all testify to the Spirit's working in the drama of human asceticism.⁵² On the other hand, Pilate's vainglory, Herod's spirit of fornication, Judas' treachery, etc., were warnings to the monk who allowed himself to be taken over by his passions. All these biblical personages provided the reader of scripture with vivid examples of both spiritual triumph and tragedy.

49. Cf. *Amb. Io.* 42, 91, 1345D. Also: "There is no rational soul which is by essence more valuable than another rational soul. Indeed, God in his goodness, creating every soul to his image, brings it into being to be self-moving. Each one, then, deliberately either chooses honor or accepts dishonor by its own deeds." *Chapters on Knowledge* 1.11, CWS 130.

50. *Disp.*, P.G. 91, 324D.

51. Cf. *Char.* 3.48, 75, 77; CWS 67,71-72.

52. These and other examples are discussed in my "Levels of Scriptural Meaning in Maximus the Confessor," SP XXVII, 133-135.

V. CHRIST THE CENTER

What can be the meaning of the striking statement that “of all the divine mysteries, the mystery of Christ is the most mysterious?”⁵³

As the Logos is (by definition) the principle of creation, a doctrine that Maximus takes from John 1:3, Col 1:15–17, 1 Cor 8:16 and the NT in general more than from Neoplatonism, so is he the principle of revelation and also of redemption, or deification, precisely through the act of the incarnation. But in keeping with his scheme Maximus sees the incarnation as happening on more levels than the merely historical. As one also sees in Origen and his tradition, the words of scripture are a type of incarnation of the Logos. Maximus writes:

The Word of God is called flesh not only as having become incarnate but as God the Word understood simply in the beginning with God the Father, who possesses the clear and naked forms of the truth of all things and does not include riddles or enigmas or need allegorical stories. But when he is present to men who cannot with their naked mind reach naked spiritual realities, and converses in a way familiar to them in a wide variety [poikilivaß] an Evagrius word to correct Evagrius] of stories, enigmas, parables, and dark sayings, then he becomes flesh. Our mind does not in this first encounter hold converse with the naked Word, but with the Word made flesh, certainly in a variety of languages; though he is the Word by nature he is flesh to the sight, so that many think they see flesh and not the Word even if he is truly the Word. For the understanding of Scripture is not what appears to the many but is otherwise than it appears. For the Word becomes flesh through each recorded word.⁵⁴

The divine Logos presents himself to us in the ambiguous world of sense and variety that characterizes our life in the flesh. As the logoi of nature point to their ontological source in the Logos, so do the logoi of Scripture point to and incarnate this same Logos.

The mystery of the incarnation of the Word bears the power of all the hidden meanings and figures of Scripture as well as the knowledge of visible and invisible creatures. The one who knows the mystery of the cross and the

53. *Amb. Io* 42, P.G. 91, 1332C.

54. *Cap. theol.* (Chapters on Knowledge) II, 60 (CWS, 160). The same idea is expressed in *Amb. Io*. 43, P.G. 91, 1285C–1288A. Cf. The extensive symbolic interpretations of Moses, Elijah, and Abraham in *Amb. Io* 10. *Chapters on Knowledge* I, 97, CWS 146.

tomb knows the principles of these creatures. And the one who has been initiated into the ineffable power of the Resurrection knows the purpose for which God originally made all things.⁵⁵

But the veil of the letter has to be pierced for us to recognize the Savior. Otherwise we become slaves to the letter and to the legalism of Jewish practice. Maximus interprets circumcision as an example of a law misunderstood because taken only on the level of the letter. The misunderstanding of the scriptural commandment has its parallel in a misunderstanding of the integrity of creation, which Maximus judges to be impugned by the physical act of circumcision.⁵⁶ As shown by St. Paul himself,⁵⁷ Christ must become the hermeneutical key to the Christian exegesis of both Testaments. Maximus' exegesis of the transfiguration account presents it as a transformation of the apostles' sensible energies and a liberation of their intellectual faculty from the veils of the passions. Only then could they perceive Christ's divine identity in the radiant light beaming from his person. The whitened garments are a figure of the words of scripture, which no longer bear any enigma or shadow once the Logos is brilliantly displayed.⁵⁸

"Nothing of what is written in scripture, persons, places, or other things whether animate or inanimate, sensible or intelligible, is always to be understood in the same manner either on the historical or the contemplative level."⁵⁹ Like the great Origen and in his line Maximus sees the vast sweep of history as God's revelation to the faithful soul to be attended to in view of its spiritual progress. Usefulness and profit, *ὠφέλεια*, is the rule to follow in the understanding of Scripture. Attentiveness to the inspired words and narratives is required for spiritual profit, since "in the richness of grace, any syllable of the divine Scripture can be taken in any number of ways for the usefulness (*ὠφέλειαν*) of those who are desirous of virtue and knowledge."⁶⁰

55. *Chapters on Knowledge*, I, 66; CWS 139–140.

56. *Qu. Thal.* 65, CCSG 22, 279. Questions 64 and 65 of the same work focus on the Jews as a people who symbolize the carnal interpretation of scripture. Maximus sees this stubborn resistance to the spirit as incarnated in King Saul, who also represents the reign of concupiscence, a reign he contrasts with David's. Maximus is "aided" in his exegesis of Saul and his associates by the use of etymology: *Qu. Thal.* 65, CCSG 22, 253ff.

57. In his typological exegesis of the Exodus wandering: "...and the rock was Christ." I Cor 10:4.

58. Cf. *Amb. Io.* 10, P.G. 91, 1125D–1128D.

59. *Qu. Thal.* 64, CCSG 22, 187.

60. *Qu. Thal.* 47, CCSG 7, 315. From this perspective Maximus does not seem to distinguish between Old and New Testaments. Both present themselves to the

Maximus means for this hermeneutical principle to be taken in its fullest sense. Thus Scripture is replete with treasures in both its *breadth* and *depth*. The long history of Israel provides us with an abundance of examples of virtues and vices, of types, images, and symbols, all of which are graciously provided to us by the revealing Logos so that we might contemplate their meaning for us. Who is the voice crying out in the desert, Maximus is asked? Any saint, he replies, and proceeds to draw up a long list of personages in a line going from Adam to John the Baptist.⁶¹ Indeed, the Pauline saying is to be taken seriously: “All scripture is inspired by God and profitable (ὠφέλιμος) for teaching, for reproving, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”⁶²

As vast as is the horizontal sweep of scripture, it is matched by its vertical depth. As Maximus gives example after example of profiles in virtue and vice, so does he give corresponding levels of interpretation.⁶³ He will regularly offer an elaborate interpretation based on allegory, etymology, numerology, etc., then follow it with another one which is completely different because it views the subject from a different angle. Sometimes the second (or third) explanation will be explicitly directed to those desirous of a more mystical interpretation. Different levels are present for the ascetical and contemplative needs of different minds. It would perhaps have seemed strange to Maximus or his correspondents to have to answer the question that would occur to today’s reader about which would be *the* correct interpretation of the text. *The* correct interpretation is the one that succeeds in moving the reader of Scripture to advance in virtue or to deepen his contemplation, to see and to be absorbed by the mystery revealed in the saving words that make present the Savior Word. Holy Writ is not a scientific problem to be solved but a call from the Logos to our personal selves which demands a reply of moral or contemplative commitment. While our contemporary scholarly concern is to narrow down the options of interpretation in an effort to discover the correct one, the concern of Maximus is just the opposite: to open up the possibilities of interpretation, to deepen the levels of comprehension, to multiply the fields of applicability.

believer as God’s word and both reveal God’s saving will in Christ. Naturally, they are to be distinguished as prophecy and fulfillment.

61. *Qu. Thal.* 47, CCSG 7, 313–315.

62. 2 Tim 3:16.

63. Cf. my “Levels of Scriptural Meaning in Maximus the Confessor,” *StPatr* XXVII, 129–44.

The Logos becomes incarnate in a threefold manner: in the flesh, in the logoi of created beings, and in the letters, syllables, and sounds of scripture. Asked to clarify a text of Gregory of Nazianzus that the Word becomes concentrated, or corporeal,⁶⁴ Maximus replies that with due regard for our bodily condition the Logos adapts himself to our perception in this series of ways so that he can be genuinely present to us.⁶⁵ In the prayer for enlightenment that begins Question 48 we see Maximus' understanding of the contemplative process by which the message of scripture is appropriated:

Come Logos of God, worthy of all praise. Give us of your logoi in proper measure and understanding, and by tearing away their thick envelope show us, O Christ, the beauty of your thoughts. Take us by the right hand, the intellectual power in us, and guide us along the way of your commandments, and 'lead us to the place of your wonderful tabernacle all the way to God's dwelling with cries of joy and thanksgiving and of the sound of those who keep festival' (Ps 41:5, LXX), so that we also, giving thanks in the confession through action and in the joy of contemplation, having been judged worthy to enter the place of your feasting, may also ourselves feast with those who are feasting in celebrating with our voices never quiet the knowledge of the ineffable.⁶⁶

The prayer continues on for another sentence, but an analysis of this section cited yields the key elements of Maximus' exegesis.

1. It is the Father's Logos, hypostatically distinct from him, who is addressed in personal prayer. Since revelation binds together two parties, revealer and receiver of revelation, it follows that, "The word of holy Scripture, even if in the *letter* of events it narrates takes place in a determined time, remains always undetermined according to the *spirit* when considering these from a spiritual point of view."⁶⁷ While we as receivers of the revelation are circumscribed, neither God as revealer nor the Word he utters is circumscribed.⁶⁸ The Holy Spirit as author of Holy Writ "sets down an understanding of the scriptural text in harmony with and in the reach of each one who

64. παραφθίρεσθαι, a word also used in an incarnational sense by Maximus' mentor Sophronius in his homily on the Annunciation: *or.* 2.15, P.G. 87 (3), 3233C. In Gregory it is in *or.* 38 (On the Theophany), P.G. 36, 313B.

65. *Amb. Io.* 33, P.G. 91, 1285C–1288A.

66. *Qu Thal.* 48, CCSG 7, 331.

67. *Qu Thal.* 50, CCSG 7, 379.

68. *Ibid.*

shares human nature,”⁶⁹ so that “each one of us can become a Hezekiah or Isaiah on the spiritual level” (cf. 2 Chr 32:20ff.).

2. The clear influence of Origen is evident in two ideas that are explicitly stated. We ask for enlightenment “in proper measure and understanding.” In many places, in fact, Maximus shows himself the heir of the great teacher of Alexandria and Caesarea in stressing the adaptability of the word to the reader/hearer. We each profit from Scripture according to our personal capacity and our individual need. The word is measured out to the spiritual dimensions of the believer. Secondly, our request in understanding the scriptures is to go beyond the letter, to tear away the envelope, the husk of scripture to reach its kernel. That is, we seek to pierce the thick wall of appearances to reach the full reality of the truth of the world, of the words, of grace.

3. The way of the commandments is the sure way to reach God’s dwelling which is reserved for the pure of heart. The purpose of human movement and action is to lead upwards to the divine realm. Since our make-up is two-fold so must be our celebration. We confess our faith through the action of ascetic discipline and the acquisition of virtues. At the same time we express our contemplative imperative in the joy of mystical insight. Through both of these actions we express our thanks to God, i.e., we respond gratefully to his inviting and saving Word.

4. Finally, the goal of God’s revelation to us is a feasting at his table, a happy encounter of Creator and creature in the mystical union of a freely chosen common life. At this feast our voices are ever active and will speak the ineffable reality of God in an endless union of love.

The danger, of course, in using Christ as the central mystery of a conceptual scheme is that he himself will be reduced (or upgraded) from a concrete reality to an idea. This danger is offset in Maximus by the concrete language which he employs for the historical Jesus of the gospels. However powerful is the synthesis that he constructs with Christ at its center, we are not allowed to forget that Jesus Christ is the real Jesus who met blasphemy, suffering, and hate with long-suffering patience and love. His obedience to the Father all the way to death for our sake proved that he kept the commandment of love.⁷⁰ The one who imitates him is the one who keeps the commandments of God.⁷¹ Jesus Christ is not only human, Maximus insists, but human in every way, having human essence in the full understanding

69. *Ibid.*

70. Cf. *Lib. asc.* 1, P.G. 90, 912; 12–13, 921A–C.

71. *Ibid.*, 3, 913B.

of that term, and not as compromised by Manicheans and Apollinarians.⁷² He breathed, walked, spoke, moved his hands, used his senses, hungered and thirsted, ate, slept, was wearied, wept, was sad in a real and not an imaginary way, for the purpose of fulfilling the economy for our sake.⁷³

In his explanation of the hypostatic union of divine and human natures in Christ, Maximus remains steadfastly faithful to the full Chalcedonian formula, to which he habitually returns. In the years of open crisis in the Monothelite debate, when the reality of the full and functioning human will of Jesus is being sacrificed to serve the political end of reunion with the Monophysites, Maximus is clear and adamant in spelling out the unavoidable consequences of Chalcedonian orthodoxy. But long before that period, Maximus has already in place the coherent structure of a Christ-centered cosmological and soteriological system.⁷⁴ One reason for this is that against the background of his Logos-logoi doctrine Maximus could appreciate the logic of Pope Leo and Chalcedon in confessing the intimate unity of two vastly diverse natures without any confusion, change, division, or separation. The mystery of profound union does not obliterate or compromise ontological diversity. But perhaps another reason for this is that in his monastic context he could see the dangers of not placing Christ, the full Christ as confessed by Catholic orthodoxy, at the center of Christian ascetical and contemplative experience. Monastic experiments had, in fact, come to grief by reason of the loss of this controlling doctrinal principle. The condemnations of the Fifth Ecumenical Council were directed at widespread and serious errors of the Origenist monks of Palestine and Egypt. In large part, the basis of Origenist errors was christological. This central flaw affected almost every part of their sometimes elaborate system, from the primitive *henad* to final *apocatastasis*.

Maximus' condemnation of the Origenist scheme in *Ambiguum* 7 attempts to set the many good insights of Origen and Evagrius in an orthodox christological context. This context informs the whole of his theology, but it is stated succinctly in *Qu. Thal.* 60, to which we may devote some attention. Far from being incidental to creation or an afterthought of it, the incarnation of Christ is the very purpose of God's creative act. It is "the blessed end

72. *Amb. Th.* 5, P.G. 91, 1048.

73. *Ibid.*, 1049CD. *opusc.* 7 PG 91, 84C-**A.

74. As early as 626 Maximus writes of the Son as "the Father's right hand," our savior and the bestower of the Spirit's gifts. The incarnate Lord is, in Paul's phrase, "the divine purpose which was hidden from all ages and generations by means of the plan of salvation incarnate in himself" (Col. 1:26); *Expl. Ps* 59, CCSG 23, 12.

for which all things were established,⁷⁵ the very reason why beings exist. Using the Irenaean term in the context of creation and providence Maximus affirms the recapitulation in God of all things that he created.

The incarnation is the mystery enveloping the ages of history by which the eternal Logos reveals the foundation of the Father's goodness in showing the end for which every created reality holds the logos of its own being. "For through Christ, i.e., in accordance with the mystery of Christ, all the ages and everything in them find in Christ the principle and end of their being."⁷⁶ The union of the finite with the infinite and the created with the Creator was determined before human history began. It was fitting, in fact, that the Creator of essences himself become the author of deification by grace, that the bestower of existence be seen as the dispenser of everlasting well-being.⁷⁷ Not having carnal pleasure at the root of his human origin, the divine Logos creates another principle of a second birth by the Holy Spirit and willingly accepts Adam's deserved death. In thus eliminating the two extremes of the flawed beginning and end of life the Savior generates a new and eternal life.⁷⁸

"How great, how truly awesome is the mystery of our salvation," exclaims Maximus.⁷⁹ His long defense of Chalcedonian orthodoxy, culminating in the personal witness of defiance, confession, and mutilation, is well known. It is particularly in his clear and firm expositions of the human freedom of Christ that his renown has been earned. For him, the Monothelite accommodation

75. *Qu. Thal.* 60, CCSG 22, 75. Maximus here is commenting on 1 Pet 1:20 and Col 1:26.

76. *Qu. Thal.* 60, CCSG 22, 75. Cf. Dominic J. Unger, O.F.M.Cap., "Christ Jesus, Center and Final Scope of all Creation According to St. Maximus Confessor," *Franciscan Studies* 9 (1949): 50–62. Still, Maximus uses the traditional language of soteriology, as in *Amb. Th.* 3, P.G. 91, 1040B; 4, 1044D. The *Liber Asceticus* begins with the monk's question to an elder about the purpose of the incarnation. Surprised at the elementary nature of the query, the old man replies that "the purpose of the Lord's becoming man was our salvation." P.G. 90, 912; Polycarp Sherwood, *St. Maximus the Confessor, The Ascetic Life, The Four Centuries on Charity*, Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1955, 103. This answer, and the explanation that follows, may well be a soteriological corrective to a mysticism in danger of being cut loose from its christological moorings in salvation history.

77. In accordance with the triad being, well-being, eternal well-being frequently used by Maximus. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 60, CCSG 22, 79; *Char.* 3.23 and 24, CWS 64; 4.11, CWS 76; *Disp.*, 91, 324D–325A.

78. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 61, CCSG 22, 91.

79. *Amb. Th.* 4, P.G. 91, 1045B.

threatened to undo the mystery expressed at Chalcedon and operative in the church's faith and liturgy. This doctrine of the reality of the existence and functioning of both the divine and the human wills of the Word made flesh had to be accepted as the clear meaning of the gospel texts. In the *Dispute with Pyrrhus* and in various other works he bases the church's dyothelite doctrine on the witness of the gospel accounts, citing the passages where willing or being unwilling is applied to Christ.⁸⁰ But the central gospel passage regarding Christ's freedom was the prayer of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. This was a passage that Pyrrhus and other Monothelite leaders were advancing to prove the Monothelite claim that Jesus' human will was so taken over by the divine as to be inoperative. But it is precisely this passage that Maximus uses to show the mystery of the profound unity of two disparate realities, the human and the divine, acting together in the most intimate synergy on the level of love. It serves, in fact, as a prime example of the key idea of Maximus: the reconciliation of all created reality with God in the hypostatic union of the Word made flesh.

Maximus sees this central mystery of faith revealed in sundry places in the Old Testament, even in the most surprising ones. We can perceive it, for example, in the vision of the prophet Zechariah of a flying sickle which becomes "a curse that goes over the face of the whole earth"⁸¹ that the Lord sends out to punish the evildoer. In reality it is the curse which in turn afflicts the curse on human nature brought by Adam's transgression. Maximus arrives at this interpretation by linking this curse to the saying in Galatians that Christ has himself become a curse for us (Gal 3:13), destroying the curse of the Law.⁸²

Similarly, Christ is the lamp of the same prophet's vision enlightening everything of the household of the world, as the Lord himself says.⁸³ For the Lord is the liberator from ignorance and vice, the destroyer of night, as Maximus explains through the etymology of *λύχνος*, the word for lamp.⁸⁴ This allegorical exegesis of Zechariah is continued as Maximus explains the church as the lampstand releasing the energies of the Holy Spirit through his seven gifts, etc.⁸⁵ But the allegorization is under the tight control of the driving idea of Maximus, the process of deification rendered possible by the

80. *Disp.*, P.G. 91, 320D–324C. This list comes at the direct request of Pyrrhus.

81. Zech 5:3 LXX.

82. *Qu. Thal.* 62, CCSG 22, 123.

83. Cf. Mt 5:15.

84. *Qu. Thal.* 63, CCSG 22, 149.

85. *Ibid.*, 153. Cf. *Lib. Asc.* 43, P.G. 90, 953B.

incarnation of the Logos. The thrust is personal: "It is in fact for me that the Logos became man, for me that he worked out my whole salvation, that he bestowed on me what was his by nature, by means of what was mine."⁸⁶

VI. ALLEGORY

When one considers the tradition from which he comes, it should not be surprising that Maximus pays little attention to the historical setting of the scriptural narrative and to its literal sense. It is not a question of his being unacquainted or ill at ease with the Biblical texts; in fact, he demonstrates a wide familiarity with them. But he wants to pierce through the letter of the Bible, or the simple historical narrative in order to discover its spiritual (*anagogic*) meaning.⁸⁷ Thus he will indulge in numerology (e.g., in Questions 49, 55, and 64 to Thalassius) and seek to discover ontological meanings through sometimes near accurate but often fanciful etymologies (e.g., Questions 50, 54, 55, 56, 64, 65).⁸⁸

But especially will Maximus indulge in the allegorical flights that were a familiar mark of monasteries in the tradition of Origen and Evagrius. The Bible presented a vast array of people, places, and events that needed to be interpreted in a meaningful way if they were to contribute to spiritual progress. In the tradition of Origen he regularly challenges the readers of scripture to go beyond the letter of the text with a view to penetrating to its meaning. Allegory was one such method by which seemingly insignificant subjects could be interpreted to yield spiritual profit. It is rendered necessary, in fact, by the divine pedagogy itself. The Word of God, unable to present the plain truth which could not be grasped by a human nature besmirched by ignorance of and alienation from divine things, wisely chose to communicate

86. *Qu. Thal.* 63, CCSG 22, 155. That is, he bestowed divinity on me by taking on my humanity. A little later in the same question Maximus offers an interpretation on another level, seeing the lampstand as the individual soul and working out another scheme on the personal level; cf. 165ff.

87. See the discussion of this method in Paul Blowers, *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy*, 185–248.

88. Antoon Schoors has analyzed the etymological usages of Maximus with an attempt to trace their sources in "Biblical Onomastics in Maximus Confessor's *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*," in A. Schoors and P. Van Deun, eds., *PHILOHISTOR, Miscellanea in Honorem Caroli Laga Septuagenarii* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 60) Leuven: Peeters, 1994, 257–72.

these under the veil of types and figures.⁸⁹ Evil spirits have their power hidden in the natural passions and becloud our spiritual understanding.⁹⁰ For this reason we must pay heed to the Apostle's saying that the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.⁹¹

Thus in Question 3 to Thalassius Maximus is asked about the Lord's sending Peter and John into the city to prepare the Passover meal. The disciples are told to meet a man carrying a jar of water, whom they are to follow to a house. There they will be shown by the householder the large upper room where they are to prepare the passover.⁹² For Maximus the mystical meaning of this passage is hidden behind the literal story and is to be read through the lens of allegory. Peter and John are symbols of action and contemplation, respectively. They are recognized by the man carrying the water jar, who represents those who carry the grace of the Spirit on the shoulders of the virtues by the mortification of the members. The householder represents those who through spiritual contemplation furnish a room on a superior level which will be fit to encounter the Logos. The house is the state of piety which is the goal of an individual who puts virtue into practice. The master of the house is the soul enlightened by the divine light of mystical knowledge. Such an interpretation allows Maximus to teach the psychological and spiritual truth that man is twofold, as represented in the two characters described: he is one in the one human nature, but two in that this nature is divided in all piety into active and contemplative. It is through the Spirit that the Logos makes the two one.

Passing to the personal level, Maximus makes his allegory specific. The city represents the individual soul to which are regularly sent as disciples the logoi of virtue and mystical knowledge (gnosis). The water carrier is the attitude of patience bearing on the shoulders of self-mastery an unshaken faith received by grace at baptism. The house is the state of virtues built stone by stone of good thoughts and actions. The upper room is the spacious intelligence furnished with mystical visions and truths. The householder is the *voũc* shining gnostically in the house of virtue, to whom the Logos comes and gives himself. The involved allegory concludes with a spiritual and allegorical truth:

89. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 20, CCSG 7, 121.

90. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 21, CCSG 7, 127.

91. Cf. II Cor 3:6. Maximus uses this quotation as well as John 4:24 (adoring God in spirit and in truth) as scriptural warrant for his method. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 65, which is a long treatment of letter versus spirit.

92. Cf. Lk 22:8–13.

For the passover is really the passage of the Logos to the human mind (voũv), through which the Logos of God in his mystical coming bestows fullness on all his elect by sharing with them his own blessings.⁹³ The Exodus event was a favorite topos of patristic exegetes. Question 16 describes the allegorical meaning of the golden calf. In Question 17 Maximus is asked about the strange events surrounding the circumcision of Moses' son.⁹⁴ He explains that the desert whence Moses is sent to liberate the children of Israel represents human nature, or the world, of the state without sin wherein the voũç learns the gnosis of beings and receives the mission to lead out of the Egypt of senses and the flesh the Israelites (= divine thoughts of beings) who labor in the clay of the passions. The voũç, linked to wisdom, takes the route of the virtues, which does not allow for any stopping, "for stopping in virtue is the beginning of evil."⁹⁵ But delaying over the edges of materiality leads to an inciting of passions and a rendering uncircumcised and profane the behavior and thoughts. It is then that the Logos presents himself to his conscience like an angel threatening him with death because of his tarrying in the path of virtue. Then like a Zipporah, the wisdom accompanying the mind cuts away every base thought from his thinking (= his child). The spiritual and theological conclusion to this allegory follows:

For the way of the virtues is veritably filled with many holy angels, i.e., in principles and modes (logoi and tropoi) to effect every type of virtue as such, as well as in invisible angels cooperating in the good with us and arousing in us such thoughts.⁹⁶

Maximus notes that the angel's threat does not come about at any time during the journey, i.e., while progress is being made, but rather when Moses and his family are stopping at an inn.

VII. WORD AND HISTORY

The great peril of a spiritual exegesis of scripture is a bypassing of its letter, and thus a neutralizing of historical events. The modern critical approaches have introduced a renewed appreciation of the literal sense of biblical texts by focusing on the Sitz-im-Leben of their authors. New critical methods have given us a keener insight into a variety of literary forms in which bib-

93. *Qu. Thal.* 3, CCSG 7, 59. cf. *Amb. Io.* 10 and its "contemplations."

94. Cf. Gen 4:24.

95. *Qu. Thal.* 17, CCSG 7, 113.

96. *Ibid.*

lical narratives are couched. Such a sensitivity to historical developments was characteristic neither of the patristic period in general nor of that of Maximus in particular.

To say this, however, is not to say that Maximus was unconcerned with history or that he was deaf to any message it might convey. History for him is no two-dimensional surface but rather artfully beveled to reveal a divine plan.⁹⁷ In fact, Maximus can discern in history a twofold process of the incarnation of God and the deification of man.⁹⁸ He regards contemporary history as the arena in which there is being worked out the great drama of personal redemption. Monastic commitment, therefore, is the wholehearted embracing of this call to perfection: *hodie, si vocem eius audieritis...* It means to interpret the events of life under the twofold rubric of providence and judgment, a visitation from God for our sanctification.⁹⁹

If von Balthasar is right in seeing Maximus as the Greek patristic thinker most open to the world,¹⁰⁰ his understanding of monasticism had to be not a flight away from it but rather a return to its center, to its Logos. It was a commitment to the redirecting of human energies in accordance with the one incarnate Logos who clears up the enigmas of nature and Scripture and who sets us under the law of grace. Our original movement was not downwards in some pre-cosmic fall, as Origenist speculation would have it, but rather upwards to union with the Creator, in Maximus' correction of the scheme. The logos of nature is called by God to a new tropos, a dimension of human existence wherein man's freedom will meet God's in love. Maximus is intent, then, to refocus the monk's vision of his spiritual striving away from a sequential ascent from ascetic praxis to mystical contemplation as if from a lesser life to a higher one. This would devalue a part of the human composite. Instead, as his theory of scriptural interpretation makes manifest, he wants to inculcate a more integrated and realistic vision of praxis and contemplation as joined together and simultaneously active.¹⁰¹ Faithful observance of the

97. See, for example, the stages into which history can be divided in *Qu. Thal.* 41, CCSG 279–281.

98. Cf. *Qu. Thal.* 22.

99. Cf. the treatment in "History and Exegesis in Evagrius and Maximus," *Origeniana Quarta*, 395–98. On providence and judgement, cf. *Ambo. Io.* 10, 1133D–1136A, 1168CD, 1188C–1193C.

100. "Maximus kann als der weltoffenste unter allen Denkern der griechischen Patristik gelten; er übertrifft in seiner grundsätzlichen positiven Wertung der Natur selbst den Nyssener." KL, 52.

101. This point is well expressed by Paul M. Blowers when he says that praxis, contemplation, virtue, and knowledge "stand in a constant, mutually coinherent

commandments is the exercise of the freedom that the Creator originally bestowed on intelligent persons.¹⁰²

To the monk who wants to leave off the practice of the virtues as mere training for beginners and concentrate on the higher states, Maximus emphasizes through abundant scriptural examples and the words of St. Paul that the heavenly life consists of the same:

Therefore, let us to the best of our ability not be careless in obeying God who calls us to eternal life and to a blessed end through the observance of his divine and saving commandments 'to receive mercy and find grace as an aid in time of need' (Heb 4:16). 'For grace,' says the divine Apostle, is with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility' (Eph 6:24), that is, those who love our Lord with the incorruptibility of virtue and the pure and sincere dignity of life, or to speak more clearly, those who love the Lord by doing his will and not by transgressing any of his commands.¹⁰³

To those whose desire for contemplative solitude leads them to despise even the eucharistic gathering Maximus gives the warning that the angels are there and take note of who is present at the services, and they also make supplications for them.¹⁰⁴ It is in the church and at the liturgy, says Maximus, that we are transformed and remolded by the grace of the Holy Spirit invisibly present but at work in each believer. To the monk in pursuit of a noetic and immaterial gnosis Maximus recalls the divine Logos who endured the nails, cross, and grave, without failing in love for his persecutors.¹⁰⁵ Monasticism is a call to journey to the heart of the Church where the saving confession of Christ takes place.

To believe in the scriptural word is to see its power and truth operative in human history and in the unfolding of contemporary events. The Arab

relation." See "The Logology of Maximus the Confessor in His Criticism of Origenism," in Robert J. Daly, ed., *Origeniana Quinta*, 574.

102. Virtue and gnosis, says Dalmais, give rise together to one wisdom: "la garde des commandements se place au centre de cette montée vers la divinisation qui a pris son fondement dans la foi et la crainte." I. H. Dalmais, "La doctrine ascétique de S. Maxime le Confesseur d'après le Liber Asceticus," *Iren* 26 (1953): 25.

103. *Myst.* 24, CWS 213.

104. *Ibid.*, CWS 206. The angels (represented by the stirrings of our conscience: Rom 2:15) also watch over our actions and either accuse or excuse us both now and on the day of judgment. *Qu. Thal.* 25, CCSG 7, 167. The language is taken from the Pauline verse. The angels likewise move us to perform good deeds: *Char.* 2.32, CWS 51; 2.69, CWS 56.

105. *Lib. asc.* 12 and 13, P.G. 90, 921A-C. Cf. *Chapters on Knowledge* 1, 66.

conquests of Christian lands, of which Maximus' displacements are a witness, were seen by him as God's judgment on a Christian people who had drifted away from a saving confession of the incarnate Logos through an embracing of the Monothelite heresy, a compromise faith. Like his master Sophronius he interpreted the Muslim conquests as the fulfillment of the prophetic words of Holy Writ. The one who saw the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place had to understand the eschatological significance of this event.¹⁰⁶ In a fashion that is reminiscent of St. Augustine, Maximus sees the great drama of redemption being played out on two levels, therefore, in the individual soul and on the level of world events. Citing the very text concerning the abomination of desolation he links the two levels:

Man's mind is a holy place and a temple of God in which the demons have laid waste the soul through passionate thoughts and set up the idol of sin. That these things have already happened in history no one who has read Josephus can, I think, doubt, though some say that these things will also happen when the Antichrist comes.¹⁰⁷

Embroided as a major figure in the controversies of the day, Maximus is at pains to stress the human reality of the incarnate Logos in its full meaning. What is not assumed is not saved, Maximus would agree with Gregory of Nazianzus. But it is precisely in ourselves that the great drama of redemption and deification is taking place. It is in this world of flux and ambiguity that the word of nature must clearly be read, the word of Scripture firmly grasped, the *kairos* of grace freely and completely accepted. The world is apocalypse, and we are the graced. To as many as receive the Word he gives the power to become children of God.

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106. Cf. Dan 11:31, Mt 24:15, Mk 13:14. For Sophronius see Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), I, 339. For Maximus see *opusc.* 15 (P.G. 91, 181CD), *Ep.* 14 (P.G. 91, 540A–544C). I have treated this subject in "Levels of Scriptural Meaning in Maximus the Confessor," SP 27, 142–44.

107. *Char.* 2.31; CWS 51.

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IX
 GERMANUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE
 (CA. 634–CA. 733)

Patriarch of Constantinople, his hometown, in 715–729, Germanus was the son of a noble family. His father, a favorite of Emperor Heraclius (610–641), was executed for conspiracy in 668. Germanus himself was made a eunuch at the age of twenty and integrated by force into the clergy of Hagia Sophia. Under Emperor Constantine IV he became instrumental in convoking the Ecumenical Council of Constantinople III (681) which condemned Monothelism, and he found himself nominated metropolitan bishop of Cyzicus. At the local synod of 712, he disowned the decisions of 681, but as soon as consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople August 11, 715, by Emperor Anastasius II, he anathemized Monothelism for good. He was deposed January 17, 730 for opposing an edict of Emperor Leo III, the Isaurian, which favored iconoclasm. He died soon after, almost a hundred years old in his retreat at Platanion, near the capital. His *Explanation of Holy Liturgy* (PG 98, 383–454) and the later *De haeresibus et synodis* are his only extant works, together with letters quoted in the eighth Ecumenical Council and nine homilies of which seven witness to the development of Marian doctrines.

In one of his letters (II: PG 98, 156–161) Germanus summarizes his arguments in favor of icons by commenting on Ex 20:4. His sound emphasis on divine transcendency and his focus on divine incarnation allow him to defend pictorial representations of Christ and Mary without a hint of superstition. In his Marian homilies Germanus comments mainly on the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, the Annunciation, and the Dormition. He stresses Mary's integral purity and universal intercession even more eloquently than his contemporary Andreas of Crete, and in anticipating the medieval lyricism of Bernard of Clairvaux. Rarely had the actualizing of NT data been pushed to such a degree of personal piety. (see for instance Homily II on the Dormition: PG 98, 349). Germanus is also credited with hundreds of *kontakia* and hymns disseminated in the Byzantine liturgy.

EDITIONS

PG 98, 148–221: Dogmatic Letters; 291–384: Homilies “On the Life-Giving Cross,” “On the Buried Lord” (for Holy Saturday), “On the Theotokos” (Homilies 1–2, col. 221–289, belong to the legacy of Germanus II of Constantinople).

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JOHN OF DAMASCUS (CA. 675–743/754)

Born in Damascus, in a family of high-ranking civil servants (one of them had opened the doors of Damascus to the Arabs in 635), John was educated with the help of a teacher, prisoner of war, from southern Italy. His older friend was the Arabic poet Ahtal, a younger one was the future calif Jazid (680–683). Like his father John served at the court until Abdel Malek (685–705) and Omar II (717–720) inaugurated a regime intolerant of Christians. He retired to the monastic solitude of Mar Saba near Jerusalem, dedicating himself to asceticism, and studying scripture and the Fathers. He was also celebrated as a religious poet. John V of Jerusalem (706–727) ordained him a priest and he often preached in Jerusalem. During the controversy about the use of painted images in the church, he supported their cult. Before his death, he revised all his writings. After having endured posthumous sanctions by the iconoclasts, John's memory was solemnly rehabilitated at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 (Kotter, 127).

John of Damascus produced remarkable dogmatic writings, systematically organized as compilations of earlier Christian literature with original comments:

- 1) the *Source of Knowledge* (PG 94, 521–1228; ed. F. Hathaway Chase, New York 1958), including a dedicatory letter, a first part of *capita philosophica*, “philosophical chapters,” a second part with a history of one hundred heresies (the eighty enumerated by Epiphanius of Salamis in *Panarion* and twenty others), also known as chapter 34 of the *catena Doctrina patrum de incarnatione Verbe* (ed. F. Diekamp, Münster/W. 1907); and a third part, *The Exposition of Orthodox Faith* (ed. D. F. Salmond, New York 1899; D. Stiefenhofer, Munich 1923; E. Ponsoye, Paris 1962.), with another hundred chapters on God, creation, humankind, incarnation, eschatology and asceticism.
- 2) the *Elementary Instruction* (PG 95, 99–112).
- 3) *Professions of Faith*.
- 4) Polemical treatises against the Nestorians (PG 95, 186–223), and other treatises.
- 5) *Oration against the Iconoclasts* (PG 94, 1232–1470).

As an interpreter of scripture John elaborated a *Commentary on Puline Letters* (PG 95, 441–1034), based on the writings of John Chrysostom and others. The authenticity of the homilies on the *Hexameron* remains disputed. Certainly authentic are three sermons *On the Dormition of the Holy Virgin*

(PG 96, 700–762; ed. P. Voulet, SC 80, Paris 1961); a sermon *On the Nativity of the Virgin* (PG 96, 661–680), *On the Transfiguration* (PG 96, 545–576), *In Sabbatum sanctum* (PG 96, 601–644), *In ficum arefactam* (575–588). His voluminous anthology *Sacra Parallela* (K. Holl, TU 16, 1; 20, 2, Leipzig – Berlin 1892–99; see M. Richard, *DSp* 5, 475–486) also includes many biblical-patristic quotations. His *Disputatio* between a Muslim and a Christian (PG 94, 1585–96; ed. R. Le Coz, SC 383, Paris 1992) and other anti-Islamic pamphlets show how John explained the figurative meaning of scripture in his response to Islam. Last, but not least, John became famous for his liturgical poetry, though it is now difficult to determine the full extent of his contribution (H. G. Beck).

The homilies *On the Nativity* and *On the Dormition* of Mary offer an easy access to John's comments on OT and NT passages applied to the mother of Jesus. He allegorizes any biblical data swept into the exuberant stream of his oratory. He warns his readers that he intends to keep a strict control ("We shall keep in mind the conciseness of the address," *Dormition* 1, 4), but in his preaching he never reins in his enthusiastic excesses: "Hence I am exulting, I let explode my pride and joy, coming back to the source of marvels. Inebriated by the torrent of my happiness, again I play on the harp of the Spirit and sing the hymns of divine Nativity" (*Nativity*, 5).

His typological reading of scripture is well illustrated by the litany of Marian "types" proclaimed in *Dormition* 1, 8–9. Among those types the "ladder of Jacob" receives a special treatment (*Nativity*, 3; *Dormition* 1, 8; 3, 2). *Dormition* 2 gives him an opportunity to recall the sweep of the economy of salvation: John starts by focusing on the parallels between Eve and Mary; he ends by glorifying the Jerusalem of the Johannine Apocalypse, the universal choir of saints from Adam and Eve to the apostles of Jesus, chanting Mary's praises, and her son adding his own use of the Cantic when he welcomes her into heaven after her death (*Dormition* 2, 10). Mary's dead body is the locus of miracles; it is the new "ark" carried in procession up to heaven (2, 12). John's arguments for that "assumption" are framed in the rationale of the arguments about divine incarnation. On the top of the "mystic mountain" of Exodus 24, all along the "noetic and living" ladder of incarnational salvation (*Dormition* 3, 2), Mary climbs to the heavenly Jerusalem, the "church of the first-born: (Hb 12:23), leaving her tomb to become a new "tabernacle." The hymn of Exodus now resounds against Nestorians. Mary's union with her son in the triumphant jubilation of heaven is in the center of John's resplendent eschatological vision (*Dormition* 3, 5).

PG

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XI
 CATENAE—“CHAINS” OF
 BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

From the sixth century C.E., collections of citations (*catenae*) copied word for word from earlier Bible commentaries multiplied in Greek-speaking churches. These were a Christian duplication of the classical genre of “anthologies,” collections of citations from ancient poets used in the schools since the time of Plato (*Leg* 811A) and of other collections of quotations used in secular schools of their time. The popularity of patristic *catenae* never declined in the Greek-speaking East while in the West it persisted until the Reformation.

Borrowed from a limited number of commentaries, literal quotations of ancient Christian writers were linked one to another, with the specific identification of the cited authors. These patristic quotations, placed side by side with the scriptural verses (*lemmata*) quoted in their natural order, were placed either on the left side or in the middle of the pages. No additional comments, *glossae*, were introduced by compilers of the *catenae* as the quoted patristic authorities supposedly confirmed and clarified each other’s statements.

Soon quotations from non-exegetical writings were added, mainly taken from homilies. These *scholiae*, in most cases dealing with the text of OT in some Hexapla editions derived from Origen, intended to assist in the understanding of the biblical text, and by consequence, its ancient commentators. Soon also the production of *catenae* (the technical term itself dates only from the fourteenth century: *Catena aurea*; 6th c. Greek titles: ἐξηγητικαὶ ἐκλογαί—“exegetical extracts,” συναγωγή τῶν ἐξηγητικῶν ἐκλογῶν—“collection of exegetical extracts”) prospered in a closed circuit, as the older ones generated new sets of such “chains.” In the process, existing collections themselves were abbreviated, or mixed with others, specific quotations were extended or reduced, or in some cases, were eliminated. Occasionally, others shifted from set to set. Hence up to the present day, studying the genealogy of *catenae* has become a bewildering task, a formidable challenge for new generations of experts. G. Dorival bluntly states: “Currently there are no specialists of *catenae*, but only specialists of the *catenae* on Psalms or specialists of the *catenae* on Proverbs and so forth” (Dorival 1986, viii).

The very idea of such *catenae* may have been shared with secular scholars of Byzantium (Wilson 1983), but the systematic use of the *catena* for educational and apologetic purposes undoubtedly addressed an ecclesiastical

readership, the birthplace of that new exegetical literature being Gaza, near the southeast corner of the Mediterranean (E. Mühlberg 1989, indispensable for the history of research and methodology; with bibliography). In the early sixth century, a Christian school of high learning in Gaza counted three famous scholars, Procopius (ca. 460–526), Aeneas and Zacharias Rhetor. According to ancient witnesses, Procopius authored *catenae* on Canticles, Proverbs and Qohelet, also on the first eight books of the Bible, the Octateuch, and Isaiah. For example, see Procopius’s *catena* on Qohelet in CCSG 4. The *Catena of the Three Fathers* on Qohelet in CCSG 11 (1983) depends directly on Procopius. Photius, *Bibl.* 206, was still able to read Procopius’s “exegetical scholia” to the Octateuch. At least four manuscripts written in uncial characters are a witness to the existence of *catenae* in the sixth century: cod. Patmius 171, 7th–8th c. and Vat. gr. 749, 9th c., on Job; cod. Taur. B I 10, 8th c., on the Psalms; cod. Zacynthius, possibly 6th c. on Luke. Among the earliest authors or editors of *catenae* one knows only a few names: John Drungarius (Par. gr. 159, 13th c.); Andreas the Presbyter (Par. gr. 156, 10th c.) in a *catena* on Isaiah; also see the *subscriptio* of the *catena* Coislin 25, 10th c., on Acts and on the Catholic Letters; Victor of Antioch, Peter of Loadicea, Leo Patricius and Philotheus. (Olympiodore’s *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* 6th c., PG 93, 477–628, is not a true *catena*; check above, chapter 11, under Olympiodore).

Nicetas of Heracleia, first a lecturer in Constantinople, occupied the metropolitan see of Heracleia from 1117 until his death (date unknown). His literary legacy, consisting mainly in the last exegetical *catenae* of the Byzantine age, dates from before his episcopal election. In his *catenae* Nicetas privileged “the works of John Chrysostom and, with ever decreasing frequency, those of Cyril of Alexandria, the Cappadocians, Theodoret, Athanasius, Isidore of Pelusium, Titus of Bosra, Maximus Confessor, etc.” (Stiernon 1982, 219). With a *catena* on Psalms, a new edition of another on Job, possibly one on Isaiah; others on Matthew, Luke, John and Hebrews, Nicetas greatly contributed to a better knowledge of patristic exegesis throughout the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas ordered a Latin translation of his *catena* on the Gospels (*Catena aurea*. prol.).

The quest for the oldest collections, specially the ones which later on generated mixed “chains,” led G. Karo and H. Lietzmann, inspired by P. Wendland, to distinguish basic “types” of *catenae* in their catalogue published in 1902, and still indispensable. Indeed, R. Devreesse successfully demonstrated the existence of such a “type” for the *catenae* on Psalms, followed by M. Richard who identified two “types” according to which quotations of Psalm commentaries were copied from their sources. The way was open

for further explorations on individual Psalms (Harl 1972), or on individual sources like Didymus or Apollinarius quoted in psalmic *catenae* (Mühlenberg 1975–1978). Similar demonstrations of given “types” had also been presented by K. Staab (1926) for Pauline *catenae*, and by J. Reuss (1941, 1957, 1966, 1984) for *catenae* on the Gospels. Still another line of research was inaugurated by M. Faulhaber (1902). It consisted in the editing of given *catenae* in full length and for their own sake in order to show the whole spectrum of ancient interpretations witnessed by them.

In a study of the fragments on Genesis transmitted by chains on Psalms, R. Devresse (1959) identified extracts from thirty-three patristic authors, most of whose writings (commentaries, homilies, or letters) being otherwise unknown. M. Geerhard (1980) enumerates exegetical *catenae* in the order of the biblical books: on Octateuch and Kings; on Psalms, Odes, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Canticles, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Pauline Letters, and the Catholic Epistles. For each *catena* he also displays the “types” identified according to Karo – Lietzmann, their list of patristic authors, and the appropriate bibliography.

As a whole, the spectacular achievement of twentieth century scholarship concerning *catenae* promises to secure a firm foundation for a broader access to their literary genre, thus allowing a more fruitful retrieval of the biblical knowledge proper to Byzantium, well beyond the patristic era. G. Dorival’s research (1986–92) presents a remarkable illustration of what that foundation means in the case of the *catenae* on Psalms, the most popular through all the centuries, and the most studied by modern scholars. Before him, M. Harl (1972) had dedicated a special study to the “Palestinian chain on Ps 118”; she offers a most valuable and pedagogical introduction to such a research.

From their sixth-century origins until ca. 630–640, when all the libraries in Palestine, in particular Origen’s Caesarean library, were destroyed during the invasion of the Arabs, *catenae* seemed to have flourished exclusively in Palestine. From the early eighth century, Constantinople became another important centre while *catenae* were never produced in Egypt. Dorival (1981) proposes a reconstitution of the whole catenal history based on the distinction between *catenae* calling on Commentaries (*hypomnémata*) or Homilies, and *catenae* compiled on the basis of *scholia*” (2). His initial chapter, “Comment écrire l’histoire des chaînes,” “How to Write the History of *catenae*” (1–98), is most helpful. The author retraces both the work of ancient “catenists” from Procopius to the 8th century, as well as the past century of research by modern experts. If some books of the OT did not enter the programme of ancient “catenists” it was because appropriate Commentaries

or *scholia* were lacking, as was the case for historical books after Esdras, or for Wisdom and Sirach; the same counts for the Gospel of Mark in the NT. For a full and recent historical survey of patristic-exegetical *catenae*, see Uthemann (1996).

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CHAPTER ELEVEN
FOURTH- AND FIFTH-CENTURY
LATIN CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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I

INTRODUCTION

The last period during which imperial institutions obtained in the West against the Barbarian invasions from without and the disintegration from within was the time when the Christian interpretation of the Bible reached a culmination in its contribution to Latin literature and Latin thought. The global amount of that literary legacy surpasses all other bodies of homogeneous writings of Late Antiquity in the western part of the Empire. The polemical reaction against Arianism was of scant significance, (being in essence a Greek dispute); whereas the literary originality of the Latin approach to scripture tended to express itself in another mode—a poetic one. Virgil was ubiquitous in the inventiveness of Christian Latin poets, of which for over a century each generation in the church would produce a fresh representative.

A lofty summit of high culture, paradoxically, Ambrose of Milan was gifted with the common touch in his pastoral composition of biblical homilies. He dominated the second half of the century preparing the way for the prodigious performance of Augustine of Hippo as an interpreter of scripture. In Augustine's paradigmatic case all the challenges to be faced by the Latin exegesis of the Bible came decisively to the fore. That exegesis had to free itself from the golden chains of classical latinity, in order to discover the hidden treasures of scripture buried under poor old translations of the LXX. It also had to infuse into biblical interpretations a truly Latin self-awareness, originally rooted in a psychological and social apprehension of the self in its concrete reality. Hilary of Poitiers, a generation before Augustine, introduced his *De trinitate* by stating in a personal outline of his inner journey his new identity as a believer. Augustine spent over a decade struggling with the rules and methods of exegesis, until he found in writing *De Genesi ad litteram* a hermeneutic fitting his personal requirements. Soon after his return to Africa an unexpected encounter with a more ancient and genuinely African form of biblical interpretation in the work of Tyconius had imposed on him a hurdle which he could not leap at once during his long apprenticeship as a biblical interpreter. Having reached a mature expertise in his pastoral handling of scripture, another unexpected hurdle he reluctantly faced was the scientific production of Jerome. His older contemporary had a solid reputation as an ascetic and a learned exegete, but the pastor Augustine was unwilling to give up the Old Latin text of the Bible familiar to his parishioners, and he refused

to dismiss the inspired version of the LXX, as Jerome's direct translation of the original Hebrew into Latin required.

Not only did Augustine experience cultural shifts of a primordial importance in the literal reception of sacred scripture but he achieved a unique osmosis between the biblical message and his Ciceronian education. He transcended his own classical background with a creative freedom which vibrated in his exegetical prose and kept him close to the essential truth of scripture despite his propensity to polemical excesses.

After Augustine, Western hermeneutics would in large part remain Augustinian. Not surprisingly, the history of patristic exegesis during the fifth century would close with the brilliant performance of the so-called "Irish Augustine," just as the twentieth century ended with a conference held at the Augustinianum, the Patristic Institute of Rome and focussing on "the exegesis of the Latin Fathers from the origins until Gregory the Great": the primacy of Augustine's understanding of the Bible seems to have put an indelible mark on Western Christianity.

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II

LACTANTIUS (CA. 250–325)

Born in Africa, a student of the rhetor Arnobius before teaching rhetorics himself, L. Caelius Firmianus Lactantius responded to a call of Emperor Diocletian between 290 and 300 C.E. to start a career as a professor of Latin at the court of Nicomedia. The young Constantine was probably one of his pupils. In February 303, he witnessed the outbreak of the persecution. Not yet a Christian himself, he took a leave from his teaching position with the purpose of writing in defense of the persecuted religion. His precarious status did not hinder him from publishing a first crypto-Christian essay, *De opificio dei*, *On God's Work of Creation*, in 303/04, and a crypto-Christian poem *De ave Phoenix*, *On the Bird Phoenix* (303/04). A major apology, *Divine Instructions*, followed between 304 and 311. After the victory of Licinius over Maximinus Daia, and the edict of tolerance signed by Licinius and Constantine in Milan, Lactantius produced soon after 313 the vehement *De mortibus persecutorum*, *On the Death of Persecutors*, which he wrote in Trier, where Constantine had appointed him as teacher of his son Crispus. In his regained academic position, Lactantius still published, after 315, an essay *De ira dei*, *On the Wrath of God*, and an *Epitome*, or summary, of his *Divine Instructions*, reworked and provided with dedicatory letters to Constantine. Death interrupted his labours in 325.

Lactantius is acknowledged for his innovative Christian retrieving of classical authors, the foremost being Cicero. He conceived his apologetic construct as based on the harmony between biblical teachings and Roman values, between true religion and wisdom, in both cases resulting from divine revelation. The seven Books of *Institutiones* offer a methodical catechesis for the journey from “false religion” (Book 1) to “true wisdom and religion” (Book 4), “justice” (Book 5), “true veneration of God” (Book 6), and the “happy life,” *de vita beata* (Book 7). His representation of God as *pater et dominus* extrapolates the traditional Roman notion of the *pater familias*. His defense of “God’s wrath” responds to the pagan accusation against Christians as responsible for public calamities.

His use of the Bible is limited to quotations (Monat counts 92) as proofs of his apologetic views. Most of the quotations are taken literally, some entailing typological or even allegorical suggestions in conformity with tradition (Monat I, 133–238). The biblical quotations of Lactantius illustrate his access to *Vetus Latina* traditions.

As a work addressed to a non-Christian readership, the *Institutiones*

represent the first apologetic summa of Christian thought written in Latin. The title of the work is borrowed from Quintillian's *Institutio oratoria* and from the *Institutiones iuris civilis*, belonging to the teaching of jurisprudence. The author omits references to scripture, until Book 4 produces the proofs of "True Wisdom and Religion," with a set of prophetic *testimonia* consisting in 75 quotations and at least 60 passages of scripture alluded to several times (Gn 2:7 alone attracting 37 such allusions). Recent research has established that Lactantius used a collection of *testimonia* found in the *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus*, a lost work of Ariston of Pella (second century), the same collection on which Cyprian depended in his *Liber testimoniorum* (Monat, I, 272–273). In other words, Lactantius's closeness to Cyprian, noted by many critics, is only indirect, the work of both authors deriving from the same source of *testimonia*, Ariston's collection, translated from Greek into Latin at a very early date.

Both in *De ira* and in *De mortibus*, Lactantius kept a line of prudent discretion in quoting scripture, his biblical references being strictly reduced to scant allusions. However such allusions, specially to the Books of the Maccabees in *De mortibus*, are very significant (Rougé). After Irenaeus, Lactantius is the most explicit advocate of millenarism in the West.

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III THE ARIAN CRISIS IN THE WEST

When Western bishops became aware of Arianism as a direct threat to their pastoral strategies, Arius was already dead (in 336), his heresy having been formally condemned at the Council of Nicaea 325 by the highest authorities of Church and State under Constantine's ruling. Therefore the whole expansion of Arian ideas in the Latin West appears like a side effect of the more agitated debate which these same ideas occasioned in the Greek-speaking churches of the East. Nevertheless the so-called Arian crisis profoundly modified the cultural and intellectual status of Western church leaders, not the least by imposing on some of them forced periods of residence among their Greek fellow bishops.

Beyond sectarian infighting, a man like Hilary of Poitiers used his exile in Phrygia for learning Greek, and so acquiring a first hand knowledge of Origen of Alexandria's exegetical legacy. On the linguistic borderline between Latinophone and Hellenophone areas, for instance in Illyricum, Arian doctrine could easily shift from Eastern polemics into Western preaching, as it is exemplified in the amazing *Opus imperfectum in Matthaëum*. Population changes, due to military operations and massive migrations, played an important role in the fostering of Western Arianism. Gothic and Vandal kindoms affirmed their peculiar form of Christianity deep into the fifth century.

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I. HILARY OF POITIERS (D. 367)

Shortly after the Council of Milan in 355, which saw the Western bishops willing to condemn Athanasius of Alexandria on the request of Emperor Constantius, a synod was held in Béziers on the initiative of Saturninus of Arles and other bishops with whom Bishop Hilary of Poitiers had broken communion after the Milanese gathering. Together with Rodanius of Toulouse, Hilary was exiled to Phrygia. There he completed an important

aspect of his theological education: he had never heard anything about the Nicene Creed until the days preceding his departure to the East, though he had already been consecrated as bishop for probably six years. In Phrygia, he was welcomed into the lively group of moderate pro-Nicene bishops called “Homoiousians,” because they supported *homoiousios* over *homoousios* when defining the relation of the Son to the Father in divine Trinity. He joined with them in travelling to Seleucia in 359 for the council which was supposed to mark the end of the Arian crisis, a council which was convened simultaneously with another council of Western bishops held at Rimini in northern Italy. Eventually, the peace plan failed. In Constantinople, near the end of 359, when bishops from East and West converged on the emperor’s court, Hilary was among those ready for a public confrontation with Saturninus of Arles. The imperial officials found it more strategic to send him back to Gaul, where he received a hero’s welcome and secured the full triumph of anti-Arian orthodoxy. According to Jerome he died in 367.

Works

1. *On Matthew (In Matthaëum)*, Hilary’s earliest work written between 353 and 355 is the first continuous Gospel commentary in Latin handed down from Antiquity. Actually, it represents a continuous “reading” of the text to a small circle of trained listeners, the comments following the Matthaean verses in their order, just as poets were read and commented on in the classical school. The *ordo narrationis*, the inner logic of the narration, was emphasized, particularly in miracle stories. Hilary deliberately omits the explanations given by the Gospel writer (Mt 13:18–23, 34–43; 15:15–20; 19: 6–11 and 23:18–22), and also excludes commentary on the Lord’s prayer; rather, he directs his listeners to Tertullian and Cyprian. Contrary to what has sometimes been suggested, no “preamble” to the work seems to be missing. The commentary follows the Gospel text as far as Mt 28:13.

In his exegesis on Matthew, Hilary’s focus is on what he calls the *ratio typica* of the Gospel narrative (2,1,10; 8, 4, 23; 12, 24, 12–13; 14, 10, 9; 17, 8, 9; 33, 3, 16). The latter’s “symbolic relevance” is scrutinized on the level of grammatical data, through lexical clarifications and through events or sayings put in sequence in order to highlight the Gospel’s ongoing significance (Kannengiesser, *DSp* 469–70; Doignon, *Sur Mt* 27–30). Hilary calls on Paul’s 1 Corinthians more than on any other authority for his own methodology; he turns to Tertullian for polemical statements, and to Cyprian for biblical *Testimonia* and liturgical ordinances. He was obviously still unaware of Alexandrian allegorism as a method for biblical exegesis, popularized by

Origen over a century before. At the time of his *In Matthaeum* he rather gives his work the special value of witnessing the archaic foundations proper to Latin culture in the history of fourth century exegesis.

Throughout his commentary *On Matthew*, Hilary revisits earlier exegetical traditions: “the apparition of the star, perceived at once by the Magi, suggests that the nations will soon believe in Christ, and that people who prefer to be far alien to the science of knowing God will immediately recognize the light bound to its birth” (Mt 2:11:1, 5, 1–4), is based on Irenaeus’s *Against Heresies* 3, 9, 3, but with Hilary’s own christological bias. His ideas about Adam’s ultimate salvation, echoing Irenaeus and Tertullian, or about the sin “against the Holy Spirit” (Mt 12:32), or the lost sheep of Mt 18:12, are strictly christocentric (Kannengiesser, *DSp* 473–474).

In *On Matthew*, the importance given by Hilary to doctrinal expositions is such that some of them belong to the commentary for no other reason but the “instruction” of the reader. “One should always remember that most of the time they start with a *tractatus* on the proper meaning of the words used in the Gospel. Indeed the procedures of a *tractatus* involve the sorting out of comparable data, according to a pattern familiar to Latin apologetics (symbolism of elements, animals, the human body, numbers), or a consideration of biblical “*exempla*” signaled in the Gospel by well-known figures (patriarchs, prophets) or anonymous groups (the poor, children, the sick). Most of these *exempla* have already been explained by Tertullian and Cyprian as signs of the Law’s obsolete status and the Gentiles’ promotion” (Doignon, *Hilaire*, 314).

2. The *Liber adversus Valentem et Ursacium* from 356–57, offered documentary evidence to Hilary’s fellow bishops in Gaul, concerning the activities of “Arian” colleagues around the infamous synod of Milan in 355. The same urge to instruct, noted in *On Matthew*, pervades the *Liber*, whose *praefatio* calls on 1 Cor 13:13 for introducing the author’s *Confessio fidei*. As in *On Matthew* 14, 6, Hilary announces a classical rule for the implementation of texts, biblical or conciliary: *Omnia enim sunt et separando temporibus et distinguenda judiciis et secernenda personis et verborum diiudicanda virtutibus*, “All data need to be considered separately in time, and evaluated for themselves, in identifying the people involved and determining the sense of their statements. (A. Feder, *Collectanea antiariana Parisina, Series B1–II*, CSEL, 65, 1916, 102, 18–20). In *De Trinitate*, Book I, Hilary’s use of scripture is much more explicit and circumstantial than in the *Liber adv. Val. et Urs.*, namely as an autobiographical report on Hilary’s quest for truth. With terms and rules already noted in *On Matthew*, Hilary intends to reach the *absoluta significatio*, the “full signification” of scripture (chap. 5) and to explore its

inexplicabilis intelligentia, “unfathomable meaning,” *studio intentiore*, with “relentless effort,” (chap. 7). He lets his *animus* burn down in the fervor of faith (chap. 16), until, urged by scripture, it bursts forth into a public *confessio Dei* (chap. 17). The categorizing of an inner journey calls here on scripture as the focus of spiritual dynamic, as will be the case on a more sophisticated level in Augustine’s *Confessions*. The public *confessio*, in Book II, relies on Mt 23:19–20 and denounces the different heresies about the commandment to go and baptize all nations (chap. 1–5), before elaborating on the traditional catechesis on Father, Son and Spirit (chap. 6–35). Book III adds a christological essay, in response to the Arian controversy, with a dogmatic analysis of Jn 14:11 and 17:1–6. The conclusion of Book III in chap 24–26, used 1 Cor 1:17–19 for turning back to the experiential style of the spiritual ascension described in Book I, confirming the literary and thematic unity of the three books as constituting Hilary’s *De fide*. Quotations from Matthew prevail throughout in these three books.

As a newcomer facing the mighty rhetoric of Greek Arianism in *De Trinitate* IV–VI, Hilary starts by working out an argument borrowed from Irenaeus, first in calling on OT *exempla*, such as Abraham (IV, 23–31; V 11–18), Jacob (V, 19–20), Moses (IV, 32–34; V, 21–23), the prophets (IV, 35–39; V, 26–35); secondly, in resting his case on the Gospels (VI, 23–31) and on apostolic testimonies. Among the complementary questions discussed in Book XI–XII, he considers the meaning of Prv 8:22, one of the most controverted verses during the Arian crisis (XII, 44). The conclusion of the whole work, given in Book XII, 52, 57, in the form of a prayer and with the “I” speech initially used until the middle of Book V, recapitulates his main conclusions in his struggles with Arianism, only to end with a detached note: *Neque sit mihi inutilis pugna verborum, sed incunctantis fidei constans professio*, “I am not interested in a vain fight with words, but only in a firm profession of unshakable faith” (PL 10, 471A), which turns once more the reader’s attention back to the autobiographical prologue of Book 1.

3. The *Tractatus super Psalmos* proceeds from the same basic motivation which had already inspired Hilary in the laborious composition of *De Trinitate*: he considered it as his pastoral duty to convey the doctrinal and exegetical riches of the Greek-speaking churches over to his own church community in Gaul, which was still in the infancy of barely educated small groups spread over a few main towns. The *Tractatus* were composed during Hilary’s last years in 364–367, as a homiletic exposition of the whole Psalter, closely dependent on Origen’s lost *Commentary on the Psalms*, as can be seen by comparison the prologue and the comments on the first five Psalms in both authors (E. Goffinet; M. Milhau, 59–66). Hilary remains silent about

this source, apparently his only critical paradigm for the exegetical task he undertook. The fact is that the *Tractatus* represents the first literary productive encounter between an exegesis based on the Septuagint and a Western mind which had been shaped in Christian traditions by the *Vetus Latina*, the Old Latin versions of the Bible.

4. After the (untimely?) death of Hilary, parts of the work disappeared. Jerome reads only the *Tractatus* on Ps 1–2, 51–52, 118–150, and Augustine knew no others. Transmitted were also the *tractatus* on Ps 9, 13, 14, 63–64 and 91 (Zingerle), which gives a total of 58 *Tractatus*, introduced by an *Instructio Psalmorum*. In the footsteps of Origen, but also in conformity with the rules of the *enarratio* taught by Latin rhetors, Hilary considers first the literal context of psalmic verses; he mentions a variety of Greek versions from the Hebrew original (he himself knew no Hebrew); he includes numerous comments on biblical history and geography, on chronologies and etymologies, before engaging into allegorical interpretation. If there were any traces of systematic Origenism in his source, he obliterated them all together, for his own commentary aims exclusively at the moral edification of his fellow Christians, not without adding to it many anthropological and christological insights brought back from his exile among the Greeks or directly copied from Origen.

“The exegete announces his explanatory method in the *Instructio psalmorum*: ‘There is no doubt that one had to expound what is said in the Psalms according to the teaching of the Gospels’ (par. 5)... ‘The Gospels, where the secrets of the Law and the mysteries of prophecies are unveiled in the incarnate Lord’ (in Ps 118, 17. 4)... In comparing prophetic sayings with statements read in the Gospels or the Epistles, the exegete shows also how it is possible to go beyond a strictly literalistic interpretation of the verses, and to apply them, not to David alone, but as well to Christ, or the Apostle. Thus, the verse ‘I have been completely humiliated, Lord’ announces Christ’s teaching on humility in Mt 11:28–29 (14, 8–9). When David evokes decisions of his own will and not prescribed by the Law, he ‘announces’ Paul making his statement about virgins (1 Cor 7:25) without the backing of a precept by the Lord (14, 13–14). As he invokes God’s mercy, the prophet anticipates Paul’s voice in 2 Cor 1:3–4; their common declaration rests on the insurance that Christ never abandons those who are persecuted (Mt 10:19–20, 10, 14)” (Milhau, 34).

5. The *Tractatus mysteriorum*, written when Hilary reached the end of his *Tractatus super psalmos*, starts with the same phrasing, at least in its form, if not in its content, as the *Instructio* opening the commentary on the Psalms: “Multiplex ... (lacuna)” (*Tr. Myst.* I, 1): *Diversas est plurimorum in*

psalmoum libro opiniones, “In the Book of Psalms there exists for most of them a variety of opinions” (*Instr.* 1). Indeed, like the *Explanation on the Psalms*, the *Explanation on the Mysteries* is directly inspired by Origen, and in both cases Hilary assumes the Origenian legacy with a strong and independent self-awareness. He focuses his comments about “mysteries” exclusively on the notion of *typus*. In other words, he adds to the formal notion of the *ratio typica*, inherited from Latin rhetorics and applied to *On Matthew*, a more biblical and theological concept of *typus*, rich with Origenian resonance and his own devotional maturity. The “mysteries” are OT figures, understood in their symbolic relevance, by which they prefigure the life and faith experiences of Christians now and ever: Adam and Eve (chap. 2–5), Cain and Abel (6–8), Lamech and Seth (9–11), Noah (12–17), Abraham (17–18), Isaac (19), Jacob and Esau (5–10), in Book II, which ends with a long conclusion, as we noted one already in Hilary’s *On Trinity*. In that conclusion, the need for, as well as the convenience of, typology are insistently recommended for the whole of OT, giving the essay the pedagogical shape of a short introduction to biblical hermeneutics. The work was almost certainly addressed to preachers (Brisson). Here like in *De trinitate* I, Hilary modestly anticipates one of Augustine’s most celebrated initiatives, *De doctrina christiana*.

6. *Hymni*. Hilary’s poetry is weighed down under the burden of his doctrinal motivation. As a poet, he never achieved popularity and soon was overshadowed by Ambrose of Milan’s lyrical performance. Nevertheless his *Hymns* confirm him as a Christian thinker deeply rooted in scripture. They were composed at the same time as the *Tractatus mysteriorum*, in a poetic meter assimilated during Hilary’s exile (Simonetti, *Studi*). In many ways, they recapitulate and condense what Hilary had written in prose for the experts.

A ‘*prooemium*,’ short introduction in a double iambic verse, places the whole book of *Hymns* under the patronage of David: *Felix propheta David primus organi/in carne Christum hymnis mundo nuntians*, “Blessed the prophet David, who first announced in hymns Christ in the flesh to the world” (Feder, CSEL 65, 1916, 209). David is called “prophet,” as author of the Psalms, hence the close connection of the *Hymns* to Hilary’s *Tractatus super psalmos* (Kannengiesser, *DSP*, 485–487).

Hilary is the first Latin bishop who conceived his pastoral teaching in the form of a continuous commentary of biblical texts. Even his major doctrinal work, *On Trinity* starts by sketching his personal commitment to scripture as the source of his *confessio fidei*. His *On Matthew*, *Tractatus super psalmos* and lost *Homilies on Job*, created in Latin the genre of such exegesis; they were apparently composed and edited with great care. Over one hundred and

fifty technical terms characterize Hilary's attitude toward the Psalter in the *Tractatus* (Gastaldi). Three main considerations direct his exegetical initiative: 1) He conceives the divine inspiration of scripture as a personal gift of the Spirit given to the authors of the Bible, allowing them—*Prophetiae scientia est pro gerendis gesta memorare*, “to commemorate past actions in prevision of those to come” (*In Ps.* 62, 4; Feder, 218; PL 9, 403B); a typology based on the presupposition that biblical authors always kept in their writing a disposition focused by the Gospel – *Huius quidem evangelicae dispositionis tenuit et propheta rationem* (*In Ps.* 2; 23; Feder, 35, PL 9, 260B). For *omnes sanctos et prophetas caelesti desiderio evangelicae beautitudinis tempus optasse*, “all saints and prophets were longing with heavenly desire for the time of Gospel blessedness” (*In Ps.* 67, 29; Feder, 304; P24, 463C). The seventy translators of the Septuagint were not only familiar with Hebrew language, they had also benefited from the secret teachings of Moses (*In Ps.* 2). It explains why their version of the Hebrew Bible is the best of all. Their ordering of biblical texts, in particular the Psalms, announces long in advance the events of Jesus. While Hilary was aware of earlier interpreters, he names only Tertullian and Cyprian; but his primary aim was to update traditional interpretations in the context of the Arian controversy (*In Ps.* 1; 126, 1–3). His use of allegory was tempered by sound realism: “One has to search for the correct meaning of what is said in taking into account the function of apostles as well as the proper nature of salt” (*In Mt.* 4, 10).

EDITIONS

PL 9

CSEL

Smulders, P., SC 443 (1999), 448 (2000); transl. and notes by J. Doignon, G. M. de Durand, M. Figuras, C. Morel, and G. Pelland.

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II. ULFILA (CA. 311–383)

Ulfila, the Apostle of the Goths, was born ca. 311 (Sivan 1995) of parents who had been deported from Cappadocia to a territory of the Goths, north of the Danube. Having served as a lector in a Gothic community, he took part in an embassy to Constantinople in 337. There he was consecrated as a missionary bishop by Eusebius of Nicomedia. During his seven years of pastoral activity, north of the Danube (ca. 341–348), he translated the Bible, at least the NT, into Gothic language. When the chieftain, Athanaric, started persecuting the Christians, he found refuge with his congregation south of the Danube in the Roman Empire. He continued serving his community for thirty years, both as a civil and a spiritual leader. In 360 he signed the Homoiousian (the Son *similar* to the Father) symbol of Constantinople; hence he was instrumental in spreading Christian faith in Germanic and Gothic Christianity with Arian overtones. Summoned by Theodosius I to a synod, he died in Constantinople in June 383.

Recent scholarship (M. Meslin) has tried to minimize the influence of Ulfila to the benefit of Maximinus, but the thesis was rejected as inconsistent. “One considers Ulfila as more or less directly the master-mind and the inspiration of all (Latin) Arian documents of a doctrinal value handed down to us” (A.-G. Hamman: Quasten IV, 142).

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III. LUCIFER OF CAGLIARI (D. CA. 370)

The uncompromising bishop of Sardinia defended the letter rather than the spirit of Nicaea I (325). He authored five bitterly polemical treatises. He is noteworthy for his abundant quotations from Old Latin versions of scripture in these pamphlets.

EDITIONS

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IV. ZENO OF VERONA (D. 371/372)

According to tradition, Zeno was the eighth bishop of Verona. In a letter written ca. 380, Ambrose mentions him in the past. Only the collections of his sermons, established soon after his death secures him a name in Latin

patristics. Possibly he originated from Roman Africa, as the *Passio* of a martyr from Mauritania was included in the collection of Zeno's sermons (Löfstedt, 107, 110). The *Passio* and the sermons seem to belong to one and the same author (Löfstedt, 7*). Some reminiscences from Apuleius, Cyprian and Lactantius, or textual contacts with Tertullian, are not conclusive. Zeno's text of the Bible is very close to the one used by Cyprian, but even that evidence would not prove that Zeno was an African (Vokes). He makes good use in his sermons of Hilary of Poitiers's Commentaries on the psalms, dating from 360. Otherwise the tenure of his pastoral ministry remains unknown. Repeated Easter homilies and baptismal instructions point to an undetermined number of years in the episcopal office.

Ninety-two sermons of Zeno are transmitted in two Books, the first including sixty-two, the second, thirty homilies. A small number of the homilies present a full text; many are incomplete, or fragmentary; some are reduced to very short drafts of less than ten lines in modern editions. It seems fairly sure that the material was collected, and edited as it was, for the sole benefit of local liturgies, soon after the death of the bishop. Modern scholarship focussed mainly on the vocabulary and the syntax of Zeno. His anti-Arian stance and other doctrinal characteristics such as his anti-Judaism, have also been highlighted, but, with one exception (Duval), his pastoral use of scripture and his attitude as an interpreter of the Bible remain a matter to be explored.

EDITIONS

PL 11, 9–760.

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Ederle, G., 4 vols. Verona 1955–1960.

Giuliani, G. B.: Verona 1990.

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Michels, T., *Des heiligen Zeno von Veronas österliche Ansprachen*. Berlin 1927.

Italian

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- Dölger, F., "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Kreuzzeichens: VI. 11. *Tutela salutis*": *JAC* 6 (1963) 8.
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- Jeanes, G. P. *The day has come! Easter and Baptism in Zeno of Verona*. Alcuin Club Collection 73. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995.
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V. MARIUS VICTORINUS (CA. 280/285-363/365)

Victorinus came to Rome from Africa as a married professor of rhetorics ca. 340. He was so famous that in 354 his statue was erected on the Forum of Trajan. He converted to Christianity and was baptised in 355. In protest against Emperor Julian's edict of 362, excluding Christians from public teaching, he gave up his chair. He probably died soon after 363. In 386, his friend Simplicianus told the story of his conversion to Augustine in Milan (*Conf.* 7, 2, 3-4).

Victorinus's literary works from before his conversion are of a grammatical and philosophical nature; they attest to high learning with a special expertise in Neoplatonism. After his conversion, Victorinus multiplied his literary output in the form of theological letters, pamphlets and (like Hilary) hymns against the Arian contestation of the Nicene Creed in his day. By his exegetical works, he inaugurated in Latin the tradition of commentaries on Pauline Letters. True to his professional past, it was as a grammarian that he explained the Epistles of Paul: in a short introduction, provided for each letter

(lost for Philipians), he gave the reason why Paul wrote it together with a concise summary. A continuous explanation follows on a strictly literal basis, attentive to lexical and syntactic peculiarities, showing only a scant knowledge of the OT and no sympathy at all for Jews (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 77).

Victorinus himself refers several times to his lost Commentaries on Romans and 1–2 Corinthians, when expounding (in his order) Ephesians, Galatians, Philipians (Gori, VII–IX). His christocentric interpretation of Paul dispenses almost entirely from references to the OT: only approximately twenty such references are noted by the editor, F. Gori; it rests on a thorough analysis of Paul's statements, the inner logic and theological implications of which Victorinus never tires of elucidating. Some verses capture his attention more than others, for instance, Eph 1:17, 19–23; 3:18; 4:25–26; Gal 1:13–14; 4:3–4; Phil 2:2–5; 6–8, 9. Throughout his exegetical endeavour, Victorinus understands his task as the most simple and concise exposition of Paul's thought: *simpliciter admonendi modo ista breviterque dicemus* (*Ad Eph. Liber II, prooemium*; Gori, 60).

EDITIONS

Gori, F.: CSEL 83/2 (1986): *in Eph., Gal., Phil.*

Henry, P. and P. Hadot: CSEL 83/1 (1971): *adv. Arrium, homous., gen. div. verb., hymn.*

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French

Henry: above.

German

Hadot, P. and K. Brenke, *Christlicher Platonismus*. Zurich 1967.

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- . *Porphyre et Victorinus*. Paris: Etudes Augustiennes, 1968.
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- . *LACL* 2nd ed. (1999), 427f.

VI. POTAMIUS OF LISBON (MID-4TH C.)

Potamius supported the Arian Formula of Sirmium of 357, and moderate Arianism at Rimini in 359. Among four known writings are the homilies *De Lazaro resuscitato* and *De martyrio Esaiæ prophetae*, transmitted in a Latin Pseudo-Chrysostom from which Augustine quoted *De Lazaro* as early as 421: “The interest of the author does not lie strictly in the interpretation of the two passages in either a literal or an allegorical manner but exclusively in their (homiletic) description, intended to present the two episodes in the most effective way possible for his listeners” (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 81). A. Wilmart, editor of *De Lazaro*, stigmatizes Potamius’s legacy as “some pages of Latin text among the most puzzling of ancient Christian literature, with a

bad taste, an obscurity and a self-complacency rarely noticeable elsewhere” (*JThS* 19, 1918, 289).

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 Wilmart, A., *RBén* 30 (1913) 280–83: *ep. ad Athan.*
 —. *JThS* 19 (1918) 298–304: *De Lazaro*.

VII. GREGORY OF ELVIRA (CA. 330–405)

“The most important and best-known Spanish author prior to Isidore of Seville” (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 85), Gregory authored some exegetical homilies:

- 1) The *Tractatus de libris sanctorum scripturarum*, nineteen homilies with allegorical illustrations of passages from Genesis to Zachariah. Another homily on the Holy Spirit comments on Acts 2:1–2. The third *Tract.* is borrowed from Rufinus’s translation of Origen’s *Hom. Gen.* 7, 2–3.
- 2) The *Tractatus de arca Noe* as a prefiguration of the Church and of Christ.
- 3) The *Tractatus in Cantica canticorum*, with the same figurative meaning.
- 4) A short *Expositio de psalmo XCI*, and
- 5) *Fragmenta tractatus in Gn 3:22 et 15:9–11*.

In his enthusiastic reception of Origen’s allegorism, Gregory showed no servility. “He knows how to distinguish in the OT a *triplicem significantiam* (*Tract. script.* 5, 1) *is est prophetiae, historiae et figurae*, where the prophecy lies *in praescientia futurorum*, the *historia* (i.e. literal interpretation) *in relatione gestorum*, and the *figura* (i.e. typological interpretation) *in similitudine rerum*, to prescind from those passages which are of value only for exhortation or edification.” He intended “with the aid of the same Spirit who inspired the sacred writer, to discover the spiritual sense of scripture which is hidden under the veil of the letter and often escapes the *simpliciores* (*Tract.* 8, 1; 11, 2; 16, 8–9; 17, 3; 19, 12)” (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 87–88).

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- . *LACL*, 2nd ed. (1999) 257f.
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IV
LATIN CHRISTIAN POETRY

I. JUVENCUS (EARLY 4TH C.)

“A Spaniard of noble birth and a priest, Juvencus, composed four Books, in hexameters, in which he transcribed the four Gospels almost literally, and certain other things in the same verse relating to the order of sacraments. He lived at the time of Emperor Constantine,” Jerome, *De viris inlustribus*, 84 (PL 23, 730), the only biographical information available on this pioneer of Christian poetry. A marginal gloss in one of the oldest manuscripts suggests that the aristocratic C. Vettius Aquilinus Juvencus was from Elvira, in modern Andalusia (Fontaine, 71).

The *Evangeliorum libri* is “a poem divided into four Books with two prologues and comprising 3,219 hexameters...the first Book deals with the events concerning John the Baptist, the Annunciation and the beginning of Christ’s activity up to the cure of Peter’s mother-in-law (770 verses); the second Book concerns Jesus’s miracles and some parables...up to chapter 12 of Matthew (819 verses); the third Book includes miracles, parables and discourses drawn only from Matthew (Matthew 13–21, 773 verses); and the fourth Book treats of Jesus’ disputes with the Jews, the parables of the ten virgins and of the talents, the death and raising of Lazarus, and the passion, death and resurrection of Christ (812 verses)” (A. Di Berardino: Quasten IV, 266f.).

Juvencus was thoroughly familiar with the works of Latin poets such as Plautus, Valerius, Flaccus, Statius and Ovid. Virgil was his prime model for style and language; he tried to recreate the Virgilian atmosphere and rhythm in his rather pompous epic paraphrase of the Gospels. He “adheres as closely as possible to the text which he sets to verse by means of a paraphrastic technique according to which he amplifies and clarifies obscure passages, expresses his feelings and judgments and describes certain scenes. He enjoys greater success with his descriptive passages: the Magi (I, 224–254), the tempest (II, 25–42), and some miracles (II, 337–407)” (A. Di Berardino, 267).

Juvencus’s biblical text is read in the *Vetus Latina*, “which (he) follows faithfully, adhering to the literal sense and clarifying only some obscure passages. Juvencus basically keeps to the text of Matthew and draws only some details from Mark. From Luke he takes chiefly information pertaining to the Baptist and the infancy of Jesus.... From John he takes the Wedding of Cana, the conversation with Nicodemus and with the Samaritan woman, the vocation of Philip and Nathanael, Lazarus and some other episode.... He produces something similar to a concordance of the Gospels” (268).

“My song will be of Christ’s life-giving deeds,” *mihi carmen erit Christi vitalia gesta: (praef. 9)*. With that purpose Juvenecus introduced into his poetic rewriting of the Gospel, the Homeric quest of perennial values, as well as Virgil’s elegant celebration of nature, but in both cases interiorized in the light of the Christian message. Like Ephrem of Edessa in the Syriac-speaking Orient one generation after him, the Spanish priest exercised at once, a ministry of catechesis and a proper gift for poetry. “In Juvenecus there is no gap between the priest and the poet. For there exists a functional relationship between the poetry and the message (of the Gospel)” (Fontaine, 75).

EDITIONS

PL 19, 9–346.

Huemer, J.: CSEL 24 (1891).

STUDIES

Borrell, E., *Iuvenecus Evangeliorum concordantiae secundum J. Huemer editionem*. Basle 1990.

Flieger, M., *Interpretationen zum Bibeldichter Iuvenecus*. Stuttgart 1993.

Fontaine, J., *Naissance de la poésie dans l’Occident chrétien*, Paris, 1981.

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Thraede, K. "Epiphanien bei Juvenecus. Ausgangstext: Evangeliorum Libri 1,1/26."

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Wacht, M., *Concordantia in Iuvenecus Evangeliorum libros*. Hildesheim 1990.

II. PROBA (D. CA. 370)

Faltonia Betitia Proba, daughter, sister, and mother of consuls, wife of Clodius Celsinus Adelphius, the Prefect of the city of Rome in 351, was a descendent of the illustrious Roman gens of the Petonii. She was one of the earliest members of the Roman aristocracy to convert and be baptized. Near 360, she composed a Virgilian *cento* ("patchwork," from the Greek κεντῶν) inspired by the scriptures. Her idea was to have divine revelation celebrated by Virgilian phrasing. Verses 1–332 deal with OT events, mainly from the creation of humankind to the Flood; verses 333–694 describe events included in the NT. The Virgilian poetry was not always adequate for a correct formulation of christology (I. Oppelt), but, despite a negative reaction of Jerome (*epist* 53, to Paulinus of Nola), Proba's work enjoyed a high popularity until the Renaissance, as shown for instance by its many editions during the eleventh century.

"The virtuoso performance in disposing of smallest elements by the Christian appropriation of Virgil's discourse is paired with a strong sense for composition. The structuring of the scenes shows the same consistent talent as does the chosen vocabulary...the Fall (136–277) presents an extended, coherent unit. It follows a mention of the creation from clay (116) of the protoparent in the likeness of God true to the biblical narrative (120), and another mention of the woman born from Adam's side (127). Speeches underline the dramatic crescendo, in particular the two framing speeches of God the Father, one introducing the human creatures into Paradise (139–156), the other their expulsion (245–268). The speech of temptation by the serpent of Paradise, a mixture of some mythological Fury and a serpent of Laocoon (183–196) parallels the hopeless apology of Adam (235–243). The luxurious Paradise itself offers a glittering reflection of *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. The stage is set for a dramatic move: the flight of the human creatures away from God the Father, which leads them out of the luminous Paradise and into the dark forest, playing thereby with impressive changes in colours and atmosphere" (Oppelt, 108).

Commenting on Proba's poetry, J. Fontaine notes: "Attention has recently

been drawn to the singularity of a poetic project whose focus is not the simple versification of scripture. For that 'version' is personal for more than one reason. Against the stream of biblical epic, and with only Juvenius to follow, it tends to suggest that Virgil was poet and prophet, and to give the key for a Christian reinterpretation of his work: 'I shall say how Virgil sang the holy gifts of Christ, *Vergilium cecinisse loquar pia munera Christi* (v. 23). In other words it was a key for Virgil as much as for scripture" (Fontaine, 104). C. Schenkl, who identifies in the apparatus of his edition the elements of Virgil used by Proba for each of her 694 hexameters, signals the allusions or tacit scriptural quotations in her work: she refers thirty-three times to Genesis and twice to Exodus before mentioning the gospels thirty-one times.

EDITIONS

PL 19, 805–818.

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Schenkl, C.: CSEL 16, 1 (1888), 513–609.

TRANSLATIONS

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III. PRUDENTIUS (348–AFTER 405)

Aurelius Prudentius Clemens was born in the region of Tarragone, Spain. He succeeded in a career of civil service until a midlife crisis made him reject worldly honours and choose poetry as a full-time spiritual exercise. A trip to Rome between 401 and 403 generated in him a powerful poetic inspiration against paganism. Anticipating Augustine, he carefully arranged a definitive edition with preface and epilogue of his main works, each of them being provided with a fashionable title in Greek: *Cathemerinon*, prayers “for daytime,” or twelve hymns for specific hours and circumstances; *Apotheosis*, an exposition and defense of Trinitarian theology, being a poem of over 1000 hexameters; *Hamartigenia*, “On the Origin of Evil,” a vigorous polemic against Marcion; *Psychomachia*, the epic and allegorical story of spiritual warfare for the conquest of one’s own soul, exemplified by many biblical characters, from Abraham to the Virgin Mary; *Peristephanon*, fourteen hymns celebrating Christian martyrs; *Dittochaeton*, describing a painting, otherwise unknown, in 49 strophes, 24 for OT and 25 for NT characters.

Prudentius’s familiarity with scripture resulted mainly from his listening to liturgical readings, his references echoing the homiletic literature of his time. He read the scriptures himself in a *Vetus Latina (hispana)* version, close to the African text and possibly through the monastic tradition of the *lectio divina*. He also knew some exegetical works, such as Hilary’s *Commentaries on the Psalms*, or Ambrose’s *De Helia et ieiunio* and *Expositio Evangelii secundam Lucam*, perhaps also Tertullian’s *Contra Marcionem* and Jerome’s *On Jonas*. Mostly through Ambrose, he had been informed about certain opinions of Origen and he had enjoyed Juvencus’s paraphrase and some poems of Paulinus of Nola; but the liturgy was by far his main resource for biblical knowledge. An indirect access to scripture was also given to him by Christian iconography (Charlet, “Prudence et la Bible”).

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IV. CYPRIAN THE POET (FL. CA. 400)

Jerome wrote *Letter* 140 to a learned priest named Cyprian, who was an expert in scripture. According to Harnack, the same Cyprian wrote the *Heptateuchos* and the *Cena Cypriani*, the latter having been composed near the end of the fourth century in the area of Brescia and Verona. Hence the learned priest, addressed by Jerome, would have lived in northern Italy, and considered his art form as a resource for religious education.

“The whole *Heptateuchos* (‘Seven Books’) is the work of a single author named Cyprian and who lived ca. 400 C.E. For this poet knew Ausonius (*Mosella* 47 = *Cypr. Gen. Nave* 89) and Claudian (*Paneg. III cons. Hon.* 77–90 = *Ex.* 474ff., *Jg* 131; *Paneg. IV cons. Hon.* 118 = *Ex.* 152), as well as Iuvencus, Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola. Claudius M. Victorius, who died before 450 C.E., was familiar with Cyprian’s *Genesis* (*Cypr. Gen.* 105 = *Vict. Aleth.* 1, 149; *Gen.* 238 = *Aleth.* 2, 364; *Gen.* 255 = *Aleth.* 2, 402; *Gen.* 486ff. = *Aleth.* 3, 433; *Gen.* 585 = *Aleth.* 607). In addition, Cyprian used a biblical text from before Jerome; on some occasions, he turns to the Greek text” (Di Berardino, 404).

The *Heptateuchos* is a work of at least 5250 verses, almost all in hexameters; three canticles are decasyllabic (*Ex* 15, *Nm* 21, *Dt* 32). The books of the Bible call for different quantities of verses: *Genesis* 1498; *Exodus* 1338; *Leviticus* 309; *Numbers* 777; *Deuteronomy* 288; *Joshua* 585, *Judges* 760. Usually, Cyprian renders the biblical text in verses without any additions; he omits some sections, such as *Ex* 26–31 or *Ex* 35–40. In general, he avoids to amplify the text as he does for *Ex* 14 = *Cypr. Ex* 418 = 507 (Peiper); *Ex.* 16:3 = *Cypr. Ex* 579–597; *Ex* 32 = *Cypr. Ex* 1134–1246; *Nm* 10:32–34 = *Cypr. Nm* 205–238. He renders all biblical names in a Latin form, Noah being spelled “*Noelus*,” Lamech “*Lamechus*,” etc. He cites or uses classical authors, such as Virgil, Lucretius, Horace, Ovid, Perseus, Catullus, and he knows Christian writers well: Iuvencus, Prudentius, Paulinus of Nola (Di Berardino 405–406).

The *Cena Cypriani*, a biblical “centon,” or collection of biblical quotations dating from the late fourth century, assembles famous figures of OT and NT at an imaginary banquet offered by King Joel, who suspects his guests to have robbed him. It is a parody, anticipating medieval farces, marked by vulgarity, and without any respect for sacred scripture. The LXX text seems to be the only direct version used by the author. Apocryphals, such as the *Acts of Paul*, are also exploited. Priscillian receives a mention. The author could have been a certain monk named Bacharius, from Spain in the late fourth century, a sympathizer of Priscillianism (Lapôte: Bardy).

EDITIONS

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V. SEDULIUS (FL. 420–430)

Sedulius composed his poem, *Paschale carmen*, probably in Italy between 420 and 430 (Di Berardino, Quasten IV, 416). He was a rhetor, trained in philosophy according to ancient manuscripts, a presbyter according to Isidore of Seville. He served as a cantor in liturgical celebrations (*Carmen* I, 23–26). His poem is divided into four Books of three hundred to four hundred verses each, with an introduction. Modern editions count the introduction as a fifth Book. After having celebrated God’s *mirabilia* as Creator and Divine Providence (I), the *Carmen* evokes the childhood of Jesus, his baptism, and the choice of the twelve apostles, in adding a long commentary

on the Lord's prayer (II, 231–300). Books III and IV describe the miracles of Christ, mainly according to Matthew; V continues the paraphrase of the gospel narrative from the Last Supper to the Ascension. Sedulius himself produced a *translatio* in prose of his poem, the *Opus*, as a scholarly exercise fashionable in his time.

In both works his way of quoting scripture remains extremely free, with many allegorical comments. “Constantly, with an apt conciseness, the poet expresses the theological and spiritual meaning of given narratives. Sometimes, for example about the Passion, he insists on minute details of allegorism, already more medieval than patristic in tone. Such exceptions confirm his poetic norm calling for an ornate and light-hearted devotion. Poetic procedures serve here religious sentiment more than theological exegesis” (Fontaine, 251).

Sedulius's versified style and syntax demonstrate a classical correctness, which explains the popularity of the *Carmen* in medieval schools, illustrated by seventy-five editions until 1886.

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VI. CLAUDIUS MARIUS VICTORIUS (D. 425/450).

Ca. 480, Gennadius (d. 492/ 505) wrote: “Victori(n)us, a rhetor of Marseilles, composed in a true and pious Christian spirit for his son, Etherius, a commentary in four Books in verse on Genesis, from the Beginning up to the death of Patriarch Abraham. But since the author was accustomed to working with literature and had not been instructed by any teacher in the divine scriptures, he expresses thoughts of little value in his poetry. He died under the reign of Theodosius (II) and Valentian (III)” (*De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, LX: PL 58, 1094).

The *Alethia*, the principal work of this married layman and professional rhetor dates between 420 and 440 (best edition, Hovingh). It begins with a fervent prayer of a hundred and twenty-six verses and is divided into three Books: Book I (523 verses) deals with the first three chapters of Genesis; Books II (457 verses) with chapter 4–7, and Book III (741 verses) with chapters 8–19. In addition to versifying the biblical text, Victorius introduces considerations and digressions of his own, such as in Book II, a description of man’s condition after his expulsion from Paradise, inspired in part by Lucretius’s theory of civilization. Other sources of Victorius’s poetry are Ovid and Virgil. On the Christian side one finds Lactantius, Prudentius, Ambrose, Augustine as well as the author of the contemporary *Carmen de providentia divina*, Pelagian in complexion, now attributed to Hilary of Arles (Gallo).

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VII. DRACONTIUS (SECOND HALF OF 5TH C.)

Blossus Emilius Dracontius, a poet and rhetorician of Carthage at the time of the Vandal invasion of North Africa, was the author of an abundant secular literature employing mythological themes. During a lengthy imprisonment by the Vandal authorities, he composed two poems of which one, *De laudibus Dei*, Book I, was received as an Hexameron during the Middle Ages.

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- . "Epiphanien bei Juvencus: Evangeliorum libri 1,1/26," In *Stimuli: Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*; Festschrift für Ernst Dassmann. Edited by G. Schöllgen and C. Scholten, 499–511. Münster: Aschendorff, 1996.
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V

FORTUNATIANUS OF AQUILEIA (MID-4TH C.)

An African, bishop of Aquileia at the time Emperor Constantius and Pope Liberius (Jerome, *De vir. inl.* 97), Fortunatianus took part in the synod of Serdica in 343 as an ally of Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra. After the synod he was hosted for several months by Athanasius and Hosius of Cordoba, with whom he celebrated Easter 345 in Aquileia. Under political pressure of Emperor Constantius II, he signed the condemnation of Athanasius in 353.

Jerome describes Fortunatianus's Commentary on the Gospels as a *margarita de evangelio* "a pearl as a Gospel commentary," in a letter to Paul of Concordia (*Ep.* 10, 3), having read it in preparation for his own Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew (*praef.*: PL 26, 20C), whereas in *De vir. inl.* he minimizes the same commentator's merits: *brevi ac rustico sermone scripsit commentaria*, "he wrote commentaries in a short and uncultivated style."

In his notice, Jerome (*De vir. inl.* 97) observed also that Fortunatianus's Commentary on the Gospels was written *titulis ordinatis*, which means composed in the order of liturgical readings in Aquileia by grouping several verses in a unity. Certainly with a pedagogical purpose, he delivered a teaching addressing the *simplices*, for which a *rusticus sermo* was entirely appropriate (Lemarié). Indeed, the style of the surviving fragments could hardly be more elementary: "In Aaron's vestment four rows with precious stones (cf. Ex 28:17) prefigure the four Gospels. The three stones mean the perfect Trinity, because these four Gospels show us the perfect Trinity included in them. As the Lord himself said to his disciples 'Go forth, preach to all creatures, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19); but Aaron's staff (Nm 17:10), which once budded in the Most Holy (cf. Heb 9:3-4), can be received in the flower and even the fruit of the staff as an image of the Lord, *in typum domini*. The staff itself is to be seen as prefiguring Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus Christ; the flower, the Lord himself. As Scripture says 'A shoot shall grow from the stock of Jesse' (Is 11:1). Hence Solomon said, speaking in the name of the Lord, 'I am a flower of the field, a lily growing in the valley' (Sg 2:1). And the four-parted fruit of the nut can be received as the Gospels..." (CCL 9, 367). No doubt the style is rustic, but the biblical texture of the homily remains apparent in each sentence. The use of scripture is entirely allegorical, but with moralistic overtones (Wilmart 1920, 162).

EDITIONS

PLS 1. 2 (1958) 217–19, 239.

Wilmart, A., – B. Bischoff: CCL 9 (1957) 365–70.

STUDIES

Bischoff, B., “Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter”: *SE* VI (1954) 238–40.

Gamber, K., “Die älteste abendländische Evangelien-Perikopenliste, vermutlich von Bischof Fortunatinus von Aquileia”: *MThZ* 13 (1962) 180–201.

Wilmart, A., “La question du pape Libère”: *RBén* 28 (1908) 31–78.

—. “Deux expositions d’un évêque Fortunat sur l’Évangile”: *RBén* 32 (1920) 160–74.

VI

PHILASTER OF BRESCIA (D. AFTER 390)

An itinerant preacher and controversialist before being consecrated bishop of Brescia, in northern Italy, as his successor, Gaudentius, informs us in a eulogy (CSEL 68, 1936, 186, 37/50), Philaster took part in the Council of Aquileia in 381. He met Augustine during his stay in Milan between 383 and 387 (Augustine, *Letter* 222, 2 to Quodvultdeus; CSEL 57, 1915, 446, 13). His *Diversarum haereseon liber*, written between 380 and 390 is heavily dependent on works of Irenaeus and Eusebius of Caesarea.

Severely evaluated by Augustine in the same letter to Quodvultdeus, the *liber* lacks historical acumen. The following is the listing of the topics treated by Philaster (CCL9, 685f.) resulting in an accumulation of exegetical “heresies,” some of which possibly originated in the imagination of the author: CXV (87), God chased Adam from Paradise because of envy; CXVI (88), Adam and Eve were blind (Genesis 3:6–7); CXVII (89), on the tunics of skins (Genesis 3:21); CXVIII (90), on the angel meeting Moses (Exodus 4:23); CXIX (91), on Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, 19); CXX (92), on the iniquity of legitimate marriage (Psalm 50:7); XXI (93), on the division of the earth by Noah; CXXII (94), on the Flood under Deucalion; CXXIII (95), on human birth determined by the signs of the zodiac; CXXIV (96), on the souls of sinners relocated in demons and animals; CXXV (97), on the fact that the Lord did not descend into Sheol; CXXVII (99), on the generation of the Saviour; CXXVIII (100), on Pharaoh (Exodus 4:21; 7:31; 9:16); CXXIX (101), on David, who was not a religious, but a secular writer; CXXX (102), on the inauthenticity and inner contradictions of the Psalter; CXXXI (103), on Cain (Genesis 4:7); CXXXII (104), also on Cain (Genesis 4:13–14); CXXXIII (105), on the fact that there are no fixed stars in heaven; CXXXIV (106), on Solomon’s Ecclesiastes; CXXXV (107), on the Canticle of Canticles; CXXXVI (108), on commandment; CXXXVII (109), on God’s image in man (Genesis 1:26); CXXXVIII (110), on God’s various languages; CXXXIX (111), on the Four Animals (Ezekiel 1:5); CXLII (114), on the Septuagint and Aquila;

- CXLIII (115), on the translation of the Thirty;
 CXLIV (116), on the translation of the Six;
 CXLV (117), on Theodotion and Symmachus;
 CXLVI (118), on the finding of the Books after the Captivity;
 CXLVII (119), on cursing (Exodus 22:28);
 CXLVIII (120), on Melchisedek (Genesis 14:18–20);
 CXLIX (121), on fasting (Zachariah 8:19);
 CL (122), on Solomon's concubines (Canticle 6:7);
 CLI (123), on Joshua's knives of flint (Joshua 5:2);
 CLII (124), on the breath of life received by Adam (Genesis 2:7);
 CLIII (125), on the measuring line (Zechariah 2:1);
 CLIV (126), on Elijah's ravens (1 Kings 17:6);
 CLV (127), on Cherubim and Seraphim (Isaiah 6:2);
 CLVI (128), on the Cherubim sent by God to the prophet Isaiah (Is 6:6).

EDITIONS

Heylen, F.: CCL 9 (1967) 207–324.

Marx, F.: CSEL 38 (1898).

STUDIES

Bardy, G., "Le 'De haeresibus' et ses sources": *Miscell. Agostiniana* II. Rome 1931, 397–416.

Frank, H., "Das Weihnachts- und Epiphaniezeugnis des Bischofs Filastrius von Brescia": *JNW* 13 (1936) 10–24.

Juret, P. C., *Étude grammaticale sur le latin de S. Filastrius*. Erlangen 1904 = *Romanische Forschungen*, XIX (1906) 130–320.

Portarena, D. *Doctrina scripturistica s. Filastrii Brixienensis episcopi et textus biblicus ab eo adhibitus*. Rome: Pont. Athenaeum Antonianum, 1946.

Vattioni, F. "La prima lingua in Filastrio da Brescia." *Aug* 34 (1994): 397–436.

VII
 GAUDENTIUS OF BRESCIA
 (FL. LATE 4TH-EARLY 5TH C.)

Gaudentius replaced his teacher, Philaster, on the episcopal see of Brescia sometime after 390. Five homilies, added to a set of ten homilies delivered during Easter week, all on scriptural topics, were preserved thanks to a high official of Valentinian II. Modern scholars have added another six sermons to the corpus of Gaudentius's works.

The Easter sermons deal with liturgical readings from Exodus, while Sermon 8 and 9 comment on the Wedding of Cana. They employ traditional typology and are directed particularly against Marcionites and Manicheans. "The two homilies on the Wedding Feast of Cana defend marriage against the Manicheans and exalt the virginity of Mary. Gaudentius takes a notable stand here against parents who consecrate their young children to a life of virginity. Although this life represents the ideal of perfection, it cannot be imposed" (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 134). Among the six homilies attributed to Gaudentius by modern scholars, *Sermo 18 Ad Serminium* interprets Luke 16, on the dishonest steward, as a symbol of the devil; *Sermo 19 Ad Paulum diaconum*, explains that John 14:28, "the Father is greater than I," refers to Christ's humanity.

The literary legacy of Gaudentius, though limited, shows him at ease in the exegesis of the biblical text. "He gives evidence of scholastic preparation, of more than superficial competence in the fields of exegesis and doctrine, and of the capacity to engage the faithful on the disciplinary and moral plane" (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 135).

EDITIONS

John Chrysostom, *Letter 184*.

TRANSLATIONS

Boehrer, S. L., Washington 1965.

STUDIES

Brontesi, A. "Ricerche su Gaudenzio da Brescia (e la sua opera esegetica)." In *Memorie storiche della diocesi di Brescia* 29 (1962): 99-198.

Ficarra, R. "La parabola del fattore infedele in Gaudenzio di Brescia." *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 12 (1995): 347-59.

Trisaglio F. 1960, 1976.

Truzzi, C., *Zeno, Gaudenzio e Cromazio, testi e contenuti della predicazione cristiana per le chiese di Verona, Brescia e Aquileia (360-410 ca)*. Brescia 1985.

VIII

PACIAN OF BARCELONA (CA. 310–CA. 392)

Pacian lived to old age, *iam ultima senectude* (Jerome, *de vir. inl.* 106), and died in the reign of Theodosius. His son, Dexter, to whom Jerome dedicated his *De viris inlustribus*, reached the rank of Praetorian Prefect. Pacian's classical education gave him access to Virgil, Cicero, Ovid, Horace, and other Latin authors whom he quotes, but he did not seem to know Greek (despite his unusual Latin rendering *irascersis ira* of Ex 32:11 (LXX) which might derive from an Old Latin manuscript, *pace* C. Granada, SC 410, 64).

Pacian's familiarity with scripture is attested to by eighty-seven OT and a hundred and seventy-seven NT quotations from seventeen different OT books and twenty NT writings. "Explicit quotations may sometimes be short, including one or two verses. Usually introduced by phrases with *dicere* and the same of the speaker, or by a simple *et iterum* (15 times), *scriptum est/sit* (7 times), *item infra* (4 times) or *adhuc* (3 times), they are occasionally mentioned by an *inquit* in the midst of the cited text (24 times). Implicit quotations and allusions are very numerous; biblical elements are then perfectly assimilated to Pacian's own exposition whose thought naturally adjusts to the scriptural discourse" C. Granada, SC 410, 60–61; see the whole section "L'Écriture," in chap. IV, "Les sources de la théologie de Pacien," 59–67.

Pacian's Old Latin text is not identical with those of his African sources, Tertullian, Cyrian, and Lactantius, nor does it belong to a specific *Vetus Latina* tradition from Europe. "Like Gregory of Elvira, Pacian attests 'Latin versions which are independent or belong to a family different from the ones used in his time...?' Neither does Pacian depend on collections of Testimonia" (C. Granada, SC 410, 66, quoting J. Campos, "La 'Epistola ad Romanos' en los escritores Hispanos": *Helmantica* 15, 1964, 256f.).

Pacian's doctrine on penance, his central topic in the discussion with the Novatian Simpronianus, depends heavily on Tertullian's *De paenitentia*. His own works include a treatise, *De paenitentibus*, (ed., C. Granada, SC 410, 1995) establishing a distinction between private *peccatum* and public *crimen* (idolatry, homicide, adultery), only the latter calling for public penance; a homily *On Baptism*, with a commentary on Romans 5:1–2 which announces Augustine's thesis on original sin; Two *Letters* to Simpronianus, refuting in depth the rigorist position held by Novatian and the Novatians of Pacian's own time. Finally, a treatise *Contra Novatianos*, refuting Novatian's ecclesiology on the basis of the NT. (An essay entitled *Cervulus*, "The Small Stag" in reference to a New Year carnival, is lost; SC 410, 13–20.)

EDITIONS

PL 13, 1051–94.

Anglada Anfruns, A.: Valencia 1983.

Granado, C.: SC 410 (1995), biblical index and bibliography.

Rubio Fernandez, L.: Barcelona 1958.

TRANSLATIONS

Catalan

Fàbregas i Baqué, J.: *De poenitentia, De baptismo*, Barcelona 1981.

Riber, L.: Barcelona 1931.

English

Collyns, C. H.: Oxford 1844.

French

Épitalon, C. and M. Lestienne, in Granado (see above).

Spanish

Rubio Ferandez: above.

STUDIES

Domínguez del Val, U., “Paciano de Barcelona: escritor, teólogo y exegeta”

Salmanticensis 9 (1962) 53–85.

Granado, C., “Las parábolas de misericordia en Paciano de Barcelona”: *EE* 63 (1988)

435–54.

Madoz, J., “Herencia literaria del presbítero Eutropio”: *EE* 16 (1942) 22–54.

Villar, J., “Las citacions bíblicas de Sant Pacià”: *EstUCat* 17 (1932) 1–49.

IX

PRISCILLIAN OF AVILA (CA. 340–CA. 387)

Born in Spain ca. 350, Priscillian started his preaching as a layman, around 370–375. He met immediate success. His mystical fervor and rigid asceticism gave him a particular popularity among the women of his acquaintance. Two bishops, Instantius and Salvianus, strongly supported him while two others, Hydacius, his metropolitan of Emerita Augusta (Mérida) and Ithacius, bishop of Ossonuba (Faro, Portugal) opposed him. Consecrated bishop of Avila by his associates, Instantius and Salvianus, the two opposing bishops obtained from Emperor Gratian a decree against the Manicheans among whom they indicted Priscillian, who went into exile with his closest disciples, first to Aquitaine, then to Italy. Accused of heresy, immorality, and magic, before the usurper, Maximus, who had established himself at Trier after the murder of Gratian, Priscillian and his disciples were beheaded. They have the dubious honour of being the first Christians condemned to death for heresy. Martin of Tours travelled to Trier in protest, but neither he nor Ambrose of Milan could prevent the tragedy.

The *Canones in Pauli apostoli ep. a Peregrino episcopo emendati* present a short outline in ninety statements (*canones*) with references to specific passages of the fourteen letters of Paul. Identified by Döllinger, and first published by Schepss, eleven anonymous texts in a manuscript at Würzburg, have been linked with Priscillian. They are now made available by H. Chadwick. The third of these texts, the *Liber de fide et apocryphis*, “confirms the twelfth anathema of the Council of Toledo I in 400 against those who accept scriptures other than those recognised by the Catholic church. In this treatise, the author maintains with ingenious and revolutionary arguments that not all the inspired writings have been included in the canon, so that not all of the apocryphal writings can be condemned *en masse* just because the heretics have introduced some interpolations into them” (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 141). There follow seven homilies with anti-Marcionite and typological comments on OT passages or episodes, together with the *Canones epistolarum Pauli apostoli*: “Ninety propositions, which are listed one after another and are at times accompanied by the Pauline passages to which the canons make explicit reference, summarize Paul’s entire doctrine” (Simonetti: Quasten IV, 141–142).

EDITIONS

- Augustine, *Letter 11* (Divjak).
Hamman, A.: PLS 2 (1958) 1391–1507.
Schepss, G., CSEL 18 (1889).

TRANSLATIONS

English

- Eno, R. B: FaCh 81 (1989): *Letter 11* (Divjak).

STUDIES

- Ayuso Marazuelo, T., “Nuevo estudio sobre el Comma Joanneum,” *Bib* 28 (1947) 83–112, 216–235; 29 (1948) 52–76.
Barrett, P. M.: *EEC*, 2, 949f.
Burrus, V., *The Making of a Heretic. Gender, Authority, and the Priscillianist Controversy*. Berkeley, CA 1995.
Chadwick, H. *Priscillian of Avila. The Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1976.
Fontaine, J., “Panorama espiritual del Occidentio peninsular en los siglos IV y V: Por una nueva problemática del priscilianismo”: *Prima reunion gallega de estudios clásicos*. Compostella 1981, 183–209.
—. *TRE* 27 (1997) 449–54.
Van Dam, R., *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul*. Berkeley, CA 1985.
Vollmann, B., “Priscillianus”: *PR, Suppl.* 14 (1974) 485–559.

X

AMBROSE OF MILAN (CA. 339–APRIL 4, 397)

Ambrose was born at Trier where his aristocratic father, Aurelius Ambrosius was a high-ranking civil servant, *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*. As a teenager, together with his mother, his older sister Marcellina, and an older brother Uranius Satyrus, Ambrose moved to Rome after his father's untimely death. Having received the best education in rhetorics and law, completed with a thorough study of Greek, Ambrose started his own career as an *advocatus*. As soon as he reached the minimal age, he became a civil servant. Nominated *consularis Liguriaie et Aemeliae*, in 370, he took up residence in Milan. Though only a catechumen, he was deeply committed to the Christian tradition of his family, with a pronounced leaning towards asceticism and philosophical contemplation. His impartial judgment in administrative matters was accorded popular acclaim with dramatic consequences, when local Catholics and Arians together proclaimed him their chosen leader after the death of the Arian bishop Auxentius. After having received the agreement of Valentinian I, the western emperor, Ambrose accepted the new responsibility. He was baptized, and on December 7, 374, consecrated bishop. While his public persona remained unchanged in its natural authority and ethical rectitude embodying the best of ancestral Roman virtues, his enthusiastic plunge into the study of scripture opened a new world of religious thought, social dedication and public discourse. At the core of a busy life, his deepest resolution remained unchanged: to rethink himself, and to share with contemporary Christians his whole understanding of church and world, exclusively in reference to scripture.

Without delay, the newly consecrated bishop invested himself in his pastoral duties to the point of producing a written work entirely dominated by biblical exegesis: "Exegesis means for Ambrose a truly fundamental way of thinking, more than a method or a genre; everywhere required, everywhere present, one would not limit it to a particular literary category" (Nauroy, 378). "His scriptural piety," *Schriftfrömmigkeit* (Dassmannn, *TRE* 2, 378), nourished by the assiduous study of Origen, Basil and other Greek interpreters, also found sustenance in the reading of Philo, Plato and Plotinus, Jewish wisdom and classical philosophy which, in Ambrose's understanding, had originated in the same divine Logos who spoke to him in Scripture. His massive quoting of scripture (mostly without specific reference) dispensed to unlearned audiences a wealth of cultural and religious values. His allegorical artistry, unparalleled in Latin Christianity until the end of the Middle Ages, with the

exception of Bernard of Clairvaux, bound him to his Greek sources, but never alienated him from the genuinely Latin focus on ethical issues and moral behaviour.

As an undefatigable preacher, Ambrose created a language of his own, which would ravish amazed listeners like Augustine. He would challenge the secular religion of old established Roman tradition, as well as the aspiration for spiritual perfection in philosophers of high culture, by deploying a vision of humanity sharpened by his unremitting learning from scripture. A more detailed survey of his writings confirms the pervasive strength of his biblical commitment, shot through with a rich overlay of the daily pastoral concerns of his office, together with glimpses of constant political interference.

Ambrose was essentially a scriptural preacher, profoundly versed in the text of Holy Writ, he found it most easy and natural to express his ideas in scriptural language. His discourses are packed with scriptural quotations and allusions. The sermons themselves are, in many cases, merely discursive expository lectures on various portions of the Bible. His comments on difficult verses are frequently very elaborate. Thus, if the verses were taken from the OT he would carefully note variations in the Greek and Latin versions, sometimes explaining the cause of a variation and indicating the reading which he himself preferred. If the verse were taken from a Gospel he would, when necessary, compare, almost in the manner of a modern critic the sentence on which he was commenting with the parallels in other Gospels. He then explained the verse often at considerable length, stating alternative views in cases where the interpretation was doubtful.... Ambrose preferred to preach on the OT... partly because the available commentaries on the OT seemed to him better than those on the N, partly because the OT was more in need of popular interpretation, and partly because these ancient scriptures afforded ampler opportunities for the exercise of the art of allegorical exegesis.... In his expositions of scriptural passages he was seldom content with the literal meaning, even when this meaning was most clear and elevated; he could not rest until he had discovered beneath the letter a deeper sense, *altior sensus* (F. H. Dudden, II, 455–57; with a reference in a footnote to thirty-three different chapters of the sole tractate *De Noe*).

The writings of Ambrose relevant for a study of his biblical exegesis are enumerated and commented on in their most probable chronology, according to the various dates assigned to them by the critics in the past three centuries: “Following Philo and Origen, Ambrose accepts the triple sense of Scripture: literal, moral and allegorical/mystical. In reality, an allegorical exegesis of a

typological and moral character prevails in his works. The major portion of these works originated as homilies which were then revised and completed by Ambrose himself” (M. G. Mara: Quasten IV, 153). PL 14–17; Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1–2 (1896–97), 4 (1902).

375–378 *De Paradiso* (ca. 377 Palanque, Dudden, Savon)

A narrative amplification of the biblical story (Gn 2:8–3:19) interprets the events in the Adamic paradise in the light of other OT and NT passages. It allows some speculation on the human condition in its present state. Philo, *Leg. alleg., Questiones in Genesim I, De mundi opificio, De post. Cain*, helps throughout the fifteen *capitula* to determine allegories and to catch the rational or irrational behaviour of the first parents. Paul’s interpretation dominates Ambrose’s understanding of the Fall.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 291–332.

BAM 1984.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 265–336.

TRANSLATIONS

Savage, J. J.: FaCh 42 (1961) 287–356.

375–378 *De Cain et Abel*

Book I focuses on Gn 4:1–10, and Book II on Gn 4:10–24. The common source of both books is Philo’s *De sacrificio*, outweighed in Book I only by Ambrose’s intense quoting from scripture, but leading also in Book I towards a more systematic discussion of sacrifices in biblical Israel. Book I, rather than Book II, derives from homilies.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 333–80.

BAM 1984.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 339–409.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Savage, J. J.: FaCh 42 (1961).

376–390 *De Tobia*

A homily is expanded into a short commentary of twenty-four capitula, following Basil's *Homily on Psalm 14* against usury, from which Ambrose borrows almost all his biblical references, except in *capitula* 17–20.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 797–832.

Giacchero, M.: Geneva 1965.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 519–73.

Zucker, L. M., PSt 25: Washington 1933.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Zucker: see above.

Italian

Giacchero: above.

377 *De virginibus*

A letter to his sister Marcellina, expanded into three Books. Book I celebrates virginity as such, Book II offers biblical *exempla*, Book III advises on a consecrated lifestyle with Origen's exegesis of the Canticle as the main reference.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 197–244.

Cazzaniga, E.: CSLParav., Turin 1948.

Faller, O.: FP 31 (1913).

Salvati, M.: CPS ser. lat. 6, Turin 1955, 15–163.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Bright, P., "Concerning Virgins": C. Kannengiesser, ed., *Early Christian Spirituality*. Philadelphia 1986, 82–100.

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 363–87.

Italian

Bianco, M. I.: Alba 1941, 1954.

Coppa, G: Turin 1949.

Cristofoli, R.: Milan 1930.

Salvati: above.

German

Niederhuber, J.: BKV 32. Kempten 1917.

Spanish

Conca, : Madrid 1914.

Medina Perez, F., Madrid 1914.

Nizmanos, F. de B.: BAC 45 (1949).

377–378 *De viduis*

A sermon presented as a direct following of *De virginibus*, it addresses widows and describes widowhood as a biblical institution, highlighting his claims by numerous biblical *exempla*. Independently from earlier authors, Ambrose expresses no restrictive opinion about a second marriage.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 247–276.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1964).

377–380 *De fide ad Gratianum*

(O. Faller, 8*–10*: Book I–II, winter 378–79;

P. Nautin, p.235; Book III–V, late 380, Faller, B. Studer, p. 246).

Scripture is by far the main source of this work. Occasionally, it is freely quoted and translated by Ambrose himself from the Greek text (not necessarily from the LXX). Some quotations diverge from the present text of

the Vulgate (O. Faller, CSEL, Index) and may rely on older Latin versions. Athanasius prevails among the patristic sources. Like Pliny, writing his *Natural History* for Emperor Vespasian, Ambrose gives titles to the chapters *De fide* and *De Spiritu Sancto*, which were both addressed to emperors (Faller, 45*). There are eight chapters in Book I, four in Book II, seven in Book III, eight in Book IV, and again seven in Book V. Book I presents an anti-Arian statement of faith. Book II adds a more explicit teaching about the Son of God. Book III to V confirm the doctrine expounded in I and II by discussing scriptural evidence on specific issues. In other words, the whole controversy about Arius is clearly presented to Gratian as a *hermeneutical* debate. Due to the controverted issues and to the Greek sources used in *De fide*, the quoting of the NT, by far prevalent in this work, requires twelve pages of Faller's Index, against only five for the OT. A closer analysis underlines the inventive freedom with which Ambrose borrows allegorical insights or polemical quotations from his sources in mixing them with his own references, images, and considerations.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 549–726.

BAM 1984.

Faller, O.: CSEL 78B (1962).

Vizzini, J.: Rome 1905.

TRANSLATIONS

Romestin, H., de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 201–314.

377–389 *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam*
(preached 377–378, reworked and completed
as a commentary 388–399).

The result of a large number of homilies preached over a decade, the *Expositio* shows frequent traces of editing, obvious in the references to parts of the original homilies suppressed in the final redaction. (V, 10; VI, 83; VII, 25, 60, 194, 195), or in the condensed summaries of the preached text, or again, in the carefully written additions to the re-employed homilies (Prologue; IV, 1–6; VI, 93–109; X, 128–184). The whole of Book III is a letter on the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke, included in the *Expositio* (Tissot, 10–14).

Among the classical sources, Virgil, (quoted up to three times in a single sentence: X, 149) surfaces in at least forty passages, followed by Homer,

Ovid, Xenophon, Pliny, Sallust and Horace, to which should be added approximately twenty reminiscences of Cicero in juridical contexts. Scripture is quoted according to unknown Old Latin versions in a close following of Hilary's *Commentary on Matthew*. Origen's *Homilies on Luke* are mainly present in Books I and II, while Eusebius's *Questions on the Gospel* is behind Book III and the last section (147–184) of Book X. "In most cases the borrowing remains verbal, material, rather than implying a real dependency of Ambrose's thought.... One has rather the impression that for the bishop of Milan, reading his models was mainly an incentive to think by himself: he listens to Origen, Eusebius, or Hilary; he registers and memorizes some phrases, but he never stops following his own line of thought, which sometimes leads him to build up with the same words an argument radically different" (Tissot, 17).

Ambrose's exegesis is entirely structured by the threefold sense of scripture, popularized by Origen:

- (1) historical or literal, recognized with a few blunders in I, 22 (John the Baptist's father, taken for the high priest); VIII, 90 and X, 136 (Nathaniel confused with Nicodemus); VII, 9 (both James confused); III, 36 (Achaz confused with Achad); XIII, 12 (a precept for the firstborn applied to all male children);
- (2) moral and spiritual, understood without rigorist or laxist bias, but balanced and open-minded;
- (3) allegorical or mystic, rich of a christocentric consideration of Church, faith and salvation according to biblical salvation history.

EDITIONS

PL 15 1607–1944.

BAM 1978.

Adriaen, M.: CCL 4 (1957).

Garido Bonano, M.: BAC 1966.

Schenkl, C. and H.: CSEL 32, 4 (1902).

Tissot, G.: SC 45, 52 (1955–58).

TRANSLATIONS

French

Tissot: above.

German

Niederhuber, J.: BKV 21 (1915).

Italian

Coppa, G.: Turin 1969, 391–495.

Minuti, R.: Rome 1966.

377–390 *De Helia et ieiunio*

Part One (1–11), a reworked homily (or homilies), celebrates the merits of fasting during Lent, in the light of biblical *exempla*, from Adam to Daniel. Part Two (12–18) chastises the propensity to excess in eating or drinking. Part Three comments on the reading of the day, Isaiah 23. Basil's homilies (I, on fasting; XIV on drunkenness; XIII on baptism) determine the content and the very division of the three Parts. The popular and narrative tone with which biblical statements are played out fits with the many allusions to the practical organization of Ambrose's church.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 731–64.

Buck, M. J. A.: PSt 19 (1919).

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 411–65.

TRANSLATIONS

Buck: above.

377–391 *De officiis* (386–389, M. Testard, 49)

Based on some homilies dedicated first to the clergy, and then to all the faithful, the *De officiis ministrorum* inherits from Cicero its title and its division into three books together with their formal content: Book I, on what is virtuous, Book II on the practice of virtue, and Book III on what is opposed to virtue and its practice. The purpose and substance of the work are markedly original. At the heart of Ambrose's thinking one finds neither Stoic morality, nor Roman ideals, but Christian values, regulated by God and turned toward the ultimate fulfillment of salvation history. Biblical *exempla* progressively overwhelm the composition of the work, to the point that the author concludes by calling his essay a collection of biblical *exempla* and *dicta* illuminating a continuous line of biblical history.

EDITIONS

- PL 16 25–194.
 BAM 1977.
 Banderle, G.: Milan 1977.
 Cavasin, A.: CPS ser. lat. 15: Turin 1978.
 Tamietti, G.: Turin 1906.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 1–89.

German

Niederhuber, J.: BKV 32 (1917).

Italian

Banderle and Cavasin: above.

378 *De excessu fratris*

Part One is a homily delivered at the funeral of Saturius, and is a eulogy of the deceased filled with personal memories and brotherly love. Scripture serves for *consolatio* in *capitula* 68–70. Part Two is a homily on the belief in the resurrection. It presents a dissertation on biblical examples and on the classical dualism of body and soul. Ambrose draws on the cycles of nature which witness resurrection, as does the Phoenix (c. 59), then turning to the scriptural teaching on the general resurrection (Trumpets, c. 107–114). These facts, and not myths, determine faith: *ut credas secundum naturam, ... oracula prophetarum*, “to believe in accordance with nature” means “to believe in the utterances of prophets” (c. 130, 1353B).

EDITIONS

- PL 16, 1345–1414.
 BAM 1985.
 Albers, P. B: FP 15 (1921).
 Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 207–325.

378 *De virginitate*

After a narrative preamble retelling the stories of Solomon's judgement in 1 Kgs 3:16–28 and of Jephthah's vow leading to the sacrifice of his daughter in Judges 11, Ambrose turns to the reading of the day (*hodierna lectio* c. 3), Jn 19:41–42, and comments on the women at the tomb, in particular Mary Magdalene, which gives him the opportunity to quote the Canticle (2:5, 7:11–12 in c. 6; 1:2, 8:2 in c. 7; 3:1 and 2, 5:7 in c. 8; 8:14, 2:1–4 in c. 9; 4:16, 5:1 and 3 in c. 10; 5:4–6, 1:2 in c. 11; 4:8, 5:2, 5:6–7 in c. 12; 3:4, 5:4, 4:12, 5:5–6 in c. 13; 5:7, 2:5 in c. 14; 6:11 in c. 15; 6:10, 5:1 in c. 16) before concluding with allegorical exhortations. These are based on Lk 5:1–7 and Mt 13:47 where the fishing on the lake and the net symbolize the repeated call to virginity in the Church. The text is derived from several homilies or parts of homilies, in particular c. 14–23 are interpolated (PLS I 576, CPL 147).

EDITIONS

PL 16, 279–316.

Cazzaniga, E.: CSL Parav. Turin 1954.

Salvati, M.: CPS ser. lat. 6. Turin 1955, 169–297.

TRANSLATIONS

Italian

Bianco, M. I.: Alba 1941, 1954.

Cristofoli, R.: Milan 1930.

Salvati: above.

378–384 *De Noe*

(soon after August 378: Rauschen, Palanque, Savon)

Probably of homiletic origin, the commentary starts with Genesis 6. It follows Philo's *De agricultura* in contemplating the ark as a figure of the human body. It comments on the flood, and contrasts Noah's piety and Ham's impiety. Throughout the essay, exegesis remains narrative with moral applications.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 381–438.

BAM 1984.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 413–97.

380–390 *De sacramentis* (Botte)

“The *De sacramentis*...consists of six homilies on Christian initiation, through baptism, confirmation and eucharist. The work’s lack of cohesion, the frequent repetitions, and the careless style...gave rise to doubts concerning its authenticity. However, these doubts have been laid to rest through the work of Faller, Botte and Chadwick, who have established that the *De sacramentis* is the stenographic record of homilies given to the neophytes” (M. G. Mara: Quasten, IV, 172). It includes instructions on prayer, on the Our Father, and citations from the Canon of the Mass (O. Faller, 1929–1940, J. Quasten, 1951, G. Lazzati, 1955, Riley, 1914).

EDITIONS

PL 16, 435–82.

BAM 1982.

Botte, B.: SC 25bis (1961) 60–136.

Chadwick, H: London 1960.

Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 13–116.

Rauschen, G.: FP (1914) 9, 92–131.

Schmitz, J.: FC 3, 1990.

381 *De Spiritu Sancto* (before Easter)

A doctrinal complement to *De fide*, the essay is close to the two tractates *De Spiritu Sancto* by Didymus and Basil, and to Basil’s *Adversus Eunomium* as well as Athanasius’ *Letters to Serapion*. Ambrose’s work grows out of his scriptural study, challenged by Arian arguments. Scripture remains his unique source, even when “our predecessors” (alias Basil) are invoked (I, 3, 81). Book I states that the Holy Spirit is not a creature, but equally divine as Father and Son. Book II elaborates on the trinitarian status of the Spirit. Book III contemplates the Spirit in relation to Christ, and stresses the unity of God. Greek words are cited here and there. This allegorical summa of scriptural teaching on the Holy Spirit, according to the Creed of Nicaea, ends with a rhetorical exclamation: “O Arians...”

EDITIONS

PL 16, 731–850.

BAM 1979.

Faller, O.: CSEL 79, 9 (1964) 15–222.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Deferrari, R. J.: FaCh 44 (1963) 35–213.

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 93–158.

Early 382. *De incarnationis dominicae sacramento*

The work includes two parts: (1) a homily delivered in the Basilica Porciana (c. 1–78) in response to Arian questions, based on Athanasius' *Letter to Epictetus*, and stressing the completeness of both natures in Christ; (2) a response to a question by Emperor Gratian (c. 79–116) about the unity of both nature in Christ, based on Basil, *Adversus Eunomium*, I–II. The style of (1) is reduced to extreme simplicity, as it would be the case of some sermons of Augustine, with sentences like: *ecclesia enim sacrificum est, quod offertur deo* (2, 10), or *fides est ecclesiae fundamentum* (5, 34). Exegesis follows the literal *ordo verborum* (7, 72) of scripture in order to confirm the christological truth of Nicaea against Apollinarianism (never mentioned by name). The response of (2) starts by noting that *ingenitus* is not scriptural (8, 80), before defining the unique divine nature of Father and Son (88) and Holy Spirit (93). Divine generation belongs to God's *potentia*, it imposes no difference in nature (97). Hence the virginal conception implies a different *potentia*, but results in the common human nature of Jesus. Ambrose invites a comparison with the creation of Adam (105). We can only imitate divine nature. The conclusion of c. 114–116 has been subsequently added. In both parts of the treatise a pastoral adaptation is obvious.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 853–884.

Faller, O.: CSEL 79, 9 (1964) 223–81.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Deferrari, R. J.: FaCh 44 (1963) 219–62.

Italian

Bellini, E.: 1974.

382–388 *De Abraham*

Book I, *moralis et simplex* (1, 1) derives from a set of homilies. It summarizes the story of Abraham in Genesis 12–25 for catechumens. Book II follows Philo on a more erudite level. It indulges in an untranslated quotation from Homer (2, 10; cf. with a verse of Euripides quoted and translated in 1, 91) and offers allegorical, philonian insights on Abraham's life up to the covenant in Gn 17:21. Note A. Vaccari, "*Locus Ambrosii de Abrahamo 2, 11 emendatus*": *Bib 3* (1922) 449–50.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 441–524.

BAM 1984.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32 (1897) 501–638.

383–394 *De interpellatione Iob et David*

Reflecting a set of four distinct homilies, this narrative paraphrase of the Book of Job, which contains numerous references to anti-Arian polemics, sparkles with allusions to dramatic situations of contemporary life.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 835–90.

BAM 1981.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 211–96.

383–394 *De apologia prophetae David*
(completed 390: P. Hadot, SC 239, 42).

The moral interpretation of David's adultery alludes to moral failures of rulers (Valentinian II) and God's forgiveness. The dedication to Theodosius may be a subsequent addition by Ambrose, acting as the advisor to the imperial conscience. (Hadot, SC 239, 43).

Ambrose comments on Psalm 50, verse by verse c. 41–85, inspired by similar commentaries by Origen and Didymus. His first chapters elaborate on Didymus's prologue (Hadot, "Une source," and SC 239). In line with Origen, Ambrose explores the typological significance of David's adultery according to a principle enunciated elsewhere: *Mysterium igitur in figura, peccatum in*

historia (*Exp. Ev. sec. Lucam* 3, 38): the union of Christ with the Church of the Gentiles fulfills a mystery of repentance and salvation.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 891–960.

BAM 1981.

Hadot, P.: SC 329 (1977).

Schenkl, C.: SCEL 32, 2 (1897) 299–355.

TRANSLATIONS

French

Hadot: above.

384–394 *De poenitentia*
(387–390: R. Gryson, SC 179, 17)

Against the Novatians of his day who refused penance to repentant sinners except for “lighter sins” (*criminibus levioribus* I, III, 10), Ambrose stresses the biblical notion of God’s radical forgiveness. He explains the practice of public and private penance in the Church on a biblical basis. His vibrant exposition emphasizes the harmony between both Testaments on that issue and ends with a call to personal penance.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 485–546.

BAM 1985.

Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 117–206.

Gryson, R.: SC 179 (1971).

TRANSLATIONS

English

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 329–59.

French

Gryson: above.

Italian

Coppa, G.: Turin 1969, 623–706.

Marotta, E.: Rome 1976.

Polish

Szoldrski, P: Warsaw 1970.

386 *Sermo contra Auxentium de Basilicis tradendis*

EDITIONS

PL 16, 1041–53.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 430–36.

386–388 *De Iacob et vita beata*

(386: Palanque; 387: Tillemont, Schenkl,
Bardenhewer, Schanz; 388: Rauschen)

The essay is essentially based on 2 Maccabees. Starting with a philosophical analysis of the human psyche, in which reason taught by Law keeps control over passions (cf. Flavius Josephus, *Peri logismou autokratoros*, Ambrose demonstrates in Book I why the Gospel needed to supplement the Law, as only charity secures true happiness. In Book II the mystic significance of the history of Jacob (Genesis 27–36) serves as a convenient *exemplum* to which Ambrose adds the heroic case of the priest Eleazar, the seven Maccabean brothers and their mother (2 Macc 6–7): *o vere 'valida caritas sicut mors, dura sicut inferi zelus'* (Cant 8; 6) *devotionis ac fidei* (2, 57:638B), “How truly of zeal and faith ‘love is strong as death, passion hard as Sheol.’” Written after having been preached, the text shows some reminiscences of Plotinus (Solignac) and a surprising restraint in biblical quotation.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 627–70.

BAM 1982.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 31, 2 (1897) 3–70.

TRANSLATIONS

English

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 119–84.

French

Gorce, D.: Namur 1967.

386–390 *Expositio Psalmi CXVIII*

A collection of twenty-two homilies, commenting on the twenty-two stanzas of Psalm 118: “The exegesis which is of a moral type is concerned with the conversion of the soul. Images of a military, athletic, judicial, and a medical nature follow one upon the other throughout this protreptic on the *sequela Christi*. A typological exegesis applied to the church is also to be found” (G. M. Mara: Quasten IV, 163).

EDITIONS

PL 15, 1261–1604.

BAM 1980.

Petschenig, M.: CSEL 62–5 (1913).

TRANSLATIONS

French

Gorce, D.: Namur 1963 (partial).

386–390 *Hexaameron*

The nine homilies collected in six Books on Gn 1:1–26, were delivered during Holy Week in a year between 386 and 390. On the first, and third and fifth day Ambrose must have preached twice. Hence Book I, II, V contain two homilies. He used Basil’s *Hexaameron* directly and, according to Jerome (*Epistola* 84, 7), commentaries of Origen and Hippolytus of Rome. He worked with a vivid memory of Cicero, Philo, Virgil and other classical sources in his mind. His written text maintains the simplicity of the spoken style.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 133–288.
 BAM 1979.
 Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 3–261.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Savage, J. J.: FaCh 42 (1961) 1–283.

German

Niederhuber, E. J.: BKV, 2nd ed. (1914).

Italian

Asioli, L.: Milan 1930.

Coppa, G.: Turin 1969, 11–387.

Pasteris, E.: CPS 4, Turin 1937.

387–390 *De Ioseph*

(387: Tillemont, Schanz; 388: Ihm, Rauschen,
 Palanque; 389–90: Schenkl, Bardenhewer)

Starting with Gn 37:6, Ambrose retells the story of the chaste Joseph in whom he sees a living proof of the universal salvation achieved by Christ (7, 41–9, 51). As Joseph distributed food to all people during a time of famine, so has Christ saved all, *ideo dominus Iesus ieiunia mundana miseratus aperuit horrea sua et mysteriorum caelestium thesauros scientiae sapientiaeque patefecit absconditos, ut nulli alimenta deessent*, “so did the Lord Jesus, in compassion for this starving world, open his storehouses and make available the hidden treasures of heavenly mysteries of knowledge and wisdom, so that nobody would be without nourishment” (41:101, 13–16 Schenkl). Philo and Virgil are alluded to in the midst of a relentless quotation of scripture.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 673–704.
 BAM 1982.
 Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 73–122.

TRANSLATIONS

English

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 189–237.

387–391 *De Isaac et anima*

Impregnated with Origen's spirituality, and quoting the Cantic from the first chapter on, the essay identifies Isaac with Christ, and Rebecca with the human soul. A continuous commentary on the Cantic, from chapter 4 to the final chapter 8, introduces Platonic recollections into the homily. The essay is well written and representative of the depth of Ambrose's cultural investment on behalf of his pastoral concerns.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 527–560.

BAM 1982.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 641–700.

TRANSLATIONS

English

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 10–65.

French

Gorce, D.: Namur 1967 (partial).

387–394 *De fuga saeculi*

Ambrose comments on the cities of refuge mentioned in Nm 35:11–34 in line with Philo, *Legum allegoriae* and *De fuga et inventione*. “Of all the Philonic essays of Ambrose the *De fuga saeculi* appears at once to be the most original, the most free in regard to its model” (Savon, 330). Philo serves for discussing the cities of refuge in c. 5–13, and for interpreting Jacob's flight and Laban's vain search in c. 19–23. “One finds here (about the symbolism of the cities) a procedure familiar to Ambrose, who often shifts Philo's interpretations from metaphysics to psychology” (Savon 337). Commenting on the death of the highpriest, Ambrose produces a whole *capitulum* (16) almost exclusively written with biblical verses, quoted or paraphrased. The choice of these verses is determined by Philo's exposition, reinterpreted in the light of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pauline notion of Christ as “head” in Ephesians 4 (Savon, 348–350). Socrates injunction in Plato's *Theaetetus* 176A, which Ambrose borrows from Philo, becomes a leit-motif of his essay in being at once assimilated to Christ's invitation in John 14:31, “So up, let us go forward!” (Savon, 358–363). “But what the bishop of Milan mainly no-

ticed in the treatise of (Philo) the Alexandrian is, rather paradoxically, the possibility of highlighting a properly Christian notion of *fuga saeculi*. For the allegorical treatment of the cities of refuge secured for him the elements of a risky Pauline *retractatio* by which the spiritual journeys suggested by Philo appeared to be as many dead ends. Another recourse was needed, namely the death of the highpriest whose mystic significance had escaped Philo, while any Christian believer participates in it through baptism. Thus, by his subtle overtones, the Milanese bishop revisits his model, in opposing to the *philosophia*, too candidly welcomed by his predecessor, the Christian *sacramentum regenerationis*, which is the true way leading to salvation” (Savon, 376).

EDITIONS

PL 14, 597–624.

BAM 1980.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 163–207.

TRANSLATIONS

English

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 281–323.

Italian

Portalupi, F.: Turin 1959.

Polish

Sgoldrski, P.: Warsaw, 1980.

389–390 *De Nabuthae historia* (386–395?)

Based on 3 Kings 21, the homily “interprets the entire scriptural narrative by means of a detailed spiritual exegesis. The oppression of the poor Naboth by King Ahab is inserted by Ambrose into the particular social, political, and religious situation of which he is himself one of the protagonists” (M. G. Mara: Quasten IV, 160). The flavour of the oral delivery still lingers in the vivid, short sentences of the written text. Basil serves as a trustworthy model. Some isolated and short quotations of Virgil and Ovid may be noted (Schenkl).

EDITIONS

- PL 14, 765–792.
McGuire, M.: PSt 15 (1927).
Mara, M. G.: Aquila 1975.
Schenk, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 469–516.

TRANSLATIONS

English

McGuire: above.

French

Quéré-Jaulmes, F., and A. Hamman: Paris 1962.

Italian

Dalle Molle, L.: Brescia 1952.

Mara: above.

390 *De bono mortis* (Palanque)

Two homilies (1–29, 30–57) present three forms of death: spiritual, mystical and physical with a wealth of scriptural citations. A catechesis (X–XII) based in IV Esdras, considered as part of the canon (X, 46; XI, 51), evokes the Day of Judgement in the presence of the glorious Christ. In its reworked editing, the essay is strikingly close to Plotinus, *Ennead* I, III, and IV and to Plato's *Phaedros* and *Phaedon* (Courcelle, Hadot).

EDITIONS

- PL 14, 567–596.
BAM 1982.
Schenk, C.: CSEL 32, 1 (1897) 703–53.
Wiesner, W. T.: PSt 100 (1970).

TRANSLATIONS

English

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 73–113.

Wiesner: above.

French

Stébé, M. H.: Paris 1980.

German

Huhn, J.: Fulda 1949.

Italian

Portalupi, F.: Turin 1961.

Polish

Sgoldrski, P.: Warsaw 1970.

389–391 *De mysteriis*

A set of homilies, edited with great care, instructs neophytes about baptism and eucharist, in stressing their scriptural symbolism of which the newly baptized were still ignorant. To know the “mysteries” of scripture is to know the *ratio sacramentorum*: only the figurative truth of OT data provides an understanding of the rites and sacraments of the church, in particular, baptism and eucharist (Botte, 33–35). The hermeneutical initiation starts by calling on the spiritual senses of the neophyte, their “ears” and “taste” (1, 3), the “eyes” by which one “turns to Christ, looking straight into his face,” *ad Christum convertitur, illum directo cernit obtutu* (2, 7). The major events of biblical salvation history—Creation and Flood, Moses and Exodus, prophetic deeds and miracles—are applied to the baptismal and eucharistic newness of life, experienced by the neophytes, as symbols rich in significance. The Canticle helps to celebrate the intimacy of the relationship between Christ, the church, and the human soul in that newness of life (7, 35–41).

EDITIONS

PL 16, 405–426.

BAM 1982.

Botte, B.: SC 25bis (1961) 156–92.

Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 13–116.

Rauschen, G.: FP 9, 73–91.

Schmitz, J., FC 3, 1990.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch

Vromen, F.: Bruges 1964.

English

Deferrari, R. J.: FaCh 44 (1963) 5–28.

Romestin, H. de: LNPF 2nd ser. 10 (1896, 1969) 317–25.

Thompson, T.: London 1919, 1950.

French

Botte: above.

Hamman, A.: Paris 1963, 1982, 61–85.

German

Schmitz: above.

After 390 *De Patriarchis*

This commentary on Genesis 48–49 completes *De Ioseph*. Hippolytus's *Commentary on the Blessing of Jacob* provides much of the allegorical commentary on Genesis 48. Philo's *De sobrietate*, *Leg. alleg.*, *De somnis*, *De ebrietate*, and other treatises surface repeatedly in the commentary on Genesis 49 (Schenkl). Ambrose follows the biblical narrative which he paraphrases in adding christological insights. There are no traces of a homiletic style.

EDITIONS

PL 14, 707–28.

BAM 1980.

Schenkl, C.: CSEL 32, 2 (1897) 125–60.

TRANSLATIONS

McHugh, M. P.: FaCh 65 (1972) 243–75.

ca. 390–397 *Explanatio Psalmorum XII*

A set of reworked homilies on twelve psalms, Psalm 1, 35–40, 45 47, 48, 61 (the commentary on Psalm 43 was interrupted by Ambrose's death). In his historical and moral exegesis of Ps 1, Ambrose followed closely Basil's *Homily* on the same psalm. First, speaking of the psalms in general, he states: *historia instruit, lex docet, prophetia annuntiat, correptio castigat, moralitas suadet*, “the story instructs, the Law educates, the prophecy announces, the reproof castigates, the moral teaching persuades” (1, 7); but exceptionally in 1, 33 he allows himself to evoke the mystic sense: *hoc enim tempus est ut inseramus mystica; bibe primum vetus testamentum, ut bibas et novum testamentum*, “it is the right moment to introduce a mystic consideration: drink first the OT in order to drink also the NT,” and he elaborates on that recommendation until 1, 35, in the same limpid style of an oral delivery. In 1, 42 he boldly insists: *Mystica*

salvant et a morte liberant, moralia autem ornamenta decoris sunt, non subsidia redemptionis, “The mystic views save and free from death; the moral teaching embellishes the beauty (of the psalms), but it does not secure resources for redemption.” At the start of the long commentary (sixty-six pages in the 2nd ed. of CSEL) on Psalm 36, he feels the need to make a more explicit statement about the senses of scripture and their links with specific biblical books: *Omnis scriptura divina vel naturalis vel mystica vel moralis est: naturalis in Genesi, in qua exprimitur, quomodo facta sunt caelum maria terrae et quemadmodum mundus iste sit constitutus; mystica in Levitico, in quo comprehenditur sacerdotale mysterium; moralis in Deuteronomio, in quo secundum legis praeceptum vita humana formatur. Unde et Salomonis tres libri explorimur videntur electi: Ecclesiastes de naturalibus, Cantica canticorum de mysticis, Proverbia de moralibus*, “All divine scripture is either ‘natural,’ ‘mystical’ or ‘moral’: ‘natural’ in Genesis in which it is said the heaven, the sea, and the earth were made, and in which way the earth is constituted; ‘mystic,’ in the Leviticus which includes a priestly mystery; ‘moral,’ in Deuteronomy, in which human life is regulated according to the precept of the Law. Therefore the three Books of Solomon are chosen among many: Ecclesiastes, as dealing with matters of ‘nature’; the Song of Songs, with ‘mystic’; Proverbs, with ‘moral’ issues” (36, 1).

Ambrose’s preference is obviously directed to the *mystica*, as his constant quoting of Canticle in many of his writings well exemplifies. By initial announcements at the start of his commentary on each psalm, Ambrose introduces a coherency of his own in their main themes: *De poenitentia*, “on penance” (37, 1), *incipit; patientiae forma*, “the notion of patience” (38, 1), *incipit; novum adnuntiat testamentum*, “a new covenant is announced” (39, 1); *bono ordine . . . in hoc iam venit et patitur*, in due order in this (psalm) he comes now and suffers” (40, 1), *incipit; ubi passionis dominicae et baptismatis et ingressionis ad altare sacrosanctum decursa mysteria sunt*, “in which the Passion of the Lord and the mysteries of baptism and of the access to the sacrosanct altar are discussed” (43, 1); *occultorum habuisse se cognitionem per revelationem domine Iesu*, “to possess a knowledge of what is hidden thanks to the revelation of the Lord Jesus” (45, 1); *in principio* (48, 1); *quid sit finis consideremus, finis enim dicitur σκοπός et summa rei eius, quam volumus explicare*, “let us consider the final purpose, which is called *scopos*, and the core of what we intend to explain” (61, 1).

Thus the psalms follow the straight line of Ambrose’s teaching: starting with a call to penance (Ps 37), they introduce into the christological centre of the NT (Ps 38–39), leading to baptism and eucharistic liturgy where and adult education of faith is warranted (Ps 40–43), preparing the faithful for the ultimate realities (Ps 48).

EDITIONS

PL 14, 963–1238.

BAM 1980.

Zelzer, M.: CSEL 64, 2nd ed. 1999.

391–392 *De institutione virginis*

The homily starts by quoting the Canticle in order to emphasize how consecrated virginity brings the soul close to Christ. It turns into a firm affirmation of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of Jesus. It ends with a citation of Sg 8:6 and some paraphrased psalmic verses.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 319–48.

Salvati, M.: CPS ser. lat. 6, Turin 1955, 303–97.

TRANSLATIONS

Italian

Bianco, M. I.: Alba 1941, 1954.

Cristofoli, R.: Milan 1930.

Salvati: see above.

Spanish

Vizmanos, F. De: BAC 45 (1949) 721–54.

Three additional writings of Ambrose without an exegetical purpose are:

392 *De obitu Valentiniani*

Rich in biblical references, the eulogy privileges Canticle; it comes close to Origen's exegesis of Canticle and Exodus.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 1417–44.

Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 327–367.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Deferrari, R. J.: FaCh 22 (1953, 1968) 265–299.

Kelly, T. A.: PSt 58 (1940).

Italian

Coppa, G.: Turin 1969, 813–50.

393–395 *Exhortatio virginitatis*

Ambrose delivered this homily in Florence for the opening of a new basilica, sponsored by a widow.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 351–380.

Salvati, M.: CPS ser. lat. 6, Turin 1955, 403–99.

TRANSLATIONS

Italian

Bianco, M. I.: Alba 1941, 1954.

Cristofolio, R.: Milan 1930.

Salvati: above.

395 *De obitu Theodosii*

Again an eulogy, with biblical references in almost every sentence, many from NT and Psalms. More than once in this discourse, Ambrose again comes close to Origen.

EDITIONS

PL 16, 1447–88.

Faller, O.: CSEL 73, 7 (1955) 369–401.

Mannix, M. D.: FaCh 9 (1925).

TRANSLATIONS

English

Deferrari, R. J.: FaCh 22 (1953, 1968) 307–32.

Mannix: above.

Italian

Coppa, G.: Turin 1969, 853–83.

One may add an essay almost lost:

(no date) *Expositio Isaiae prophetae* (Fragments)

The fragments collected by the editor are quotations made by Ambrose himself in other writings. Fragments IV, V and VI clarify apparent contradictions linked respectively with 1 Jn 1:10 (IV); Phil 3:12 (V); Rom 7:24 (VI). *illud quoque non absurdum ad intellectum accessit*, “for that statement also came to mind without being absurd.” The clear-minded faith of the Milanese bishop was allegic to any confused statement in biblical matters.

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XI

AMBROSIASTER (SECOND HALF OF 4TH C.)

A juridically trained Roman, possibly of Spanish extraction, converted from paganism, and apparently a member of the local clergy under Pope Damasus (366–384), whose supporter he was, Ambrosiaster (as Erasmus named him) wrote a commentary on Pauline Epistles, *Commentarius in epistolas paulinas*, with the exclusion of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and so-called *Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti*. The author, close to high-ranking civil servants, and possibly one of them at one stage in his life, published his work anonymously. Jerome knew at least some of his *Quaestiones* (*Letter* 36, of 384; 73, of 398; 146, ca. 398?), but he choose not to mention their author in his literary catalogue *De viris illustribus*, “an enigma of which I see only one solution: He [Jerome] did not *want* to mention him” (H. J. Vogels, xvi).

Ambrosiaster had no knowledge of Greek. The Old Latin versions which he used created for him some difficulties (Vogels, 15). His greatest achievement was his *Commentary on Romans*, known in three different editions, of which one at least, was completed in Rome by Ambrosiaster (*Quaest.* 115, 16, p. 323, 21; Vogels, xv). He offers in it a valuable analysis of Paul’s controversy with Jewish-Christian opponents. He is also the first exegete to render ἐφ’ ᾧ in Rom 5:12 with *in quo*, meaning Adam and humanity, by which the way was opened for Augustine’s doctrine of original sin. His familiarity with contemporary Judaism was remarkable. He succeeded in being friendly to Jews without giving up anything of the Gospel (Stuiber). His view of society conformed to Roman standards. He created the phrase *ius ecclesiasticum* (*quaest.* 93, 2f.; 102, 24 and 31; *Ad. Tim.* 4:12), when stressing clerical orders. In conformity with ancient Roman patriarchy he emphasized the subordination of women, on biblical grounds: only man, not woman is created according to God’s image (*quaest.* 21; 45; 106, 17); but Christ’s image is equally in both (*Ad. Col.* 3, 8–11). Ambrosiaster is the only patristic author admitting remarriage under certain conditions (Stuiber, Crouzel).

Commentarius in epistolas paulinas

PL 17, 45–508 is unsatisfactory and must be replaced by H. J. Vogels, CSEL 81, 1–3 (1966–1969): Com. on Romans (81, 1), on 1 and 2 Corinthians (81, 2), on other Epistles (81, 3). The Commentary was written after Emperor Julian’s death (June 363), and before Damasus’ death (December, 384). Joined with the equally extended exposition on 1 and 2 Corinthians, the commentary

on Romans far exceeds all others composed by Ambrosiaster on Pauline epistles. The medieval transmission of the work enjoyed a great popularity under the alleged authorship of Ambrose, already admitted by Augustine. (Letter 82, 24) in 405. The pseudonymity was recognised only by Erasmus in 1527. As a result, seventy-two ancient manuscripts warrant a solid basis for the critical edition of 1966.

Ambrosiaster's exegesis completely ignores Alexandrian allegorism. After a short preamble in which he signals the main reason why, and mentions the circumstance when, Paul wrote the Letter, the author follows the text of Paul, verse by verse, adding to each of them, concise comments. His main purpose is to give a clear account of what Paul said; he acts more like a historian of Pauline thought than as a theologian concerned by the church's thought of his own day. Hence, with Ambrosiaster, the task of interpreting scripture shifts from the pastoral level to the level of individual scholarship, the private composition of the commentary seeming to replace homiletic delivery. It looks as if Ambrosiaster intended to give himself a firmer grasp of Paul's message in sharing with educated fellow Romans his written account on the matter. His self-appointed task allows him to learn more precisely what the Pauline epistles are all about.

His remarks are essentially of a logical nature. They repeat what Paul says in adding circumstantial and theoretical observations which tend to explicitate and amplify Paul's statements. Ambrosiaster hardly shows any interest in grammatical or stylistic issues, whereas he never misses points of juridical relevance. Having expressed his understanding or when still in the process of expressing it, he calls on scripture to confirm his opinion, or to supply a complementary expression of his thought. Many individual notices for commented verses dispense from any scriptural reference. There is little surprise if one does not find in Ambrosiaster explicit observations about his hermeneutical practice, his attention not being directed toward the Pauline *mode* of communicating divine revelation, but toward the *content* of that revelation as found in Paul. The Roman exegete is able to reconstruct in his own terms that revelatory content, in producing a very original and inspiring synthesis of Paul's thought concerning the Law and the Gospel, nature and grace, human freedom and divine predestination.

"The work is throughout, Roman and practical in tone. Common-sense explanations are the rule. The tone is rather that of the calm dispassionate searcher for truth than of the mystic visionary who seeks to soar to the heights of the Apostle's thought. We have here none of the spiritual insights of an Augustine ... but the work of a conscientious writer who seeks in scripture for plain useful lessons which may serve elevate the daily lives of his

Roman fellow citizens.... The commentary seems to be for the most part, if not entirely, original” (Souter 1905, 6–7).

EDITIONS

PL 17, 47–536.

Amelli, A., *Spicilegium Casinense* 3, 2 (1901) 1–383.

Vogels, H. J.: CSEL 81, 1–3 (1966–69).

Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti CXXVII

Ambrosiaster started by collecting a series of a hundred and fifty-one pamphlets, first published anonymously in separate issues. Later on having produced in the meantime his Pauline Commentaries, he revised the collection of *Quaestiones*. He eliminated duplicates, corrected errors, and reduced comments now superfluous on Paul’s Epistles. That *retractatio* gave him space for expanding some of the earlier pamphlets and adding new ones, now enriched with a distinctive homiletic flavour. The revised collection counts a hundred and seven pamphlets. A third recension of the *Quaestiones* dates from the High Middle Ages, between the eighth and the twelfth centuries (Souter, CSEL 50, 1908, xi–xiii).

A first set of forty-seven *Quaestiones* addresses the OT, eighty others deal with NT issues. The OT series includes *Quaestiones* 1–6, on teachings of Genesis and stressing at once the author’s fascination with the Law and divine predestination; *Quaestiones* 7–28, on Mosaic Law, in its institution, its application and its links with circumcision; *Quaestiones* 19–29, on body and soul; *Quaestiones* 30–43, on sin and death. *Quaestiones* 44–47 form an appendix, starting with the longest of all pamphlets, an *Adversum Iudaeos* as a special addition.

Though ignorant of Alexandrian allegorism, or allergic to it, Ambrosiaster expresses a strong sense for the spiritual and figurative meaning of what scripture describes in bodily terms: *non terram solam vult intellegi, sed materiam significavit*, “he does not mean only the world, but he refers to matter as such” (3:22, 18–19); *Iudaeorum populum reprobum significavit... alter populus futurus significatus est*, “he referred to the rejected Jewish people... he refers to another people to come” (8:32, 22–33, 2); *spiritualiter vero hoc significavit*, “to speak the truth, he meant it in a spiritual sense” (12:37, 13); *spiritualis tamen intellegentia in hac causa ista est*, “the spiritual understanding in that matter goes as follows” (17:44, 16–17); *figura fuisse existimetur*, “it should be considered as a prefiguration” (20:47, 13–14); *salutis huius figura... figura*

huius rei... signum praeteritae fidei primordie significatae figura fuit futurae fidei primo die constabilitatae, “a prefiguration of that salvation... a figure of that reality... because the sign of past faith, referred to on the first day, was a prefiguration of faith to come, confirmed on the first day” (29:57, 10–19); *corporaliter data sententia spiritualiter cecidit in satanan*, “the sentence imposed in bodily terms fell on Satan as a spiritual one” (31:59, 20–21); *corporalis videtur data sententia, ut illum spiritualiter teneat*, “the sentence is shown as given in bodily terms in order to bind him (Satan) spiritually” (59:26–27); *alio sensu scriptura locuta est quam propositum est*, “scripture speaks in a different sense from what is written” (36:64, 4); *non est sic intellegendum ut sonant verba*, “this should not be understood literally” (38:65, 24); *si autem spiritualiter vis hoc accipere, terram hominem significatum intellege*, “if you are inclined to admit it in a spiritual sense, understand that ‘earth’ means ‘humankind’” (66, 6–7); *tenebrae gentilitatem et ignorantiam significant*, “‘darkness’ means ‘paganism’ and ‘ignorance’” (39:66, 13); *canem autem gentilem significatum*, “‘Dog’ means ‘pagan’ (66, 21); *spinae autem in peccatis significantur*, “‘thorns’ signify ‘sins’” (42:69, 12–13); *illa quae in figura data erant, id est sabbatum et circumcisio*, “(the impositions) given as a prefigurations. namely the Sabbath and circumcision” (44:73, 18–19); *populus iste in Iacob significatur aut in Samaria aut in...*, “that (Jewish) people included in Jacob is referred to by ‘Samaria’ or by...” (78, 14); *de gentibus autem apertus est quia aliter illos significat, quam sunt Iudaei*, “concerning the pagans then manifestly referred to in a different way than the Jews” (78, 15–16); *septem mulieres septem ecclesias esse significatas*, “the seven women referred to seven churches” (47:90, 20–21); *quia qui sine deo est, nudus dicitur*, “because a person without God is said to be naked” (92, 13); *quia hoc unusquisque indutus dicitur, quod et est et profitetur*, “because each one is said to be dressed according to what he is and what he professes to be” (92, 23–24).

Thus Ambrosiaster’s theodicy hopes to overcome all apparent contradictions in scripture, and to verify God’s consistent acting in view of the fulfillment of biblical salvation-history in Christ. “The biblical text employed by Ambrosiaster... is at least coeval with our oldest complete manuscripts of the Greek Bible, and thus presupposes a Greek text anterior to them... the text employed by him was presumably that commonly employed in Rome at the time... the only Latin text of the NT to which Jerome paid any regard at all... the value of Ambrosiaster’s text of the Pauline Epistles could not be exaggerated” (Souter 1905, 195f.). Ambrosiaster quotes all the Books of the OT, “except Ruth, Nahum, Suzanna and perhaps one or two others” (Souter 1905, 196). In the NT, note quotations from 2 Peter, James, 3 John. The Gospels are ordered: Matthew, Luke, Mark, John (Souter 1905, 196f.).

EDITIONS

- PL 35, 2207–2386.
 PLS 1 (1958) 652–73; 2 (1960) 389–92: additional fragments.
 Souter, A.: CSEL 50 (1908).

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XII
CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA (335/340–407)

Bishop of Aquileia, his home town, Chromatius had, while still a presbyter, taken part in the local council of 381. At an earlier date, he had welcomed Jerome and Rufinus in his circle of ascetics. He would continue to support them throughout their quarrel, even sending Jerome financial assistance for his work and urging Rufinus to translate Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*. He appealed to Emperor Arcadius on behalf of John Chrysostom after the latter's deposition in 404. His last years from 404 on were troubled by Gothic invasions.

Since 1960, about sixty *tractatus* on Matthew, a large part of his extensive commentary, composed ca. 400–407 (CCL 9A, VII), have been identified, transmitted under the names of Jerome and Chrysostom. Forty-five other homilies of Chromatius are also extant.

EDITIONS

Étaix, R., J. L. Lemarié: CCL 9A (1974), 9A Suppl. (1977).

Étaix, R.: RB 91 (1981) 225–230; 92 (1982) 105–110.

Hosté, A.: CCL 9 (1957) 371–447.

Tardif, H.: SC 154 (1969; intro. text, notes by J. Lemarié), 164 (1971).

TRANSLATIONS

French

Tardif: above.

Italian

Cuscito, G., *Catechesi al popolo*, Rome 1979.

Todde, M., *Cromatio de Aquieia, Sermoni liturgici*, Rome 1982.

Trettel, G., *Commento al Vangelo di Matteo*, Rome 1984.

Bibliographies in CCL 9A, 9A Suppl., and SC 154, 115–120.

In CCL 9, one reads: *Sermo de octo beatitudinibus* (PL 20, 323–328); *Tractatus XVII in Evangelium Matthaei* (PL 20, 327–368):

<i>Tractatus</i> I	on Matthew 3:15
II	3:16–17
III	5:1–12
IV	5:13

V	5:14–16
VI	5:17–20
VII	5:21–24
VIII	5:25–26
IX	5:27–30
X	5:31–37
XI	5:38–42
XII	5:43–6:4
XIII	6:5–8
XIV	6:9–15
XV	6:16–18
XVI	6:19–21
XVII	6:22–24

These *tractatus*, of various lengths are partly based on preached homilies. They benefit from earlier commentaries on Matthew, those of Fortunatianus, Chromatius's predecessor, and of Hilary of Poitiers, as well as from Ambrose's *Commentary on Luke*. They were written shortly after Jerome had published his own commentary on Matthew. Their purpose is deliberately pastoral. Chromatius wrote about a hundred such *tractatus*, covering Matthew 1–18 (the commentary on Mt 19–25 could not be included), a work which "by its dimensions went far beyond those of Hilary and Jerome, and by the riches of its content, could compete with those of John Chrysostom or of Ambrose on Luke" (SC 154, 53). Only Leo I quotes Chromatius's *In Matthaeum, tract. XVII*, in *Sermo* 95 (PL 54, 461f.). On the style of Chromatius, see J. Lemarié, SC 154, 54–61: "for the bishop of Aquileia, Cyprian was indeed the 'master' *par excellence*" (62, note).

In CCL 9A, one finds the seventeen *tractatus* published in CCL 9 reprinted (listed above), with a broader annotation and critical apparatus (243–348):

<i>Tractatus</i> XII	(olim. <i>Tractatus</i> I)	p. 243
XIII	II	p. 247
XVII	III	p. 267
XVIII	IV	p. 278
XIX	V	p. 284
XX	VI	p. 290
XXI	VII	p. 294
XXII	VIII	p. 299
XXIII	IX	p. 303
XXIV	X	p. 308

XXV	XI	p. 313
XXVI	XII	p. 318
XXVII	XIII	p. 324
XXVIII	XIV	p. 327
XXIX	XV	p. 336
XXX	XVI	p. 339
XXXI	XVII	p. 344

In addition, one reads with the new numbering:

<i>Tractatus</i> I on Matthew	1:1-17
II	18-23
III	24-25
IV	2:1-9
V	10-12
VI	13-18
VII	19-23
VIII	3:1-3
IX	4
X	5-9
XI	10-12
XIV	4:1-11
XV	12-17
XVI	18-25
XXXII	6:25-34
XXXIII	7:1-12
XXXIV	13-14
XXXV	15-20
XXVI	21-23
XXXVIII	8:2-4
XXXIX	5-13
XL	14-17
XLI	18-22
XLII	23-27 (= <i>Opus imperf. in Mt</i> , hom. 23; PG 56, 754-756)
XLIII	28-34
XLIV	9:1-8
XLV	9-13
XLVI	14-17
XLVII	18-26
XLVIII	27-31

XIX	12:22–28
L	29–32
LI	13:36–43
LII	14:22–33
LIII	15:1–16
LIV	16:4
LV	18:1–6
LVI	8–9
LVII	10–11
LVIII	15–18
LIX	19–35

The *Index sermonum in classes distributorum* in CCL 9A, p. 609, facilitates collecting information about Chromatius's exegetical sermons commenting on the *Old Testament*

<i>Sermo</i> IX	on Ps 13:1–7
XXIII	on Cain and Abel
XXIV	on Joseph
XXV	on Elijah
XXXV (frag.)	on Suzanna
XXXVIII frag.)	on Gn 3:21 (tunics of skins)

and commenting on the *New Testament*

On Matthew

<i>Sermo</i> V	on Mt 5:1–3
VI	6:22–23
X	21:33–35
XIII (frag.)	23:37
XIX	27:27–28
XX (frag.)	7
XXXVII (frag.)	8:23–24
XXXIX (frag.)	5:1–9
XLI	1–12

On Luke

<i>Sermo</i> XXII	on Lk 2:1–14
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On John

<i>Sermo</i> IV	on Jn 2:3–15
XI	12:3
XV	13:4–9
XVIII	3:1–6

XVIII	5–6
XXVII	11:1–44
<i>On Acts</i>	
<i>Sermo</i> I	on Acts 3–4
II	8:9–38
III	10:1–20
XXIX	12:1–17
XXX	1:12–24
XXXI	5:15–16
<i>On Pauline Epistles</i>	
<i>Sermo</i> XII	on Rom 5:7–12
XXV	on 1 Cor 9:24

Only two sermons comment on Paul's Letters, more precisely on his moral teaching, one or two parenetic verses being quoted. Paul's dialectic, his struggle for stating properly a believer's identity as he perceives it, seems to be ignored in all peace of conscience by the optimistic-minded bishop. The single sermon on Luke, for Christmas highlights the integrating power of Chromatius's allegorical mind-set: the Gospel event, in its global narration and significance, surfaces between the lines of a most unpretentious comment on the scene of the Nativity, The historical reality is directly called to mind as a direct challenge for the present experience of faith being actualized ecclesiologically: the shepherds cared for their sheep in the night, so do bishops now, *Vigilare enim potest in Christo fides nostra* (*Sermo* 32, 99–100).

The number of sermons handed down on OT themes is also very limited, given the opportunity afforded by the year-long liturgical readings. The fragment edited as *Sermo* XXXVIII is in fact a conflation of rewritten extracts from several other sermons, S. XV, XXI–XXIII (CCL 9A, 166). *Sermo* XXIII, XXIV and XXV, were taken over by Caesarius of Arles as *Sermo* 2, 8 and 27 of his *Collectio biblica de mysteriis Veteris Testamenti*. The fragment on Suzanna was found copied in the Bavarian homiliary of a Carolingian Pseudo-Bede, early ninth century and *Sermo* IX, on Psalm 13 was also included in a homiliary, dating from 811–819, compiled by the abbot of Mondsee for the archbishop of Cologne, and of which only the *pars aestivalis* remains (CCL 9A, XV). In other words, the few scattered remains of Chromatius' teaching on the OT readings allow no definitive conclusion about his activity in this regard. The same precarious conditions were imposed on his NT sermons, but more of them survive, which nevertheless need to be evaluated with

much caution. Only the homilies on Matthew stand firmly enough for such a critical evaluation, reassumed or paralleled as they were in the forty-one extant *tractatus* of Chromatius.

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XIII
JEROME (CA. 347–419/420)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Pierre Jay

I.

A few years older than Augustine, Jerome—*Eusebius Hieronymus*—was born most probably in 347 on the eastern confines of northern Italy; Stridon, his native village, was to be destroyed thirty years later in an invasion of Goths (*De uiris inlustribus* 135). Issued from a Christian family sufficiently comfortable to send him to Rome for his studies, it was there that he pursued the teaching of the celebrated ‘grammarian’ Aelius Donatus, at whose school he was when in the summer of 363 word reached Rome of the death of the emperor Julian (*In Habacuc* II. 3.14). He must have been about twenty years old when after his studies he went to Trier, the ordinary residence at that time of the emperor Valentinian in the face of the barbarian advance. He evidently was nourishing the hope of landing a career as an imperial functionary. But the discovery he made there of the monastic ideal, that Athanasius of Alexandria had popularized in the area through his tales of the life of Antony the Hermit during his first exile, turned his life upside down. Once converted to the ascetic life he discovered Christian authors of the same movement and copied with his own hand the *Commentary on the Psalms* of Hilary of Poitiers (*Epist.* 5.2). Some years later, when he went to the east after an abbreviated stay in his native land, “full of ardor for the study of the scriptures,” he made at Antioch a rather unfortunate first display of his talent with a now lost commentary on the short book of Obadiah (*In Abdiam*, prol.). Like his monastic vocation, Jerome’s work begins under the sign of the Bible.

Still, things did not go all that smoothly for him even though he was born into a Christian family and was baptized in Rome towards the end of his studies. Jerome in fact had kept from the teaching of Donatus a deep attachment for the great classical texts in whose familiarity his mind and sensitivity had been formed. He was also put off at first by the reading of the biblical texts whose style he judged to be rough and unadorned: *Sermo horrebat incultus*, he would later admit to the young Eustochius when telling him of the famous dream which, at the time of his retreat in the desert of Chalcis marked the climax of this internal conflict between the love of the classics and the vision he had at the time of his ascetical vocation. “You

are a Ciceronian, and not a Christian," he hears it reproaching him before committing himself not to read profane authors anymore (*Epist.* 22.30). He seems to have kept his word for awhile before settling for a much more nuanced attitude toward classical culture.

In the desert he had read scripture while perfecting his knowledge of Greek and even beginning Hebrew (*Epist.* 125.12). Realizing when he returned to Antioch the necessity of a serious initiation, he gave ear to Apollinarius of Laodicea, who used to come there to comment on scripture. At Constantinople, where he went next, he got close to Gregory of Nazianzus, with whom he read the Bible in private sessions, and whom he would recognize as his genuine master. Alongside the Cappadocian who had put together in the *Philocalia* a florilegium of Origen's exegetical pages he dived into the vast universe of the scriptural work of the Alexandrian. He even set out to "Latinize" Origen, translating twenty-eight of his homilies on Jeremiah and Ezekiel and then nine others on Isaiah, chiefly on the prophet's vision, which are also from his hand, although he never admitted this. Undoubtedly he took from there the idea for the little personal essay that he wrote on this vision at that time (= *Epist.* 18 A) and to which he will return some thirty years later in his great commentary on the prophet (*In Isaiam* III. 6.1). The preface to his translation of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius of Caesarea attests at the same time to the interest he showed for the different OT versions that Origen had put together in the *Hexapla*. Thus he could boast of a certain fame in the study of the scriptures when he returned to Rome for the council of 382 where he accompanied Bishops Paulinus of Antioch and Epiphanes of Salamine in Cyprus.

In Rome, with the encouragement of Pope Damasus who put his exegetical abilities to good use and for whom he translated two homilies of Origen on the Song of Songs, he undertook, in the face of divergent copies of the Gospels then in circulation, to revise their Latin translation on the basis of the Greek manuscripts. For the OT, his correspondence of the period shows him in the process of collating the Greek edition of Aquila with the Hebrew scrolls clandestinely brought to him from his synagogue by a Jew (*Epist.* 32.1). Many letters contain as well quotations of psalms not only in the Greek of the Hexapla versions but in the transliterated Hebrew text, and perhaps he already owned a copy of the *Hexapla* psalter.

At the same time he had accepted to guide in their reading of scripture a group of women and young ladies of the aristocratic world of the Aventine who were brought together by the same ascetic interest. Besides Marcella who was its founder, one of its striking figures was Paula, who would follow him to the Holy Land. By providing for Jerome with their companions an attentive

and demanding audience these remarkable women, whose intellectual and spiritual personality can be glimpsed in many of his letters and funeral eulogies he was to devote to them (*Epist.* 108, *Epitaphium s. Paulae*; 127, *de uita s. Marcellae*), contributed not a little to confirm him in his scriptural vocation. Continued in Bethlehem with Paula and her daughter Eustochium, this *lectio diuina* of a select few which often spilled over into letter exchanges, contained in germ the continuous commentaries he would undertake there. Indeed, almost half of them would be dedicated to these women.

Jerome did not only make friends through his ascetical propaganda. The calumnies aimed at him after the death of Damasus made him decide to leave Rome for the East in the year 385. Accompanied by Paula and her daughter he first went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the holy places of Palestine (*Epist.* 108.7–14) and pushed on all the way to Egypt where he met the heir of the Alexandrian exegetical tradition in the person of Didymus the Blind, who at his request will write commentaries on Hosea and Zechariah which Origen had not explicated in full (*In Osee.* prol.). At Bethlehem, where he definitively settled in 386 the Bible was to be at the heart of his existence.

To the direct discovery of the Holy Land there was added for him the possibility of gathering evidence from informed Jews not only on biblical geography but on the Hebrew language and traditions. From Bethlehem it was also possible for him to go to Caesarea to consult Origen's library as enriched by Eusebius, and to have copied the works which interested him (*Epist.* 84.3). While quickly giving himself over to the explication of four epistles of Paul, then of Ecclesiastes and some psalms, and in the translation of thirty-nine homilies of Origen, he provided himself with reference works by working out "biblical dictionaries" such as the *Book of Hebrew Names*, inspired by the *Onomasticas* of Philo and Origen, and the *Book of Place Names*, an adaptation of a short work of Eusebius on the topography of Palestine. As for the *Hebraic Questions on Genesis* which continues them, they reveal his curiosity about Jewish traditions, but testify as well to the attention he was already bringing to the Hebrew text and to its Hexapla versions.

The concern to reach the exactitude of the sacred text led him first of all to undertake a revision of the Latin translation of the OT books on the basis of the Greek version of the Septuagint as reviewed by Origen. A quick and partial correction of the psalter had already been done in Rome but has not come down to us. He carefully took up this work again and extended it to other books. Like that of the book of Job which has been preserved and those of Chronicles and the books of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song) of which we have only the prefaces, this revision was characterized by the introduction into the Latin text of the diacritical marks used by Origen in

his Hexapla recension such as asterisks indicating passages missing from the Greek and restored on the basis of the Hebrew text, and obeli pointing out additions absent from the Hebrew (*Praef. in libro psalmorum iuxta LXX*).

These revisions were to remain incomplete. In fact, to respond to a request from one of his friends who was hoping to use a translation of the Hebrew psalter for his discussions with Jews on the messiah, Jerome launched into a direct translation from the Hebrew of the Psalms, then of the Prophets. In doing this he had the feeling of recovering the truth of the original text, the *hebraica ueritas*. Moreover, in abandoning the revision that he had begun, he in the end translated from the Hebrew all the books of the Hebrew Bible. Inspired from the beginning by an exact concern with anti-Jewish polemic over the genuine text of scripture, this translation, which took almost fifteen years, answered in some way a scientific concern and in no way aimed to supplant the versions in use around him in the Church. But in going back to a tradition considered suspect because the text differed sometimes markedly from the Greek of the Septuagint, his bold initiative, whether he wanted it to or not, unsettled the authority of the traditional version. Moreover, it was rather poorly received, as attest the strong reservations of an Augustine (*Epist.* 71.3) or a Rufinus (*Apol. contra Hieronymum* II.40). Nevertheless his translation, along with the revision of the Gospels he had made in Rome, was to constitute the essence of what will become the Bible of the Christian West, the Vulgate.

Aware of reaching a new tradition through the Hebrew text, Jerome quickly experienced the desire to continue his translation with a work of exegesis. Scarcely had he begun his task as translator with Psalms and Prophets when he launched into Commentaries. He had already touched on the psalms with seven little treatises of which two have survived (the *Tract on Ps.* 10 and 15), and had just devoted to them breezy *Commentarioli* inspired by Origen. He turned to the prophets, commenting in turn on Nahum, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai, and Habakkuk in starting out both from his new translation and from the traditional Septuagint version. Jonah and Obadiah will follow three years later in 396. Meanwhile, Jerome allowed himself to be drawn into a controversy about Origen which badly set him at odds with his bishop John of Jerusalem and led to a break with his old friend Rufinus, who had settled on the Mount of Olives. After a first reconciliation had brought peace between Jerome and his bishop, the quarrel was to rebound when Rufinus was back in Rome, and would only die down in 402. The quarrel had led Jerome to shake off completely the contestable aspects of Origen's thought but did not turn him away from the esteem he had for the scriptural work of the Alexandrian, to which he continued to refer in his later Commentaries.

After the death of Paula in 404 he took up again his interrupted task and finished in 406 the explication of the minor prophets by commenting successively on Zechariah, Malachi, Hosea, Joel, and Amos. The following year he continued with the *Commentary on Daniel* before launching into the explanation of the collection of Isaiah, which he had already attempted several times before: from his time in Constantinople with his translation of Origen's homilies and his own essay on the seraphim, then by writing in 397, at the request of the bishop Amabilis, an explication *iuxta historiam* of the visions in chapters 13 and 23 of the prophet, which he included in his Commentary. Of his eighteen books which had occupied him for more than two years, the *Commentary on Isaiah*, finished in 410, is at once the fullest and the finest of all Jerome's exegetical works. He also brought his long *Commentary on Ezekiel* to a conclusion, and finally in 416 undertook the *Commentary on Jeremiah*. But age and difficulties, especially connected to the struggle against Pelagius, did not leave him the leisure to finish it and thus to bring to a final conclusion that *opus prophetale* which from 392 to the last years of his life except for a brief *Commentary on Matthew* hurriedly dictated in 398, constitutes the essence of his scriptural works.

From the time he was in Bethlehem he had also explained the Bible to the monks of his monastery. With the calming of the backwash stirred up by the Origenist crisis which had closed off access to him of the basilica of the Nativity, he also commented at the invitation of the local clergy the psalm or gospel reading of the day on Sundays and feast days for the small congregation of the church in Bethlehem where monks and nuns of the Latin monasteries were mixed in with the local people. We have preserved almost a hundred of these homilies on the Gospel of Mark and especially on the Psalms, of whose paternity, despite a recent challenge, there is no reason to doubt.

The Bible is also present in the whole course of his correspondence. Without speaking of the abundant quotations and reminiscences, we can point to more than twenty letters referring to points of exegesis, some of which having directly as their object the explication of a biblical text: parable (*Epist.* 21) or psalm (*Epist.* 65 and 140). Nor is the Bible absent from polemical works such as the *Dialogues Against the Pelagians* through the frequent recourse to the argument from scripture, traditional in the controversy against heresy.

Since his discovery of Hilary's work on the Psalms during his stay on the borders of the Mosel all the way to his death in Bethlehem probably in 420, Scripture did not cease to be at the heart of Jerome's life.

II.

In spite of the opposition provoked by his bold initiatives as translator and exegete, Jerome was recognized during his lifetime as an authority in the domain of Sacred Scripture. As early as 405 his contemporary Sulpitius Severus states in his *Dialogues* (I.8.3) with some grandiloquence, "that he is read in the whole world." Augustine, whose correspondence witnesses to the rapid diffusion in Africa of his translations from the Hebrew (*Epist.* 71.5) and makes use of all his Commentaries on the Prophets when he writes the *City of God*, praises his exceptional knowledge of the scriptures (*Epist.* 28.1). A full year after his death Cassiodorus pays tribute to the translator and commentator in his *Institutions*, and we see in his *Expositio psalmorum* echos of the *Tractatus* of Jerome, on the Psalms and also on the Gospel of mark, sometimes cited explicitly.

In the seventh century, while the text of his revision based on the Hebrew is spreading in Italy, Africa, and also in Spain, Gaul, and all the way to Ireland, his exegetical works turn up in the library of Isidore of Seville. In the same period the oldest manuscripts of his Commentaries that we possess bear witness to their diffusion. In the following century Bede, who is concerned in his Commentaries with putting together the best exegesis of his predecessors, seems to be acquainted with all Jerome's Commentaries. He is constantly quoting him in his *Expositio* on the Acts of the Apostles. In his *Expositiones* on the Gospels of Luke and Mark he digs deeply into the *Commentary on Matthew* of his predecessor. And he has nothing but esteem for the translator of the *hebraica ueritas*, whose Commentaries, as well as the *Book of Hebrew Names* and the *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* provide him, as later it will for the whole Middle Ages, a mine of information on the names of personages and places of the Bible and their etymologies.

Interest in the scriptural works of Jerome is notable at the end of the eighth and in the ninth centuries in the Carolingian renaissance. At this period Alcuin undertakes his great recension of the Latin Bible, which is based on Jerome's revisions, but in preferring for the Psalms the psalter as revised on the basis of the Greek, whose usage was generalized in Gaul and was known as the "Gallican" psalter. A few years later, on the contrary, the edition of Theodulf of Orleans will retain the psalter *iuxta Hebraeos*, but it is Alcuin's edition which was to win out to become one day the Vulgate. Towards the middle of the ninth century, a large illuminated page of the first Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, BN, Ms.lat. 1.3v_) well illustrates Jerome's recognized authority as translator of scripture.

As for his Commentaries, which become the most important of his

works, their increased readership can be gauged both by the multiplication of copies produced in this period and the use made of them by writers in their own Commentaries. It is the *Commentary on Isaiah*, the messianic prophet *par excellence* in whom Jerome recognized “an evangelist and an apostle” (*In Isaiam*, prol.), which enjoys the greatest favor in spite its size. Thirty manuscripts predating the tenth century have come down to us. The briefer and more quickly composed *Commentary on Matthew*, of which twenty of our manuscripts can be dated to this period, achieves a comparable success. Although unfinished and less popular with commentators, the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, whose earliest preserved manuscripts in fact predate the eighth century, are also the object of numerous copies. If these three Commentaries seem in different degrees to be the object of special attention, Jerome’s other exegetical works are nevertheless not neglected. We can again cite, for example, the Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul, or the short *Commentary on Jonah*, included in twenty-two manuscripts of the eighth and ninth centuries. Some other of the oldest manuscripts of the homilies on the psalms also date from this period.

Contemporary commentaries verify the interest shown to Jerome at that time. Rabanus Maurus (+856), who takes great care to make accessible to his readers the richness of the exegesis of the Fathers, takes Jerome’s *Commentary* as the basis of his explication of Isaiah, widely reproducing both literal and spiritual interpretations, leaving aside textual and philological discussions. And the eight books of his *Commentary on Matthew* give the impression of a patchwork of patristic texts where abundant citations from Jerome’s, too rapid in his eyes, take their place beside other sources. We can also recognize one of the major aspects of Jerome’s influence in the Middle Ages in the care Rabanus shows to be assured of a good text and of an exact literal sense by having recourse when necessary to Jewish sources.

With more independence than his predecessor, Paschasius Radbertus (+c. 865), in his *Expositio in Euangelium Matthaei*, offers among others the interpretations of Jerome, whose other works he also knows and from whom he borrows most of his references to the *hebraica ueritas*. Very attentive to the literal sense, Christian of Stavelot (+880) acknowledges following Jerome in his *Expositio in Matthaëum* with the ambition of completing him. Remigius of Auxerre (+891) makes use of him both for the Psalms and well as for Isaiah, and in particular follows very closely his *Commentary on Jonah*. And the paraphrase of this *Commentary* given by a popular preacher in a “bilingual sermon” weaving together Latin and French towards the middle of the tenth century confirms the admiration in which the work of Jerome was then held.

On the threshold of the twelfth century, Rupert of Deutz appreciates particularly in him the scholarly translator who has given access to the source of the Hebrews. But at the same time in his *Commentary on Jonah* he pushes to extremes the Christological interpretation of the figure of the prophet that he finds in Jerome's commentary. His contemporary Hugh of St. Victor owes much to the latter in his *Adnotationes* on the Pentateuch. But this theorist of medieval exegesis especially admires the translator of the *hebraica ueritas* whose version was imposed on the Latin world and he fully agrees with the commentator when he insists that the spiritual sense rests on the *fundamentum historiae*. In turn, the manner in which Andrew of St. Victor holds in his *Commentary on Jonah* to a literal explication, which comes to him from Jerome's, reveals a new tendency to dissociate the literal sense and spiritual interpretations and to establish exegesis as a separate science. But this tendency is as alien to Jerome as to the medieval tradition. The latter, on the contrary, recognized itself in the traditional understanding of the four senses of scripture which had little by little emerged from the practice of the Fathers and which were to find in the following century its lapidary formulation in Augustine of Dacia's couplet:

*Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
Moralis quid agas, quid speres anagogia.*

It is in this perspective of the four senses which all converge in the Christian reading of the Bible that the Latin Middle Ages had quickly recognized in Jerome the emblematic figure of the literal sense. This choice is significant: a return to the *hebraica ueritas*, concern for the establishing of a text, recourse to philology and to the data of history and profane disciplines as well as to Hebrew traditions to be assured of the exactitude of a literal sense regarded as the basis of any spiritual interpretation—these are indeed the characteristics of Jerome's exegesis that the Middle Ages thought to honor by this patronage.

This particular accent of Jerome's exegesis also explains the return to favor that Jerome would experience in the Renaissance with the humanists who recognized themselves in this "trilingual" scholar and independent spirit. Erasmus, his future editor, was scarcely twenty years old when he saw in Jerome "the first among the doctors" and some twenty-five years later he writes of him to Pope Leo X that he is "the prince of theologians of the Latin language." But the admiration he bears him does not cause him to lose his critical liberty. Like his friend Thomas More he points out errors in his work. Himself a loose cannon in the field of the Scriptures with his Latin translation of the New Testament he criticises the Vulgate, that the council of Trent was soon to consecrate as the "authorized version" of the Latin Church.

This success of Jerome as translator and exegete with the learned of the Renaissance finds its illustration in the representation of the scholar in his study which, from Ghirlandaio to Dürer, the exact contemporary of Erasmus, supplants at that time the image of the hermit in the desert. The result is that however much interest he arouses, Jerome is no longer the inspirer of a living exegesis. A page is turned in his influence with the growth of a biblical exegesis which from Richard Simon to our own days is committed to new paths. However, in returning to the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, modern works on the biblical text which relativize the value of Jerome's translations render homage by renewing it to the process of the translator of the *hebraica ueritas*.

III.

The NT occupies only a modest place in Jerome's exegetical work: the several Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul which usher him into Bethlehem had no successor, except for the rapid *Commentary on Matthew* a dozen years later. As for his Roman revision of the Latin text of the Gospels according to the Greek, it did not involve either exegetical presuppositions or extensions.

It is with the OT books that the greater part of his Commentaries deal. The ones he undertakes in the first years of his stay in Bethlehem do not indicate any precise plan: the *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* fulfills with some delay a promise made on the Aventine; the explication of psalms 10 to 16 (*De uiris inlustribus* 135) indicate an attention to the psalter confirmed by the *Commentarioli*; with the *Hebraic Questions* which he projects at that time to write "on the whole of sacred Scripture" (*Hebraicae Quaestiones in Genesim*, prol.), he touches on the Pentateuch. But it is definitely towards the prophets that he turns after having retranslated them from the Hebrew, thus confirming the interest he had in them from his time at Antioch and Constantinople. Practically brought to term, this ample *opus prophetale* consecrates the dominant place of the Old Testament in Jerome's exegetical work. This place is also attested in another way by the activity of the translator of the *hebraica ueritas*, itself filled with exegetical implications not only through the textual differences it introduced, but also by its reference to traditions external to the Church's tradition.

This exegesis of Jerome is basically seen in the formal framework of the running Commentary of a biblical book, an indirect heritage of the Hellenistic grammarians who come to him across the works of his Greek forebears. But with Jerome this heritage interferes with the direct heritage

of the grammatical commentary experienced at the school of Donatus, to which he explicitly refers (*Apol. c. Rufinum* I.16). Now one of the laws of this commentary, it will be recalled, is to report most often without mentioning their names the opinions of various interpreters, relying in this case on the sagacity of the *prudens lector*. In fact, more than one page of the *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* or of the *Commentarioli* where there is a succession of interpretations simply linked by the adverb *aliter*, illustrates this tendency of grammatical exegesis in the compilation of sources. And if he tends to break loose of this in his later Commentaries, where his liberty of judgment is much more clearly affirmed, he still continues not only to indicate the work of his predecessors in his prologues but also to exploit them in the course of the Commentary, most often without any indication of an *alii* or a *quidam dicunt*. Actually, in reference to that law of grammatical exegesis Jerome found a handy justification for his bold plan to “deliver to Latin ears the secrets of Hebrew science” of the Scriptures along with the contributions of the Church writers who had preceded him (*In Zachariam* II. 6.9–15). But in mostly holding to this practice he became for his Latin contemporaries, in line with his express intentions, the mediator of a twofold exegetical tradition, to which these could have no direct access, out of ignorance not only of Hebrew but also of Greek, which the traditional program of studies in the West touched only lightly.

Faithful to the conceptions of the grammarians Jerome is faithful as well to the arrangement of his commentary, explaining the sacred text step by step, proposition by proposition, according to the fragmentary technique of the *commaticum genus*. But he avoids the excessive parcelling out of the genre by a sensible extending of the propositions and of their explications, and also by the attention (absent from the grammatical commentaries) that he brings to the linking of meaning (the *consequentia*) and to natural unities of the text. Thus he can distinguish and delimit with the greatest clarity in his *Commentary on Isaiah* several of the sets recognized by modern criticism: prophecy of Emmanuel, oracles of foreign peoples, ‘apocalypse’ of Isaiah, etc.

Reviser of the Gospels and translator of the *hebraica ueritas*, Jerome brings particular care to the establishment of the sacred text. In his Commentaries on the Prophets, he sets out from his new translation, discreetly retouched when necessary, which he supports and clarifies by recourse to the Jewish versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion collected in the Hexapla. But more often than not he gives a translation of the proposition from the Greek which he directly establishes from Origen’s recension of the Septuagint, without bothering to reproduce the old Latin translation in use around him.

The traditional version is thus not neglected, but he does not surround it with a respect without nuance, sometimes not hesitating to question it more and more on its meaning or its errors when it is in wild disagreement with the Hebrew.

Jerome scarcely ever troubled to lay out in systematic fashion the rules of his hermeneutic. The rare pages where he seems to be doing it, like the passage of his letter to Hedybia (*Epist.* 120.12) where he presents a theory of the three senses of Scripture, reflect in fact an Origenian conception that he does not take as his own. In reality, his exegetical practice is normally set in the traditional framework of the two great senses of Scripture: the literal sense and the spiritual interpretation.

To the literal sense Jerome accords a particular attention. Two terms from his pen, *littera* and *historia* serve to denote it. They are not strictly equivalent. Almost interchangeable when they are merely mentioned, they cease to be when Jerome seeks to qualify them. Then, echoing the Pauline condemnation of the “letter,” he reserves to *littera* restrictive connotations. On the contrary it is *historia*, in fact more frequent, that we find in favorable contexts, often associated with terms like *ordo*, *ueritas*, *fundamentum*, which witness to the value in Jerome’s eyes of this first level of interpretation which he practically never sacrifices, even when it presents hardly any difficulties.

This importance of the literal sense appears also in the extension which Jerome recognizes for it. He does not, in fact, limit it beyond the first task of establishing the text, to its obvious understanding, the *simplex Scripturarum lectio*. In contrast to his Alexandrian predecessors, quick to seize in every figure an invitation to rise to the spiritual sense, and even more clearly than his Antiochian contemporaries, he brings in as a grammarian everything that has to do with the figurative sense or is related to it: figures and tropes, but also anthropomorphisms, which lend God physical traits or human feelings, scripture’s habits of expression, even distinction of literary styles and genres.

One particular relation seems to be able to be revealed between this *historica interpretatio*, which has as its role an exact reading of the sacred text, and the *hebraica ueritas*, which provides in Jerome’s eyes the authentic form conveyed by a tradition which enlightens it. But this relationship is not exclusive: besides being concerned as well with the explication of the statement translated from the Greek, Jerome’s literal exegesis is far from being reduced to the contribution of Hebraic traditions in which, besides, everything is not admissible, in particular when they take the form of the “carnal” exegeses of the Jews challenged by Christian faith, which Jerome does not hesitate to bring in to oppose them.

The subject dealt with by the literal interpretation reflects in its richness and diversity the very ones of the sacred text. Without ordinarily having as much importance as in the case of the book of Jonah, whose area is situated in the very consciousness of the undocile prophet, recourse to psychological analysis can clarify, for example, the different behavior of the prophets with regard to their mission, or the attitude of this person of the book being considered. But on a regular basis and in agreement with the original meaning of the term, the explication *iuxta historiam* draws its clearest essence from the realities of history, whether in establishing the facts by direct testimony or, more often, information on the past provided by Scripture itself, supported in some cases by the traditions of the Hebrews, but also by profane history, invoked particularly as a guarantee of the effective fulfillment of a prophecy. Geographical data have their importance as well, supplemented when needed by the contribution of the natural sciences. In another line of thought, Jerome also puts into the service of the elucidation of the text being commented on the whole stock of tools of grammatical, rhetorical, and logical procedure: semantic study, paraphrase, regard for context, appeal to argumentation, different forms of reasoning. Thus there is sketched out in Jerome's practice a convergence of all the resources of knowing for the service of the exact understanding of the literal sense, the *historiae ueritas*, touchstone of the validity of every spiritual interpretation.

As a necessary step of every reading of scripture the literal exegesis, as important as it is in Jerome's eyes, still does not exhaust its content: after having "set down the bases of the history," as we can read in the *Commentary on Zechariah* (III. 14.16), there remains to "pass from them to the spiritual realities."

A varied vocabulary, less incoherent as has often been said, indicates in Jerome's Commentaries this second level of interpretation, which interests the New as the Old Testament. The relatively rare appearances of the word *allegoria* oscillates in that place between two opposing values according as it reflects the use, rather forced in Jerome's eyes, that the Epistle to the Galatians makes of it (4.24) or as it betrays the exegete's hesitations before what remains to his eyes a grammatical procedure whose limits and risks he is pressing. Much more frequent are the words *anagoge* ("superior meaning") and especially *tropologia* ("figurative meaning") which appear as the ordinary designations of the spiritual sense, yet without our being able to disclose in their usage the specialized meanings they will take in later classifications. As for *spiritus*, which with its derivatives represents in most of Jerome's commentaries the most current and also the most specific of the "spiritual" exegesis, it translates well its Pauline basis.

Less frequent are other terms, also Pauline, like *umbra*, *imago*, and especially *typus* (or *figura*) set in relationship with *ueritas* that highlight, especially in the Commentaries on the Prophets, the underlying connections between the persons or events of biblical history and the coming of Christ which they herald. Jerome also speaks of *mysteria* and of *sacramenta* that a reading “according to the Spirit” allows us to discover in scripture. In the end, it is to a single perspective where “history” and “spirit” are related as “sketch” (*umbra*) and “reality” (*ueritas*) that Jerome’s vocabulary of the spiritual sense introduces us.

To have access to this second level of interpretation, Jerome does not shy away from the allegorical exegesis largely practiced by his Alexandrian sources, even though he denounces more and more its excesses and dangers. Nevertheless, he means to subject it to the double register of *ordo historiae* and *regula ueritatis*. But if he is intractable on the “rule of faith,” with the aid of the law of the commentary, in leading him to reflect on previous interpretations, he still does not always avoid exegeses having little respect for the “coherence of the historical sense.” Perhaps also his grammatical training is explained in his manifesting for etymological exegesis a relative ease, while having recourse to arithmology only with prudence.

But to these different forms of exegesis which stem from allegory Jerome clearly prefers, while ignoring the adjectives, “typological” or “figurative” exegesis, which following the apostle Paul and Jesus himself recognizes in certain realities of the Old Covenant prefigurements of the New. Besides individuals like Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Jonah who could have prefigured Christ in some detail of their life, the people of Israel itself, in the reality of its worship and history, constitutes for him the chief illustration of this type of exegesis directed to the coming of Christ.

Interfering with these different types of exegesis, recourse to other texts of scripture, which frequently takes the form of veritable chains of quotations, plays an essential role in passing to the spiritual sense. Simple in their principle, these scriptural rapprochements rest on a phenomenon of association between a term of the commented text with other passages of Scripture containing the same word; but their use can be very complex and sometimes play on several words of the proposition being explained (e.g., *In Isaiam* I 2.2). In a general way they bring into play the Old Testament as well as the New, the former preparing often through the mediation of the prophets and particularly the psalms, the passing to the latter, which consecrates and even prolongs the spiritual interpretation. Thus for Jerome, as before him for Origen, the Bible explains the Bible.

But when he is commenting on the prophets the exegete is not only

concerned with the prefiguring of realities to come, but also, in the case of prophecy properly so called, with their direct announcement as obscure and veiled as it sometimes is, in accordance with the law that he considers to be a veritable genre. For Jerome most of the prophecies have seen their fulfillment by his time, for some at the period of Israel's history, for others with the Romans, for a large number with the coming of Christ, the crowning of messianic promises as the New Testament itself attests for many of them. Many could have seen partial fulfillments before realizing the complete fulfillment: thus as illustrated among other examples by the personage of Zerubbabel, a first fulfillment of a prophecy in history can itself appear as a figure of its fuller and more complete fulfillment in Christ (*In Hieremiam* VI. 30.18–22). Conversely, it can happen as in the case of the prophecy of Emmanuel (Is. 7.14), that the relationship of the prophecy to Christ's coming is in Jerome's eyes so evident and exclusive that literal sense and spiritual signification come together in a direct announcement of Christ which exhausts the content.

It is in any case "the Lord Savior, as the name of Jesus signifies, he whose coming the Law and the Prophets did not cease to proclaim" (*In Isaiam* VII. 17.9–10) whom Jerome's spiritual exegesis discovers in the ancient scriptures, both in the Commentaries on the Old Testament as well as on the New, and especially in his *opus prophetale*. The historical circumstances of his life can be prefigured in them, or more often there can be discovered in them the mysteries of his person and his saving mission which are extended and actualized in the church. The new Jerusalem issued from the old, gathered up by the preaching of the apostles, fortified by the sacraments enters into combat against heresies that harass it and tear it apart and its image Jerome is quick to see in the opposing powers which assailed the Jewish people. Not much in evidence, on the other hand, are the eschatological perspectives of Christ's second coming, whether under the somber colors of the evocation of the end times and of judgment or under the positive light of the fulfillment of the historical process of salvation by the final conversion of Israel. Even though he is especially attentive to the collective dimension of this salvation, Jerome does not yet ignore its individual dimension which he clearly envisages, far from speculations over some world of the soul or of a banal moralism, in terms of the Christian's spiritual life in his relationship to God and to Christ, himself "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1.24).

Little developed in the learned exegesis of the Commentaries destined for a cultivated audience of informed readers, this last aspect occupies on the other hand an important place in the homilies which have been preserved

of Jerome's preaching. Less scientific, the explication which according to the requirements of the genre aims at the instruction and edification of the faithful is much given over to concrete applications and to paranesis, which often opens up by the end of the homily into a prayer which manifests its genuine meaning. A greater flexibility in them characterizes also the flow of the explication, which progresses from verse to verse by following the order of the biblical text yet allows digressions or backpedaling to repair an oversight, or repeated summaries of verses already commented upon to emphasize what has been secured before going on.

But the pedagogical sense of the preacher and the simplicity of the tone which brings him close to his audience do not restrain Jerome from keeping to the essence of his exegetical requirements. If he keeps himself from making reference to the *Hexapla* versions his concern for the exactness of the sacred text leads him, for example, not to leave his audience in the dark on any important textual divergence between the current text of the Septuagint and the Hebrew without having to explain successively the two versions (*Tract. de ps.* 86.5). Likewise, before coming to the spiritual interpretation he tarries at the literal sense in emphasizing that it is profitable for his audience, and not only for "simple folk:" "I myself am edified by the letter," he makes clear (*Tract. de ps.* 108.24). Thus the importance of the literal sense is reinforced by the usefulness that Jerome recognizes in it for the spiritual life of the Christian. But it is essential not to be locked up in it as are the Jews. For, as the preacher invites his hearers to recognize, "from the history itself we are elevated little by little to the sacred mysteries" (*Tract. de ps.* 86.4).

By any standard the literal sense remains the criterion of reference for the validity of any spiritual interpretation. Thus Jerome does not hesitate to charge with haughtiness, even if it comes from good intentions, the rather widespread exegesis that applies to Christ the content of Psalm 1, for he delights in pointing out that several verses in it are incompatible with this interpretation (*Tract. de ps.* 1). The scattered appearance of a verse-by-verse exegesis should not then deceive us: no more than in his Commentaries does Jerome lose sight in his homilies of the concern for the *consequentia* of the sacred text, whose respect must take command over any spiritual interpretation.

The feeling for the whole imposes itself over the spiritual interpretation itself. More than once Jerome insists at the beginning of a homily that the title of the psalm is there to convey its sense. More broadly, it is the psalter itself that in the line of Origen and of Jewish exegesis he represents as a vast dwelling whose door is opened by one key, each psalm being itself a room possessing its own key. More broadly still, according to an expression

borrowed from a homily on Mark, it is Holy Scripture which “clings whole to itself” (*haeret sibi tota*), welded by a single Spirit, that of Christ, “who possesses the key of David” and without whom not only the Law but the Gospel itself remain veiled (*In Marc. hom. II*). For the preacher as for the commentator it is Christ who speaks through scripture, the Old as well as the New Testament.

Likewise, one is not surprised to meet in Jerome’s homilies the elements of a trinitarian theology or of a Christology whose deliberately polemical profile bears, perhaps more clearly than the Commentaries, the mark of a certain actuality: a renewed refutation of Arianism, jabs against the “new heresy” of Apollinarius of Laodicea, also a condemnation of the errors of Origen which had fueled recent controversy. This vigorous denunciation of heresy, simple and lively in its deliberate form of diatribe, is doubtless a witness of the echo that doctrinal controversies still aroused in the local churches of the East.

Thus one notices between the practice of the commentator and that of the preacher some differences of accent, which are due in great part to the differences of genre. But it is the same reading of scripture which comes out; it is basically the same conception of Christian exegesis that Jerome obeys when he writes learned Commentaries for his informed readers who were his disciples near at hand or far-off correspondents, and when he comments fraternally on the daily psalm or gospel to the modest and mixed audience of the liturgical assembly at Bethlehem.

It is in fact significant that it is in the prologue of a homily on the first verses of Isaiah (the *In Esaia paruula adbreuiatio*) that Jerome delivers something of a summary of his method of reading the prophets and of the history of Israel, and in a homily on the Transfiguration (*In Marc. hom. VI*) that he gives the deepest formulation of his idea of Christian exegesis, veritable transfiguration of Scripture as a whole to the light of the Spirit of Christ.

IV.

Jerome has often been criticized for doing nothing but following in his Commentaries, according to the expression of Julian of Eclanum (*In Hosea*, prol.), the twofold current “of the allegories of Origen and the narrative traditions of the Jews,” or, to speak as his biographer G. Grützmacher at the beginning of this century, of “being nothing more than a compiler.” If it is correct that Jerome’s writing was worked out at the confluence of several traditions, the

reality is much more nuanced and complex than these cutting judgments would lead us to think.

In undertaking to explain the Bible, Jerome in the fourth century was necessarily heir in his exegetical proceedings of the tradition of the reading of scripture which imposed itself on him as on every ecclesiastical writer of his time and which, going back to the NT itself, rested essentially on the relationship of the OT to Christ. But at a time when there was developing in the Christian East with the Cappadocians and especially with the Antiochian current a renewed reflection on the spiritual sense, this tradition did not constitute a monolithic block. Jerome could realize this once he became aware of the necessity of a serious training for the study of scripture. The three masters to whom he acknowledges indebtedness in the matter, Apollinarius, Gregory, and Didymus, brought him in fact across their differences the echo of major accents of this diverse heritage.

It is at Antioch that at his return from the desert of Chalcis he received his first biblical training from the teaching of Apollinarius. Certainly the personality of the bishop of Laodicea eludes classification, but the chief traits of his exegesis as they appear to Jerome—clarity, quickness, concision pushed to the extreme, a sense of the essential which makes him attentive to the literal sense and to clusters of verses bound by meaning—did not contradict the tendencies then being brought out in the Syrian metropolis, in whose intellectual climate Jerome was in fact absorbed for some years. It is surely not an indifferent matter that he received this stamp before becoming open to the Alexandrian tradition at Constantinople with Gregory of Nazianzus.

By Gregory's side he became initiated into the vast universe of the exegetical work of Origen, for whom he will never cease to feel esteem and admiration, even at the height of the Origenist controversy. But the master's personality was no less important to guarantee Jerome possible drifts of the exegesis he was discovering. In fact, for Gregory as for his friend Basil the admiration which inspired their composition of the *Philocalia* did not go without discrimination. In the Cappadocian's balanced attitude and sense of measure by which his esteem for Origen did not make him blind to the dangers of Alexandrian allegorism, Jerome thus found an exemplary model at a timely moment.

Thus forewarned against the temptations of an uncontrolled allegorism by the impressions left on him by his frequentation of Apollinarius then of Gregory, he was in condition to draw the most profit from this direct contact with the pure Alexandrian tradition as it was practiced in his time when some years later he made the trip to Alexandria to listen to Didymus there.

From the diversity of this triple scriptural initiation Jerome the exegete definitely drew a twofold benefit: he did not find himself enclosed from the beginning in the limited horizons of a single tendency. Disclosed on another level by theological divergences which went all the way to heresy (*Epist.* 84.3), these differences among his masters also contained in germ, by the force of things, an invitation to discernment from which he will know how to profit.

Jerome would not find the same diversity in the written sources, mostly Greek, which he would use for his Commentaries and which he reveals in his prologues. For the whole of the *opus prophetale* in particular there appear with more or less regularity the names of Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Didymus, and Apollinarius. Now with the notable exception of the last named, all these predecessors whose works Jerome affirms to have read and used are situated, with some nuance, in the Alexandrian movement. As he observes in the prologue of his *Commentary on Zechariah* after having mentioned the Commentaries of Origen, Hippolytus, and Didymus on that prophet, "their exegesis is altogether allegorical and they have barely touched history," for which reason he cannot make use of any reference but the *Hebraei*. As for the Latins, as the *Commentary on Isaiah* declares, one of the rare ones which give him occasion to mention them, there is "a great silence" except on this prophet for the Commentary of Victorinus of Poetovio, a pure reflection as well of Alexandrian exegesis. This is also the case, on the Psalms, for Hilary, Eusebius of Vercelli, or Ambrose, whose dependence on Origen he brings out (*Epist.* 112.20), while he seems not to know the Commentary of Diodore of Tarsus on the Psalms, his Antiochian contemporary. The same observation can be made for the *Commentary on Matthew*, for which we find, besides the usual Greek sources and Origen at their head, the names of Victorinus and Ambrose.

But as far as we can judge despite the loss of the greatest part of his direct sources, the way in which Jerome draws a part of this heritage does not go without discrimination. The discovery at Toura in 1941 of the *Commentary on Zechariah* of Didymus allows us today a comparison with that of Jerome, one all the more interesting because Didymus is here his principal source, since Origen explained only the first six chapters of the prophet. Now if Jerome is close to his source to the point that one has spoken of a "certified true copy," his Commentary can in no way be reduced to being nothing but a servile imitation of its model. Certainly, Jerome draws from the prolix Commentary of the Alexandrian a pile of elements of his spiritual explication, but the content of his own Commentary is not limited to these borrowings, however abundant and evident they are. Didymus, for example, is of no help to him for

the literal explication, and he scarcely influences his exegetical vocabulary. In the very usage that Jerome makes of the elements he retains we notice very often that he maintains his distance with respect to his model, for instance in the treatment of a chain of scriptural quotations that he takes up, not to mention the specific rejection of allegorical exegeses which would empty the sacred text of its substance (e.g., *In Zachariam* III.13. 7–9).

The comparison of Jerome's *Commentary on Isaiah* with the very long extracts of that of Eusebius that we possess today (*GCS Eus. W.* 9) lead to similar conclusions. Jerome seems beholden to his predecessor for more than one line of interpretation, such as among other examples the place held in his Commentary by the fulfillment of the prophetic heralds at the time of Christ by the hand of Rome. But no less can some serious differences between the two Commentaries be observed: in the recourse to the Hexapla versions, in the use of the exegetical vocabulary, in the free repetition of chains of scriptural citations, etc., Jerome breaks away from Eusebius even quite briskly in twice reproaching him for abandoning the historical explication of which he believed he could see the promise in the prologue of his predecessor's Commentary, in favor of dangerous liberties offered by allegory (*In Isaiam* V, prol.).

The loss of Origen's Commentaries does not allow us any such precise comparisons. But it is certain that Jerome's dependence on the one whom, in the line of Didymus, he regarded at the beginning of his career as "the master of the churches after the apostles," is considerable. From the time of the Pauline Commentaries, where he goes so far as textually taking up, at least once, an entire passage of the Alexandrian without attribution (*In Epist. ad Ephesios* III. 5.28–29), and throughout his *opus prophetale*, Origen's exegetical work which he never disowned (e.g., *Epist.* 85.4) does not disappear from the background of his Commentaries, as has been demonstrated in particular for the *Commentary on Jonah*. But if Jerome's debt toward the exegesis of his predecessor should not be underestimated, his own practice brings out manifest divergences from it. From the time of his essay on the *seraphim* of Isaiah he had denounced the interpretation which saw in them the Son and the Spirit. In the midst of the Origenist controversy we can perceive in the thread of his Commentaries a growing distancing from the interpretations whose questionable character seem clearer to him, while reservations about the "*allegoricus interpret*" become sharper. And the reading of his homilies does not belie this twofold impression of dependency and distancing.

Several major aspects of Jerome's exegesis, on the other hand, are directed to other rapprochements. The importance which he accords to the literal sense, obligatory foundation of any spiritual interpretation, in whose service

are brought in the contributions of profane culture and of the rabbinic traditions, a marked preference for figurative exegesis even if the nature of his sources lead him to reflect many allegorical interpretations of his predecessors, sometimes in contradiction with his own principles, the place made in his work for prophecy and certain aspects of the conception he has of it, in particular the idea of successive fulfillments of certain oracles: so many traits for which he is perhaps indebted in one way to the Commentaries of Apollinarius but which certainly bring him close to the exegetical tendencies of Antioch, even if we cannot speak here of heritage or even of real dependence on the Antiochian writers.

Largely tributary of recognized sources while at the same time pervious to influences of an exegetical actuality which is not stiff, Jerome's exegesis is thus not reducible to a single tendency. On the contrary, it finds its specificity in the commentator's capacity to exploit preexistent materials and by exercising choices to set them in an order of importance and in differently clarifying the elements he keeps of them, while bringing external contributions to them. A realistic Latin at the crossroads of the Greek traditions distinguished by important nuances, Jerome in his somewhat groping search for a balanced position after the manner of his master Gregory was finally led to find beyond the cleavages of the schools the common Christian exegesis which he also attained through the Latin tradition, even though it had scarcely yet produced any Commentaries. Even before these witnesses of common typology like Cyprian's *Testimonia* and Hilary's *Treatise on the Mysteries*, Tertullian had in fact applied himself to establish against Marcion the legitimacy of a figurative interpretation of the Old Testament while being careful to condemn their allegorizing drift.

In this way Jerome occupies in the history of Latin exegesis a position which is original for more than one reason. First of all he appears as the man of the prophets, for being the first and even the only one of the Latins to have commented on all of them, and this privileged accent placed on prophecy does not seem to be unrelated to his preference for the figurative exegesis and the Christocentric character of his exegesis.

More broadly, there come together in his Commentaries, without their being reduced to this, along with the contributions of the Latin tradition, the different tendencies of Greek exegesis as we can perceive them in his time. But the heritage is not evaluated here only in terms of exegetical conceptions. By reflecting in his Commentaries on the opinions of his predecessors as the law of the genre required of him, he extended in some way and widened the field of the undertaking begun in Constantinople to "render Origen Latin" and fulfilled in his way his proclaimed purpose to make known to

his contemporary Latins “what he had received from Church writers” (*In Zachariam* II. 6.9–15). In thus indirectly giving them access to works which without him would remain closed to them at a time when the linguistic cut-off of the Empire went in tandem with its definitive political division, he played a role of connecting link between East and West, of which his own life, divided almost equally between the Latin world and Bethlehem provides a sort of symbolic image. Moreover, without having sought it, he assured the transmission to the Latin Middle Ages of the content, partial certainly but not negligible, of many of these works which are lost today.

Along with the exegesis of his predecessors, Jerome also promised to “deliver to Latin ears the secrets of Hebrew science...touching the scriptures,” of which he had concerned himself to make direct inquiries of the Hebrew “masters” whose reality is incontestable, whatever has been said on the subject. In reverberating in his Commentaries more systematically than any of his predecessors the echoes of their linguistic, historical, even properly exegetical traditions, he has singularly enriched Christian exegesis. Even more revolutionary and perfectly original, the choice that he made to return to the *hebraica ueritas* for the text of the Hebrew Bible would as it were not only give the Bible for a second time to the Latin Church, but provide the bases on which would rest from now on any edifice of the explication of the Scriptures in the Christian West.

Positioned by his personal itinerary at the crossroads of a classical Latin training, a biblical culture very largely Greek, and of a serious Hebrew initiation, the *uir trilinguis* that Jerome knew himself to be thus appears at this winding down of the end of the fourth century as an exceptional mediator in the service of scripture: between the heritage of ancient culture and the newness of Christian experience, between Jewish traditions and the Church’s tradition, between the Greek East and the Latin West.

In Esaia (1, 1–6) *paruula adbreuiatio*:

In the Twelve Prophets we have the description as it were of a sick person who has refused to care for his illness right up to the point of death, and then the story of his healing after death by Christ, who is the true physician. So what the Twelve Prophets do each in part—not without themselves briefly letting understand that they include the same purport—the greater prophets did in a general way. And Ezra, who is known as “the support,” Zerubbabel, which means “he is prince in Babylon,” and Jesus (son of Josedec), which in our language means “savior,” have come in advance as figures of the Lord, to care for what

the other prophets could not care for by their medicine books, and to lead the people back from captivity.

In Marci Evangelium tract. VI (= In Marc. 9, 1–7):

The one who follows God's word and climbs up the mountains, that is, on the heights, for him Jesus is suddenly transformed and Jesus' clothing becomes shining with whiteness. The words that we read, if we understand them literally, what is shining about them, what is resplendent or lofty? But if we understand them spiritually suddenly the holy scriptures, that is, the clothing of the word become transformed and become of a shining whiteness like snow, "as no fuller on earth can make them."

Take any prophetic witness, take a gospel parable: if you understand them according to the letter there is nothing in them that is resplendent, nothing shining. But if you follow the apostles and understand spiritually, suddenly the clothing of the word is transformed and becomes shining white: it is both the whole Jesus who is transformed on the mountain and his clothes which become of a whiteness as shining as snow, as no fuller on earth can render them in brightness.

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XIV
RUFINUS OF AQUILEIA (CA. 345–410)

Tiranius Rufinus, born ca. 345 at Concordia near Aquileia, studied in Rome 359–368, entered the ascetic group of Aquileia where he was baptised (368–373), and shared his monastic experiment with Jerome, before emigrating to the East. In 373, he went to Alexandria where he met Melania the Elder. Soon he escorted her on her journey to Palestine; then he sojourned with the monks in Egypt and enrolled among the auditors of Dydimus the Blind. In 380, following Melania the Elder's example, he settled in a monastic cell on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem (380–397). After a bitter quarrel with Jerome and Epiphanius, he returned to Rome in 397, and to Aquileia in 399. His intensive work as a translator, interrupted by the invasion of the Goths in 407, continued in Sicily until his death in 410.

Translations of Origen's exegetical works by Rufinus:

- 398 *Peri Archon, Homilies on Psalm 36, 37, 38.*
 403–404 *Homilies on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Joshua, Judges.*
 405–406 *Commentary on Romans* (partial).
 410 *Commentary on Canticle, Homilies on Numbers.*

Rufinus also wrote a commentary in two Books on the *Benedictions of the Patriarchs*.

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XV

OPTATUS OF MILEVIS (D. BEFORE 393)

A Numidian by birth, Optatus was an older contemporary of Tyconius. As bishop of Milevis (eastern Algeria), he wrote between 364 and 367 a treatise *Against the Donatists*. Near 397, Augustine (*De doctrina christiana* II, xl, 61) counts him among people dead for some years. Already in 393, Jerome (*vir. inl.* 110) seems to consider Optatus as deceased. In addition to the treatise *Adversus Donatistas*, two sermons of Optatus survive, one for Christmas (PLS 1, 288–294), another for Easter (PLS 1, 295–296).

In response to pamphlets of Bishop Parmenian, the intellectual leader of the Donatists, Optatus emphasized a notion of the *universal church* (*catholica*), as a united, but “mixed body,” *corpus mixtum*, of sinners and saints, good and bad, announcing thereby Augustine’s ecclesiology. He focussed on a theology of baptism, in pointedly distinguishing between the intrinsic value of God’s gift to the baptised, the purely instrumental function of the minister, and the ethical requirements imposed on potential beneficiaries of the baptismal gift. Optatus countered Parmenian’s vision of a spotless and perfect church by arguing in favor of forgiveness and inclusion of sinners, his realistic notion of church realities being permeated by his hope in the ultimate fulfillment at the end of time. His eschatological expectation, as much as his strongly original distinction between “schismatics” and “heretics,” allowed Optatus to overcome more rigid conceptions of Cyprian, and to open the spiritual space needed for Augustine’s action in favour of a reintegration of Donatists into church unity.

In Optatus’ recourse, best documented in Books IV and V of *Adversus Donatistas*, one can only admire the candid ingenuity with which the bishop multiplies quotations in favour of his arguments. His unsophisticated use of scripture gives a biblical favour to his heart-felt doctrine of community life and unity in the church. His vindication of the Catholic communion against Parmenian is summed up in a single reproach: *A vobis enim contempta est disciplina. Ut quid recitas testimonium, qui testamento no servis, in quo descripta est disciplina, quam servare non vultis?* “Indeed you have shown contempt to the discipline (cf. Ps 49 (50):17). Why then do you read the Testament in which the discipline refused by you is described?” (IV, 4, 1). The question opens a section centered on Ps 49 (50). It becomes a firm statement closing the section: *Testamentum recitas et testamentum non servas in quo descripta est disciplina* “You read the Testament (= OT!) and you refuse the Testament in which the discipline is described” (IV, 4,). Thus the whole canonical order,

or *disciplina*, defining the believers' status in the church is fixed for Optatus by the Christocentric "Testament."

With a strong sense for OT typology, Optatus emphasizes the significance of baptism. In his own baptism, Jesus acted *ad mysteria initianda et ordinanda et implenda baptismatis* "for the establishment, the institution and the fulfillment of the mysteries of baptism," (VII, 4; SC 413, 102, 28–29). Book V exposes the typology of the Flood and of circumcision, both, the mythical event and the social rite, excluding reduplication. Calling on many proofs from scripture, the author's theological argument rests on a clearly enunciated doctrine of Trinity. Obviously Optatus relies on Tertullian, his thought being thoroughly rooted in the African tradition, with a distinctive trinitarian caste inherited from Novatian.

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XVI
TYCONIUS (FL. 370–390)

Tyconius is the author of what might be considered the most ancient exposition of biblical hermeneutics written in the West by a Christian theologian, the *Liber regularis* (*LR*), as he called it. Up to the present day he remains an enigmatic and undervalued intellectual leader of the Donatist church, known only through Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* (*DDC*) and a short notice of Gennadius, *De viris inlustribus* 18 (PL 58, 1071f.). In a sense, the spectacular reception of *LR* by Augustine in *DDC* III xxx, 42–56 was a double-edged sword: It saved Tynonius's work for posterity but, by carefully adjusting the Donatist's biblical quotations and statements to his own hermeneutics, Augustine sealed the fate of the Donatist theologian until close to the end of the twentieth century. On one side, the Augustinian reception must be considered as the only reason why Tyconius's *LR* was preserved in its entirety; on the other side, the overpowering authority of the bishop of Hippo and the immense popularity of *DDC* explains sufficiently why the direct study of Tyconius's work remained completely neglected by scholars, including Augustinian scholars of the past century. F. L. Burkitt secured a critical edition of *LR* in a well-known British series in 1894, but only in 1988 did a first monograph analyse his work (Bright), and only in 1989 appeared its first translation in a modern language (Babcock).

Tyconius is also the author of a *Commentary on the Apocalypse* in its full text (*ex integro*, Gennadius). Only fragments (Lo Bue 1963, Gryson 1997) of it survive. Additional fragments were identified between 1964 and 1974 by László Mezey in the Library of the Central Catholic Seminary of Budapest. A full copy of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* was still registered in the 9th century in the library of St. Gall. The loss is the more unfortunate as that work became a major reference for later commentators throughout the Middle Ages (Steinhauser). The literary and logical links of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* with *LR* are striking enough, though usually ignored or downplayed by the critics. *LR* was probably written by Tyconius first (Bright, Simonetti), and then in the *Commentary* he systematically applied the seven rules exposed in it (Kannengiesser).

For a long time, at least from Burkitt's edition to Bright's monograph, Tyconius attracted the attention of specialists exclusively for his abundant use of Old Latin versions of the Bible (Hahn). His proper significance as a theoretician of biblical hermeneutics in the context of Augustine's magisterial ministry as bishop of Hippo was never thoroughly explored in its own

right. On the contrary, it became common practice to approach Tyconius only through the literary access provided by Augustine.

In *LR* Tyconius exposed a theory on biblical hermeneutics doomed to remain isolated in its African originality, due to its problematic reception in Augustine's *DDC* (Bright). The Donatist's systematic interpretation, though operating with grammatical and rhetorical notions familiar to any educated Christian in the fourth century, rested essentially on a scriptural and theological culture proper to the particular church traditions in Roman Africa. Tyconius wrote the heavily theological *LR* not as a sectarian Donatist, but as a genuinely African theologian focussing on African ecclesiology and on the African sense for baptism and for the Christian liberation from evil. A "conflict" between such a regional hermeneutics, confined to local perceptions of the true relevance of scripture, and Augustine's interpretive attitude, governed by academic and pastoral principles appropriated outside of Africa, was inevitable (Kannengiesser – Bright).

At least, a fusion of the Tyconian way of interpreting scripture with the Augustinian *doctrina* could only entail heavy losses on both sides, as *DDC* witnesses: Tyconius would lose the original sense of the "Rules", which he had so dramatically emphasized in *LR*, for Augustine would identify those "Rules" as rhetorical precepts like the ones taught to him by Cicero and school rhetoricians since his early youth; Augustine would be completely reduced to silence about African hermeneutics for almost thirty years, from the time of his episcopal consecration, when he begged Bishop Aurelius of Carthage in *Letter 41* to explain to him Tyconius's rules, to the years shortly before his death, when writing his *Retractationes*, because he simply failed to catch the proper meaning of the "Rules" in his first encounter with them.

Indeed *LR* speaks about "Rules" as instituted by the Holy Spirit in person for the very composition of scripture, Tyconius taking no notice of a human agency in the conception and articulation of biblical prophecy. Hence, according to Tyconius, the "Rules" are constitutive of the intimate mystery of divine scripture, the latter being composed by the Spirit as a written revelation of God's thought and purpose, articulated through the secret logic of the "Rules." Therefore, in the prologue of *LR*, Tyconius insists on the specific task of the interpreter of scripture, as he understood it. By no means does the interpreter choose and apply the "Rules" themselves. For they are the reserved property of the "Authorial" Spirit who speaks through the Hebrew prophets. The interpreter's proper task is to address the obvious need for perceiving the coherent system of the mysterious "Rules." He explains how they function in specific cases and thereby he opens a way to better understand the whole of scripture. In Tyconius's metaphoric terms, the interpreter provides

the readers of scripture with some “keys” and “windows” (or “lamps”) of his own confection, thanks to which the global application of the *Spirit's* “Rules” would be facilitated, and scripture thereby become more intelligible. Tyconius does not describe the Rules themselves (because they are mystic, “mystery”); he only presents an access to the Rules of the Spirit.

The prologue is as follows: “Above everything else that came to mind, I considered it necessary to write a Book of Rules and so to fashion keys and lamps, as it were to the secrets of the Law. For there are certain mystic rules which obtain in the inner recesses of the entire Law and keep the rich treasures of the truth hidden for some people. But if the sense of these rules is accepted without ill will, as we impart it, what ever is disclosed will be opened and whatever is dark will be illumined; and anyone who walks the vast forest of prophecy guided by these rules as by pathways of light, will be kept from straying into error” (Babcock, 3).

First, Tyconius’s initiative as an interpreter consisted in determining seven such “mystic” rules. He did not give them names, but he specified the proper purpose of each of them:

Rule I calls for a fundamental distinction between “the Lord and his Body”;

Rule II focusses on “the Lord’s bipartite Body”;

Rule III regulates statements about “the Promises and the Law”;

Rule IV separates “the particular and the general” in prophecies;

Rule V is about “times” as implied in prophetic sayings;

Rule VI determines the so-called “recapitulation” effect in scripture;

Rule VII deals with “the Devil and his Body” (*LR*, prologue).

Secondly, Tyconius examined each “Rule” with regard to the specific procedures for its application. For him, the correct verification of these procedures consisted in the attempt “to fashion keys and lamps.” In a work of seven tightly knit chapters (Bright 1988), he composed a set of recommendations, or “keys and lamps,” to secure a right notion of the “Rules” themselves. He called his essay *libellus regularis* (*LR*, prologue), a “Regulating Essay,” not, as Augustine would decide and impose on later generations, a *liber regularum*, which means a Book of Rules” (or principles and regulations decided by the author), even if both designations, *regularis* and *regularum* are equivalent in strictly grammatical terms. The *libellus*, as conceived by Tyconius, was to become *regularis* through the acceptance by readers “without ill will” (prologue), agreeing to the “keys and lamps” (or “windows”) which he fashions for them. In the mind of this African theologian, it was not, nor could it be, to publish a “Book of Rules,” as if *he* were the author of the Rules, imposing them on scripture like the rhetorical precepts required for the explanation

of classical texts in the schools. They were for him *regulae mysticae*, operating in the innermost “recesses” of “obscure,” or contradictory, sayings of the prophets of old. They transcended the realm of scholarly hermeneutics; they made possible the intrinsic regulation of biblical “treasures of truth.” To elucidate their functioning in the sacred text, Tyconius invested his entire rhetorical culture, convinced that through such an investment his theological mindset, as an African Donatist, would succeed in clarifying the system of mystical rules proper to scripture.

Thirdly, Tyconius conceived his hermeneutics as a response to the major issues of the ecclesiastical debate in the church of his time. Not only did he insist, from chapter to chapter, on the basic need for a sound judgement and logical reason in reading prophecies, but even more he emphasized the need for actualizing in faith the truth perceived in them: “And so the body, in virtue of its head, is the Son of God; and God, in virtue of his body, is the Son of Man who comes daily by birth and ‘grows into the holy temple of God’ (Eph 2:21). For the temple is bipartite” (Babcock, 13f.). Concerning Rule 2, reason (*ratio*) determines that the function of that rule consists in producing “the transition (*transitus*) from head to body and back again (*reditusque*),” to allow faith to conclude that “it is by this mystery (*hoc mysterio*, namely “Rule 2,” Babcock 20) that we must interpret, throughout the scriptures, any passage where prophetic utterances claim that Israel will perish,” etc.

Concerning Rule 3, Tyconius treats his readers to a long dissertation in order to overcome the contradictory statements of the *auctoritas divina* in scripture (Babcock, 20–54). Pauline dialectics help to exercise sound reasoning, but “the Law, I say, was what showed us faith” (Babcock, 33). In faith, human reason reaches its proper accuracy for it would be “foolish and perverse to believe that something said to the bipartite body pertains to the whole body” (Babcock, 43). The “bipartite” body of the church, including saints and sinners (and not only “saints” in the Donatist sense), is a faith reality urging to preview the church’s next future and its final consummation: “for there is a time when these things may be said not in riddles but openly, as that ‘departure’ approaches which is the revelation of the ‘man of sin’ (2 Thes 2:8), when Lot departs from Sodom (Gn 19:29)” (Babcock 55).

Rule 4 imposes a chapter as long as the one before (Babcock, 55–89), and in its direct following, announced in school terms, “the particular and the general” though the author introduces it by declaring “I am not referring to the particular and the general as they are used in the rhetorical art devised by human wisdom” (Babcock, 55). A detailed discussion of OT data and events leads Tyconius to conclude: “Even if some of this seems to be happening now in plain sight, it is still true that these are all spiritual mat-

ters" (Babcock, 79), namely the bipartite nature of data and the universal relevance of events when interpreted according to Rule 4.

Rhetorics and arithmology provide the "keys" for catching the "mystic significance" of Rule 5: "Temporal quantity in scripture often has mystic significance through the rhetorical figure of synechdoche, as through the specific numbers involved" (Babcock, 89). In Rule 6, it is, carefully identified, stylistic subtlety which gives a sense for the scriptural Spirit's recourse to "recapitulation." Tyconius's opening of the small chapter suggests a resemblance between the "Rules" of scripture and the "sealed" book of the Johannine Apocalypse: "Among the rules with which the Spirit sealed the Law so as to guard the pathway of light, the seal of recapitulation guards some things with such subtlety that it is more a continuation than a recapitulation of the narrative" (Babcock, 109). This rule has been specially discussed by M. Dulaey. Rule 7 explicitly parallels Rule 1, with a symmetry of ecclesiological and christological themes, calling insistently on the Book of Revelation and condemning once and for all the contemporary mystic of Donatism about an undivided church of the "Pure."

It seems improbable that the *LR* had any real impact on the course of events in the fateful confrontation between African Donatists and Catholics. When Augustine discovered the work, its author most probably had died, but the *LR* would haunt Augustine's preaching and count for much in his own resolve to become a true interpreter of scripture. More immediately influential for a broader readership was Tyconius's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, though it is almost impossible today to evaluate its immediate significance, given the poor state of its remains. The Bobbio Fragments (Lo Bue 1963) relate to Rv 2-3, 7-12; the Budapest Fragments (Gryson 1997) relate to parts of Rv 6. More is known of Tyconius's text by comparing the Commentaries on the Apocalypse of Primasius, Pseudo-Caesarius, Beatus of Liebana, and Bede (Steinhauser, Gryson). "The fragments of Budapest present the authentic text of Tyconius, and not a summary, like those of Turin" (Gryson, 1997, 226). The exegesis is allegorical (Simonetti) with a strong ecclesiological frame, like *LR*. The "Rules" discussed in *LR* are also consistently retraced in a similar way in the *Commentary* (Kannengiesser, 1989, 12-15). Tyconius never tires of engaging into polemics against his fellow Donatists who reduced the dimensions of the church to their provincial surroundings, and ignored the double, or "bipartite," nature of the church in which saints and sinners cohabit.

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XVII
AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354–430)

A comparative latecomer in the history of patristic exegesis, Augustine surpasses most of the ancient Christian interpreters of scripture by the intensity of his personal appropriation of the biblical text, and by the originality and the profundity of his interpretations. He would not have been consistent with his own life-long spiritual quest had he not struggled over long years to give himself a properly “Augustinian” expertise in the art of interpreting sacred scripture. However first he set out to learn the rules and principles of interpretation from his predecessors, considering it his duty to conform to their hermeneutical standards, and in no way to impose a new exegetical method of his own invention. Augustine’s creative contribution consisted in a deliberate synthesis of late antique rhetorical culture with the biblical hermeneutics already elaborated over several centuries inside the church community. Whereas in the works of other Christian interpreters, rhetorical culture and familiarity with scripture fused in a largely unreflected approach to scripture, for Augustine, these two streams, in their distinctive resources as well as in the complexity of their interactions, became a matter of fascinating inquiry.

Thus while Augustine never tired of discovering new aspects of the biblical message, it was in exploring scripture that he explored himself as well. His exegesis became an original contribution to biblical exegesis not so much by the imposition of a new theoretical frame as by the freshness and intensity of his inner inquiry. Scripture allowed him to interpret *himself*, even more than he interpreted scripture. The focal importance of the “self” in Augustinian exegesis is a key factor in the enduring relevance of Augustine’s hermeneutics right into modern times.

The present survey of Augustinian writings calls for a chronological outline of the hermeneutical experience through which Augustine slowly reached his maturity as an interpreter of scripture. Hence the divisions of this very short presentation of his exegesis: (I) A Hermeneutical Apprenticeship; (II) A Theoretical Foundation: *De doctrina christiana*; (III) A Practical Exercise in Biblical Hermeneutics: *Confessions*; (IV) The ‘Truth’ of Scripture: *De trinitate* I–IV; (V) Exploring the Literal Sense: *De Genesi ad Litteram* I–IX; (VI) The Biblical Scholar; (VII) Augustine’s Ministry of the Word, (VIII) *The City of God*.

I. A HERMENEUTICAL APPRENTICESHIP

For the years 386–391, while Augustine lived in turn in Cassiciacum, Rome and Thagaste, before being ordained priest in Hippo, only those writings are considered which are of some significance for his future career as an interpreter of scripture.

In *Contra Academicos* (Cassiciacum, in the Fall of 386), where Cicero and Neoplatonists are omnipresent, one finds only one anonymous allusion to scripture: *Nam mihi credite, vel potius illi credite, qui ait: 'quaerite et inveniati,'* “for believe me or rather believe him who said: ‘Search and you will find,’ Mt 7:7” (II iii, 9), a distinctly insignificant reminder on a Bible whose very functioning, at this point, seems to be quiescent in the lively arena of Augustine’s philosophical debate.

Again in *De beata vita* (November 386 at Cassiciacum), a charming conversation between Augustine, his mother Monica, his son Adeodatus, his brother Navigius, two cousins, two students and the friend Alypius, only one biblical citation surfaces: “For this also is said: ‘I am the truth’ (Jn 14:6)” (IV, 34), among a striking display of references to literary and philosophical sources. The more personal turn of the staged conversation does not yet convey Augustine’s immersing himself into the sacred text.

De ordine (Cassiciacum, also November 386) is a more ambitious “discussion” of a philosophical nature (*disputatio*) in two Books between Augustine and friends. Numerous allusions and quotations exemplifying Augustine’s past education or current intellectual concerns (Virgil and Ovid, Tacitus and Terence, Cicero and Plotinus...) are mentioned at random in the vivid exchange of views, mainly in Book I, in which one notes only one very vague scriptural allusion on Col 2:1 (*philosophos huius mundi evitandos*), joined to an explicit quotation of Jn 18:36, *satis ipse Christus significavit, qui non dicit: 'regnum meum non est de mundo,' sed 'regnum meum non est de hoc mundo'* (I xi, 32). While the Pauline allusion, if real, and the Johannine quotation, have no impact whatsoever on Augustine’s thought, they do add a distinctive mark to the specific point of argument. It is worth observing that they intervene at the conclusion of *De ordine* which has been built up around an answer given by Augustine to the unexpectedly feminist request of his mother: *numquidnam in illis quos legitis libris etiam feminas umquam audivi in hoc genus disputationis inductas?*, “Did I ever hear women introduced in that kind of discussion in those books of your reading?” (I: xi, 31). This isolated NT echo has the mark of a tribute paid by the son to the religious devotion of the mother, and suggests that, right up to the time of his baptism,

Augustine still grounded his biblical allegiance in the maternal religiosity which had pervaded the years of his childhood.

Soliloquiorum libri duo (Cassiciacum, late 386/ early 387), Augustine's inaugural prayer (I, 2–6) is emphatic and lyrical, written in a poetic prose which dispenses from any scriptural allusion. Augustine reaches a substantial definition of what he means by “God,” namely the objective response to all the wishes and requests of his longing for absolute transcendency. His philosophical mindset is self-sufficient as he shifts from prayer to the strictly conceptual analysis by which the *Soliloquium* becomes a dialogue between himself and reason. In Augustine's understanding, ‘*Soli*’ is conversational in nature: the *loquium* of the self confirms its own inalienable consistency through its dialogue with reason. Therefore in the return to prayer in VI, 9, *Deus, pater noster* (a prayer which has less to do with the biblical invocation “Our Father” than with the vibrancy of Augustine's own innate mysticism) Augustine's words may meet biblical metaphors, *exaudi me palpitantem in his tenebris et mihi dexteram porrige*, “hear me as I struggle in that darkness and stretch out to me your right hand,” but they do not result in any explicit reference. While he quotes Cicero several times, or refers to Quintilian (XVI, 30), or alludes to Plato and the Neoplatonists, and gives an explicit citation otherwise unknown of Cornelius Celsus (XII, 27), Augustine's tacit reminiscences of scriptural phrases remain hardly identifiable (I: i, 3; vi, 12), or at most very sporadic. They are generally located in the immediate context of prayer (I: i, 3: *Deus, per quem mors absorbetur in victoriam*, cf. 1 Cor 15:54, followed by other short allusions of the same sort to Jn, Mt and Gal; I: i, 4 = Gn 1:26; I: i, 5, cf Mt 7:8, 1 Cor 13:13; xiii:23). In these instances, scripture gives a language to the personal emotion generated by the intellectual debate. It does not yet play a role in the definition of the “self” as capable of divine transcendency, which is what is at the heart of the whole debate.

De immortalitate animae was written in Milan in 387. This short essay *On the Immortality of the Soul* seems to have been included by accident in Augustine's works: “The contortion of its arguments is so short and obscure” (*Retractationes*, 1, 5, 1), that it tired even Augustine himself near the end of his life. Amazingly enough the exposition lacks any reference to scripture as well as any reference to secular literature.

Only in the last eight of 36 *capitula* of *De quantitate animae*, a long philosophical dissertation (*tam longum sermonem xxxvi*, 81), composed in Rome 388, are found, highly significantly for Augustine, the first explicit quotations from scripture introduced as such in one of his early treatises: *Cor mundum*, ... Ps 50:12; then a barely recognizable echo of Pauline phrases

in xxviii, 54, followed by an implicit quotation of Eccl 1:2 in xxxiii, 76, and an explicit reference to Paul with a paraphrase of 1 Cor 3:2: *apostolus Paulus parvulis se totum dedisse praedicavit* (xxxiii, 76), followed by a proper citation of Mt 4:10: *Dominum Deum tuum adorabis et illi soli servies*. The biblical references of this treatise, tenuous as they are, sound close to Augustine's recent experience of baptism: they witness to the fervor of the neophyte, already testifying to his improving familiarity with the Pauline letters.

Of a completely different order is Augustine's use of scripture in the polemical essay *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et moribus Manichaeorum libri duo*, also written in Rome 388. Now the controversy itself imposes a systematic quotation from the NT against Manichean interpretations. The same practice would carry more weight in Augustine's other two anti-Manichean essays of the next years, *On Free Choice*, started in Rome in 388, and completed in Africa, possibly in Hippo as late as 395, and *On Genesis Against the Manichees*, written in Thagaste in 389. For the task (totally new for him) of defending scripture against heretical abuse, Augustine starts by taking shelter under the umbrella of *episcopos vel presbyteros vel cuiuscumodi ecclesiae catholicae antistites et ministros* (*De moribus*, I, 1; J. B. Bauer, CSEL 90, 4) and by invoking the *apostolica disciplina* (I, 2). His use of scripture in these polemical treatises would not be determined by the rich background of his rhetorical culture, but it would conform to his recent entry into the institutional frame of the church. Therefore after an introductory set of considerations determined by reason, Augustine shifts into a form of discourse entirely regulated by the authority of divine revelation, communicated by "the election of the patriarchs, the covenant of the Law, the predictions of prophets, the mystery of God's becoming man, the testimony of the apostles, the blood of martyrs, and the conversion of the nations" (I, 7, 12). One proposition after another contributes its share of biblical allusions, quotations, or paraphrases. The author palpably enjoys taking advantage of his personal familiarity with Pauline letters, the very letters which his Manichean adversaries claimed to know so well. He refers to many OT passages also used by them, though in a way now thoroughly reprehensible to the recent convert.

"In *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae* I, mainly composed in Rome, whose biblical richness reveals the author's readings through its references, one finds in particular the first quotations from Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Qohelet, Proverbs, which were books recommended to the attention of the catechumens" (La Bonnardière 1986, 46–47). Some basic principles of interpretation take on a distinctive Augustinian tone, for instance that "Determination as much as piety is required; we may by the first progress in learning, by the other, understand what we have learned," *Et diligentia igitur et pietas adhi-*

benda est; altero fiet ut scientes inveniamus, altero ut scire mereamur (I, 1). Another traditional principle emphasized by main church apologists since the second century “There is only one God in both Testaments” *utriusque testamenti deus unus est* (I, xvii, 30), leads Augustine to root “the harmony of both Testaments” *testamenti utriusque concordiam* (I, xviii, 34), in true “love” *caritas*. Further on he concludes: “The two voices of the one God, registered in both Testaments attest to the sanctification of the soul in a common declaration, so that it happens sometimes that the same data is taken over from the old into the new scriptures,” *Quae duae voces unius dei in duobus testamentis signatae sanctificationem animae concordia attestazione declarant, ut fiat aliquando illud quod item in novam scripturam de veteri assumptum est*. Without the explicit invoking of the technical term, the typological interpretation of scripture is well secured.

The dialogue *On Free Choice, De libero arbitrio*, in three Books, argues against the teaching of the Manichees that evil results only from people’s free choice. The very first biblical reference in Book I, Is 7:9 (the only one in that Book), is introduced as a “prophetic proscription” *praescriptum enim per prophetam* (I, ii, 4, 11). In Book II and III, added seven years later when Augustine was a presbyter in Hippo, biblical quotations occur more frequently in a somewhat homiletic style referring to Wisdom literature and the Prophets as much as to the Gospels and to Paul.

In *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, dating from 388–389, the scriptural focus of Augustine’s polemic against his former fellow Manichees for the first time calls on allegorical exegesis, as learned from Ambrose. Augustine’s concern to present a hermeneutically structured argument determines the whole essay (Weber 1998, 14–16). In addition to Ambrose, a direct dependence on Origen’s *Homilies on Leviticus* and *On Genesis* is claimed by Weber, following Altaner (1951) and Teske (1992).

A new stage in Augustine’s apprenticeship in biblical hermeneutics was firmly announced shortly after his acceptance of the presbyterate in 391, in another anti-Manichean writing *De utilitate credendi*, which was addressed to his friend Honoratus, still a member of the sect. Here he carefully explains how to distinguish four possible senses of scripture: “historical” (what happened), “aetiological” (why it happened; *aetia*: “cause”); “analogical” (in OT and NT), and “allegorical” (not literal, but figurative). This teaching was communicated just as he received it, in phrases with Greek terms, *secundum historiam, secundum aetiologicaliam, secundum analogiam, secundum allegoriam*. Immediately Augustine explains the foreign terms, for instance: “According to allegory, when one explains that something written should not be taken literally, but be understood figuratively” *non ad litteram esse accipienda quaedam*,

quae scripta sunt, sed figurate intellegenda (3, 5). Augustine's comments on the four senses of scripture extend until the end of 3, 9 with insistent quotations of 1 Corinthians, Galatians and 2 Corinthians (*littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat* 2 Cor 3:6), specially when expanding on "allegory." However the recourse to scripture stops there in the treatise and the hermeneutical teaching remains without much of an application. Indeed another interpretive approach seems to be practised in the contemporary *De utilitate credendi*, a Neoplatonic one: "Augustins antimanichäische Schriften sind in ihrem Gehalt erheblich neuplatonisch geprägt," "Augustine's anti-Manichean writings are distinctively marked in their content by Neoplatonism" (Schäublin 1989, 63).

De Genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber starts as an attempt at a continuous explanation of Genesis 1 by repeating word for word the statement about the four scriptural senses (*modi*) already made in *De utilitate credendi*, though in the "more appealing order, *historia-allegoria-analogia-aetiologia*" (Schäublin 1989, 54). Once more, the hermeneutical statement remains an abstraction, having no relevance for the subsequent exposition. The author multiplies reference to the religious cosmology of other Christian commentators of Genesis; he intersperses these observations with insights of his own which much later, he would elaborate in his definitive *De Genesi ad litteram*, but at this stage he does not engage into any hermeneutic of the "literal sense" as such. That may be the main reason why his first attempt at a continuous commentary ends as early as with Gn 1:16. A theoretical foundation was needed, thought out by Augustine himself before he could resume such a task. It would be his treatise *On Christian Doctrine*.

II. A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION: *DE DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA* (DDC)

It is probably a distinctive mark of gifted intellectual leaders in the Christian movement to engage their creativity simultaneously on a more practical and a properly theoretical level, when deciding to make a valuable contribution to biblical hermeneutics. Origen wrote his treatise *On First Principles* simultaneously with his *Commentary on John*, completed at a later date. Tyconius, the first Latin theoretician of biblical hermeneutics wrote his *Commentary on the Apocalypse* at the time when he focused on his *Liber Regularum*. Augustine does the same in starting *De doctrina christiana* a few months before launching the redaction of his *Confessions*. Karl Barth would do the same in writing and rewriting his *Commentary on Romans*, and at the same time building up the theoretical construct of his so-called "dialectic theology."

The project of *DDC* must have been on its author's mind from the day that he had to face the pastoral duty of preaching the word of God. Even without this clerical charge, Augustine's daily reading of scripture kept him well aware of the needed procedures for its interpretation. Just to know how to select quotations to contradict the scriptural claims of adversaries was not enough for ministering to the community. How would he answer the questions of the faithful puzzled by readings of the liturgy if he had not clarified for himself the main rules appropriate for understanding biblical texts? While the *DDC* directly addresses the pastoral requirements of that exegetical task, it was in a way more significant for its author's idiosyncratic interests than of the social and ecclesiastic context in Hippo around 396. In his early forties Augustine certainly would not have been true to himself had he not anchored his new project in a fresh reassessment of his inner self. On a theoretical level his hermeneutic of sacred scripture would mirror the vital trajectory of his own journey toward a spiritual goal. The first Book of *DDC*, linear and unified in its composition, firm and clear in its distinctions, with the intensity of its statements and its condensed aspirations, describes in forty short *capitula* the deepest personal motivation of the author even more than any exegetical theory: *haec summa est, ut intellegatur legis et omnium divinarum scripturarum plenitudo et finis esse dilectio*, "The chief purpose . . . is to make it understood that the fulfillment and end of the law and all the divine scriptures is to love" (I, xxxv, 39; R. P. H. Green, 84).

Book I recapitulates Augustine's quest during the past ten years. It rests on his inner vision achieved at the end of that decade since baptism. It takes advantage of the literary creativity generated by Augustine's spiritual journey during that recent past. At once, it summarizes past experiences and already announces *Confessions*, the next dramatic initiative bursting forth from the bishop's religious genius. For lack of evidence, all direct datings are blurred, but enough is said by Augustine himself to allow us to locate the composition of the first nine Books of *Confessions* in the two years of interval between Book I and Book II of *DDC*. Indeed the contemporaneity of the two major projects of *DDC* and *Confessions* highlights structural affinities. A circular flow of creative motivation relativizes their chronological sequence, like two complementary expressions of a same authorial urge to express a self-awareness. Like the double face of a same coin, Augustine's fascination with scripture marks the author of the *DDC* who starts by contemplating scripture at the very core of the spiritual journey before expanding into the detail of hermeneutical and rhetorical rulings; whereas, in the reverse order, *Confessions* starts with a long review of detailed incidents and life experiences before ending with the most amazing self-description, in biblical terms, of the

author's spiritual identity in a commentary on Gn 1:1–3 in Books XI–XIII.

DDC I's essential purpose is to explain what a Christian theory of biblical hermeneutics is all about. It is about knowing the right way to approach the divine realities which give Christian faith its foundation and original profile. Scripture is *par excellence* the primary source for such knowledge. It speaks to us as the central revelatory agency made available in the church by God himself mediating through its written message all that God wants us to know for our salvation, therefore it must be studied in the most thorough way possible. Its consistent and accurate interpretation implies a total dedication of its readers' faith, hope and love, in other words, the actual accomplishment of the Law.

According to M. Moreau's recent and illuminating proposal, Book I is divided into two parts: "I–The *res*, objects of *frui* or *uti* (5, 5–21, 19)," and "II–The *res*, subjects of *frui* and *uti* (22, 20–34, 38)"; the two parts are preceded by six preliminary distinctions: *modus inveniendi/modus proferendi; res/signum; frui/uti* (1, 1–4, 4); and followed by a conclusion (35, 39–40, 44). In the first part of Book I the *res* are the eternal realities, objects of sheer enjoyment, grounded in Trinitarian faith, as well as the temporal realities "useful" to faith in God's salvific action, exemplified in Christ and church (Thus the first part evokes the two central affirmations of the Creed, by which God is acclaimed as universal Creator, then professed as active in the history of salvation). The second part of Book I submits the subjective experience of *frui* and *uti* to an analysis of the purpose of scripture, its *telos*, in Mt 22: 37–40: *Diliges Dominum Deum tuum...tota lex pendet et prophetae*—"Love your Lord God...on which the whole Law and the Prophets depend."

The richness and density of both parts draws together the main strands of Augustine's earlier creativity at work in his mind from Cassiciacum to Thagaste and is now placed at the service of the new bishop as he commences the writing of *DDC*. From the *Soliloquies* derives the inspirational Platonic "love," a notion which Augustine would rethink at the core of *DDC* I, and keep in mind throughout the composition of *DDC*. From *De magistro*, dictated in 389 at Thagaste, he borrows the crucial notion of "signs" only to amplify and deepen it before using it to structure the next two Books of *DDC*. In *DDC*, he would revive from *De quantitate animae*, written in Rome two years before *De magistro*, the basic idea of the human soul passing through several stages of levels of being, from a "vegetal" level to the "very vision and contemplation of truth" where one reaches "in reality, a home at which one arrives via those levels" (II, 9–11; cp. I, 7–10 "as a journey or voyage home"). The same idea had already resurfaced in *De vera religione*, with the theme of the seven stages in the spiritual journey from the "old" to the "new"

man. More such thematic affinities between *DDC* and earlier writings of Augustine may be identifiable, but it is not only a set of philosophical and religious commonplaces which one finds resonating. Rather, in a Christian context, *DDC* is a replication of secular rhetorics calling on centuries old learning, not at all as a challenge or a supplement to that learning, but, more candidly, for exploiting its sophisticated resources in order to teach how to interpret scripture.

Book II deals with basic data which the Bible has in common with any other important writing: the very fact of the Bible's being a work of literature and taking into consideration the peculiar style in which it is written leads Augustine in Book III to discuss the biblical style as seen from the outside, from a non-biblical culture. The cultural difference between the biblical world and the world of its reader creates special difficulties, for instance, when figurative phrases are wrongly taken as proper expressions to be understood literally, or when several figurative meanings are equally possible. At that point at the end of III, xxv, 35, with a quotation of Lk 13:21, Augustine interrupted the redaction of *DDC*. It took him thirty years to resume its composition. Augustine's theoretical foundation of biblical hermeneutics was shaken, if not compromised, by such an abrupt ending, a unique case in the bishop's prolific experience as a writer. Certainly, short interruptions happened elsewhere. We even noted one between *DDC* I and *DDC* II. Major works like *De trinitate*, or *De civitate dei*, would need to be reactivated several times after periods of busy distractions, but there is nothing comparable to Augustine's apparent failure to complete *DDC* in 396–397. Even more without parallel is the fact that in 427, the old bishop felt obliged to complete that *opus imperfectum*, while other writings indeed remained “unfinished.”

Augustinian critics frequently tend to minimize, if not ignore, the three decades of interruption, insisting that the author's outline and motivation for *DDC* remained unchanged, or that the interruption was purely circumstantial, and in the end, insignificant. Various fortuitous reasons for that interruption are postulated: A. Pincherle (1947), calculating that the initial work on *Confessions* had anticipated the composition of *DDC* I–III, xxv, 35, thought that the interruption was due to Augustine's eagerness to continue his writing on *Confessions*. Hill (1996) suggested that a request of Bishop Aurelius diverted Augustine's attention to another assignment. Strauss (1953) argued on the basis of *DDC* III, xxv, that the puzzling analysis of *signa ambigua* locked the author in a dead end. More recently, G. Lettieri (1997) concluded that Augustine interrupted *DDC* when he realized that what he had written on *revelatio* in *Ad Simplicianum* 1, 2 was inconsistent with the hermeneutical and soteriological structure of *DDC* in 396. In all cases these hypotheses more

or less tend to overlook the controversial citation of Tyconius introduced by Augustine at the second start of his writing on *DDC* in 427, thus trivializing the extended commentary on the Tyconian rules carefully elaborated until the final line of *DDC* III (see chapter 11, XVI: "Tyconius"). Recent publications have succeeded in opening a new debate on that issue, still a matter of controversy (Bright 1988, 1989, 1995, 1999; Dulaey, Kannengiesser 1989, 1995, 1999, Pollmann 1996, Verduyck 2000).

DDC IV presents the *modus proferendi*, after Books I–III had exposed the *modus inveniendi*. In other words, it deals with the art of communicating the biblical truth "found" and critically established by applying the precepts inculcated in Books II and III. "Communication," in *DDC* IV, makes sense exclusively within the parameters of the rhetorical culture familiar to Augustine. The author opens Book IV with a loud and clear warning for readers expecting him "to outline the precepts of rhetorics which I learned and taught in secular schools," *qui forte me putant rhetorica daturum esse praecepta, quae in scholis saecularibus et didici et docui* (IV, i, 2). However the warning sounds paradoxical since the whole of Book IV will be filled with rhetorical prescriptions, in the same way that the rejection of Tyconius as "a Donatist and a heretic" (*donatista hereticus* III, 30, 43) sounded paradoxical given the exceptional importance which Augustine allows to Tyconius's *Book of Rules*. In both cases, the aged bishop reacts with strictly pastoral concerns, much more constraining at the end of his life than they were in the earlier writing of *DDC* in 396. In fact, Book IV offers a very substantial lesson on (1) the Bible itself as teacher of sacred eloquence, (2) on Christian eloquence, (3) on the ethics of sacred eloquence: a final tribute paid to Cicero by the most eloquent and the most sophisticated of all of Cicero's disciples in the episcopal office during the patristic age.

III. A PRACTICAL EXERCISE IN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS: CONFESSIONS

After months of studious leisure at Cassiciacum, and almost three years of a contemplative retreat at Thagaste where he probably spent much of his time in reading scripture, Augustine had accepted in 391 the presbyteral ordination, not without requesting instantly from the local bishop a leave of absence with the specific purpose of improving his knowledge of sacred scripture. Entering the public service of the church, a church expressly calling on his intellectual leadership, he had conformed to a personal agenda which had biblical studies as its first priority. Through all these years, Augustine

had kept alive the vivid memory of his rhetorical and professional past by which he surpassed most of his educated contemporaries in Roman Africa. However his new life-commitment as a Catholic on the provincial scene of a church divided by the Donatist schism firmly urged him to submit his skills to the divine authority of scripture. That appeared to him to be his only responsible option in face of the troubled situation of the community of believers to which he would be dedicated for the rest of his life. His public rejection of the Manichean sect had already entailed a few substantial essays. His real challenge now was to gain a grasp on scripture no longer limited to the kind of polemics conditioned by his unfortunate nine years in the sect of Mani, but henceforth oriented towards a fruitful assimilation of biblical and spiritual values inside the new institutional frame of his life. To be a member of the church could only mean for Augustine the presbyter, to exercise the same degree of literacy in ecclesiastical culture which he had so brilliantly displayed in his secular past. Therefore scripture was for him *the* challenge to face. In order to face it, not only did he beg for help among church authorities like Aurelius of Carthage, his hierarchical superior (*Letter* 41), but he also mobilized the many resources of his rhetorical expertise.

The passion of his recent conversion fused with his newly acquired biblical knowledge drew Augustine to conceive a project highly significant of his introspective creativity, the *Confessions*. Psalmic lyrics and Pauline affirmations would help him to project an image of his past journey, capable of opposing sectarian claims of Donatists and Manichees alike, in showing how a true sinner could eloquently also claim to be a true member of the church.

Augustine's hermeneutical approach to the Bible in *Confessions* was of a practical nature, not aimed like in *DDC* at teaching *others* how to use scripture, but primarily *self-serving*. The author, already invested for six years with the sacramental dignity of the presbyterate and since April 397 sole bishop of Hippo after the death of Valerius, was now deprived of the spiritual support of Ambrose, his distant, but still inspiring model of Milan (Ambrose died April 4, 397). With the genius of his own sensibility, Augustine needed to redefine his whole person in the sacred terms of divine scripture, the only form of language appropriate in the church, as he had learned from Ambrose. Eager to acknowledge such a fundamental need, Augustine responded to it with the literary inventiveness which he had so much enjoyed at Thagaste, illustrated in particular by *De magistro*, the dialogues with his son, Adeodatus. A restless intellectual, determined to assume his new pastoral dimension, he conceived a literary project for which the Christian tradition did not provide any precedent, namely a story of his life illustrating the spiritual

values by which he was re-defining himself through his scripture readings and through his service to the church.

Some modern editor has counted up to seventeen hundred biblical references in *Confessions*, implicit quotations and allusions included. But the picture of a massive use of scripture should not mislead. Book I, for instance, starts just like another *Soliloquium* with here and there prayerful lyrics mingling with the familiar voices of the Psalms, Paul and Job, of Jeremiah, even with some allusive Gospel wordings, but the biblical strata always remains slightly below the surface of the text and never becomes explicit as a citation. In Book II, the autobiographical purpose gains some momentum, but it does not entail any biblical quotation. Not a single direct quotation of that sort imposes itself on the author of *Confessions* in the next five Books. On the other hand, Augustine's purpose to "confess" himself in retracing the convoluted itinerary of his spiritual journey out of his childhood and adolescence by no means repudiates his growing familiarity with scripture. In Book III he turns to the Bible after his reading of Cicero's *Hortensius*. He obviously continues to be inspired by scripture in his autobiographical narration. His anti-Manichean outbursts occasionally confirm his submission to the divine authority of scripture in Book IV, V, and VII. Although in Book VI, he celebrates the merits of Ambrose's distinction between "letter" and Spirit" in the exegesis of the Bible, one must wait until near the end of Book VIII (after Book VII had explained precisely what the books of the Platonists ignored in matters of spiritual humility) for encountering in *Confessions* the first explicit biblical quotation: *vade, vende omnia quae habes, da pauperibus et habebis thesaurum in caelis; et veni, sequere me*, "Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and then you will have riches in heaven; and come, follow me" (Mt 19:21). Even this *locus classicus* of the evangelical call to conversion, far from being addressed to the author, is only a memory, but a crucial one, crossing his mind at the climax of his own religious crisis: "For I had heard of Antony (the Hermit), that by hearing of the Gospel which he once chanced to come in upon..." (Loeb 18, 12). In reaction to the philosophical pride of the Platonists and in deep admiration for Victorinus's humility, by which this famous rhetor converted from philosophy to the message of scripture, Augustine himself at long last reached to the needed humility for opening "the Apostle's book.... I opened it, and in silence I read:...'Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and in wantonness...' (Rm 13:13)." Helped by Alypius he also read: "Him that is weak in faith, receive" (Rm 14:1).

Having established himself in the attitude of humble faith, the author of *Confessions* can now successfully appropriate the sacred text. In Book IX, for the first time in his life, Augustine dares to punctuate the whole chapter

4 with comments on different verses cited in their natural order of Psalm 4. His “transition” on “memory” in Book X ends with a hardly perceptible echoing of 2 Cor 5:18, but for the last three Books XI–XIII, Augustine adopts an inquisitive style and multiplies the admissions of his ignorance in such an intense discussion of Gn 1:1–3, that the biblical commentary in itself becomes his confession, or vice-versa (see the following contribution of P. Bright). For the modern reader, over the abyss of a millennium and a half of Western history, these last Books of *Confessions* already announce the much more deliberate hermeneutical experimentation to which Augustine would submit himself in *De Genesi ad litteram*.

A last observation on these last three books of *Confessions*. In Book XI, the literal enunciation of Gn 1:1, “In the beginning,” induces Augustine to wonder about the nature of time. His reaction is comparable to the crossing of an ocean of cultural legacies: the full cycle of scholarly disciplines is invested in his attempt to determine the nature of time, given the fact of the original creation of all things. Divine scripture challenged the dedicated “self” of the interpreter by imposing on him to place all his past learning at the service of the biblical *littera*, for that *littera* makes sense only, in Augustine’s view, by enabling him to succeed in a coherent retrieving of his own cultural heritage. It is noticeable that Augustine’s conceptual clarification about the nature of time does not require one single quotation from scripture that would count for his argument (only a historical circumstance is recalled by quoting Mt 3:17 in XI:6). Implicit paraphrases, mainly of psalms, abound with a few more of Matthew, John and Paul.

In Book XII, the same verse of Gn 1:1 turns Augustine’s attention towards space, or absence of space (a turn similar to the one which would be imposed much later on Immanuel Kant by transcendental subjectivism). The notion of “heaven of heavens” helps Augustine to emphasize divine transcendency, with only one direct, though adapted, reference to 2 Cor 5:21 in XII, 15. Using the figure of Moses as author of the Book of Genesis for a literary inclusion of much significance (XII, 23–27), he discusses the diverse exegetical opinions on the matter in presuming that multiple interpretations of scripture are to be treated as a set of philosophical opinions whose diversity is, in the final analysis, of no importance given the transcendent nature of divine truth in scripture.

In Book XIII the powerful image of the “firmament of your book” introduces and concludes, *firmamentum libri tui* (XIII, 15)—*firmamento scripturae tuae* (XIII, 18), a celebration of the works of creation prolonged until the end of the *Confessions*.

Pellegrino, M., *Le "Confessioni" di Sant' Agostino*. Studio Introduttivo. Rome, 1956.
Les Confessions de Saint Augustin. Paris, 1961 ("Éléments dérivés: influence de la Bible," 292–300).

For Augustine's use of scripture in *Confessions* XI–XIII, see:

Bright, P. "Conversing with God and Others: Scripture in a Community of Discourse (*Confessions* Books X–XIII)": P. Allen, *al.*, eds., *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, I. Everton Park, Queensland, 1998, 327–38.

O'Rourke Boyle, M., "The Prudential Augustine: The Virtuous Structure and Sense of His *Confessions*": *RechAug* XXII (1987) 129–50.

Kienzler, K., "Der Aufbau der 'Confessiones' des Augustinus im Spiegel der Bibelzitate": *RechAug* XXIV (1989) 123–64.

IV. THE "TRUTH" OF SCRIPTURE: *DE TRINITATE*, I–IV

In a strong shift from the inventive fervor of the last books of *Confessions* into the rigorous demands of composing the *De Trinitate*, the bishop of Hippo reverted to the teaching stance in which he had already composed the first three books of *De doctrina christiana*. As in *De doctrina christiana*, he introduced Book I of *De Trinitate* by denouncing three categories of potential adversaries, the third being the most unacceptable: "They would seem both to know what they do not, and cannot, know" (I, 1). The first four books of *De Trinitate* are an elaboration of biblical sources of Trinitarian thought. They have many features in common with the last three books of *Confessions*, but they are very different in their use of scripture. From the author's very first observation in *De Trinitate* on "holy scripture which suits itself to babes" (I, 2) an explicit and consistent biblical quotation enhances Augustine's biblical arguments. The dogmatic aim of the work obviously entails its proper hermeneutics, which belong now to a *demonstrative* genre warranted by *canonical* rules, and no longer to the *narrative* genre of *Confessions* for which Augustine had fixed his own rules.

Thinking over the sheer possibility, as well as the content, of trinitarian faith was for the bishop in itself a noble enterprise, "first, however, we must demonstrate according to the authority of the holy scripture, whether the faith be so" (1, 4). Another basic requirement was to conform with the interpretive tradition of the church: "All those catholic expounders of the divine scriptures both Old and New whom I have been able to read, who have written before me concerning the Trinity who is God, have purposed

to teach this doctrine according to the scriptures..." (1, 7) summarized by the Creed and supported by numerous proof texts. "In these and like testimonies of the divine scriptures by the free use of which, as I have said, our predecessors expounded such sophistries or errors of heretics, the unity and equality of the Trinity are intimated to our faith" (1, 14). Thus the dogmatic discourse rests on a judicious choice of scriptural quotations already debated at length by (mainly Greek) "predecessors" of past centuries. It becomes the more intriguing to observe Augustine's own contribution to the history of biblical interpretation in his application of biblical hermeneutics throughout *De Trinitate*.

Before ending Book I, Augustine emphasizes a first "rule" for such hermeneutics: "Wherefore, having mastered this rule for interpreting the scriptures, *ista regula intellegendarum scripturarum*, concerning the Son of God, that we are to distinguish in them what relates to the form of God, in which he is equal to the Father and what to the form of a servant which he took in which he is less than the Father, we shall not be disquieted by apparently contrary and mutually repugnant sayings of the sacred books" (1, 22). If Augustine was aware or not of here coming close to specific statements made by his "predecessors" we do not need to decide, but the fact is that "this rule for interpreting scripture" leads him first to discuss the Gospels, introducing Jesus in "the form of a servant" before engaging into any consideration of the divinity of Christ, thus reversing the order, for instance, of the Athanasian *Contra Arianos* where the discussion of the Logos Incarnate as a "servant" always follows extensive debates on the nature of his divinity.

At the start of Book II, the Preface announces a strong resolve to face the challenges of contemplating divine Trinity: "I will not be slow to search out the substance of God, whether through his scripture or through the creature, for both of these are set forth for our contemplation to this end, that he may himself be sought." The "rule" already enunciated in the Preface is repeated at the top of the main exposition: "We hold most firmly, concerning Our Lord Jesus Christ, what may be called the canonical rule, as it is both disseminated through the scriptures, and has been demonstrated by learned and catholic handlers of the same scriptures," *per scripturas disseminatam et a doctis catholicis earundem scripturarum tractatoribus demonstratam tanquam canonicam regulam* (1, 2) about the two natures of Christ; "yet there are some things in the sacred texts so put as to leave it ambiguous (*ut ambiguum sit*) to which rule they are rather to be referred; whether to that by which we understand the Son as less, in that he has taken upon him the creature, or to that by which we understand that the Son is not indeed less than, but equal to, the Father, but yet that he is from him, God of God, Light of Light."

Firmly leaning on the dogmatic conclusions of his unnamed “predecessors,” and remembering the recommendation of *De doctrina christiana* in the case of scriptural ambiguities (cf *DDC* II 6, 7) before the end of Book II, Augustine hastens towards the familiar territory of biblical symbolism much needed for his forthcoming demonstration: “Nor again, as we call the Son a rock (for it is written, ‘And that rock was Christ,’ 1 Cor 10:4), can we so call the Spirit a dove or fire. For that rock was a thing already created, and after the mode of its action was called by the name of Christ, whom it signified; like the stone placed under Jacob’s head, and also anointed, which he took in order to signify the Lord; or as Isaac was Christ, when he carried the wood for the sacrifice of himself. A particular significative action was added to those already existing things; they did not, as that dove (Mt 3:16) and fire (Acts 2:3), suddenly come into being in order simply to signify” (2, 11). Without using technical terms Augustine refers to the kind of typology already practised inside scripture before it was further elaborated by his predecessors in the art of commenting on scripture. In the Preface of Book III, he repeats with an unusual insistence the debt of learning which he owes those former commentators with regard to the scriptural foundation of Trinitarian faith, not discounting the merits of his own research: “I myself confess that I have by writing learned many things which I did not know...supported, then, very greatly and aided by the writings we have already read of others on this subject...”

The purpose of Book III is to state the absolute transcendency of God before discussing or “theophanies.” Those divine apparitions to Abraham, Moses and others, do not imply any visible essence of God, nor any changes in that essence. The book focuses on that issue. It is noticeable that in the Preface of Book IV, still close to *DDC* I, Augustine recovers the lyrical accents of prayer in his *Confessions*. His humble self-depreciation is balanced by a firm affirmation of “thy truth,” *veritas tua*: “And this truth, changeable though I am, I so far drink in, as far as in it I see nothing changeable...for the essence of God, whereby he is, has altogether nothing changeable, neither in eternity, not in truth, nor in will.” Without further technicality the author expresses once more his central conviction: interpreting scripture means accounting for divine truth as such. What is read in scripture refers always to that truth personified in Christ. “Because therefore the Word of God is one, by which all things were made which is the unchangeable truth, all things are simultaneously therein, potentially and unchangeably; not only those things which are now in the whole creation, but also those which have been and those which shall be.” The whole interpretation of Genesis I which Augustine

would develop later on in *De Genesi ad litteram* is announced here, based on his dogmatic concept of divine truth in scripture.

V. *EXPLORING THE LITERAL SENSE:
DE GENESI AD LITTERAM I–IX*

The first nine books of *De Genesi ad litteram* were composed in 401 and 402. Books X–XII, like the last three books of *Confessions*, were progressively added to the unfinished work up to 415.

In Augustine's many-faceted literary output, *De Genesis ad litteram* would remain a unique attempt to write a proper commentary of scripture. After his earlier refutation of Manichean ideas about the creation of the world, and his theoretical outline on biblical hermeneutics in *DDC*, Augustine had attempted to exercise a consistent use of scripture in the different literary genres to which belong *Confessions* and the dogmatic treatise *De Trinitate*. He did not consider the last three books of *Confessions* as a proper commentary on Genesis I because they were more aimed at retrieving his inner journey in the light of Genesis than at focusing on the biblical text for itself. In truth he had never before faced the task at expounding for itself the biblical *littera* in its immediate enunciation and its natural order. Augustine's candor in turning to the risky challenge of a proper commentary is a mark of his genius.

He mentions no specific adversaries whose thought would bother him at the start of the work, nor does he feel the need to call again on the canonical authority of "predecessors" or church institutions as he did in venturing into the composition of *De Trinitate*. His only 'adversary' in this case would have been his own lack of a formulated understanding of Genesis I–III. He would fight his own deficient rationale about Genesis from one biblical word to another. The only sacred authority to which he would submit the composition of his commentary would be the divine *littera* itself. There is something paradoxical, even puzzling, in the apparently innocent reception of the *littera* by Augustine. At once he qualified the *littera* as "figurative," "No Christian will dare say that the narrative must not be taken in a figurative sense" (I, 1, 1); and goes on to wonder: "What meaning other than the allegorical have the words 'in the beginning God created heaven and earth' (Gn 1:1)" (I, 1, 2), only to argue page after page until the end of Book I about all the possible meanings of each biblical word taken at face value.

For in the bishop's approach, the *littera* happens to be a formidable screen,

at once showing and hiding the meaning of God's written message; a screen on which the interpreter would unremittingly project his questions and reactions, not without observing how irrelevant his behavior might be: "Perhaps this is an absurdly material way of thinking and speculating on the matter" (I, 2, 5). Taken one word after another, line after line, the text of scripture constantly imposes itself on the interpreter, and reinforces its categorical requirements as the objective and definitive expression of divine truths, by definition, unchangeable. Therefore, for Augustine, "interpretation" would mean allowing one's own thought to be consonant with the *littera*. Thus in front of the literal "screen" of scripture a drama develops in the interpreter's mind, keeping the *littera* itself untouched and undisputed, but plunging Augustine into a decisive crisis of a hermeneutical nature. Through a consistent questioning of the biblical text (and of himself) about "light," "water," "darkness," "heaven and earth," and the Spirit "stirring above the waters," this commentator of Gn 1: 1–5 would conclude in recognizing his apparent failure. He had kept true to his initial purpose, "to discuss sacred scripture according to the plain meaning of the historical facts, not according to future events which they foreshadow" (I. 17. 34), but he would wisely conclude: "God does not work under the limits of time by motions of body and soul, as do men and angels, but by the eternal, unchangeable and fixed exemplars of his co-eternal Word, ... hence we must not think of the matter in a human way, as if the utterances of God were subject to time throughout the various days of God's works." The *littera* itself, being "utterances of God," transcends human thinking. A true interpreter verifies that transcendency in exposing to the mystic evidence of the *littera* all his thinking, rational yet deficient as it may be.

Book II, on Gn 1:6–8 or on Ps 135:6, "can with good reason be understood figuratively," or better allegorically, as speaking about "spiritual and carnal persons in the church" (II, 1, 4), but that is not Augustine's present purpose. Though other commentators start interfering in his exegetical exercise, such as "people who engage in learned discussions about the weights of the elements," "a certain commentator" (who is Basil of Caesarea; II, 4, 7); or again "certain writers" (II, 5, 9), "certain commentators" (II, 6, 10), nobody distracts him from multiplying his own questions and common-sense observations. He is confident that "the authority of scripture in this matter is greater than all human ingenuity" (II, 5, 9), and that "the narrative of the inspired writer brings the matter down to the capacity of children" (II, 6, 13). Only once does the author refer to an interpretation that would deviate from the plain sense of the text under scrutiny, in recalling the beautiful image of the scripture-firmament in his former work: "My allegorical interpretation of

this passage (Ps 103:2, 'who stretches out heaven like a skin') can be found in the thirteenth book of my *Confessions*" (II, 9, 22).

Book III, about "The works of the fifth and the sixth days," proceeds in the same brilliant yet somehow pedestrian way as Book I and II, by bringing the *littera* close to daily sense experience, a procedure which occasionally gives the author some satisfaction: "Considerable light is now thrown on this text [Gn I:21] which seemed obscure at first" (II, 7, 10). Several questions are postponed: "Concerning this question there may be an occasion later on, God willing, for a more thorough discussion" (III, 3, 4); "Later on there will be ample opportunity to treat more thoroughly the nature of man" (III, 19, 29); "This theory [about a possible "baby boom" without the Fall] can be proposed, although how it could all be explained is another matter" (III, 21, 33); and "As I have already indicated, we shall later investigate more thoroughly the rest of the biblical account of the creation of man" (III, 22, 34).

Book IV recapitulates the consideration of the six days in the former books and ponders the biblical phrase of "God's rest." In that recapitulation one finds a new emphasis on what would become a distinctively Augustinian mark in the present commentary: The author introduces the Book by pointing out very precisely: "It is a laborious and difficult task for the powers of our human understanding to see clearly the meaning of the sacred writer in the matter of these six days" (IV, 1, 1). After a brilliant summary of mystical numerology about the "six days," flanked with the severe *caveat*: "We must first drive from our minds all anthropomorphic concepts that men might have" (IV, 8, 15), Augustine stresses the radical transcendency of God about the "rest" of the seventh day, only to conclude: "But now, in view of what we have seen about the seventh day, it is easier to admit our ignorance of a thing that is beyond our experience.... It is easier to confess our ignorance of these matters than to go against the obvious meaning of the words of holy scripture by saying that the seventh day is something else than the seventh recurrence of the day that God made" (IV, 21, 38). Thus the *confession of ignorance* generates the idea of seven recurrences of the same primordial "day." That idea, immediately examined through more reasoning, allows Augustine to dig out from "the evidence of scripture" other arguments in favor of the transcendent meaning of "day": "Otherwise we might be forced to say, against the evidence of scripture that beyond the works of the six days a creature was made on the seventh day, or that the seventh day itself was not a creature" (IV, 26, 43). That transcendent meaning, he insists, has nothing to do with "some figurative and allegorical way" of interpreting "day," "evening," or "morning"; it "must be understood not in a prophetic or

figurative sense”, but literally (IV, 28, 45), which, he significantly observes, does not exclude a variety of interpretations.

Here one reaches the ground of the interpreter’s intimate conviction: by divine inspiration the true nature of the biblical *littera* conveys enough of God’s own transcendency for enabling its interpreters to formulate such paradoxical notions as the one to which Augustine now turns, the notion of the simultaneous creation of all things: “For this scripture text that narrates the works of God according to the days mentioned above, and that scripture text that says God created all things together, are both true. And the two are one, because sacred scripture was written under the inspiration of the one Spirit of truth” (IV, 34, 53). In the following books of *De Genesi ad litteram*, it is through the experience of sacred “literalism” that Augustine deepened his distinctive attitude as an interpreter of scripture: “You must understand that this day (Gn 2:5) was seven times repeated to make up the seven days.... Holy scripture indeed, speaks in such a way as to mock proud readers with its heights, terrify the attentive with its depths, feed great souls with its truths, and nourish little ones with sweetness” (V, 3, 6).

The humble confession of “ignorance” by the “great soul” claiming here to perceive the “truth” of scripture will become more and more, the central element in the completion of *De Genesi ad litteram*, as it was already the case in *Confessions*. As in V, 7, 22 about Gn 2:6, the commentary would often take on the shape of accumulated questions begging their answers. “Ignorance” will be repeatedly linked with interpretation: “In our ignorance (*nescientis*) we conjecture about possible events which the writer omitted knowingly. In our efforts according to our limited ability we try with God’s help to see that no absurdity or contradiction have be thought to be present in sacred scripture to offend the mind of the reader” (V, 8, 23). “In this whole wide universe created by God there are many things we do not know” (V, 18, 36). “Scripture does not permit us to understand that in this manner the man and woman were made on the sixth day, and yet it does not allow us to assume that they were not made on the sixth day at all” (VI, 6, 11). “Within the limits of our human intelligence we can know the nature of a being we have observed by experience in so far as past time is concerned, but with regards to the future, we are ignorant” (VI, 16, 27). “If the foregoing conclusion is valid we are attempting in vain to find a literal meaning” (VI, 21, 32). “Nevertheless, as I weigh these considerations, I do not want to make any hasty declarations but rather to wait and see whether the text of scripture elsewhere is not against my interpretation” (VI, 28, 39). “Whether in the present study, I shall find some certain and final answer (about ‘the problem of the soul’), I know not” (VI, 29, 40),—the final statement of Book VI.

From Book VII *De Genesi ad litteram* engages into a changed mode of composition. Each Book focuses now on given issues whose philosophical discussion is occasioned by the biblical text. In VII, it is the origin and nature of the human soul referred to in Gn 2:7 which is at stake. In VIII, it is the “garden of Eden” of Gn 2:8; in IX, the creation of woman (Gen 2:21); in X, again, the origin of the human soul, and finally in XI, the sin of Adam and Eve (Book XII, on the “third heaven” is a later addition, as noted by Augustine himself, *Retract* II, xxiv, 1 *duodecimum addidi*). In that sequence of Books Augustine finds several occasions to admit the limits of his understanding (VII, 3,7:28, 43; VIII, 5, 9; X, 1, 2; 3, 6; 4, 7; 15, 27; 23, 39; XI, 6, 8; 10, 13; 19, 26); he also repeatedly expresses (at least until XI, 1–2!) his firm determination to avoid allegorizing the text of Genesis (VIII, 1, 2; 1, 4; 2, 5; 4, 8; 5, 10; 6, 12; 7, 13; 18, 37; IX, 14, 24; 16, 30; XI, 34, 45), but the focus of his attention has become more distant from the biblical *littera*, more self-contained in philosophical arguments. Therefore the dramatic confession of “ignorance” bound with the hermeneutical inquiries about the literal meaning of Genesis in the former Books of *De Trinitate* no longer occurs. It clearly shows that Augustine’s interpretive experience in *De Genesi ad litteram*, determined as he was to give a full account of the very *littera* of Genesis and of the *littera* alone, confirmed him in the highly inspiring attitude of intellectual humility which he had already increasingly emphasized in his *Confessions*. The interpretation of scripture understood as pervaded by *docta ignorantia*, as Augustine called it as *Letter* 130 written in 411, when he was in the midst of writing *De Genesi ad litteram* (completed in 416), would thereby receive its proper Augustinian mark. In *Retractationes* II, xxiv the aged bishop consistently noted about *De Genesi ad litteram*: “In this work there are more questions raised than answers found, and of the answers found, not many have been established for certain. Those that are not certain have been proposed for further study” (transl. J. H. Taylor 1982, I, 4), *In hoc opere plura quaesita quam inventa sunt, et eorum quae inventa sunt pauciora firmata, cetera vero ita posita, velut adhuc requirenda sunt* (CSEL xxxvi. ed. P. Knöll, 1902: II, L, 159f.; CCSL LVII, ed. A. Mutzenbecher, 1984: II, xxiv, 109f.).

VI. THE BIBLICAL SCHOLAR

The two early polemical essays of an exegetical nature, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, *De Genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber*, with the much more important theoretical work *De doctrina christiana* and the personal inventiveness in *De Genesi ad litteram*, have already received notice. Under

the present rubric are collected literary products of Augustine's scholarly practice: a set of answers to specific *quaestiones* raised by the "brothers" of his monastic group during their common reading of scripture, or by people like the Milanese priest Simplicianus. Added are a Commentary on Matthew 5–7, some marginal notes on Job, two letters to Jerome, and a late scholarly exercise on the Heptateuch. All these written traces of Augustine's life-long dedication to studying scripture, fill up the three decades of his presbyteral and episcopal ministry. Most helpful precisions on these scholarly papers are given by G. Madec, *Introduction aux 'Révisions' et à la lecture des oeuvres de saint Augustin*, Paris, 1996. Also: M.-J. Lagrange (1931). For Augustine as "réviseur de la Bible," De Bruyne, 1931, 521–606, remains indispensable.

De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus

The 83 *Quaestiones* are indeed extremely diverse, as expressly stated by Augustine himself in *Retract* I, 26. Collected on free sheets of paper by "brothers," such as Alypius, Severus, Profuturus, and Possidius, in Augustine's improvised community of Thagaste (Fall 388–mid May/August 389), they reflect a shift in favor of biblical studies after Augustine's priestly ordination in 391 (*Epist* 21, 3). From lively discussions during the five or six years preceding Augustine's episcopate (395/7) derived essays like *De Genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber*, *De sermone domini in monte*, *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex epistola ad Romanos*, *Epistolae ad Galatas expositio*, *Epistolae ad Romanos inchoata expositio*. The 83 *Quaestiones* (casually assembled and edited by the "brothers" but numbered by Augustine himself) start with a set of fifty, dating from 387–391, and are mainly philosophical. A second set consists of groups of *quaestiones* determined by biblical texts under scrutiny, and close to Augustine's biblical works of the time: *Qu* 51–55 on OT , 56–57 on John, 59–60 on Matthew, 61–65, again on John, 66–68 on Romans, 69–70 on 1 Corinthians, 71 on Galatians, 72 on Titus, 73 on Philippians, 74 on Colossians, 75 again on Romans, 76 on James, 79 (like *Qu* 57 edited with pseudo Augustinian elements) in Exodus, 82 on Hebrews (some non exegetical *Quaestiones* are inserted here and there: *Qu* 62, 77, 78, 80, 81). As a whole the second set of essentially biblical "diverse questions" dates from the leave of absence for bible study granted to Augustine when ordained priest in 391 Both sets of *De diversis quaestionibus* "testify to Augustine's spiritual journey during the period starting when the biographical report of *Confessions* ends" (Mutzenbecher, 1975, xliii).

- Qu 51 Gn 1:26
 52 6:7
 53 Ex 3:22; 11:2; 12:35–36
 54 Ps 72:28, strictly philosophical on body, soul, God.
 55 Sg 6:7
 56 Jn 2:20, numerology.
 57 21:6–11, numerology.
 58 Mt 3:1–12 etc.; John the Baptist.
 59 25:1–13, ten virgins.
 60 24:36, doomsday.
 61 Jn 6:3–13.
 62 4:1–2.
 63 1:1, *Logos = ratio or verbum*.
 64 4:6–29, with a general rule: *in omnibus scripturis summa
 vigilantia custodiri oportet et secundum fidem sit sac-
 ramenti divini expositio* (137, 11f.).
 65 Jn 11:17–44.
 66 Rom 7:1–8:11.
 67 8:18–24.
 68 9:20.
 69 1 Cor 15:28.
 70 15:54–56.
 71 Gal 6:2.
 72 Tit 1:2.
 73 Phil 2:7.
 74 Col 1:14–15.
 75 Heb 9:17.
 76 Jas 2:20.
 (77, 78: non exegetical)
 79 Ex 7–8, on the miracles performed by Pharaoh's
 magicians.
 80 *Adv Apollinaristas*
 81 *De quadragesima et quinquagesima*
 82 Heb 12:6.
 83 *De coniugio* (Mt 5:32; 1 Cor 7:10–13).

In the first set of fifty *quaestiones* a very first allusion to scripture occurs in *Qu* 11, the first quotation of scripture in *Qu* 27. Only from *Qu* 35 on biblical references multiply. In *Qu* 35, 36, 38, 39, and still in *Qu* 54, Augustine's

arguments are aiming towards the biblical quotations given at the end of the *quaestio*, whereas in the second set (*Qu* 51–83) the biblical text is center stage in each *quaestio*. After *Qu* 57, specially in the second half of *Qu* 61, full developments in Augustine's exposition offer mainly a sequence of biblical quotations.

Expositio quarundam propositionem ex epistola ad Romanos

In *Retract* I, 22, 1, Augustine explains that the short essay consists in answers given to “brothers” in 394. Without much editing we hear echoes of discussions entertained by Augustine and his friends during the happy years of their spiritual incubation at Thagaste. As a bishop, Augustine would never use it. The first to mention it in a much later time would be Cassiodorus, *Inst div* 1, 1, 13. (See O. Bardenhewer, *Misc Agost* 2, 1931, 879–883).

Epistolae ad Galatas expositionis liber unus (Retract I, 24)

Of the same nature as the *Expositio* above, attempted after the return to Hippo.

Epistolae ad Romanos inchoata expositio (Retract I, 25)

Another attempt quickly interrupted when found too difficult.

De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum (Winter 395–396: Perler Mard 177)

The work has been composed according to the genre of *Quaestiones et Responsiones* inaugurated by Philo on Genesis and Exodus, and acclimated to Christian literature by Ambrosiaster ca. 370–375.

Qu. 1, 1 on Rom 7:7–25, opposes the Manichean exegesis of two “Laws,” one “good,” the other for “death.” Augustine proceeds by exploring the passage verse after verse in a continuous exegesis which actually exceeds the limits of the genre.

Qu. 1, 2 on Rom 9–29, a passage ignored by Marcion, but used by Origen in defense of free will and divine justice. A similar use was already noticeable in Ambrosiaster, and in Augustine, in *Rom* 6 and 62 (in 394/5).

Qu. 2, 1 is about 1 Kgs 10:10 and 16:14: is the literal meaning contradictory?

Qu. 2, 2 treats 1 Kgs 15:11. Marcion had also wondered how God could “repent” and he had concluded that there was a different God in OT and NT. The same question was raised by Manichees, hence Augustine's answer defends the OT.

Qu. 2, 3 is about 1 Kgs 28:7–19. In line with a tradition marked by

Origen, Eustathius, Ambrosiaster and Philaster, Augustine explains that the *pytonissa* does not mean that evil power can exercise its dominion over virtuous souls.

Qu. 2, 4 treats 2 Kgs 7:18. Augustine peacefully clarifies the literal meaning.

Qu. 2, 5 treats 3 Kgs 17:20. It is also free from polemics and Augustine's answer remains purely exegetical. In an eloquent paraphrase (*Ita ergo dictum est, ac si diceret*, "It is expressed as to say...") and by calling on the broader scriptural context (*Multa sunt autem in scripturis quae*, "Much is said in scripture which") Augustine clarifies the somewhat "obscure," (*obscuram*) sentence in Elijah's badly transmitted statement, *non servata pronuntiatio*.

So much for the exegetical elements in *De diversis quaestionibus*, the rest belonging to heresiology.

De sermone domini

The essay was composed between late August 392 and late 396 as a continuous commentary on the literal meaning of Mt 5–7, with as central theme the progressive acquisition of Christian perfection in seven stages, determined by the seven Beatitudes of Matthew (the eighth transcending the series is a symbol of eternity. Augustine links the beatitudes with the seven gifts of the Spirit according to Isaiah 11:2–3, but he contemplates them in their reverse order and in the light of the seven (not six!) requests of the prayer, Our Father.

Book I, commenting on Beatitudes 1–5, focuses on Mt 5. Book II, discussing Beatitudes 6 and 7, deals with Mt 6–7. Indeed the first five Beatitudes direct people towards *bona opera*, the last two turn their attention toward *contemplatio summi boni*. In *De consensu evangelistarum* (1, 5, 8), dating from 400, Augustine would use that same division for commenting on *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

Ten years before Augustine, Ambrose had written on the same topic in his *Commentary on Luke*, V, not without discreetly referring to his source, Gregory of Nyssa's eight Homilies on the Beatitudes delivered during Lent 387. That Augustine's exegesis, though without being servile, directly depends on Ambrose is certain; that he knew also Gregory's Homilies seems probable, but needs further verification.

Adnotationes in Job

They date from 399. They "are marginal notes added by Augustine to a codex, collected and edited by disciples. In Augustine's own observation, they are the more difficult to understand as in many of them the biblical

phrases interpreted have not been noted, and the very text of the biblical book was severely questionable (*Retract* II, 13). The same must be said of the *Expositio ... epistolae Iacobi* (*Retract* II, 32). They are not proper books, but only valuable witnesses to Augustine's study of the Bible." (G. Madec, *Introduction aux 'Révisions' et à la lecture des oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, Paris, 1996, 56).

De consensu evangelistarum (399/400)

Expositio epistolae Iacobi ad duodecim tribus (before 411, lost).

Ad Hieronymum presbyterum libri duo

These libri are, in fact, two letters given to Orosius in 415 for being delivered to Jerome. They were "published" only after Jerome's death (420).

Locutiones/Quaestiones in Heptateuchum (*Retract* II, 54–55)

The work was composed at the time when Augustine was writing Books XV–XVI of the *City of God* probably in 419/20. It consists of a minute exercise of literal exegesis on the first seven books of OT by which *idiomata* and *proprietas*, "words" and "particularities" of the Greek and Hebrew language taken over without explanation into *Vetus Latina* translations of the Bible are clarified. Occasionally Augustine compares the Latin text with the LXX Greek, but "hastily" *tamquam a festinantibus* (Prooemium). For the Questions on Genesis, see Cavallera (1931).

Quaestiones in evangelium

Quaestiones XVI in Matthaem

VII. THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Enarrationes in Psalmos

"The great biblical discovery of Augustine during his stay at Cassiciacum was the Davidic Psalms" (La Bonnardière 1986, 44), a discovery which he would reiterate and deepen throughout his pastoral activity until the day when psalmic verses copied in large characters would be posted on the walls where he was dying in 430.

As noted by the editors of *St. Augustine on the Psalms* in ACW., 29 (1962), the *Enarrationes* (a title in use only since Erasmus) "fall into four

classes, in which the written commentaries often differ considerably from those delivered orally: (a) brief exegetical notes (Ps 11–32); (b) more detailed commentaries (Ps 1–10); (c) dictated expositions in sermon form, possibly read aloud in church by his priests; (d) proper sermons. Certain psalms demanded more than one commentary: there are two on many of them; three on Ps 32, 33 and 36; four on Ps 30 and 103; and no fewer than thirty-two on Ps 118!

The dating of the *Enarrationes* was subjected to much scrutiny since W.W.II: Zarb, 1948. The major results of that research are that *Enn* on Ps 1–32 were composed as early as 392, whereas the commentary on Ps 118, Augustine's last *Enn*, dates from 418. A chronological list of the *Enarrationes* is printed in ACW 29, 17–19; another one in CCSL XXXVIII, pp. xv–xviii add La Bonnardière, *Recherches*, 1965; Le Landais, M., *Deux années* (1953).

Some of the sermons on the psalms were preached at Hippo or Carthage (De Bruyne, 1931), seven others at Thagaste, and one at Utica. “They have the freedom, the forcefulness and the penetrating simplicity of the spoken word, added to the inexorable realism which characterizes all Augustine's sermons to the people. One gathers the impression, from many of these lively homilies that they are addresses of a pastor of souls to a flock whom he loves and knows intimately. Their homely metaphors and flashes of wit, their wordplay, assonance, and rhythms must have sent many a listener home chuckling with appreciation.” The imaginative perception of Augustine's preaching style by Dame Scholastica Hebgin and Dame Felicitas Corrigan (ACW 29, 1960, 5) is representative of the unanimous chorus of praise magnified by modern critics. The thematic richness of Augustine's sermons on the psalms adds to the thrill of their lively style.

The *Enarrationes*, similar to the *City of God*, depict a “spiritual history of humankind” (Pontet 1945, 387): Jesus Christ is the celestial “Lord” of the earthly church extended to the limits of the human species according to the basic principle of ecclesiology systematized by Tyconius. By focusing on the “Lord,” Augustine explains all ups and downs of individual believers and of the whole “body” of Christianity, as a universal and ongoing drama in which God operates universal salvation. The preacher's rhetorical skills, joined with a religious imagination in constant alertness, let him detect endless possibilities for allegorical applications. Psalmic verses are clarified when necessary in their literal meaning, with the help of grammatical devices, by referring to common experiences or to historical information. More constantly their spiritual meaning allows one or more allegories, always inspired by Augustine's vision of biblical salvation history. In particular the Book of Genesis and the Pauline Letters remain permanently in the back

of the interpreter's mind. One psalm calls on another. They are best understood in the light of the Gospels which themselves call on the whole Bible. In the blinding light of the divine incarnation as he perceives it Augustine dispenses from any investigation of the literal meaning of psalmic verses, but he never fails to anchor his Christian "dream-time" exegesis in scriptural evidence: "His rule was to interpret scriptural obscurities only in the light of other very clear passages. Hence, though reading in given verses things that were not in them, it practically never happens that he reads in them a truth that would not be in the Bible. A strictly located error does not affect the general truth and if philologists disagree, theologians cannot protest." (Pontet 1945, 585).

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2. *Other Sermons*

A comprehensive survey of Augustine's sermons by M. Pellegrino forms the "General Introduction" to Edmund Hill's superb translation: *The Works of Saint Augustine. A Translation for the 21st Century*. Part III/1 "Sermons (1-19) on the Old Testament" (Brooklyn NY 1990); III/2 "Sermons (20-50) on the Old Testament" (1990); III/3 "Sermons (51-94) on the New Testament" (1992); III/4 "Sermons (97A-147A) on the New Testament" (1992).

In III/1, 13-137, the "General Introduction," first published in Italian in 1979, starts by raising the most obvious questions: "What is to be understood by the Sermons?" (13), given the variety of Latin terms used for them; "How have the Sermons come down to us?" (15-20), given their number: 544, counted by P. P. Verbraken (1976), of which only half are available in satisfactory editions, ten or fourteen times more of them being lost; "When and where did Augustine preach?" (21-24), namely at least twice a week, daily during Easter week and on many special occasions, with "146 sermons preached at Hippo, 109 at Carthage, a dozen at various cities; there is no clues at all for 188" (23).

Chapter 4 deals with “The Use of the Bible in the Sermons” (25–55). The biblical readings in the liturgical assembly, joined with the singing of psalms entailed as many preached commentaries adapted to audiences and circumstances. With these sermons it is possible “to reconstruct the lectionary of Hippo for the seasons of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, and to give some information for a skeleton plan of the lessons of the *Sanctorale*” (Willis 1962, 101). The bishop’s homiletic comments on scripture, far from avoiding difficult passages emphasize for the common believer what Augustine used to call biblical “mysteries,” passages “rather difficult to understand” or whose full explanation was impossible to provide in a short sermon. (*Serm* 99, 4–5, 7). “Many things have been read that are important and necessary. In fact every thing is important and necessary, but some things in the scriptures are hidden in darkness and call for study while others are within easy reach, being proposed with clarity so as to cure whoever wants to be cured” (*Serm* 32, 1). In front of the challenging text of scripture, Augustine’s interpretive humility was for his listeners an excellent invitation to become humble in their turn.

More than once, the preacher interrupted his comments in turning to prayer, begging for the needed intelligence of the sacred text. Or he gave his interpretation reluctantly uneasy with his own thoughts. Not only textual obscurities, but also apparent contradictions between one passage and another, or between one gospel and another, hampered the progress of his expositions, to the point that he occasionally asked his congregation to rescue him from his perplexity through prayer and moral support (*Serm* 24, 4). Just as in the written text of *De Genesi ad litteram*, when Augustine spoke from the *cathedra*, he would not hesitate to multiply questions about the biblical text which he would leave without answers.

His obvious focus in the Bible was in the NT, the OT being only considered by him in regard to the NT. Thus the spiritual sense of the OT equaled for him the OT’s christological messianism. Indeed many valuable interpretations could compete about a given episode in the OT if only all of them showed fitting with the christocentric perspective of the interpreter. Augustine never misses the occasion to denounce heretical interpretations, such as those of Manichees or Donatists, but polemics never prevail in his sermons over the pastoral care for the education of the faithful. Sometimes the learned rhetor did not refrain from showing a preference for numeral symbolism (*Serm* 8, 17; 51, 32–35; 125, 7–10; 260/C, 2–6; 272/B, 2–6); or he could refer to the authority of learned predecessors or colleagues (*Serm* 306/C, 7); he could claim direct knowledge of biblical manuscripts (*Serm* 23, 8; 319, 3; 169, 1); but in the final end it is always the pastoral leader whose voice one hears in the sermons, a

leader capable of addressing directly the faith experience of his listeners out of his own inner conversion, and a cultural consensus inside the church for which the Bible was the exclusive mode of religious communication.

Some Easter sermons of Augustine probably dating from 412 or 413,—*Serm* 211, 212, 59, *Guelf* III, *Guelf* V, 121, 227, 231, 232, 237, 246, 250, 253, 257 and 258—have been studied and edited by S. Poque, *Augustin d’Hippone. Sermons pour la Pâque*, SC 116 (1966).

For the *Tractatus in epistolam Ioannis ad Parthos*, preached during the Easter week 415, and shortly after, see P. Agaësse, SC 75 (1961).

Also:

T. C. Lawler, *St. Augustine. Sermons for Christmas and Epiphany*, ACW 15, 1952.

Augustinus. *Sermones I–L de vetere Testamento*, ed. C. Lambot, CCSL XLI (1961).

Augustinus. *in Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus CXXIV*, ed. R. Williams, CCSL XXXVI (1954): Sermons 1–54 preached at Hippo in 413; sermons 55–124, dictated probably 418.

In 1990 F. Dolbeau identified about twenty unknown sermons in a fifteenth century collection kept at Mainz (Stadtbibliothek I 9): “Sermons inédits de S. Augustin dans un manuscrit de Mayence (Stadtbibliothek I 9),” *REAug* 36, 1990, 355–359. On the 252 folios of the collections, one “reads three groups of authentic sermons, corresponding to two ancient collections of Augustinian *tractatus*. The first and the third group (f. 1–73 and 162–252v) transmit a series close to a lost collection of which only the titles have been preserved in a ninth century inventory of the Benedictine Abbey of Lorsch...” That first group, conveniently called the “series Mainz-Lorsch,” has been published by Dolbeau in *AnBoll* 110 (1992) 263–310, and in *RBen* 101 (1991) 240–256; 102 (1992) 44–74, 267–297; 103 (1993) 307–338; 104 (1994) 34–76.

The second group of sermons (f. 75–160v), called “Carthusian,” is apparent, but with a more complete content of another collection, a Carthusian one, “known through a twelfth century edition. Amazingly, that second group of Mainz transmits a series of sermons included by Possidius in their liturgical order in his *Indiculum*, chapter X, 355f.” That second series was preached by Augustine from May to August 397 in basilicas of the region of Carthage, the discovery of Mainz confirming earlier datings by D. De Bruyne, *RBen* 43, 1931, 185–193; and C. Lambot, *RBen* 47, 1935, 114–124; 60, 1950, 3–7. Dolbeau concludes: “This manuscript of the second half of the 15th century transmits a collection of sermons not only African, but already established in

Augustine's lifetime" (356). In 1991, Dolbeau identified more precisely in the homiliary of Mainz nineteen unknown sermons and parts of seven others by Augustine, with thirteen of fifty fragments whose immediate context can now be located (*REAug* 37, 1991, 37f.).

A provisional publication of the second group has also been secured by F. R. Dolbeau: "Nouveaux sermons de saint Augustin pour la conversion des païens et des donatistes," *REAug* 37 (1991) 37–78, 261–306; 38 (1992) 50–78; 39 (1993) 57–108, 371–423; 40 (1994) 143–196.

The sensational finding of these sermons first announced in 1990 is only comparable with J. Divjak's identification, in Marseilles and Paris two decades earlier, of a whole set of Letters written by the bishop of Hippo, or sent to him, but never noticed by the many French specialists of Augustine. A revised critical edition of the newly discovered sermons should soon become available. Contrary to the new Letters, the new sermons offer a rich addition to the writings of Augustine witnessing to his pastoral use of scripture; for instance, Mainz 55 offers a christological interpretation of Psalm 21 (F. Dolbeau, "Nouveaux sermons," *REAug* 40 (1994) 143–96).

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VIII. THE CITY OF GOD

The *City of God* consists of twenty-two Books of which Books I–III were composed in 412–413, when the author was in his late fifties. A separate publication of these first three Books was well received. In 415–417, Augustine wrote Books IV–X. Another publication of Books I–X again drew encouraging responses, followed without further delay by the composition of Books XI–XIII in 417–418, and Books XIV–XVII in 419–420. Possibly a third partial publication of Books X–XIV happened in the meantime. In 425, Augustine added Book XVIII and in 426–427, Books XIX–XXII. When he started the *City of God* he was fifty-eight years old; in the process of composing the work, he secured the division of each Book into numbered chapters; he completed the work at the age of seventy-four, three years before his death.

In I, xi, 1, Augustine declares that the very notion of *civitas dei* was given to him by scripture (see also v, 19; xiv, 1; xv, 1). Indeed the “city of God” is mentioned in Heb 11:10, 13–16; 12:22–23; 13:14, and in Rv 3:12, 21:2, 10; see also the strong suggestions of Gal 4:22–26 and Phil 3:20–24. Before Augustine, this biblical motif had attracted the attention of Tyconius, and Ambrose, *In Ps* 118, 15, 35 (PL 15, 1422c). Before embarking on *De civitate dei*, Augustine himself touched on this theme in a number of works: *De vera religione* 27, 50 (ca. 390); *Confessiones* 12, 11, 12 (in the late 390s); *De catechizandis rudibus* (ca. 400); *Enarrationes in Ps.* 64, in 410–413; and in *Ps.* 119–133, probably before *De civitate dei* Book VI, in 414 or 415. Interesting enough, in *Retractationes* II, 43, where Augustine gives information about the circumstances which engaged him into composing *De civitate dei*, he restricts his critical remarks *only* to biblical data, as in Books X and XVII.

In Book XIII, xxi, the Paradise of the origins (Genesis 2), interpreted allegorically, for the most part, by predecessors, must be seen as *real*, as *narrated* in the Bible: *dum tamne et illis historiae veritas fidelissima rerum gestarum narratione commendata credatur*—“If only one also believes in the truth of that story as most accurately recorded in the narration of what happened.” The apostle Paul is the main authority for speaking about the bodily mortality resulting from the Fall. Before discussing at length the origin and the nature of “concupiscence,” Augustine very deliberately states in Book XIV, i, v that he found in scripture the notion of the “two cities,” the carnal one and the spiritual one: *quas civitates duas secundum scripturas nostras merito appellari possemus*—“(two forms of human society) which we could rightly call two cities in accordance with our scriptures.” In that discussion (XIV, i–ix), Pauline quotations again prevail massively over Johannine and OT references.

In line with traditional church apologetics, Book XV paraphrases Genesis, aiming both to answer questions coming from non-Christians, and to teach the biblical story to the community of believers. Quotations from Genesis and the Pauline corpus, together with other scriptural passages punctuate Augustine’s text, witnessing the constant proximity of the author to the sacred sources. The paraphrase amplifies and interprets the biblical narrative on the literal level, as an historical report whose veracity is beyond question. From Book to Book of *De civitate dei*, Augustine’s interpretive rewriting of scripture *actualizes* the biblical story without changing it in any way but in stressing its enduring relevance.

A massive quotation of prophets occupies chapt. 26–36 of Book XVIII, called for by the mention of Cyrus and the return of the Jewish deportees from exile.

Each Book starts with a reformulation of the general theme of the “two cities,” the overarching focus of Augustine’s paraphrase of the Bible. Book XX, vii, 1–ix, 3, gives the author an opportunity to express in full detail his view on the “thousand year” reign of Jesus at the end of time (Rv 20:1–5). Rather than refuting in detail the materialistic projections of the “Millennarists,” Augustine decides to discuss directly the scriptural passage. He concludes that the “thousand years” mean symbolically “the present time of his (Christ’s) first coming”—*isto iam tempore prioris adventus* (XX, ix, 1), following in particular Tyconius’s teaching in this regard. An extended quotation of 2 Thes 1–2 in xix, 1, helps to investigate the “mystery of iniquity” linked with Antichrist, of which Augustine concedes: “I must confess that I totally ignore what he (Paul, in 2 Thes 2:7) wanted to say”—*Ego prorsus quid dixerit me fateor ignorare* (xix, 2), a candid admission of ignorance immediately followed by a short summary of “human conjectures,” and a broad survey of OT prophecies about the final resurrection (xx, 1–xxx, 6).

The last two Books, XXI and XXII of *De civitate dei* deal with Hell and Heaven, the final destinations of all humans. The aged Augustine excels in treating the topic with a realistic and systematic application of his familiar hermeneutics: his *literal* reading of biblical data calls again and again for investigations in philosophical and scientific matters; his *spiritual* reading of scriptural statements gives him a final opportunity in “this immense work” (*ingentis huius operis* xxx, 5) to celebrate the fulfillment of God’s salvific work on earth.

In his seventies now, Augustine receives from scripture an over-streaming inspiration for depicting afterlife; he gives back to scripture a commentary enriched with nonbiblical wisdom and logic, but exclusively intended to let scripture speak for itself. The vivid sensibility of the author fills each line of the text with the same fire of eloquence that burned in the writings of his youth, but the substance of thought consumed in the last chapters of the *City of God* is more self-aware and communicative. The dedicated pastor, the sharp critic of society, the passionate believer and the scholar eager to transcend his own limited knowledge, all in one, express Augustine’s final message to the world in the last part of his masterwork.

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AUGUSTINE: THE HERMENEUTICS OF CONVERSION

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

by Pamela Bright

I. THE LOWLY ACCESS TO MYSTERY

The first decade of Augustine's episcopacy was marked by a new phase of his activity as biblical commentator, a phase that was to produce three significantly new initiatives: *De doctrina christiana*, *Confessiones*, and *De genesi ad litteram*. These works, very different in genre and purpose, are all infused with a new sense of mastery. The biblical apprentice of Milan, the journeyman of Rome, Thagaste, and then Hippo Regius, was now, ten years after his baptism, to embark upon a series of projects which, in significantly different ways, would define his contribution to biblical hermeneutics. It is in these three works that Augustine elaborates his maturing grasp of hermeneutical principles with a pointedness and a sweep of vision that is remarkable.

In *De doctrina christiana* (*De doct. chr.*), Augustine faces squarely the complexity of the hermeneutical problems posed to the biblical interpreter precisely as minister of the Word (in spite of a thirty-year hiatus¹ in the completion of the writing). After at least three earlier attempts at interpretation, *De genesi ad litteram* is characterized by his newfound confidence in tackling the notoriously difficult text of Genesis. Although the importance of the *Confessions* (*Conf.*) for the development of Augustine as a biblical exegete is not immediately obvious, it is in this extraordinarily concentrated and multivalent work that Augustine devotes precise attention to hermeneutical issues. The *Confessions* is an important witness to this new phase of Augustine's maturing as a biblical interpreter, with the last four books marking a significant moment of the crystallization of his thought. It is in these books that Augustine forges strong links between an anthropological and a christological basis of biblical interpretation. Whether as the self in search of God, or as the interpreter of the Word of God, the Christian is plunged into an abyss of mystery, the *kenosis* of the Incarnation, where the poverty and frailty of being and of understanding are paradoxically transfigured.

At this phase of his activity as biblical interpreter, Augustine writes not only as a master practitioner but also as an insightful theorist of biblical

1. Charles Kannengiesser, "The Interrupted *De Doctrina Christiana*," in *De Doctrina Christiana: A Classic of Western Culture* (ed. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 3-13.

interpretation. To speak of Augustine as theorist, I do not mean only the theory and principles of hermeneutics, but also as a theorist of the underlying suppositions of the ministry of the Word. In the early years of his episcopal career, Augustine records his reflections on the need for the interpreter to be aware of the proper scope of scripture to build up love (*finem praecepti esse caritatem*, *De doct. chr.* 40.44;² cf. *Conf.* XII 18.27), and of the proper characteristics of scripture in being conformed to the “human condition” (*humana condicio*), as Augustine argues in the prooemium to *De doctrina christiana*: “All those matters could have been done by angels but the human condition would have been degraded if God would not seem to want to minister his own words to human beings through human beings” (*prooemium* 4).

While both the *Confessions* and the *De doctrina christiana* share similar perspectives about the scope and character of the scriptures, what is peculiar to the *Confessions* is that these principles are examined in the context of the process of conversion. The title of this study, “The Hermeneutics of Conversion,” is not intended to signify an analysis of the process of conversion. Rather it announces a focus on Augustine’s reflection on the intersection of a theology of the needy and wounded self in the process of “re-formation,” on the one hand, and a theory of biblical hermeneutics founded on a kind of existential epistemology, on the other: “All too frequently the poverty of human intelligence has plenty to say, for inquiry employs more words than the discovery of the solution”³ (*Conf.* XII 1.1) The fractured self seeking wholeness and the multi-worded search for truth are themes that are intertwined throughout the final books of the *Confessions*: “In my needy life [*in hac inopia vitae meae*],⁴ my heart is much exercised by the words of your holy scripture” (*Conf.* XII 1.1).

The program announced in the *Soliloquies*, as early as his catechumenate days, “To know myself, to know you” (*noverim me, noverim te*, *Sol.* 2.1) is followed assiduously in the *Confessions*: “May I know you who know me. May I know as I also am known” (*cognoscam te, cognitor meus, cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum*, *Conf.* X 1.1), but what Augustine emphasizes in the

2. R. P. H. Green, *De Doctrina Christiana* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 52.

3. Henry Chadwick, *St. Augustine Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992; repr. 1998), 246. The translations of the *Confessions* in this essay are taken from Chadwick.

4. Lucas Verheijen, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina XXVII, Sancti Augustini Opera. Confessionum Libri XIII* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981). See also James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine, Confessions* (3 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1992).

Confessions is that the seeking of this vital knowledge must be undertaken in the pilgrim mode of humble seeking:

I therefore decided to give attention to the holy scriptures and to find out what they were like. And this is what met me: something neither open to the proud nor laid bare to mere children; a text lowly to the beginner but, on further reading, of mountainous difficulty and enveloped in mysteries (*excelsam et velatam mysteriis*). (*Conf.* III 5.9)

In this sense, the interpreter, *as* interpreter, is called to conversion. The proud, solitary interpreter holding to a singleness of truth is revealed as an empty and boastful liar: When it is “mine alone, it is a lie,” for your truth does not belong to me nor to anyone else but to us all whom you call share it as a public possession” (*quoniam veritas tua nec mea est nec illius aut illius, sed omnium nostrum*, *Conf.* XII 25.34).

The proper “scope” of scripture to build up charity, should rule hermeneutical discourse, just as the acknowledgement of the “poverty of human intelligence” should temper the tenacity with which opinions are clung to in such discourse.

See now how stupid it is, among so large a mass of entirely correct interpretations which can be elicited from those words, rashly to assert that a particular one has the best claim to be Moses’ view, and by destructive disputes to offend against charity itself, which is the principle of everything he said in the texts we are attempting to expounding. (*Conf.* XII 25.35)

Augustine is always aware of the paradox of humility and sublimity in the exercise of the ministry of the Word. The “access” may be lowly, but the “sublimity”⁵ of the divine mystery is celebrated throughout the *Confessions*:

For we have not come across any other books so destructive of pride, so destructive of the “enemy and the defender” who resists your reconciliation by defending his sins. I have not known, Lord, I have not meet with other utterances so pure, which so persuasively move me to confession, make my neck bow to your yoke, and bring me to a free worship. (*Conf.* XIII 15.17)

It is hardly surprising that Augustine, the self-in-conversion, and Augustine, the biblical interpreter, come to discover that the entry into the sublimity of mystery, both for the self and for the biblical interpreter, has the same lowly

5. Thomas Finan, “St. Augustine on the ‘mira profunditas’ of Scripture,” in *Scriptural Interpretation in the Fathers: Letter and Spirit* (ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey; Dublin: Four Corners Press, 1995), 173. See n. 63, the recurring motif of scripture’s combination of *altitudo* and *humilitas*.

access. This is the special insight that marks the character of the hermeneutical principles adumbrated in the final books of the *Confessions*.

II. THE SELF, UN-FORMED AND RE-FORMED (CONFESSIONS X–XIII)

The neediness and incompleteness of the human condition is a central theme in the final books of the *Confessions*. It is this neediness that draws the Divine Physician to us (Book X), while the “not-yetness” of the self in the web of time (Book XI) and the incompleteness of the unformed earth/self (Book XII) are revealed, paradoxically, as the real source of our thanksgiving—the “confession of praise” for our re-formation⁶ in the image of the Triune God (Book XIII):

Proceed with your confession, my faith. Say to the Lord your God: ‘Holy, holy, holy Lord my God,’ (Is 6:3; Rv 4:8). In your name we are baptized, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19); in your name we baptize, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Among us also in his Christ God has made a heaven and an earth, meaning the spiritual and carnal members of his church. Moreover, before our earth received form, imparted by doctrine, it was ‘invisible and unorganized’ (Gn 1:2), and we were covered by the darkness (Ps 54:6) of ignorance. For you ‘corrected man for his iniquity,’ and ‘your judgements are like the great abyss’ (Ps 38:12; 35:7). But because your ‘Spirit was borne above the waters,’ your mercy did not abandon our misery, and you said: ‘Let there be light’ (Gen 1:3). ‘Do penitence, for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near’ (Mt 3:2; 4:17)... Our darkness displeased us. We were converted to you (Ps 50:15), light was created, and suddenly we ‘who were once darkness are now light in the Lord’ (Eph 5:8). (*Conf.* XII 12.13)

Book X: The Wounded Self

Book X begins with a careful enunciation of the purpose of the *Confessions*: to encourage his readers, “shareres of my joy, conjoined with me in mortality, my fellow citizens and pilgrims” (X 4.6) to take heart through his double “confession” of praise and lament—praise to God for what Augustine him-

6. M.-A. Vannier, “*Creatio, conversio, formatio* chez S. Augustin,” coll. “*Paradosis*” (Fribourg, 1991; repr. 1997), 27, n. 30.

self had become by God's grace, and his lament over his past sinfulness. He embarks with this crowd of witnesses on the inner journey into "the fields and vast palaces of memory" (*et venio in campos et lata praetoria memoriae*, X 8.12) housing three great storehouses—first that laid down by the senses (X 8.13–15), then that acquired by a lifetime of learning through the liberal arts (*de doctrinis liberalis*, X 9.16) and the principles of numbers and dimensions (X 12.19), and finally that laid up by the recollections of affections—the "four perturbations of the mind, cupidity, gladness, fear and sadness" (X 14.22). The seeking for God through the inner depths of self leads to Augustine's reflection on the basic human drive for happiness (X 20.29–24.34), and culminates in the cry: "That is the authentic happy life, to set one's joy on you, grounded in you, and caused by you. This is the real thing, and there is no other" (X 22.32). "See how widely I have ranged, Lord, searching for you in my memory" (X 24.35). The famous cry, "Late have I loved you, beauty so old and so new: late have I loved you," encapsulates the wrong-headed seeking for happiness of his former life: "See you were within and I was in the external world.... You were with me, and I was not with you." This leads to the final acknowledgement:

When I have adhered (Ps 72:28) to you with the whole of myself, I shall never have 'pain and toil' (Ps 89:10), and my entire life will be full of you. You lift up the person whom you fill. But for the present, because I am not full of you, I am a burden to myself.... See I do not hide my wounds. You are the physician, I am the patient. (X 28.39)

This "confession" sets the stage for the second half of Book X, an analysis of the depth of the woundedness of the human condition, in the frame of 1 John 2:16, the concupiscences "of the flesh"⁷ (cf. Book VI), of "the eyes" (cf. Book VII) and of "the pride of life" (cf. Book VIII). But this painful introspection in terms of "woundedness" has been well prepared for in the earlier reflection on the inner self, within the rooms of the palace of memory. The continuing unruliness of sense images⁸ ("of the flesh"), the difficulty of curbing the appetite for "*curiositas*" ("of the eyes"), and the hydra-headed manifestations of pride and ambition ("the pride of life"), are the distorted mirror images

7. See also *Conf. XIII* 21.30, 31. "The haughtiness of pride, the pleasures of lust, and the poison of curiosity are the passions of a dead soul.... 'Be not conformed to the world,' Rm 12:2."

8. See Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de Saint Augustin* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1950), 255. Courcelle suggests that the *Soliloquies* refer to the battle against the temptations of the flesh while the *De Ordine* focuses on intellectual difficulties.

of the positive faculties of memory: the storehouse of sense perception (X 8.13–15), of knowing (X 9.16–12.19), and of the range of human emotions (X 14.22). As Book X draws to its end, Augustine turns to Christ, the divine physician: “So under three forms of lust I have considered the sickness of my sins, and I have invoked your right hand to save me” (*ideoque considervai languores peccatorum meorum in cupiditate triplici, et dexteram tuam invocavi ad salutem meam*, X 30.41).

Book XI: The Self-in-Time

Having established the human condition (existentially) as one of need—a neediness which impells a reaching out to Christ, the Mediator—Augustine begins Book XI with a reflection on the ministry of the Word, the ministry which he confirmed as his vocation in the closing section of Book X. In the very face of the vulnerability of fallen human nature, he takes up the burden and privilege of ministry (XI 2.2; X 43.70). As the Word, through the words of scripture, resounds in his ears in the narrative of the creation of heaven and earth, Augustine launches into justly famous reflection on time, culminating in his meditation on the self-in-time, the self (XI 26.33), “distended” between past, present, and future.

This emphasis on tension or distraction (*distentio animi*), this near fracturing of self, reinforces the notion of neediness and vulnerability of the human condition established in Book X. However, in the closing sections of Book XI it is not so much the abjection of neediness that is emphasized. Rather, like the shift in tone between chapters 7 and 8 of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, for Augustine the pain of this existential awareness of being “distended”⁹ between past and future is transformed, under grace, into an “extension” towards the Mediator (XI 29.39). Augustine draws together the multistranded discourse of Book XI:

‘Because your mercy is more than lives’ (Ps 62:4), see how my life is a distention in several directions. ‘Your right hand upheld me’ (Ps 17:36; 62:9) in my Lord, the Son of man who is mediator between you the One and us the many, who live in a multiplicity of distractions by many things, so that ‘I might apprehend him in whom I am apprehended’ (Phil 3:12–14), and leaving behind the old days I might be gathered to follow the One, ‘forgetting the past’ and moving not towards those future things which are transitory but to ‘the things which

9. Scholars refer to *diastasis* in *Enneads* III 7,11, 10. See the survey of scholarship in James J. O’Donnell, *Confessions* III, 288–90.

are before' me, not stretched out in distraction but extended in reach, not by being pulled apart but by concentration.... The storms of incoherent things events tear to pieces my thoughts, the inmost entrails of my soul, until that day when, purified and molten by the fire of your love, I flow together to merge into you. (X 29. 39)

Book XII: The Two Abysses: the Self and the Scriptures

While time and eternity dominate Book XI, heaven and earth are the focus of Book XII. Just as the self-in-time, rather than the question of eternity, became the center of inquiry in Book XI, so too, for all the wonderful passages devoted to the contemplation of the "heaven of heavens," "that no experience of time can ever touch," it is the "unformed earth," "next to nothing" (*prope nihil...quam fecisti de nulla re paene nullam rem*, XII 8.8) that becomes the preoccupation of Book XII. Indeed, it is the *potential* for conversion¹⁰ of the "almost formless earth" that captures Augustine's attention:

It is true, Lord, that you made heaven and earth.... It is true that everything mutable implies for us the notion of a kind of formlessness, which allows it to receive form and to undergo change and modification. It is true that no experience of time can ever touch what has so close and adherence to immutable form that, though mutable, it undergoes no changes. It is true that formlessness which is next to nothing (*prope nihil*) cannot suffer temporal successiveness.... It is true that of all things with form nothing is closer to formless than earth and the abyss. It is true that you made not only whatever is created and endowed with form but also whatever is capable of being created and receiving form. It is true that every being that is formed out of that without form is itself first unformed and then formed. (XII 19.28)

In what seems at first glance a digression from his contemplation of the two "creatures," the "heaven of heavens" and the "earth and the abyss," Augustine a major part of Book XII to the problem of the diversity of scriptural interpretations. However, it is questionable that his attention to the problems of the "truthful diversity" (XII 30.41) of scriptural interpretation is a digression. In contemplating the abyss of the first day of creation, Augustine is

10. Marie-Anne Vannier discusses Augustine's treatment of mutability as a source of hope in her study of one of the newly discovered sermons of Augustine (Dolbeau 26), "L'apport des nouveaux sermons à la christologie," *Augustin Prédicateur (395-411)* (Collection des Éditions Augustiniennes 159, S. Madec; Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes Press, 1998), 267-79.

logically drawn to the contemplation of another abyss, the profound depths of scripture: “What wonderful profundity [*mira profunditas*] there is in your utterances! The surface meaning lies open before us and charms beginners. Yet the depth is amazing, my God, the depth is amazing. To concentrate on it is to experience awe—the awe of adoration before its transcendence and the trembling of love”¹¹ (*Conf.* XII 14.17). The presence of “the abyss” is palpable throughout the *Confessions*. The two “abysses” are intertwined. On the one hand, there is the abyss of neediness and vulnerability of the human condition: “To the lower abyss he calls in the words: ‘Be not conformed to this world, but be reformed in the newness of your mind’” (Rm 12:2; *Conf.* XIII 13.14). On the other, the abyss of the scriptures, with all its diversity and multiplicity, while carefully orchestrated through the last books of the *Confessions*, is the special focus of Book XII.

The “depth” of the scriptures has the practical result of affecting the very mode of scriptural discourse:

I see that two types of disagreements can arise when something is recorded by truthful reporters using signs. The first concerns the truth of the matter in question. The second concerns the intention of the writer. It is one thing to inquire into the truth about the origin of creation. It is another to ask what understanding of the words on the part of the reader and hearer was intended by Moses, a distinguished servant of your faith. (XII 23.32)

Augustine argues that the fullness of meaning intended by Moses cannot be grasped in its singleness by later interpreters. In fact the complexity of the truth revealed by Moses requires an unfolding in multiple interpretations:

A spring confined in a small space rises with more power and distributes its flow through more channels over a wider expanse than a single stream rising from the same spring even if it flows down over many places. So also the account given your minister (Moses), which was to benefit many expositions, uses a small measure of words to pour out a spate of clear truth. From this each commentator, to the best of his ability in these things may draw what is true, one this way, another that, using longer and more complex channels of discourse. (XII 27.37)

The point is that truth cannot be “grasped” or possessed in a single unflinching glance (at least in the human condition); neither can it be possessed by the individual interpreter. Speaking of those interpreters who refuse another’s (in this case Augustine’s!) interpretation he comments:

11. Thomas Finan, 170.

They do not say this to me because they possess second sight and have seen in the heart of your servant (Moses) the meaning which they assert, but because they are proud. They have no knowledge of Moses' opinion at all, but love their own opinion, not because it is true, but because it is their own. Otherwise they equally respect another true interpretation as valid, just as I respect what they say when their affirmation is true, not because it is theirs, but because it is true.

(XII 25.34)

It is significant that Augustine has set this careful reflection about hermeneutical theory and exegetical practice in the context of a complex meditation on the Six Days of Creation, ranging from the "almost nothingness" of the earth on Day One to the "re-formation" of the human being in the image and likeness of God in Day Six. This "earth"—which is us (as he claims)—is called from "almost nothingness" in Book XII to fruitful multiplicity in Book XIII (XIII 12.13). In a similar inversion (or conversion), the very "privation" of the words of Genesis (*parvo sermonis modulo*, *Conf.* XII 27.37) necessitates a multiplicity of true interpretations, so that the word of scripture can nourish both the simple and the sophisticated, or can be adjusted to the needs of the community as a whole, or to the individual at different stages of life. In other words: "The surface meaning lies open before us and charms beginners. Yet the depth is amazing." (XII 14.17)

Book XIII: The Human Condition as a Pilgrim State

Book XIII begins with a prayer of thanksgiving: "Before I existed, you were, and I had no being to which you could grant existence. Nevertheless here I am as a result of your goodness, which goes before all that you made me to be, and all out of which you made me" (XIII 1.1). The tone of thanksgiving is maintained as Augustine reflects on the Trinity: "Behold, the Trinity, my God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, creator of all creation" (XIII 5.6). This prayer continues in the contemplation of the Spirit: "By your gift we are set on fire and carried upwards: we grown red hot and ascent. We climb 'the ascents in our heart' (Ps 83:6), and sing 'the song of steps' (Ps 119:1). Lit by your fire, your good fire, we grow red-hot and ascent, as we move upwards 'to the peace of Jerusalem'" (Ps 121:6; *Conf.* XIII 9.10).

There is a constant imagery of our life as pilgrimage:

In the morning I will stand up and contemplate you. I will see the 'salvation of my face' (Ps 41:6-12), my God, 'who shall vivify even our mortal bodies through the Spirit who dwells in us' (Rm 8:11). For in his mercy he was 'borne above' the dark and fluid state, which was our

inward condition. From him during this wandering pilgrimage, we have received an assurance that we are already light (Eph 5:8). (*Conf.* XIII 14.15)

In Book XIII the human condition, or as Augustine phrases it, the “weak who are on a lower level,” is contrasted with the fullness of the apprehension of truth of the happy citizens of the heaven of heavens, the City of God:

There are, I believe, other waters above this firmament, immortal and kept from corruption. Let them praise your name (Ps 148:2–5). Let the peoples above the heavens, your angels, praise you. They have no need to look up to this firmament and to read so as to know your word.

They ‘ever see your face’ (Mt 18:10) and there, without syllables requiring time to pronounce, they read what your eternal will intends. They read, they choose, they love. They ever read and what they read never passes away. By choosing and loving they read the immutability of your design. Their codex is never closed, nor is their book ever folded shut. For you yourself are a book to them and you are ‘for eternity’ (Ps 47:15). You have set them in order above this firmament which you established to be above the weak who are on a lower level (*super infirmitatem inferiorum populorum*) so that they could look up and know your mercy, announcing in time what you had made in time. (*Conf.* XIII 15.18)

However, just as In Books X, XI, and XII, so too in the final book of the *Confessions* there is a transfiguration of a privation into a blessing. It is this very “weakness,” this incapacity to attain to the whole of truth in a single angelic glance, that is transposed into blessing. Multiplicity is announced as a mark of the goodness of creation. Everywhere creation is filled with God’s “multitudes, abundance and increase” with the voices of your messengers (ministers of the Word) “flying above the earth in the open firmament of your book...their words sounding to the ends of the earth” (*Conf.* XIII 20.26).

The process of *conversion* as a life-long pilgrimage to the Sabbath rest of the Holy City. “I will enter my chamber” (Mt 6:6) and I will sing you songs of love, groaning with inexpressible groanings (Rm 8:20) on my wanderer’s path, and remembering Jerusalem my mother... I will not turn away until in that peace of this dearest mother, where are the first-fruits of my spirit (Rm 8:23) and the source of my certainties, you gather all that I am from my dispersed and distorted state to reshape and strengthen me forever, ‘my God my mercy’ (XII 16.23). So too is the process of interpretation an ongoing ecclesial “colloquy”: both the self and the biblical interpretation share the same pilgrim status. They are both marked by a fragility, an incompleteness which is the human condition. In a paradox that Augustine would appreciate,

the phase of his ministry that is most marked by his newfound mastery of biblical interpretation is also the phase where he fully assumes the limitations of hermeneutics. But there is a very real distinction between a “limitation” and a “negation.” An awareness of a limitation is an awareness of a need, and it is the awareness of neediness and vulnerability that is foundational in the process of conversion. In theological terms, it is the lowly access to salvation modelled and incarnated by the Word of God:

I sought a way to obtain strength enough to enjoy you; but I did not find it until I embraced ‘the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus’ (1 Tim 2:5), ‘who is above all things, God blessed forever’ (Rm 9:5). He called and said, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6). The food which I was too weak to accept he mingled with flesh, in that ‘the Word was made flesh’ (John 1:14) so that our infant condition might come to suck milk from your wisdom by which you created all things. To possess my God, the humble Jesus, I was not yet humble enough. I did not know what his weakness was meant to teach. Your Word, eternal truth, higher than the superior parts of your creation, raises those submissive to him to himself. In the inferior parts he built for himself a humble house of our clay. By this he detaches from themselves those who are to be made his subjects and carries them across to himself, healing their swelling and nourishing their love. They are no longer to place confidence in themselves, but rather to become weak. They see at their feet divinity become weak by his sharing in our ‘coats of skin’ (Gn 3:21). In their weakness they fall prostrate before this divine weakness which rises and lifts them up. (VII 18.24)

Augustine tells us clearly that in his own journey towards conversion he had discovered that self-sufficiency is the antithesis of conversion. “I sought a way to obtain strength enough to enjoy you, but did not find it until I embraced the mediator between God and man.” Conversion is the turning of the self towards God, and in the very turning from self-sufficiency is the discovery that the multiple, fractured self is transfigured in the image and likeness of the Godhead whom one sees at one’s feet.

The restless angst of the human condition (*Conf.* I 1.1) is the precious first gift of the Creator to the “almost formless earth” through which the self-in-time strains forward towards the “Self-Same” the Immutable One:

To know you as you are in an absolute sense is for you alone. You are immutably, you know immutably, you will immutably.... In your sight it does not seem right that the kind of self-knowledge possessed by unchangeable light should also be possessed by changeable existence

which receives light. And so my soul is 'like waterless land before you' (Ps 142:6), just as it has no power to illuminate itself. 'For with you is the fountain of life,' and so also it is 'in your light' that 'we shall see light.' (*Conf.* XIII 16.19)

The self that is not self-sufficient is the self that is oriented in a turning, or rather a re-turning to the Father, like the Prodigal Son, whose presence haunts every stage of the narrative of the *Confessions*.

III. THE WORD MADE FLESH: THE CHRISTOLOGICAL FRAME OF HERMENEUTICS

It is hardly surprising that the principles that govern the interpretation of scripture elaborated in the *Confessions* are informed by Augustine's central Christological insight of the humility of the Word made Flesh.¹² Just as the Word in scripture is adapted to the human condition, so too the Incarnate Word assumes the limitations of the human condition.

Augustine is not the first to draw together hermeneutics and anthropology. In the fourth book of the *Peri Archon*, Origen of Alexandria links the threefold anthropology of body, soul, and spirit with the three "senses" of scripture:

The individual ought then to portray the ideas of holy scripture in a threefold manner upon his own soul; in order that the simple man may be edified by the "flesh" as it were of the scripture, for so we name the obvious sense; while he who has ascended a certain way may be edified by the "soul" as it were of scripture. The perfect man, again... (may receive edification) from the spiritual law. For just as man consists of body and soul and spirit, so in the same way does scripture which has been arranged to be given by God for the salvation of men (IV 11).

However, though Augustine also links anthropology and hermeneutics in the last books of the *Confessions*, he makes no attempt to elaborate a hermeneutical discussion of the "senses" of scripture in an anthropological frame. These technical questions had received masterly attention in the second and third books of *De doctrina christiana*, but in the *Confessions* Augustine's focus is

12. Albert Verwilghen, "Jesus Christ: Source of Christian Humility," *Augustine and the Bible* (ed. P. Bright; The Bible Through the Ages, 2; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 301–12.

not on textual ambiguity as an exegetical question, but on the ambiguity of the human condition itself. It is the fragility, the partial knowing, the “not-yetness” of the full understanding of scripture that captures his attention. “Now your word appears to us in the ‘enigmatic obscurity’ of clouds and through the ‘mirror’ of heaven” (1 Cor 13:12; *Conf.* XXX 15.18).

This reflection on the partialness of our knowing is in the context of the establishment of the firmament on the second day of creation. Typically, Augustine proposes a paradox. The firmament, this “firm” overarching structure marking the limits between the “waters above” and the “waters below,” is an analogy for the “firmness” of the authority of scripture, stretched over our lives. Yet the “firmness” of this authority does not imply something material to be grasped or possessed. It is neither an objective knowledge to be wielded as a weapon, nor is it some secret knowledge to be wrested from a hiding place. It has to be approached humbly, and in full recognition that the scriptures themselves share the mutability of the human condition. The words of scripture are adjusted to the human condition in the same way that the Eternal Word “looked out through the lattice” of the flesh:

For although we are beloved by your Son, ‘It does not yet appear what we shall be’ (1 John 3:2). ‘He looked through the lattice’ of our flesh and caressed us and set us on fire; and we run after his perfume (Cant 2:9; 1:3, 11). ‘But when he appears, we shall be like him as he is’ (1 John 3:2). ‘As he is’ Lord will be ours to see, but it is not yet given to us. (*Conf.* XIII 15.18)

IV. COMMUNITY, SELF, AND THE SCRIPTURES

Just as a new awareness of self in modern thought has given rise to a new hermeneutical awareness, so too at the end of the fourth century, Augustine’s genius left its imprint both on the understanding of the self and on that Self-to-self disclosure that is Word of God in human words. The new horizons of hermeneutics of our times have focused attention on the self and self-disclosure in language and in community.¹³ Robert Detweiler¹⁴ refers to an essay written by Martin Heidegger in 1936, “Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry.” Heidegger quotes from an unfinished poem of Hölderlin:

13. James J. O’Donnell, *Augustine’s Confessions* I. See the discussion on “being” and “discourse,” xvii.

14. Robert Detweiler, *Story, Sign and Self* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 74.

Much has man learnt,
 Many of the heavenly ones has he named,
 Since we have been a conversation
 And have been able to hear from one another.

The poet's affirmation of the self in community, "since we have been a conversation," is a beautiful echo of Augustine's own understanding of the insufficiency of the self. This affirmation of the insufficiency of the self is far from just another grim tally sheet of what is miserable about the human condition. Rather it is an affirmation of the limiting conditions that call us to acknowledge that the human condition is, as base, societal—"since we have been a conversation." Community demands communication, which in turn requires the constant exercise of interpretation.

The hermeneutical principles developed by Augustine, particularly but not exclusively in the last books of the *Confessions* of a multiplicity of true interpretations, "this diversity of true views" (*Conf.* XII 30.41), call for a dialogic mode of hermeneutics so that *contradictores* (*Conf.* XII 15.19), those who disagree, can become *con-loquitors*, those who are in conversation with each other, and finally to recognize their common ministry as *laudatores*,¹⁵ giving praise together (even through differing interpretations) in the community of the church:

May all of us who, as I allow, perceive and affirm that these texts contain various truths, show love to one another, and equally may we love you our God, fount of truth—if truth is what we are thirsting after and not vanity.... So when one person has said 'Moses thought what I say' and another 'No, what I say,' I think it more religious in spirit to say 'Why not rather say both, if both are true?' And if anyone sees a third or fourth and a further truth in these words, why not believe that Moses discerned all these things? For through him the one God has tempered the sacred books to the interpretatoin of the many, who could come to see a diversity of truths. Certainly, to make a bold declaration from my heart, if I myself were to be writing something at this supreme level of authority I would choose to write so that my words would sound out with whatever diverse truth in these matters each reader was able to grasp, rather than give a quite explicit statement of a single true view of this question in such a way as to exclude

15. *Ecce autem alii non reprehensores, sed laudatores libri Geneseos.*

other views—provided there was no false doctrine to offend me.
(*Conf.* XII 30.41–31.42).

From such a perspective, hermeneutics in the ecclesial community is to be governed by the *scope* of scripture which is to build up the community in love (not to divide by hubris), and to welcome diversity of opinion as a richness. At the same time, this dialogic mode would subject the interpretive process to an austere critical reflection. It is a balanced process acknowledging a diversity of gifts and encouraging a generous responsiveness to the demands of ministry of the Word and at the same time exercising an uncompromising passion for the truth of scripture.

The ministry of the Word, like scripture itself, is a double-edged sword (Ps 149:6, *Conf.* XII 14.17) in not only calling the community to conversion, but in calling the interpreter of scripture to a conversion in the very exercise of hermeneutics. It is a very special call to humility in a deep awareness of the frailty and limitations, the “not-yetness” of human knowledge and understanding. However, it is the nature of interpretation, “diverse” and yet “true” that establishes the proper mode of exegetical discourse as ecclesial and dialogic. The properly partial and refracted mode of knowing in our human condition is what draws us together and therefore establishes our need for each other in both church and human society.

The interpretation of scripture is inextricably linked with the human condition. The self is not self-sufficient; the scriptures call for a community of interpreters. The self is mutable; the truth of scriptures is not to be apprehended in a single, immutable moment of understanding. To stand in the presence of oneself, or better, to enter into the inner recesses of self, is to approach mystery, known, partly known, beyond full knowledge; the abyss of scriptures is a constant image in the *Confessions*. What Augustine says of the power of memory—the inmost recesses of self—in Book X can be transposed to describe the scriptures: “an awe-inspiring mystery, my God, a power of profound and infinite multiplicity. It is characterized by diversity, by life of many forms, utterly immeasurable” (*Conf.* X 17.26). “Deep” still “calls to deep” (Ps 41:8; *Conf.* XIII 12.13). Both the self, as self-in-time, and the scriptures, measured in the syllables of time, stand at the brink of mystery which can be accessed only in the company of the lowly Word-made-flesh, both assuming and transforming the human condition.

XVIII
PELAGIUS (CA. 354–427)

Born ca. 354 in Britain, well educated and even knowing some Greek, Pelagius settled in Rome under Pope Anastasius and was baptized between 380–384, possibly between 375–380. A lay ascetic, well received in Roman upper class society in which he became influential as a spiritual advisor, Pelagius found refuge in Carthage after the fall of Rome in the summer, 410. He soon went to Jerusalem where Bishop John took his defence in 415, against Orosius and other Latin exiles. Speaking for the Origenists, Pelagius entered into conflict with Jerome. At the end of 415, he avoided a condemnation at the Council of Diospolis about his own opinion on human free will capable of impeccability as created by God. But from that date he would no longer free himself from the attacks of the African church under the leadership of Augustine, until his death in exile, apparently in Egypt, near 427 (V. Grossi: Quasten IV, 465; DPAC II, 2730–2732).

I. EXEGETICAL WRITINGS

Liber de induratione cordis Pharaonis: G. Morin, ed., in G. de Plinval, *Essai sur le style et la langue de Pélagie*, Fribourg, 1917, Pp. 137–203; PLS I (1959) 1506–1539. *Expositiones XIII epistolarum Pauli*: A. Souter, ed., *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul* (TS 9, 2), Cambridge, 1926; PLS I (1959) 1110–1374. Th. De Bruyn, ed., *Pelagius's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. Transl. with Introduction and Notes, Oxford, 1993. *Expositio interlinearis libri Iob*: PL 23, 14 75–1538.

De induratione was written ca. 397–398, before the *Quaestiones CXVII* of Ambrosiaster and the Latin version of Origen's *Peri Archon* by Rufinus were circulating in Rome, both of these works dealing with the same Pauline assertions in Rom 9:9–23 and 2 Tm 2:20–21 (Plinval, *Essai*, 134). Pelagius starts by announcing the five questions of his agenda: 1) Ex 20:5, "I punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me"; 2) Pharaoh (Exodus 7–11, Rom 9:17); 3) Esau and Jacob (Genesis 27); 4) the valued and cheap vessels (2 Tm 2:20–21); 5) those concerned by divine foreknowledge and predestination. He also firmly states his intention, *nec litteratis et doctoribus sed, nobis similibus, rusticis et simplicioribus simplici sermone sensum scripturae divinae exposuisse*, to expound the meaning of divine Scripture in simple terms, not for experts

and learned people but for the unsophisticated and simple ones like us" (2; PLS, 1507). In a general consideration of his introductory section (3–11), he bases his hermeneutics on an analogy with the creation of humankind: "For as he created the human being with two realities, soul and body, so was, we are told, the body of the one Law composed of two Tablets. And as he pulled out of the rib of the male another human person, both being one flesh, despite the fact that they are two, so did he produce two Testaments, one out of the other, namely the New out of the Old, though by nature they are one" (3–4; PLS, 1507). The analogy is then extended to sinful humanity, OT and NT did not eliminate evil but they serve as a *correctorium animarum*, a "rehabilitation of souls": they guide the soul toward the "fire of faith," *ad ignem fidei*, if only the souls consent to be reshaped in it; in the same way, OT and NT keep their secrets hidden until humility prevails in their interpreter, serving again *quasi correctorium*, "as a rehabilitation" (6; PLS, 1508). As our bodies count many members, some visible, others not, *ita et lex, cum unum vocabulum sortiatur, secundum hominis similitudinem (ut dictum est) multa habere membra probatur: visibilia et invisibilia, lucidissima et magnis ac obscuris obtecta mysteriis*, "so does the Law, designated by a single word, in analogy with the human being (as said before) include many members, visible and invisible, some crystal clear and others hidden in deep and dark recesses" (7; PLS, 1509). Pelagius rounds up his argument after a more detailed comparison between the Law and the very complex human body: *legem divinam in figura hominis per Moysen datam cognosce, quemadmodum homo ad imaginem dei factus refertur*, "And thus, as it has been said above, admit that divine Law was given to Moses in resemblance with the human being, just as the human being is said to have been made in the image of God" (7; PLS, 1509).

In the logic of such premises and with constant reference to his basic analogy, Pelagius discusses clear and obscure biblical passages (*De induratione* 9), apparent biblical contradictions (*De induratione* 10–11), and finally his announced "questions" 1 to 5: the saying about the sons punished for the sins of their fathers, to be taken as a *parabola*, not *ut sonabat historia* (12; 1512); the predestination of Jacob and Esau (13–16, 1512–1514); the obtinacy of Pharaoh (17–33; 1515–1524); the vessels of different qualities (34–48, 1524–1534). His comments on the "vessels" lead directly to the theological views and exhortations of "question 5," by which the essay ends (49–55; 1534–1539).

II. THE PAULINE COMMENTARY

Pelagius wrote it between 405 and 410, as a sequel to his oral teaching in aristocratic circles of the capital, where his moderate asceticism held a middle position between the extremes of Jovinian and Jerome. Before him, Marius Victorinus, an anonymous master, and Ambrosiaster had issued in fourth century Rome similar commentaries. Against Marcionism, the need for interpreting Paul's Epistles had become a general concern among educated Christians. The conflict with the Manicheans called for reassessing the meaning of Christian asceticism in the light of Paul's teaching. In addition, the older tradition of stressing human freedom against Gnostic determinism, a tradition exemplified in the Latin edition of Origen's *Peri Archon* by Rufinus of Aquileia, enriched Pelagius's notion of the human being and destiny.

Pelagius's interpretation of Romans falls into four thematic sections: the first, chapters 1–4, treats the histories of the Gentiles and the Jews in order to show that their response to the revelation of God has been the same and that consequently they are on an equal footing before God. The second section, chapters 5–8, considers the transition from the 'death' of sin to the 'life' of righteousness. The pivotal point in this transition is baptism, which incorporates the believer into Christ. On either side of this transition there lies a deliberate way of living... the third sections, chapters 9–11, considers the status of the Jews in the Christian era of salvation. The burden of the argument, with a view first to the past and then to the present, is to show that the condition for salvation is the same now as it was before, namely a believing response to divine revelation. The final section, chapters 12–16, discusses various practical matters in a hortatory mode, always to the end that the Christian should better imitate Christ (De Bruyn, 35–36). Pelagius's interpretation of the other Pauline Epistles follows exactly the same pattern of a continuous quotation of verses or parts of verses, followed by concise comments. By collecting Pelagius's citations, it becomes possible to identify with a fair accuracy which biblical text he used for his exegesis (De Bruyne, Souter, Frede, Tinnefeld, Nellessen, Borse, Wolfgarten; according to Th. De Bruyn, "Appendix: Pelagius's Biblical Text," 155–193). The technique of interpreting also remains unchanged throughout the Commentary, for instance, in the comments on Romans (Souter, De Bruyn):

1) the need to *explain* Paul's phrasing calls for short paraphrases backed up by complementary quotations, some also from Paul, such as in 1:5, 9, 25; 2:7, 9, 28; 3:4; 4:13; 5:2, 7, 8, 10, 18; 6:6; 7:8; 8:22; 11:2; 14:4, 21; 15:4, 6, 8, 15, 20, 23; etc.; sometimes the short explanation dispenses from any addi-

tional references to scripture (1:6, 12, 13, 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, 29, 30; 8:32; 9:13; 11:11, 32, 35; 15:21, 24, 26, 31–33), or such references stay by themselves as explanatory (1:4, 17; 8:17, 18; 9:12; 12:19; 13:2; 15:9, 17, 22).

2) Some glosses limit themselves to *enunciate a definition: anima pro toto homine dicatur* (2:9), “Sacrilige is something that is committed strictly against God, as a violation of the sacred” (2:22), “Vanity is everything that some day comes to an end” (8:20); 11:16f.; “That (‘a living sacrifice, holy’) is pure and free from the total death of sin (12:1); “He shows that a gathering of believers is called a church” (16:5) etc.

3) A few comments are delivered in form of *short exhortations*: “We too should fear...” (2:13); “It is the hour for you to strive for that which is more perfect...” (13:11); etc.

4) More significant are the remarks spread over the whole Commentary on Romans expressing *Pelagius’ critical awareness as an interpreter*: He regularly announces the diversity of interpretations given for certain verses by some unnamed predecessors (essentially Ambrosiaster and Origen-Rufinus), not without marking occasionally a distance to them (3:28; 9:17; 11:20, 26; 14:,2); He even sketches a short history of interpretation (8:19). He stresses the difference between the literary sense (*historia*) and what is said allegorically (*per allegoriam*, 10:18; *allegorice*, 10:21), or only suggested (2:28 *figura*; 3:27; 5:14 *typus*, 18; 7:4, 6 *spiritualis gratiae praeceptis, non litterae legis*, “by the precepts of spiritual grace, not by those of the letter of the Law” 8:4; 9:28 *historiae sensus...in prophetia autem* 10:8.

5) Several glosses of the commentator are concerned with *literary criticism* (3:10; 7:1, 25; 9:1; 11:8; 14:1, 13 *subtiliter*). Paul is seen as a *bonus doctor* (11:1; 15:14), one distinctive mark of his teaching consisting in his consonance with the Johannine message (11:36; 12:9; 13:14; *passim*).

6) *Rare glosses extend over ten lines or a full page of our editions* (2:4, 13, 21; 3:28; 4:4, 5, 15:4; 7:4; 8:3, 19; 9:17, 33; 11:20; 12:15). They are due to the variety of interpretive traditions reported but also to special concerns of the authors.

7) Throughout the Commentary, Pelagius identifies with Paul’s literary persona in using “we”—talk and “you”—addresses when amplifying Pauline statements.

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XIX
PAULINUS OF NOLA (355–431)

Metropius Pontius Paulinus was born in Bordeaux in 355, the son of well-to-do parents belonging to the senatorial aristocracy. A student of Ausonius, the most famous Gallic rhetor of his time, he cultivated his poetic talents, but engaged into the career of a civil servant (the *cursus honorum*), probably in replacement of his father in the Senate of Rome, which led him in 379 to the position of governor of Campania. There he became acquainted with the cult of St. Felix of Nola, a local martyr from the time of the persecution of Decius. In 383, when the “Arian” Valentinian II replaced Emperor Gratian, he abandoned the civil service, retired with Therasia, his wife, into a monastic solitude in Spain, accepted the priesthood in Barcelona, and distributed the couple’s rich properties among the poor. In 395, Paulinus and his wife established themselves in two monasteries next to Nola, in Cimitile, southern Italy (for some time they had adopted total continence). Ca. 409–410, after the death of Therasia, he consented to serve as bishop of Nola for the next two decades.

In the educated society to which he belonged, Paulinus was remarkably gifted for friendship. He welcomed as visitors or visited himself many of the famous Christians of his time. Like his poetry, his correspondence testifies to a lively network of personal relationships. Only *Letters* 46–48 are of an uncertain origin among the fifty-one attributed to Paulinus. Jerome claimed that Paulinus’s letters deserved to be ranked with those of Cicero (*Ep.* 85, 1: PL 22, 752). Four of them are addressed to Augustine. *Letter* 4 thanks Augustine for having sent a copy of his tractates *De Genesi contra Manichaeos* and *De vera religione* through Alypius. In *Letter* 6, Paulinus urges the bishop of Hippo to meet him and his wife if ever possible. *Letter* 35 begs Augustine for an instruction about the nature of angels in the light of 1 and 2 Corinthians. In *Letter* 50, he asks to hear Augustine’s exegesis of Ps 15:3–4; 16:14; 67:22, and he lists a series of requests about Pauline letters (Eph 4:11; 1 Tm 2:1; Rom 11:28; Col 2:18–21) and the gospels, where the apparitions of the Risen Christ impose questions of an eschatological nature: what was the real nature of the resurrected body?

A thorough study of the whole collection of Paulinus’s letters would demonstrate their deliberate and constant recourse to scripture. They illustrate beyond measure the will of the highly literate bishop of Nola to express his thought and his feelings exclusively in biblical terms, or by paraphrasing scripture. He thereby integrates the literal content of the Latin Bible into the

rhythm and the syntax of his post-classical prose and poetry. Augustine must have recognized the striking similitude between such a choice and his own assimilation of psalmic verses and Pauline phrases to personal statements in the *Confessions* or in his correspondance.

Hartel counts thirty-three poems, *carmina*, of which n. 4, 5, and 32 are *certainly* not, and *carm.* 30 and 33 *probably* not, from Paulinus, the most important being *carm.* 10 and 11 for Ausonius, *carm.* 22 for Jovius, 17 for Nicetas, and 25 for Titia, the daughter of Julian of Eclanum, on the occasion of her marriage. *Carmen* 31 is a versified *consolatio* for the loss of a friend's child. *Carmina natalicia* (*carm.* 12–16, 18–21, 23, 26–28, and a fragment of 29) were composed in honour of the feast day, the *dies natalis* (January 14) of St. Felix. John the Baptist is the topic of *carm.* 6. Paraphrases of Ps 1, 2 and 136 fill respectively *carm.* 7, 8 and 9. Though theology and exegesis remain conventional in the thought of Paulinus, his poetic expression of any doctrinal content represents his own achievement, and his phrasing is constantly permeated by the biblical text.

Limited as it might be, his literary legacy is highly original. "He places the task of poetic creation in direct line with the *lectio divina* of the scriptures: *dumque leges catus et scribes miracula summi/ Vera dei, proprior disces et carior ipsi/ esse deo*, 'In reading and conspicuously describing the authentic marvels of the supreme God, you will learn to come closer to God himself, and to become dearer to him' (*carm.* 22, 29–31). Hence it is an open possibility that the poetic activity and the various exercises of asceticism coincide... Poetry shows up as the spiritual exercise *par excellence*" (Fontaine, *Naissance*, 152).

In such an exercise, the actualizing of biblical narratives proceeds on the level of personal devotion: "*Ne maneam terrenus Adam*: May I not remain the earthly Adam, but be born from the virginal soil and, free from the old, become an image of the new one. May I be guided far away from my country and become alien to my tribe, running in haste to the honeyed rivers of the promised land, preserved from the furnace of the Chaldaean fire. That my hospitality be as easy as it was for Lot, always with open doors, liberated from Sodom; and I would not turn my eyes back, in the fear that I would turn into a column of salt for lack of the salt of the heart. Like the child Isaac, may I be offered to God as a living host, and, carrying my wood, may I follow my father under the cross. I would find the wells, but it is my prayer, they would not be obstructed by the envious Amalek who corrupts the living waters. May I become a fugitive from the world, like blessed Jacob who fled from his brother Edom, and I would lay a sacred stone under my exhausted head, and in Christ I would rest" (*carm.* 27, 608–622).

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XX
EUTROPIUS (EARLY 5TH C.)

A priest from the north of Spain (Madoz) or from Aquitaine (Courcelle), Eutropius who admired Ambrose and was close to Paulinus of Nola. He wrote letters of admonition and consolation to the two daughters of a certain Geruntius, because they had been disinherited by their father after having vowed virginity. In the first letter, *De testamento Geruntii*, he urges them, with much logic and authority, to abstain from legal procedures against their father's decision. The second letter, *De vera circumcissione*, was specifically addressed to the nun Cerasia. In it, Eutropius emphasized the need for a spiritual exegesis of the circumcision prescribed in the Bible in order to perceive its real meaning, arguing in line with the whole interpretive tradition, from Philo to Zeno of Verona, his contemporary (Savon, 1982). His *disputatio* called on the academic objections of Jews, Eutropius's main goal being to prescribe for his addressee a line of conduct prescribed by the gospel. Ultimately the "true circumcision" represents a change of "nature" determined by gospel values, and in conformity with Paul as a role model, the ideal "nature" being incarnate in Christ. Throughout the essay, Eutropius's thought remains unconcerned "with the problem and the solutions of Augustinianism" (Savon 1982, 402). The basic antithesis by which the author opposes "nature" and a behaviour determined by the gospel leads him to an original exegesis of Rv 5:1, "the famous book written inside and outside, secret and public, open and closed" (*De vera circumcissione* 6, 193C–194 D) (199C–201C).

Eutropius also composed two treatises, *De perfecto homine* (Col 1:28) and *De similitudine carnis peccati* (Rm 8:3). All of Eutropius's works are skillfully written in an elegant prose. They remain close to the NT, not only through appropriate quotations, but also in the detail of the author's arguments.

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XXI
 EVODIUS OF UZALIS
 (CONTEMPORARY OF AUGUSTINE)

The African bishop Evodius was a disciple and close friend of Augustine. Four letters sent by him to the bishop of Hippo in 414–415 figure, with their answers, in the correspondence of Augustine: CSEL 44, Letters of Evodius to Augustine, *epp.* 158, 160, 161, 163; Letters of Augustine to Evodius, *epp.* 159, 162, 164, 169. They deal with questions concerning the soul, free will and grace, Catholic faith vs. Manichaeism, and in particular with the anti-Manichean interpretation of scripture. Another letter, dated 426, exposes for Valentinus of Hadrumetum the problem of free will. An anti-Manichean treatise, *De fide contra Manichaeos*, very close to Augustine in its style and inspiration, is also attributed to Evodius.

EDITIONS

BAug 24: Letter to Valentinus of Hadrumetum.

CSEL 25, 2: *De fide contra Manichaeos*.

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XXII

MAXIMUS OF TURIN (D. 408/423)

As the first verifiable bishop of Turin (not to be confused with Maximus the Arian!), Maximus is only documented by Gennadius, *De viris inlustribus*, 41, in the late fifth century. His legacy consists in a *fixed* collection of eighty-two authentic sermons, and twenty-four other authentic sermons “outside of that collection,” *extravagantes*, often transmitted under the name of Augustine, (A. Mutzenbecher, 1962). Most of the sermons were preached in the years 395–415. He was strongly influenced by the writings of Ambrose. He died under the reign of Honorius and Theodosius II (408–423).

Though pastoral and practical in purpose, being directed against paganism at a time of massive conversion to Christianity, and against contemporary Jews, seen as a potential threat for the local church community, the *sermones* of Maximus demonstrate a standard teaching on Scripture and biblical exegesis of his time. The bishop knows about *scripturarum caelestium sacramenta*, “the mysteries of heavenly scriptures” *sermo* 3, line 91). He explores in *scriptura divina* (22, 3), particularly in the Pauline Letters, *evangelicae scripturae secretum*, ... *Christi secreta mysteria* “the secret of the Gospel... Christ’s secret mysteries” (39, 34, 41). Without any speculative allegorizing, he repeatedly invites his listeners to reach an *altiozem intellectum*, “higher understanding” (34, 22–23) when pondering a biblical reading in church. The birth of John the Baptist “includes, I think, some mystery,” *mysterium aliquod arbitror continere* (5, 42). The recommendation of Matthew 10:11, to go and find hospitality in any city visited, sounds rather down to earth, but: *Sed repetamus sanctam ipsam divinamque sententiam! Si enim in littera placet, in mysterio forsitan plus placebit* “but let us repeat that holy and divine statement. If it is literally pleasant, it will probably please more in its mystery” (34, 18–19). The verdict of Mt 18:6 against those who are a cause of stumbling is also a “mysterious” sentence: *Puto enim illam (sententiam) aliquod mysterium continere*, “for I guess that such a verdict includes some kind of mystery” (48, 74). The same is true of the “forty days” of the Flood in Genesis 7:17–20, figurative of baptism (50, 50–65). In all cases, the “mystery” means the Christian reality of the present church as prefigured in both Testaments. The very birth of Jesus is utter “mystery”: *Intellego plane mysterium* “I understand it as utter mystery” (62, 86–87). His baptism adds another secret: *Intellego mysterium agnosco etiam sacramentum* “I perceive the mystery, I also acknowledge the sacrament” (64, 57–58; 100, 57), and so does his entry into Jerusalem accord-

ing to Jn 12:12 (68, 60). The death of the Baptist includes a “great mystery”: *in quo facto grande mysterium continetur* (88, 64–65), and the Ascension of Jesus gives the “mystery” a paradoxical twist: *Quodam enim mysterio, dum filius dei filium hominis sustulit ad caelum, ipsa captivitas portatur et portat* “by some mystery, as the Son of God uplifted the son of man to heaven, captivity itself carries and is carried on” (56, 63–64), by referring to Ps 67: 19, *Ascendens in altum captivam duxit captivitatem*, “ascending to the highest he carried on captivity as captive.” Behind most of these assertions, stressing the spiritual meaning of the scriptural texts under consideration, one finds Ambrose’s *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, of which as many as sixty-five passages are echoed in Maximus’s sermons (CCL 23, 443).

The homiletic prose of Maximus, written in a fluid and limpid Latin, addressed his congregation with a continuous stream of biblical images and references. Conventional in their doctrinal content, and modest when compared with the contemporary preaching of Augustine, Maximus’s sermons present all the features of an inventive inspiration. They are an outstanding monument of pastoral care whose serene and thoughtful message deserves further study.

CPL 220–226

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XXIII
QUODVULTDEUS (D. CA. 454)

A deacon and later bishop (ca. 437) of the church of Carthage, Quodvultdeus asked Augustine in 428 to write a compendium of heresies for him (Augustine, *Letters* 221, 223; *De haeresibus*). He was expelled by the Arian warlord Gaiseric and found refuge in Naples where he died ca. 454. Entirely dedicated to pastoral work, he left behind him a collection of sermons, a few letters and the *Liber promissionum et praedictorum dei*.

After references to the Creation and Fall, Cain and Abel, Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel in his introductory *capitula*, Quodvultdeus starts the first part of the *Liber* with the cycle of Abraham covering ten *capitula*, followed by the story of Isaac and Jacob, the cycle of Joseph and the figurative events linked with Moses. The second part of the *Liber* comments on the Mosaic institutions, Israel's journey in the desert, Joshua, Judges, Ruth and Kings; then on the prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel, and finally on Esdras, Esther, Judith, Tobit and the Macabees. The third part adds verbal prophecies and promises paralleled by specific data in Gospel narratives. It ends with two additional sets of Testimonia, on the *Dimidium temporis* and the *Gloria Sanctorum*, strongly inspired by the *City of God*, XX–XXII.

Quodvultdeus's exegesis is thoroughly *spiritalis* or typological. In his view biblical salvation-history is a texture of closely linked *signa, mysteria, sacramenta*, announcing the Christian fulfillment. Throughout the whole work, the author categorizes and divides his abundant material with an almost mannerist attention to detail. The author's originality consists in adding to traditional typology a detailed illustration by which small or hitherto neglected elements of figurative data are systematically interpreted as significant. Allegorical numerology, learned from Augustine, contributes to Quodvultdeus's exegesis. For instance, it allows the linking of the "seventy-five souls" of Genesis 46:27 with Psalm 75 (I, 44, 14), or the eleven veils of the Tabernacle with Psalm 11 (II, 4, 3). Moral applications multiplied for pastoral reasons include a homiletic diatribe about deficient charity and the abuse of riches, unworthy priests and persecuting kings. Scripture is usually quoted from memory, with occasional inaccuracy, or paraphrased and accommodated to the author's symbolic interpretations. His free quoting of scripture is paired with a similarly free use of various textual traditions: he rests on Jerome's translation from the Hebrew, in particular for Daniel and Job, but more frequently on Old Latin versions, circulating in Africa (Braun, SC 101, 33–53).

EDITIONS

CPL 413.

PL 51, 733–854. PLS 3 (1963), 149.

Braun, R.: CCL 60 (1976) 11–223.

Braun, R.: SC 101–102 (1964).

XXIV

JULIAN OF ECLANUM (CA. 380/385–CA. 454)

Julian was the son of Bishop Memorus, the location of whose see in southern Italy is unknown. Well educated, married to Titia, the daughter of another bishop, Julian became a deacon in 408 and was ordained bishop of Eclanum by Pope Innocent in 416. When still a deacon, he visited Hippo at the invitation of Augustine. In Carthage he attended discussions on the origin of the soul, directed by the Manichean, Honoratus. In 418, he wrote twice to Pope Zosimus in protesting against the *Tractoria* of Zosimus, condemning Pelagius. He found himself condemned and was sheltered by Theodore of Mopsuestia in Cilicia. He became increasingly a fierce adversary of the Augustine whose alleged Manicheism he denounced in most of his later writings. The logical strength and the articulate diction of a rationalist theology pervade his literary legacy. One finds the same qualities mirrored in his exegesis.

One of Julian's earliest works was a translation and adaptation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's *Commentary on the Psalms*, followed by the *Expositio libri Iob* (CCL 88, L. De Coninck), vaguely inspired by John Chrysostom and dependent on Polychronius, with a first expression of his allegiance to Pelagius. Soon after he produced *Commentarius in Canticum canticorum* (fragments in Bede, *In Cantica canticorum allegorica expositio*, I; CCL 88, 398–401), in which some of his peculiar phrases have been noted by G. Bouwman. Only after 432 (between 432 and 436: Plinval 1959) did he publish some *Explanations duodecim prophetarum qui minores...nominantur*, whose general title is uncertain and of which commentaries on Osee, Joel and Amos survive, a reasonable guess being that he left the tractate unfinished (Bouwman, 9). "The work is admirable as an essay of historical and messianic hermeneutics; its exegesis is original and often accurate. One has for good reasons celebrated the qualities of its style" (De Coninck, CCL 88, XI; more depreciatively, G. de Plinval, RSR 1959). The biblical text for the *Explanations* is Jerome's Vulgate, freely quoted, with some variants, borrowed from the LXX (o. c., XXIX–XXX).

Of the *Expositio libri Iob* transmitted under the name of the priest Philip, a disciple of Jerome, only a few lines are missing at the end (CCL 88, 3–109). "Jerome had just issued a *Commentary on Jeremiah* filled with anti-Pelagian polemics, but Julian produces a *Iob* entirely anti-Augustinian.... Closer to the genre *scholia* than to the one of extended biblical commentaries, the *Expositio* positions Julian as a competent exegete of the Antiochean school. He favours the 'literal' or 'historical' sense of scripture and avoids

ornamental paraphrase. He affirms that Job was inspired like the Prophets and that he managed to announce the mysteries of the gospel. Only rarely would allegories or references to the 'mystical' sense be scrutinized in the work of this born rationalist, moulded by imperial Stoicism" (Kannengiesser, *DSp* 1222). In fact, out of a reference to *incarnationis dominicae mortisque sacramentum*, "the mystery of the Lord's incarnation and death" (xxxviii, 16–17; 100, 84), Julian finds only six other opportunities to mention the future fulfillment of salvation-history: *a contextu disputationis exsiliens in futura mysteria os aperit, et de passione dominica vaticinatur*, "leaping out of the matter under discussion, he becomes vocal about future mysteries and predicts the Passion of the Lord (IX, 24; 28, 104–29, 106); *videtur de futuris misteriis polliceri*, "he seems to announce future mysteries" (XII, 17; 38, 61–62); *spectaculo profundarum rerum attentior reddebatur, ut de mediatoris mysterio, de resurrectionis vel fide vel tempore aliqua sine ambiguitate sentiret ac diceret*, "by the sight of deep realities, he became more attentive, as to feel and to speak out without uncertainty some truths about the mystery of the mediator, or either the faith or the time of the resurrection" (XV, 12; 42, 53–55); *ea quae teguntur dispensationis profundo non potestis oculis mentis inspicere*, "the realities concealed in the abyss of the (divine) dispensation, you cannot investigate with your mind's insights" (XVII, 10; 49, 65–66); *et ideo prophetali plenus spiritu de salvatoris nostri vel incarnatione vel resurrectione prae loquitur*, "and therefore, filled with the spirit of prophecy, he announces the incarnation or the resurrection of our saviour" (XIX, 26; 54, 62–64); *mysteria post futura cognoscit, ut natura carnis suae indutum deum se dicat esse visurum; quod manifestissime ad incarnationis dominicae pertinet sacramentum. Nec illud ad minoris gratiae spectat testimonium, quod ita plene et aperte illo iam tempore spem resurrectionis annuntiat*, "he knows mysteries following times to come, of such a nature that he says he would see God dressed by nature with his own flesh, a statement which very clearly refers to the mystery of the Lord's incarnation. Such testimony means no lesser grace, for it announces to him already in his time with full clarity the hope of a resurrection." (27; 54, 103–108); but he never mentions by name, nor does his commentary reflect any christocentric hermeneutics. In addition he lacks the eschatological thrust of Pelagius' s vision of universal salvation, though his strong persuasion about afterlife commands all he has to say concerning Almighty God's justice. His explicit notion of deity in XXXVIII, 1–2, *Deus qui tantae esset potentiae, tantae bonitatis, cuius curam erga homines creaturarum vel institutio vel administratio publicaret*, "God of such power, of such goodness whose concern for human beings would be made public through the institution and administration of creatures." (99, 5–8), built up all along the

previous chapters of the commentary, exemplifies a more static perception of the Christian experience. According to Julian, the Christian way of life consists in a synthesis of rational knowledge and virtuous living, integrating the ethical norms of culture with the precepts and examples of Scripture in both Testaments. Hence his interpretation of the Book of Job, while missing the high tragedy of Job's suffering, assiduously translates each verse in a common prose style in order to affirm the relevance of these verses for the average believer of his day. Thus Julian persistently eliminates the rich poetry of the images in the biblical text, the *similitudines* of its symbolic discourse, in order to clarify what a verse really means according to him. (XV, 30; XIX, 8–9; XX, 15; XXVII, 21; XXX, 12, 21–22, 29; XLI, 6). He multiplies phrases like *ac si diceret*, “as if he said”; *id est, hoc est*, “which means”; *pro*, “instead of,” when giving prosaic equivalents for biblical metaphors. Sometimes the metaphor and its translation are simply juxtaposed: *absque manu, absque opere vel labore*, “without a hand, without work and effort” (XXIV, 20); *viarum eius, id est operum*, “of his ways, which means of his works” (XXVI, 23); *sonum de ore tonitru dicit*, “the ‘sound of his mouth’ means thunder” (XXXVII, 4); *lumen pro pluviis posuit*, “he placed ‘light’ for rains” (11); *auri vero nomine divitias quas diversae rerum species faciunt indicavit* “for by the term ‘gold’ he indicated the riches which the different species of things represent” (XLI, 22). The same vindication of the importance of the very reasonableness of the Book of Job seems to urge Julian, *vi rationis pressus*, “urged by the force of reason” (as he notes about Baldad the Shuhite in XXV, 2), repeatedly to stress the consistent logic of biblical statements: they proceed *per ordinem*, “in order” (XXVII, 9); *consequenter*, in a “consistent” manner, (*passim*). They always imply a deliberate order: *Unde non est repetitio superiorum, sed innovatio, ut illud ad auctoritatem, hoc ad gratiam spectare videatur*, so that there is no repetition of what has already been said, but rather innovation, so that one sees how one statement refers to authority, whereas the other refers to grace” (XXIX, 23); *Scriptor libri capita dictorum distribuens nobis, principiis sequentia dicta conectit*. “the author of the book displays for us the chapters of what is said, with the first statement he connects the following” (XXXVI, 1–2); *Quod superius obscure dixerat, hic aperte fecit intellegi*, “what he had said in unclear terms, here he gives openly to understand” (XXXVII, 15). The definitions of biblical data given by Julian contribute to the same acculturation of Job into the author's rhetorical tradition; *Aenigmata dixit, quia brevitate dictorum plus intellegendum reliquerat quam enuntiaverat audientium*, “he mentioned ‘enigmata’ because, due to the conciseness of the statement more remained to be understood than what he had said to be heard” (XIII, 17); *Parabola proprie dicitur quando plus continetur in sensibus quam*

pronunciatur in verbis, vel amplius quam in superficie sonat rerum consequentia vel intellectus ratione conficitur, “‘parable’ is rightly said when the meaning exceeds the words pronounced, or when the consistency of the realities makes more sense than in its mere appearance, or is fixed by the logic of the intellect” (XXIX, 1); *‘legislatores’ dicit, qui in diversis regionibus instituta mortalia quibus regerentur convenientes in unum populi condiderunt*, “he calls ‘law-givers’ those who, in different parts of the world, bringing together the perishable institutions over which they are supposed to govern, establish people in unity” (XXXVI, 22).

When a biblical phrasing may surprise the reader, Julian knows how to call on scripture’s habits: *Familiare est enim divinae scripturae ponere dicta pro factis*, “for it is usual in scripture to state declarations as facts” (I, 6); *Possunt omnia per commutationem temporum legi, quod quidem est divinis scripturis familiare, ut sit sensus*, “all can be read in changing the tense of the verbs, something that is familiar to the divine scriptures when the meaning calls for it” (VIII, 5); *Familiare est scripturis sanctis ut dicant id, in quod praecipitantur iudicantur sententias, ex voto et studio suscepisse; consueto scripturae est excursos hostium ‘latrones’ vocare*, “it is customary for the holy scriptures to say that if one is plunged in something, it has been undertaken by choice and intent; it is common practice for scripture to call the spies of the enemies ‘thieves’” (XIX, 12).

He wonders whether the biblical narrative of Satan challenging the Lord should not be taken *more scripturarum*, “according to the habit of the scriptures” (II, 3): *Quaeritur utrum actum sit, ut est in simplici relatione verborum, an more scripturarum id, quod in votis diaboli et permissu dei fuit, ob hoc ad formam rerum gestarum translatum sit, ut posterorum memoriae tenacius inhaereret: maiorem enim sui tradunt memoriam facta, quam dicta* “one wonders if things happened just as narrated, or, as it is the habit of scripture, if what corresponded to the wishes of the Devil and to God’s permission for that very reason was not transposed in terms of action, in order to be better implanted in the memory of future generations, because facts leave a stranger impression on the memory than words” (II, 1–3); and he observes: *Tibi secundum morem scripturae pro causa posuit, non pro loco*, “‘there’ is said according to the habit of scripture not for indicating a place, but a causation” (XXXV, 12); or *Mos scripturae est magnarum rerum descriptiones verborum cumulis semper attollere*, “it is always the habit of scripture to emphasize the description of important facts by accumulating words” (XLI, 21). Thus any stylistic obscurity in scripture should find its clarification: *Obscura satis elocutio, sed quae huiusmodi intellectum suggerat*, “the expression is quite obscure but in view of suggesting this kind of understanding” (XXVIII, 3).

In short Julian's exegesis presents a remarkable case of a genuine Latin hermeneutics by which, *secundum regulas disputationis*, "according to the rules of the debate" (XXXIV, 10) the interpretation of Job is a celebration of the Western mind and the Western way of life.

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XXV
OPUS IMPERFECTUM IN MATTHAEUM
 (EARLY 5TH C.)

The *Opus* is a collection of sermons, the work of an unknown Latin author, a spiritual leader, a bishop (677A), of a small Arian, and therefore persecuted, community. It is the longest commentary on Matthew in Christian antiquity, incomplete only because of a defective transmission; a commentary more precisely on Mt 1:1–8:10, 10:16–13:13, 19:1–25:44, without the Passion narratives preserved in the transmission.

The purpose of the author, who expresses a strong theological conviction against the Nicene Creed (807B, 889AB, 903D), was foremost of a practical nature. He stresses the ethical values of marriage and family life, rejects slavery, and pleads for honesty under oath and in matters of money. In all of it, his fervently dedicated concern focusses on the present endurance and the trial still to come, imposed on his migrating community. In facing the fatal measures against Arianism taken by the late Constantinian and Theodosian administrations, the anonymous pastor who possibly preached and certainly wrote what was to become known as the *Opus*, stresses a sombre image of the future with an imminent intervention of Antichrist and indeed *the* End of the world (672D, 674D, 846D).

The Greek or Latin provenance, the date and authorship, and even the theological content of the *Opus* have occasioned a lively debate since 1530, when Erasmus declared it to be a Latin work of the Arian Maximus of Turin.

Though the author insists on the literal meaning (*simplicitas historiae* 755A), the allegorical features (*allegorica ratio* 755A; *mysterium* 805D) of the *Opus* recall Origen's exegesis, with numbers, animals, or plants among other material things interpreted in symbolic ways. Etymologies proliferate with an arbitrary incompetence concerning Hebrew names. The distinction between letter and spirit in scripture is based on a dualistic notion of flesh and mind (*humanae naturae mysterium* 494B, 695C, 707C, & 13BC, 874A, 828A), bound to a voluntaristic theory of free will (835B, 864C, 937AB), which leads the author to formulate strong, and sometimes moving statements about the challenge of true Christian faith (766C, 847A, 931A). He was aware of the precarious survival of his congregation (878BC, 901BD, 915AB), and even more, of the basic weakness of human beings (661BC, 662CD), exposed to the strategies of the Devil (663–664, 671B). Temptation (611C, 707C, 723C, 763B) and death (661BC, 662CD) were always imminent.

The author was eager to learn from earlier interpreters of Matthew (892BC); he comes close to copying them (790C, 791A, 939A), and he makes direct use of Jerome's commentary (J. Stiglmayer). His interpretation of parables is remarkable, for instance, in Homily 31 and 41. In all his deeds and sayings, Jesus serves as the ideal paradigm proposed for the imitation of the faithful (611CD, 657B, 664D, 670ff., 827D, 832B). Prayer is essential. Homily 14 (711–715) comments on the "Our Father" (Mt 6:9–15), a well chosen prayer "because the Father willingly responds to a prayer dictated by the Son" (714A). Familiarity with scripture is a high recommendation, because in any moral status one finds in it the right medicine, the proper spiritual nourishment (862CD). Homily 41 (859–865) calls on the manna in the desert and develops in full detail an analogy between reading and "masticating" scripture. In the life of faith everyone needs to meditate on scripture for his or her well-doing, though only a "spiritual person, expert in God's spiritual narratives" catches the deeper meaning of biblical mysteries (*Hom.* 18, 729A). Therefore one needs the help of priests "the key-holders to whom is given the charge to teach and interpret the scriptures. The key itself is the teaching of the scriptures, by which the door of truth is opened. Its opening is the correct interpretation" (*Hom.* 44, 881B–882).

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XXVI
 PETER OF RAVENNA, CHRYSOLOGUS
 (CA. 380–450)

Metropolitan of Ravenna sometime before 431 (when Theodoret wrote a letter to him) until his death between 449 and 458, Peter became famous for his “168 sermons of the *Collectio Felicianiana* (saec. VIII) and 15 *extravagantes*,...homilies on passages from the Gospels, but also on the Pauline letters, the Psalms, the baptismal symbol, the Lord’s Prayer and the saints,...(they) include likewise exhortations to penance. In commenting on the Bible and taking his cue from liturgical celebrations, Chrysologus gives authoritative witness to the theological preoccupations of his age” (Studer, 576).

The *exegetical* homilies, delivered by Peter Chrysologus as a regular commentary of biblical readings included in the liturgy, are by far the most numerous of his extant works. As transmitted by the so-called *Collectio Felicianiana* (because of Bishop Felix of Ravenna signing its Preface, PL 52, 77), dating from the eighth century, they address NT readings exclusively. In original sets of three to twelve or more homilies, they focus on a given passage, the speaker referring to his former exposition or announcing the following topic inside each set, which gives the impression of a well planned lecture programme. Thus one reads comments on Luke 15 in *Homilies* 1–6, on Matthew 6 in *Homilies* 7–14, on Matthew 8 in *Homilies* 15–21, on Luke 12 in *Homilies* 22–27, on Matthew 9 in *Homilies* 28–31, etc.; the longest sequence referring to the Gospels is to be found in *Homilies* 73–84 for Easter. Even more remarkable, the most substantial of all the groupings of Peter’s sermons focuses on Romans 12 in *Homilies* 108–120, the last homily carefully paralleling the first as a literary framing for the whole set.

SERMONS	MAIN BIBLICAL FOCUS	ADDITIONAL BIBLICAL FOCUS
1	Lk 15:11–17	
2	Lk 15:17–19	
3	Lk 15:20–24	
4	Lk 15:25–32	

5	Figurative recapitulation	
6	Parentic actualization	
7	Mt 6:16	
8	Mt 6:20	
9	Mt 6:1-2	
10		Ps 28
11		Mt 4:1-4
12		Mt 4:8
13		Mt 4:5-9
14		Ps 40
15	Mt 8:5-9	
16	Mt 8:28-32	
17		Mk 5:1-12
18	Mt 8:14-15	
19	Mt 8:18-22	
20	Mt 8:23-27	
21		Mk 4:35-36
22	Lk 12:32-37	
23	Lk 12:32-33	
24	Lk 12:35-38	
25	Lk 12:32-33	
26	Lk 12:41-48	
27	Parentic recapitulation	
28	Mt 9:9-13	
29		Mk 2:14

30	Mt 9:9-13	
31	Mt 9:14-15	
32		Mk 3:1-5
33		Mk 5, 22, 29
34	Mt 9:20-29	
35	Mt 9:20-21	
36		Mk 5:25-35
37	Lk 11:29-30	
38		Mt 5:39
39	Lk 11:5-10	
40		
41	Lk 11:41	
42	Lk 11:41	Biblical recapitulation
43		
44	Ps 1	
45	Ps 6	
46	Ps 94	
47	Mt 13:45-49	
48	Mt 13:53-56	
49		Mk 6:1-4
50	Mt 9:1-7	
51, 52, (53)		Mk 9:17-19
54	Mk 9:12	Lk 19:1-10
55	Lk 11:11-13	
56-61	On the Apostolic Creed	
63	Jn 11:3-4, 15, 20-27	

64	Jn 11:20, 33-34	
65	Jn 11:38-44	
66		Lk 16:19-31
67-72	On the Lord's Prayer Mt 6	
73-85	Easter	S. 85: // Jn 7:14-15 (frgt)
86	Lk 1:5	
87	Lk 1:6-9	
88	Lk 1:11-13	
89	Lk 1:5-7	
90	Lk 1:13-22	
91	Lk 1:5-17	
92	Lk 1:24-25	
93	Lk 7:36-50	
94	Lk 7:36-50	
95	Figurative recapitulation	
96	Mt 13:24-25	
97	Mt 13:24-25	
98	Lk 13:18-19 (seed)	
99	Lk 13:20-21	
100 (pg)		//Mk 7:25-28 (bread)
101	Lk 12:4	
102	Lk 7:2-9	

103	Lk 7:12-17	
104	Lk 12:16-20	
105	Lk 13:10-13	
106	Lk 13:6-9	
107		
108	Rom 12:1	
109	Rom 12:1	
110	Rom 4:23-25	
111	Rom 5:17	
112	Rom 5:15, 17-20	
113	Rom 6:1-4	
114	Rom 6:15-19	
115	Rom 7:1-5	
116	Rom 7:7-11	
117		// 1Cor 15:45.50
118		// 1Cor 15:1-4
(119)		
120	Rom 12:2-16	+Rom 1:4-6
121	Lk 16:19-21	
122	Lk 16:23-24	
123	Lk 16:24-31	
124	Lk 16:19-22	
125	Lk 16:1-8	
126	Lk 16:3-8	

127-139	Feast of saints: "non-exegetical"	
140	Lk 1:26-29	
141	Lk 2: (frgt)	
142	Lk 1:30-38	
143	Lk 1:26-28	
144	Lk 1:30-33	
145		//Mt 1:18-19
146		//Mt 1:18-19
147	Incarnation Mt 2?	
148	Incarnation (not a single biblical reference!)	
(149)		
150	Mt 2:13	
151	Mt 2:13	
152	Mt 2:16	
153	Mt 2:16	
156	Mt 2:1-2	
157	Mt 2:1-2	
158	Mt 2:3-8	
(159)		
160	Figurative actualization	
161	Lk 17:7-10	
162	Lk 12:13	
163	Lk 12:22-31	
164	Lk 12:49-53	
167	Mt 3:1-2	
168	Lk 15:2-7	

169	Lk 15:8–10	
170		
171	Lk 7:44 // Mk 7:3, 20–23	// Mk 6:6–7
172	Lk 11:52	
173	Mk 6:14–28	
174	Mk 6:14–24	

Add A. Olivar, PLS III, 156–157:

- 11 *De Pentecoste*
- 12 *De passione Domini* (I)
- 13 *De passione Domini* (II)
- 14 *Homilia in Matthaëum* 11:2.

Most of the *spuria*, noted by Olivar, are non-exegetical sermons.

At a first glance, one may observe that Luke prevails in providing the main focus for fifty-three homilies, against only twenty-nine commenting on Matthew, the latter in turn completely overshadowing Mark who is reduced to the secondary role of a parallel reference (except in Homilies 173–174, where Mark secures the main focus). The very limited use of John is striking. Only in Homilies 63–65 does the fourth Gospel provide a main focus; in the Easter Homilies 73–85, Jn 7:14–15 is quoted as a secondary reference only, in the fragment of Homily 85, a further secondary focus being given to Homily 40 by Jn 10:14–18. The three *Homilies* (44–46) on Psalms presently included in a sequence framed by Luke 11, allow the supposition that a much larger number of such psalmic expositions has not survived. The twelve *Homilies* (108–120) dedicated to Romans and to 1 Corinthians as a parallel reference, would deserve further study.

In sum, Peter preached extensively on:

Matthew

chapter 1:18–19	Homilies 145–146
2:1–2	156–157
3–8	158
13	150–151
16	152–153

3:1-2	167
4:1-4	11
5-9	13
8	12
5:39	38
6:1-2	9
16	7
20	8
8:5-9	15
14-15	18
18-22	19
23-27	20
28-32	16
9:1-7	50
9-13	28, 30
12	54
14-15	31
20-21	35
20-24	34
11:2	Olivar, 14
13:24-25	96-97
45-49	47
53-56	48
<i>Mark</i>	
chapter 2:14	29
3:1-5	32
4:35-36	21
5:22-29	33
25-35	36
6:1-4	49
6-7	170
14-24	174
14-28	173
7:25-28	100
<i>Luke</i>	
chapter 1:5	86
5-7	89
5-17	91
6-9	87
11-13	88

13-22	90
24-25	92
26-29	140
30-33	144
30-38	142
7:2-9	102
36-50	93
44	171
11:5-10	39
11-13	55
29-30	37
41	41, 42
52	172
12:4	101
16-20	104
32-33	23, 25
32-37	22
35-38	24
41-48	26, 27
13:6-9	106
10-13	105
15:2-7	168
8-10	169
11-17	1
17-19	2
20-24	3
25-32	4, 5, 6
16:1-8	125
3-8	126
19-21	121
19-22	124
19-31	66
23-24	122
24-31	123
17:7-10	161
19:1-10	54
<i>John</i>	
chapter 7:14-1585	
10:14-18	40
11:3-4, 15, 20-27	63

20, 33–34	64
38–44	65
<i>Romans</i>	
chapter 1:4–6	120
4:23–25	110
5:17	111
6:1–4	113
15–19	114
7:1–5	115
7–11	116
12:1	108
2–16	120
<i>1 Corinthians</i>	
chapter 15:1–41	118
45, 50	117

Peter remains silent on Matthew 14–28, and on Mark 8–16 (except for 9:17–19), Lk 19:11–24, not to speak of most parts of John. Should we infer that the passion and resurrection narrative were not considered as appropriate focuses for his preaching ministry? That would be hard to believe. Rather should this lacuna lead us to the possibility that a substantial part of Peter's exegetical homilies perished in the troubled circumstances following his death.

EDITIONS

PL 52, 183–666: *Sermones* 1–175; 666–680: *Sermones* VII (additional).

PLS III, 153–183: a list of authentic and inauthentic sermons, by A. Olivar; *sermo* 7 *Contra Pharisaeos*, Luke 14:1–4; *sermo* 8 *De iracundia fratrum* Matthew 5:21–22; *sermo* 9 *De inimicis diligendis*, Matthew 5:44–45; *sermo* 12 *In Matthaicum*, Luke 17:3–4.

PLS V, 396–398: *De Pentecoste*.

Olivar, A.: CCSL XXIV: Sermons 1–62 bis; CCSL XXIV A: Sermons 63–124; (1975), with German introduction.

TRANSLATIONS

English

G.-E. Ganss: FaCh 17 (1965), 25–287, selections.

Italian

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German

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XXVII
JOHN CASSIAN (D. 435)

From a Christian family of landowners in the Roman province of Scythia Minor on the western shore of the Black Sea, Cassian received a classical education with a thorough grounding in Greek. Around 380–382, while still very young, he engaged into the cenobitic life with his friend Germanus in a monastery at Bethlehem, before encountering the monks in Egypt, notably the hermits settled in the desert of Scete. Except for a short return to Bethlehem in 386 or 387, he remained in Egypt until 399. In Constantinople, John Chrysostom ordained him a deacon, against Cassian's own wishes. He went to Rome in 404, and then moved on to spend the rest of his life in Marseilles as a priest, founding two monasteries, one for men and another for women, in the hope of materializing in the West a monastic return to the traditions of the Apostles. In Marseilles he composed his two main writings, *De institutis coenobiorum* and the *Conlationes*, between 420 and 429, as well as a theological pamphlet, *De incarnatione contra Nestorium* (ca. 430).

The key to Cassian's whole work lies in his abundant use of scripture" (O. Chadwick, 652). "In his monastic directory, Cassian attaches primary importance to the scriptures and to prayer; the one leading to the other through the work of the same Agent, the Holy Spirit.

The Bible is the book and the reading material *par excellence* for the monk. The numerous biblical citations contained in the *Institutiones* and the *Conlationes* and the various elaborations on the scriptures are the measure of the primacy of place which the sacred books occupy in monastic spirituality.... The monk must always be ruminating on some part of the sacred text, e.g., a passage from the Psalter, in order to succeed in penetrating its profundity, i.e. the spiritual meaning in purity of heart. This is especially true with regard to the psalms (A. Hamman: Quasten IV, 519).

Cassian quotes scripture ("his source *par excellence*," E. Pichery, 63) in Jerome's version, but sometimes also in older ones; occasionally he refers to the Greek text. His frequent scriptural allusions and citations, most of the latter from memory, bear witness to this deep familiarity with the sacred books.

Conlationes XXIV presents a set of lectures and admonitions allegedly communicated by famous solitaries in the form of conversations with Germanus or Cassian himself. They follow the stages of Cassian's journey into the monastic world of Egypt. A first part (*Conlat.* I–IX) belongs to Cassian's

first visit to Scete and delivers the equivalent of a treatise on monastic perfection. Seven distinguished masters of the desert answer the questions of the visitors. A second part (*Conlat.* XI–XVII), dating from 427, lets other monks add complementary lessons on similar topics. A third part (*Conlat.* XVIII–XX), dating from around 428–429 and located at Diolcos, engages into more general considerations about the many categories of monks, the purpose of cenobitic and eremitic experiments, and penance. A fourth part (*Conlat.* XXI–XXIV) ends with sublime thoughts on inner freedom, the temptations of the flesh, the never achieved sinlessness, and the sweetness of serving God. The *Conlationes*, Cassian’s masterpiece, influenced Benedict of Nursia and Cassiodorus. They profoundly enriched monastic traditions in the East and the West. Their profuse citation of OT and NT, in the form of quotations and innumerable allusions, still waits for a comprehensive and in depth study.

Abbot Moses dedicates part of his first lesson to informing Germanus about the craftiness of the demon who tempted Jesus with a misleading interpretation of scripture (I, 20), a lesson taken from Origen, *Commentary on Luke*. In his second lesson, he lets Antony the hermit celebrate the merits of spiritual discretion in the light of two biblical *exempla*, Saul in Samuel 15 and Ahab in 1 Kgs 20 (II, 3). In his own speech, Abbot Paphnus does the same; he calls on biblical *exempla* to confirm his notion of the “three renunciations”: “These three renunciations fit perfectly with the three books of Solomon. For Proverbs addresses the first renunciation which is to eliminate fleshly desires and earthly vices; Ecclesiastes, the second, as it states that everything is vanity under the sun; the third, Canticle of Canticles, as the mind transcends in it all things visible in being united with God’s Word through the contemplating of heavenly realities” (III, 6). See Abraham, Enoch, Moses; “All this happened figuratively in advance to the Jewish people, but now we see it fulfilled in our status and way of life” (III, 7). Abbot Daniel engages into a lexical and thematic analysis of “flesh” in scripture: *Vocabulum carnis in scripturis sanctis multifarie legimus nominari*, “the term ‘flesh’ is used in holy scriptures with many different meanings” (IV, 10). Abbot Sarapion speculates at length on temptation as experienced by Christ. He finds in “Moses” and the Apostle Paul strong support for his doctrine of eight capital vices. Abbot Theodore turns to the Book of Job for answering questions about evil; *veram scripturarum definitionem tenentes minime infidelium hominum decepti errore*, if only “we hold firm to what scripture defines, we shall not be deceived by non-believers” (VI, 2); that leads him to deepen the biblical notion of tests and trials (*mala*), as Abbot Daniel had done for “flesh” (VI, 6). In the fight against evil spirits, Abbot Serenus recommends Pauline weaponry and invokes the psalms (VII, 5–6).

In his second lecture, Serenus starts by admitting obscurities in scripture, due to the many levels of interpretation *in hoc uberrimo spiritualium scripturarum paradiso*, “in this fertile paradise of spiritual scriptures”; he distinguishes between “literal” and “spiritual” meanings, between *historia* and *allegoria*, insisting on the many different opinions open to discussion in any “spiritual” interpretation. As a proof of it he shows how Genesis 1–3 can be understood in different ways (VIII, 3–4). Abbot Isaac, in his second talk, discoursing on prayer, offers a commentary on the Lord’s Prayer (IX, 17–24). He reaches a climax with the praying of the Psalms. Asceticism and inner fervour literally appropriate the psalmic verses for they revive in us the very emotions which were originally sung in the Psalms and which produced them in the first place. We become authors of the Psalms, knowing in advance their wordings, rather than learning them only when they are enunciated; we catch what they mean before knowing what they say (X, 11). Through Abbot Isaac’s discourse one can easily surmise the enjoyment of the monks in reading Athanasius’s *Letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms*.

Abbot Nesteros, in his first lecture, *On Spiritual Science*, delivers a message which clarifies and defines biblical hermeneutics as practised in the desert. There is a difference between *praktikè* and *theoretikè* science: *‘theoretikè’ vero in duas dividitur partes, id est in historicam interpretationem et intellegentiam spiritualem. . . . Spirituales autem scientiae genre sunt tria, tropologia, allegoria, anagoge*, “the ‘theoretical’ is divided in two parts, the historical interpretation and the spiritual understanding. . . . The genre of spiritual science counts three levels, namely tropology, allegory and anagogy” Appropriate citations illustrate each term of the four dimensions (*quattuor figurae*) proper to biblical “*theoria*” (XIV, 8). When we learn the sacred scriptures by heart, their most hidden meanings will at last enlighten us in our very sleep. *Crescente autem per hoc studium innovatione mentis nostrae etiam scripturarum facies incipiet innovari, et sacratoris intellegentiae pulchritudo quodammodo cum proficiente proficiet*, “As by such a study our mind grows in newness of understanding, the scriptures themselves take on for us a new face: their deeper understanding embellishes with our progress. For they accomodate to the capacity of the human mind; terrestrial for fleshly people, they become divine for the spiritual,” (XIV, 9). Abbot Theonas gives three lectures: in the first, he indulges in some allegorical arithmology in order to explore the mystery of Pentecost (XXI); in the second, “On the Deceptions of the Night,” he invokes Paul for making clear that only Christ, though tempted in the desert, remains without any sin (XXII); in the third one, “On Sinlessness,” *De anamarteto*, he focuses on Romans 7. The final *Conlatio* by Abbot Abraham multiplies biblical *exempla* about mortification, the main theme of his lecture.

De institutis coenobiorum, a work of Cassian's maturity, counted twelve books of which Book V–XII established their own, independent manuscript tradition. Book I starts by describing the dress of Egyptian monks from their belt and their garment to their staff and sandals, as "it will be easier to present their inner devotion, after having described their external appearance" (I, 1). Each detail of that appearance calls throughout Book I on parallel vestimentary information found in scripture, always recalled in their proper context and with their moral relevance. As a result, the biblical *historia* is effectively actualized in the bodily appearance of the monks.

Book II starts with a series of eighteen *capitula*, short summaries of a few words, one sentence at most, by which the content of the following sections is announced. They deal with the nocturnal prayer life of the monks in Egypt, ruled by fixed (canonical) conventions. Their individual or collective recitation of the Psalms serves as a centrepiece in the spiritual festival of prayer, celebrated by the monks night after night in the silence of their cells or during their gatherings. Their experience of a praying community re-enacts in a monastic fashion the ideal description of the earliest disciples who invented the gospel lifestyle, according to Acts 4:32 (II, 5).

Book III turns to the diurnal prayer of the solitaries in Syria (III, 1), Egypt (III, 2), and in "the whole Orient" (III, 3–12). At least, such is the announcement made by the introductory *capitula*. In reality, the expositio is less divided geographically as it is chronologically, according to the canonical hours, the third, the sixth and the ninth when prayers are ordered by tradition. The biblical symbolism of these hours resounds with references to the whole salvation history, a vivid sense for the scriptural embeddedness of monastic prayer life vibrating throughout Cassian's descriptions.

The long Book IV, including forty-three chapters of which the last offers a *recapitulatio*, explains practical regulations of the community life in Egyptian monasteries. It is a life based on renunciation, obedience, humility and patience, inspired by the Gospel (IV, 5–6) and the paradigmatic figure of Moses (IV, 7); a life exemplified by outstanding ascetics like Abbot John (IV, 23–26) or Patermutius (IV, 27–28), who embodied the radicality of the Gospel to the point of becoming paradigmatic in their own right.

The *Institutions* present a significant use of Psalms and Matthew, as being by far the most helpful biblical sources for describing the social and psychological behaviour of monks. Book II, as already noted, stresses the recitation of Psalms during the night. Book V calls on 1 Cor 9:26–27; Book VI on 1 Thessalonians 4 and Hebrews 12 about the rewards of chastity, in particular the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Thes 4:3–8) and the vision of God (Heb 12:14–16). Biblical *exempla* concerning the greed for riches, *philargyri*, fill

Book VII; others, on reconciliation, with a special discussion on Mt 5:22, fill Book VIII which discusses anger. Long comments on 1 Thes 4:9–11, 2 Thes 3:6–15, Eph 4:28 (with Acts 18:1–3; 20:33–35) are joined when the author denounces *akèdeia*, boredom, in Book X; biblical examples continue to proliferate in the last two Books, XI and XII, on idleness and pride.

EDITIONS

PL 49–50 (unsatisfactory).

Guy, J. C.: SC 109 (1965) *De institutis coenobiorum*.

Petschenig, M.: CSEL 13 (1886); 17 (1898).

Pichery, E.: SC 42, 54, 64 (1955–1959, 2nd ed., 1967–1971) *Conlationes*.

TRANSLATIONS

Dutch

Kar, A., van de, 1968.

English

LNPF 11, 2nd series, 1894 (1973) 201–290.

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French

Guy, J. C. and Pichery, E.: see above.

German

Abt, A., H. Kolhund, 1878.

Italian

Ernetti, P. M., 1956; Lari, O., 1965.

Spanish

Sansegundo, L. M. and P. M., 1961.

STUDIES

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- Leyser, C., "'Lectio divina, oratio pura.' Rhetoric and the techniques of asceticism in the *Conferences* of John Cassian." In *Modelli di santità*, 79–105. Edited by G. Barrone, M. Caffiero, and F. Scorza Barcellona. Turin, 1994.
- Rebillard, É., "*Quasi funambuli*. Cassien et la controverse pélagienne sur la perfection." *REAug* 40 (1994): 197–210.
- Riggi, C., "La giuntura 'imperium immo consilium' nell'esegesi di Cassiano alla pericope matteana sul giovane ricco (Conl 24.24)." In *Esegesi e catechesi nei Padri (secc. IV–VII). Convegno di studio e aggiornamento, Facoltà di Lettere cristiane e classiche (Pont. Inst. Altioris Latinitatis), Roma 25–27 marzo 1993*, 121–46. Edited by S. Felici. BSRel 112. Rome: LAS, 1994.
- Stewart, C., "Scripture and Contemplation in the Monastic Spiritual Theology of John Cassian." In *StPatr Vol. 25. Papers presented at the Eleventh International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 1991. Biblica et Apocrypha, Orientalia, Ascetica*, 457–61. Louvain: Peeters, 1993.
- Vannier, M.-A., "L'influence de Jean Chrysostome sur l'argumentation scripturaire du *De Incarnatione* de Jean Cassien." *RevSR* 69 (1995): 453–62.

XXVIII
APPONIUS (FL. 405–415)

Merely a name, possibly a Roman author with a Jewish or Oriental background, Aponius wrote a Commentary on Canticle, mentioned by Bede (PL 91, 1162: *In Cantica Canticorum allegorica expositio*, 4), first edited in Rome, 1843, by H. Bottino and J. Martini, and reprinted in PLS I, 800–1131; the title given by the manuscripts (Ambrosianum D 37 sup., Sessorianum 12) being: *Aponii in Canticum Canticorum explanationis libri XII*.

A monument of symbolic theology, representative of Western monastic culture on the threshold of the High Middle Ages, Apponius's commentary expounds a christological and ecclesiological interpretation of the Canticle, deeply rooted in the tradition of Origenian exegesis.

Book I comments on Canticle 1:1–6;

Book II, on Canticle 1:7–8;

Book III, on Canticle 1:9–2:6;

Book IV, on Canticle 2:7–15;

Book V, on Canticle 2:16–3:11;

Book VI, on Canticle 4:1–7;

Book VII, on Canticle 4:8–5:2a;

Book VIII, on Canticle 5:2b–5;

Book IX, on Canticle 6:8–7:1;

Book X, on Canticle 7:2–9;

Book XI, on Canticle 7:10–8:4;

Book XII, on Canticle 8:5–14.

The short prologue of the *Expositio* shows affinities with the translations of Origen's homilies by Jerome and Rufinus. Apponius comes also close to Ambrose and to the *Opus imperfectum in Matthaëum*. He uses the *Onomasticon* of Pseudo-Philo, adapted by Jerome in 389 as *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*. He knew no Greek but was attracted by mathematics and natural sciences; his geographical notions were poor, but with some clearer knowledge of history, thanks to the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius. Philosophical discussions fascinated him. For quoting Canticle, he used Jerome's Vulgate of 398; for quotations of other parts of scripture, his textual basis included versions belonging to different traditions. His exegesis is thoroughly spiritual: *Omnia in mysterio eo tempore acta intellegantur*, "All the elements of the mystery are to be understood as accomplished in that time."

The Canticle has no profane relevance, it is entirely a *nuptiale carmen*, a “nuptial song,” sung by the Spirit to celebrate the wedding of Christ and the Church (V, 458; VIII, 3). It is a prophetic text which, through figures and enigmata, prefigures the mystery of the Incarnation. Different senses of scripture need to be distinguished: the *historia*, which is negligible in this case; the *intelligentia mysteriorum*, which is essential: *Necesse est, ubi figuris agit Spiritus sanctus, nos allegoriae omnimodo deservire*, “where the Holy Spirit acts in figures, we must by all means use allegories” (II, 295); the *sensus moralis* (V, 80), magnifying the love which unites the divine Logos and the human soul of Jesus (specially IX and XII), the love between Christ and Church (*passim*), and the love joining Christ and human souls in general. There is no direct influence of Origen perceptible in Apponius.

According to Apponius, the Canticle celebrates the whole divine economy of creation and salvation. Book I exposes God’s project. Book II shows the perfect soul guided and supported by Christ, in its search of God and of the true Israel, namely the Church. Book III sings the beauty of the Church. Book IV announces the Incarnation, Book V describes the consequences of the resurrection of Jesus, namely the conversion of Jews in Jerusalem and the meeting with Gentiles. Book VI lets Christ describe the different categories of Christians. Book VII shows how the Church is growing through the persecutions. Book VIII denounces heresy and invites heretics to conversion. Book IX sees the Soul of Christ at the top of all ecclesial orders. Book X mentions the conversion of Rome, *filia principis*, “the daughter of the prince (Christ).” Book XI claims that the invasions of Barbarians entail the latter’s conversion, which leads to “the doors” of the End. Book XII, in a final vision welcomes the triumph of the Soul of Christ over Antichrist. The Church reaches the end of a pilgrimage on earth by speaking all her five languages: Hebrew, Greek, Egyptian, Latin, and Assyrian.

EDITIONS

Bottino, H. and G. Martini: PLS 1, 800–1031 (1958) = (Rome 1847).

Vrégille, B. de, and L. Neyrand: CCSL 19 (1986).

—. SC 420, 421, 430 (1997–1998), Introduction and bibliography: 12–128.

TRANSLATIONS

French

Vrégille, B. de, L. Neyrand: see above.

German

König, H., *Apponius. Die Auslegung zum Lied der Lieder*. Freiburg, 1991.

Italian

Crociani, L., *Apponii, In Canticum Canticorum explanationes Libri VI*. Rome, 1990.

STUDIES

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Bischoff, B., "Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter": *SE* 6 (1954) 189-279) = *Mittelalterliche Studien* I. Stuttgart 1966, 205-73.

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Laistner, M. L. W., "Some Early Medieval Commentaries on the Old Testament": *HThR* 46 (1953): 27-46.

Ohly, F., *Hohenlied-Studien*. Wiesbaden 1950.

Stubenrauch, B., *Der Heilige Geist bei Apponius. Zum theologischen Gehalt einer spätantiken Hoheliedauslegung*. Römische Quartalschrift. Suppl. 46. Freiburg: Herder, 1991.

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Witek, F., "Aponius": *RAC* Suppl. 4 (1986) 506-514.

Witte, J., *Der Kommentar des Aponius zum Hohenliede*. Diss. Erlangen 1903.

XXIX

PROSPER OF AQUITAINE (CA. 390–CA. 455)

A layman with a solid classical education, Prosper became a fervent defender of Augustine in the so-called Semi-Pelagian controversy. He composed a commentary on some Psalms, *Expositio Psalmorum 100–150*, during his time in Rome (434–442). “The authenticity of the Prologue (*prologus metricus*, PL 36, 59) is disputed; G. Morin, who republished it in *RB* 46 (1934) 36, is in favour, while M. Cappuyens (BTAM 3 n. 153) is opposed. The CCL considers it to date from the Carolingian era, and to be perhaps a work of Walafrid Strabo and thus ommits it” (A. Hamman: Quasten IV, 554).

In fact, with some literal excerpts, Prosper summarized Augustine’s *Enarrationes in psalmos*. His psalter text is nothing but a mixture of Augustine’s Psalter and the Roman Psalter (Callens, ix),

EDITIONS

PL 51, 277–426.

Callens, P.: CCL 68A (1972) 1–211.

STUDIES

Gori, F. “Da una compilazione medievale sui *Salmi*: recuperi per i commentari di Girolamo, di Prospero di Aquitania e di Arnobi il Giovane.” *ASE* 10 (1993): 531–70.

XXX

VALERIAN OF CIMELIUM (FL. MID-5TH C.)

As bishop of Cimelium (Cimiez, near Nice, southern France), Valerian entertained a close relationship with the monks of Lérins. He authored a *Letter* to these monks, *Epistola ad monachos de virtutibus et ordine doctrinae apostolicae*, and twenty *Homilies*, almost entirely dedicated to moral issues, such as the needed discipline, promises unkept, insolence, idle talk, parasitism, vain-glory, the benefit of peace, the high value of martyrdom, the Maccabees, and avarice. Valerian's sophisticated style betrays his rhetorical formation. He alludes to Seneca, among others. His main authority is the gospel. Many biblical quotations and references enrich his discourse. *Homily* 18 is entirely dedicated to the Maccabees.

EDITION

PL 52 = Gallandi, *Bibliotheca veterum Patrum*, X. Venice 1774.

STUDIES

Mara, M. G., "Una particolare utilizzazione del corpus paulino nella *Epistola ad monachos*": *Mémorial Dom Jean Gribomont* (1920-1986). Rome 1988, 411-18.

XXXI

EUCHERIUS OF LYON (CA. 380–450/455)

The son of a senatorial family of Lyon, well educated and knowledgeable in Greek, Eucherius separated from his wife and four children (among them two sons who became bishops in his lifetime), and retired into the eremitic solitude of one of the Lérins islands from which he was elected to the see of his hometown in 453.

His *Liber formularum spiritalis intellegentiae*, dedicated to one of his sons, enumerates in ten sections some examples of allegorical exegesis. The introduction distinguishes between the literal, tropological and anagogical meaning of scripture. His *Instructionum libri duo ad Salonium* explains in Book I passages from the OT and NT; in Book II, it comments on some Hebrew and Greek words like *Halleluiah* or *Zabaoth*, according to Jerome. The whole work proceeds by means of question and answer. Eucherius's exegesis follows closely models provided by Ambrose and Augustine. He was highly esteemed in mediaeval monasteries.

EDITIONS

PL 50.

Wotke, C.: CSEL 31 (1894). *Eucherius Opera*.

TRANSLATIONS

French

Cristiani, L., 1950: *Éloge de la solitude*, with the Introduction of the *Liber formularum*.

STUDIES

Bardy, G., "La littérature patristique, des 'Quaestiones et responsiones' sur l'écriture Sainte.": *RB* (1933) 14–230.

Cristiani, L., "Eucher (saint)": *DSp* 4 (1960) 1653–60, bibliography.

Curti, C. "Spiritalis intelligentia? Nota sulla dottrina esegetica di Eucherio di Lione." In *Fs. C. Andresen, Kerygma und Logos*, edited by A. M. Ritter, 108–22. Göttingen, 1979.

Hirte, J. G. "Doctrina scripturistica et textus biblicus S. Eucherii Episcopi." Diss., Rome: Pont. Athenaei Urbaniani de Propaganda Fide, 1940.

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- , "L'influsso delle 'Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos' di Girolamo sulle 'Instructiones' di Eucherio di Lione," 435–53.
 - , "Per una nuova edizione delle opere maggiori di Eucherio di Leone," 631–46.
 - , "Le *Regole* di Ticonio e le 'Quaestiones et responsiones' di Eucherio di Leone." *ASE* 8 (1991): 535–46.
 - , "Sulle fonti di Eucherio di Lione: L'influsso dei *Commentarioli in Psalmos* di Girolamo sul I libro delle *Instructiones*." In *Egesi, parafrasi e compilazione in età tardoantica. Atti del Terzo Convegno dell'Associazione di Studi Tardoantichi*, 249–71. Edited by C. Moreschini. Collectanea 9. Naples: M. D'Auria Editore, 1995.
- O'Loughlin, T. "The Symbol gives Life: Eucherius of Lyon's Formula for Exegesis." In *Scriptural Interpretation in the Fathers: Letter and Spirit*, edited by T. Finan and V. Twomey, 221–52.
- Pintus, G. M. "Il bestiario del diavolo. L'esegesi biblica nelle 'Formulae spiritalis intelligentiae' di Eucherio di Lione." *Sandalion. Quaderni di cultura classica, cristiana e medievale* 12–13 (1989–1990): 99–114.
- , "Autorità di Girolamo e testo biblico in un passo delle *Formulae spiritalis intelligentiae* di Eucherio di Lione." *Sandalion* 15 (1992): 163–74.
- Pourrat, P., "Eucher": *Cath* 4 (1956) 660–61.
- Rusch, W., *The Later Latin Fathers*, London (1977), 159–60.
- Wickham, L. R., "Eucherius von Lyon": *TRE* 10 (1982) 522–25.

XXXII
SALONIUS OF GENEVA (MID-5TH C.)

Salonius, son of Eucherius, the bishop of Lyon, was educated at Lérins where his father had spent a few years with his wife and their two children. Between 428 and 434, Salonius received there the two volumes of *Institutiones*, which Eucherius dedicated to him, containing questions and answers on scripture. Before 439, he became bishop of Geneva, his brother, Veranus, occupying the see of Vence. Salonius wrote a "Spiritual Interpretation of Solomon's Parables and Ecclesiastes," *Expositio mystica in Parabolas Salomonis et Ecclesiastem*, in the form of a conversation between Veranus and himself. The difficult passages of both biblical texts, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, are allegorized. Under a slightly modified title, the same work is transmitted as belonging to Honorius of Autun (PL 172, 311–348). Salonius died shortly after 450.

EDITION

PL 53, 967–1012.

STUDIES

Bardy, G., *La littérature patristique des "quaestiones et responsiones" sur l'Écriture sainte*. Paris 1933, 84–86.

Besson, M., "Un exégète de Genève au milieu du V^e siècle, saint Salone": *Anzeiger für schweizerische Geschichte*. Neue Folge, IX (1902–05) 252–65.

XXXIII

ARNOBIUS THE YOUNGER (D. AFTER 451)

An African monk, having fled the Vandals, while in Rome ca. 432, Arnobius opposed Augustine's doctrine of grace. In particular, he wrote an allegorical *Commentarii* on the Psalms in which he opposes Augustinianism, and the *Expositiunculae in evangelium* which offer *scholia* on passages from Matthew, Luke and John.

EDITIONS

Daur, K. D. CCSL 25 (1990), *Commentarii in Psalmos*.

STUDIES

Gori, F. "Da una compilazione medievale sui *Salmi*: recuperi per i commentari di Girolamo, di Prospero di Aquitania e di Arnobi il Giovane." *ASE* 10 (1993): 531-70.

McHugh, M. P.: *EEC* I 120.

XXXIV

LEO I, THE GREAT (D. 461)

Bishop of Rome, 440–461, possibly born in Rome of a Tuscan family, Leo occupied an important position inside the papal administration for at least a decade before entering the pontifical office. A man of strong affirmation, he identified himself with his ecclesial mission, the apostle Peter to be speaking through him. He established the supremacy of the Roman See in the West at a crucial time when the Empire was collapsing. His interventions in the East (*Tomus ad Flavianum*; Council of Chalcedon 451, his letters concerning the monks of Palestine, 452–454, the ecclesiastical peace in Egypt 457–458) as well as his negotiation with Attila, 452, and his world-wide epistolary activity gave his ministry a universal dimension.

Leo himself secured the focal collection of his sermons, ninety-seven of them in Chavasse's edition, "arranged not only in their liturgical order (beginning from September 29 to the sermons for the ember days of (the following) September), but also in chronological order within the same liturgical arrangement" (Studer, 597); in particular, ten sermons for Christmas, eight for Epiphany, two for Easter, two for the Ascension, seven for Pentecost and the time of Pentecostal fasting, twelve for Lent, nineteen for Holy Week (*De Passione*), nine for the ember days of September, and six for the so-called Collects. Sermons and letters are Leo's literary legacy. "Leo's letters and sermons are in fact distinguished by their refined style, rhythmic prose, purity of language, conscience of expression and clarity of thought. Few writers of that time excelled like Leo in his domination of Latin rhetoric and his achievement of such a perfect concordance between content and form. This ability to express in a Roman fashion the Christian themes dearest to him is a characteristic of Leo. In Leo, Roman genius was united with the Christian spirit in a truly singular manner" (Studer, 595).

The Christmas sermons cover two periods of five years each, *tractatus* 21–25, in 440–444, and *tractatus* 26–30 in 450–454. They testify to Leo's dogmatic and parenetic inspiration, Scripture confirming his doctrinal statement or articulating the mystery celebrated in the liturgy. The exposition shows no trace of any narrative style. From a clear definition of the divine mystery concerned, the preacher shifts over into imperative exhortations: *Reformationis humanae sacrum divinumque mysterium sancto atque sincero honorate servitio. Amplectimini Christum in nostra carne nascentem*, "By a holy and sincere service, honour the sacred and divine mystery of the reshaping of humanity. Embrace Christ born in our flesh" (*tract.* 22; 100, 236–239,

Chavasse). Leo is more concerned with an adequate definition of the two natures of Christ, or a denunciation of christological heresies, among which he counts Manicheism, than he is with the paraphrased retrieving of Gospel narratives. A closer paraphrase of Mt 17:1–9, on the Transfiguration, is included in *tractatus* 51, delivered “at the Mass which closed the vigils of the Saturday to the second Sunday of Lent” (Chavasse, CCL 138A, 295).

The sermons *De passione*, 52–72, comprise also those delivered during the Easter vigil. Sometimes called *De resurrectione*, they are short, extremely well focused and incisive against those *fantastici christiani*, “fantasizing Christians” (*tract.* 65; 398, 71 Chavasse) who misunderstand the reality of Christ’s Passion. From that series of homilies (the oldest collection, secured by Leo himself) we go directly to two sermons for the Ascension, *tract.* 73–74, dating from 444 and 445 and then to the series of sermons for Pentecost and its time of fasting. In other words, we note the absence of the Easter *solemnitas*, so much emphasized in Leo’s time by his contemporary fellow-bishop, Peter of Ravenna.

Leo shows little consciousness of specific hermeneutical concerns. He mentions scripture only for the purpose of quoting it. Bits and pieces of scriptural phrases surface spontaneously in his discourse, but his use of the Bible exemplifies a highly significant emergence of the Roman pontiff’s self-awareness: “It is not so much that his preaching is at the service of Scripture as that Scripture is at the service of his preaching” (A. Lauras). Tacitly, Leo embodies the *auctoritas* of Scripture as he quotes it by affirming himself as Peter *redivivus* (W. Ullmann, E. Quiter). For a systematic analysis of Leo’s exegesis, see B. Studer, “Die Einflüsse.”

EDITIONS

PL 54–56.

Chavasse, A.: CCL 138–138A (1973), *Sermons*.

Dolle, R.: SC 22 bis (1964); 49 bis (1969); 74 bis (1976).

TRANSLATIONS

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Huyg, A., 1941.

English:

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French:

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Italian:

Mariucci, T., 1969.

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XXXV

FAUSTUS OF RIEZ (CA. 405–CA. 490)

Probably a Briton by birth, Faustus entered the monastery of Lérins about 424, became its third abbot ca. 433 and was elevated to the see of Riez around 457. In addition to sermons and letters he wrote a polemical treatise *De spiritu sancto libri duo*, and, shortly after the synod of Arles 473, a treatise *De gratia* against the predestinarian priest, Lucidus.

In *De gratia*, the use of scripture makes up the main structure and fabric of Faustus's discourse (Simonetti). Scripture is quoted 255 times in the extant text, nearly half of the OT citations being from psalms, and thirty-five citations from the NT deriving from Romans. "Just as the rhetoric of the *De gratia* is essentially bi-polar excluding extreme positions in favour of a middle way, so Faustus's use of scripture aims at inclusiveness and equilibrium. Scripture must be interpreted and understood in the broadest way, taking into account the whole of sacred writ: ... 'When one thing is asserted without the other, the other is unmentioned, not denied, According to the rule which bishop Augustine introduces: Not everything which is unmentioned is denied' (I, 5; 20, 11–14; cf. *De doctrina christiana* II, VI, 8; IX, 14, *ad sensum*)" (Smith, 110).

Entirely motivated by his theological concerns in the context of the so-called Semi-Pelagian controversy,

Faustus's global approach to Scripture is not simply the disinterested method of an exegete attempting to deal equitably with the Scriptures. The method itself, for all its apparent equanimity, is also demonstrably a function of Faustus's persuasive and polemical intention. Without doubt the use of Scripture in the *De gratia* actualizes the centrist ideal expressed, for example, by Vincent of Lérins in the *Commonitorium*.... While he never directly disputes with the bishop of Hippo, Faustus certainly joins battle precisely at the point of some of Augustine's favoured anti-Pelagian proof-texts. On comparing the exegesis directly with Augustine's on these texts, however, one finds Faustus aiming not at Augustine, but at a kind of hyper-Augustinian predestinarian use of the Bible. It may well be that Faustus regarded such radical interpretations to be abuses of Augustine's own hermeneutical canons" (Smith, 124–25).

EDITIONS

CSEL 21.
CCL 64 and 101, 101A, 101B.

TRANSLATIONS

German

C. M. Kasper, *Mönchspredigten des Faustus von Riez*. EA. 1991.

STUDIES

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XXXVI
PATRICK AND EARLY IRISH LITERATURE

I. PATRICIUS (PATRICK) (390/410–461 OR 491)

Potitus, a grandfather of St. Patrick, was a presbyter. His father, Calpornius, was a deacon and a decurion, possessing land and slaves. From Britanniae, where he was born, Patrick went as a missionary, in 432, to Ireland. In 444, tradition claimed him to have founded the church of Armagh. He died allegedly in 461 or 491 (Hanson).

Patrick wrote a *Confessio* and the *Epistula militibus Carotici*, two remarkable documents allowing insights into the daily struggle of one of the rare known missionaries of late Antiquity. Patrick is the only known Roman citizen giving a report of his imprisonment as a slave among the Barbarians (before his missionary tenure).

Two *Letters* of Patrick are “masterpieces” (Howlett). “Should it happen that Patrick was a *homo unius libri* (man of a single book), that book would be the Latin Bible, which he quotes at once rarely and pertinently” (Howlett 1996, 95). He used its phrasing in claiming that his own vocation was equal to that of Moses and of Paul. His art-prose, with its many wordplays, presents “a use of the *cursus* and a biblical orthography, diction and syntax, which are correct” (Howlett, *TRE*, 95). Patrick declared himself to be the “bishop” of Ireland, instituted by God: *Hiberione constitutum episcopum me esse fateor* (*Ep.* 1).

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- Mohrmann, C., *The Latin of St. Patrick*. Dublin 1961.

II. LATHCEN (D. 661)

A monk of Clonfertmulloe, today Kyle, in Leix County, southern Ireland, Lathcen (or Laidhggén), was counted by Notker Balbulus among "the famous men who commented on sacred scriptures with great care," *illustros viros qui ex intentione sacras scripturas exponebant*. His *Ecloga* ("Digest") of Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job* covers 364 pages in its very first printed edition,

dating from 1969. Lathcen is also the author of the *Lorica of Gildas* (the latter is mentioned as “author” only in a late manuscript), a rhythmical prayer which was to enjoy a long-lasting popularity (Esposito 1929, 289ff.).

EDITIONS

Adriaen, M., *Egloga quam scripsit Lathcen filius Baith de Moralibus Iob quas Gregorius fecit*. CCSL 145 (1969).

STUDIES

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III. THE “IRISH AUGUSTINE” (MID-7TH C.)

The “Irish Augustine” was a disciple of a certain “doctor Manchianus,” who died in 652, abbot of Mondrehid, in Laoighis County. This monk may have written a *Commentary on Matthew*, of which only a few fragments survive (Esposito 1920, 317). The “Irish Augustine” was called so, probably soon after his death, because his most popular writing, *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, dating from 655, was pervaded by a strong Augustinian flavour, to the point that, for over a millennium, it was considered as a work of Augustine of Hippo himself. At least, the mistaken attribution helped greatly for a broad distribution of the Irish treatise.

EDITIONS

CPL, n. 1123.

PL 35, 2149–2200.

STUDIES

Díaz y Díaz, M. C., “*Isidoriana* I: Sobre el *Liber de ordine creaturarum*”: *SE* 5 (1953) 147–66 (of Irish origin, influenced by the Irish Augustine’s *Liber de mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, dating ca. 650).

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- Esposito, M., "The Knowledge of Greek in Ireland during the Middle Ages": *Studies* 1 (1912) 665–83; M. Esposito, *Latin Learning in Medieval Ireland*, ed. M. Lapidge. London 1988, section 9.
- Gorman, M., "A Critique of Bischoff's Theory of Irish Exegesis: The Commentary on Genesis in Munich Clm 6302 (Wendepunkte 2)": *JMedLat* 7 (1997) 178–233.
- Herren, M., "On the Earliest Irish Acquaintance with Isidore of Seville": E. James, ed., *Visigothic Spain*. Oxford 1980, 243–50.
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- O’Cróinín, D., “A Seventh Century Irish Computus from the Circle of Cummianus”: *PIA* 82, 2 (1982) 405–30.
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- Painter, K. S., “Gran Bretagna e Irlanda”: *DPAC* 1657–77.
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Twentieth century scholarship on early Irish exegesis ended with a bombshell in the pages of the highly respectable *Revue Bénédictine*: Michael Gorman’s critical review of what he called “The Myth of Hiberno-Latin Exegesis,” *RBen* 110 (2000) 42–85. In reference to “La cultura irlandese precarolingia: Miracolo o mito?,” *StMed* 8 (1967) 257–420, by Edmondo Coccia, and in line with his former article “A Critique of Bischoff’s Theory of Irish Exegesis: The Commentary on Genesis in Munich Clm 6302 (Wendepunkte 2),” *JMedLat* 7 (1997) 178–233, the Irish Gorman begins his article in *RBen* with a volley of observations: “Very few of the items listed by Bischoff are found complete in a manuscript which can with certainty be attributed to Ireland, and the many anonymous items do not present any evidence of Irish origin in a rubric or colophon” (48); “there is no evidence that any work listed in ‘Wendepunkte’ was created as an original biblical commentary in Ireland during the period under question (600–800)” (49); “the various anonymous commentaries listed in ‘Wendepunkte’ do not seem to have exerted any influence on later exegetical work” (50).

After clearing the ground, Gorman then presents a strategy for future studies of Hiberno-Latin exegesis: “For all these reasons, it seems to me that the time has come for a moratorium on producing catalogues of Hiberno-Latin exegetical works. Instead, scholars interested in this problem should concentrate on transcribing the various unpublished works Bischoff listed in 1954 so they can be read and analyzed and the validity of Bischoff’s description can be verified.... I doubt that it is worthwhile to create genuine critical editions of all of them. It seems to me more important to have transcriptions

of all of these works available on the World Wide Web at no cost to readers as soon as possible" (51).

In other words, for the study of early Irish literature, as for many other areas of patristic exegesis, the electronic age may well open new perspectives which reduce to sheer documentary value the results of certain trends of twentieth century research. Gorman ends his contribution in *RBen* with a sharp and illuminating "Updated Bibliography on the Items Listed in 'Wendepunkte'" (59–85), which casts a penetrating light on the erudite information in the present section of this Handbook.

CHAPTER TWELVE
SIXTH- AND SEVENTH-CENTURY
LATIN CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

CONTENTS

- I. Avitus 1301
- II. Eugippius 1303
- III. Fulgentius of Ruspe 1305
- IV. Arator 1307
- V. Caesarius of Arles 1310
- VI. Eusebius Gallicanus 1314
- VII. Verecundus of Junca 1316
- VIII. Dionysius Exiguus 1317
- IX. Boethius 1318
- X. Benedict of Nursia 1320
- XI. Victor of Capua 1324
- XII. Primasius of Hadrumetum 1325
- XIII. Iunilius Africanus 1326
- XIV. Cassiodorus 1327

XV. Gregory the Great 1336
by Stephan C. Kessler, S.J.

XVI. Gregory of Agrigentum 1369

XVII. Isidore of Seville 1370

XVIII. Ildefonsus of Toledo 1375

I

AVITUS (450–CA. 518)

By birth, Alcinus Ecdicius Avitus belonged to the Gallo-Roman aristocracy of senatorial rank in Auvergne. Among his relatives were the Western Emperor Eparchius Avitus, who ruled from 455 to 456, and the poet Sidonius Apollinaris. Following his father, Avitus became bishop of Vienne, the metropolis of Gaul in 490, and succeeded in converting the Burgundian king Sigismund from Arianism to the Catholic faith. With sixty-six *Letters*, his literary legacy includes the apologetic *Dialogi cum Gundomado rege*, the father of Sigismund whom he had tried in vain to convert as well; thirty-four *Homilies*, of which only three are transmitted in full. The epic work *De spiritualis historiae gestis* is written in five books, dating from 507. This biblical epic of 2552 hexameters describes Creation, Fall (the theme of Paradise Lost) and Judgment, followed by the Flood and the Crossing of the Red Sea. In a refined style, precious and virgilian, Avitus imitates the classics as well as his contemporary, Sidonius Apollinaris. Book V witnesses to an elegant and finely wrought psychological sensitivity. It offers “an excellent choice of examples illustrating the history of a literary decadence” (Labriolle, 65of.).

EDITIONS

PL 59: Suppl. 3.

Hecquet-Noti, N.: SC 444 (1999), *De spiritualis historiae gestis*.

Peiper, R.: MGH. AA 6/2, 1–294.

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- . "Further Notes on the Text of Avitus": *VC* 39 (1985): 79-81.
- . "*Subitania paenitentia* in Letters of Faustus and Avitus": *RTAM* 55 (1988): 30-41.
- . "Avitus and a Fifth-Century Statement of Faith": *J ECS* 2 (1994): 71-91.
- Palanque, J.-R., "Avit (saint)": *DHGE* 5 (1931): 1205-1208.
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- Roncoroni, A., "L'epica biblica di Avito": *VetChr* 9 (1972): 303-29.
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II

EUGIPPIUS (465/467–CA. 533)

Probably of Roman background, Eugippius entered the monastery of Severinus of Noricum, next to the Danube River. Barbarian invasions drove him, together with his whole community, to southern Italy where he became the abbot of a monastery near Naples under the pontificate of Gelasius I (492–496). His relationship with Dionysius Exiguus, who dedicated to him his translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *De statu hominis*, and with Fulgentius of Ruspe, Cassiodorus, Paschasius, and Proba, position him as a spiritual and intellectual leader, close to the Roman aristocracy which favoured the Byzantine politics of the time. His *Commemoratorium vitae sancti Severini* stresses the biblical inspiration of Severinus facing the dramatic destruction of the Roman province of Noricum. He wrote his significant account in the art-prose of late Antiquity with rhythmic *clausulae* and Christian simplicity. After 511, he produced a compilation of *Excerpta ex operibus sancti Augustini*, dedicated to Proba.

EDITIONS

- Knöll, P.: CSEL 9, 1 (1885), *Excerpta*; 9, 2 (1886 = 1967), *Vita Severini*.
 Mommsen, Th., *Excerpta*. Berlin 1898 = 1978.
 Noll, R., Berlin 1963 = 1981.
 Nüsslein, T., Stuttgart 1986.
 Régerat, P.: SC 374 (1991).
 Sauppe, H., Berlin 1877 = 1961.

TRANSLATIONS

English

Bieler, L. – L. Krestan: FaCh 55. Washington 1965.

French

Régerat: above.

German

Noll, R., *Eugippius. Das Leben des hl. Severin*. Berlin 1963.

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Berlin 1964, 155–67.

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'Vie de saint Séverin' d'Eugippius": *SE* 21 (1972–73) 147–58.

—. "La Bible dans la 'Vie de Saint Séverin' d'Eugippius." *Latomus* 33/2 (1974):
324–52.

III
FULGENTIUS OF RUSPE (476–532)

Born in Byzecna (modern Tunisia) into a senatorial family of Carthage under the Vandal occupation, Fulgentius became a tax-collector with a good knowledge of Greek. Having read Augustine's *Enarratio in Ps. 36*, he chose to enter a monastery. He enjoyed the works of Cassian and the writings of the Desert Fathers with special devotion. In 500, he was elected bishop of Ruspe, only to be exiled to Sardinia, where he served as a theological advisor among his fellow bishops, also exiled ca. 515 by the Vandal administration of King Thrasamond. Thrasamond called him back to Carthage for a theological debate, which turned to Fulgentius's advantage. At once, the bishop was chased away again. He remained in Sardinia until Thrasamond's death in 523. In a monastery near Cagliari, built by him and some forty other monks, he enjoyed more than anything else discussing difficult questions of biblical exegesis. The late part of his life was dedicated to the church in Ruspe.

Fulgentius wrote two main works: *Dicta regis Trasamundi et contra ea responsiones*, or *Contra arianos*, and *Ad T(h)rasamundum regem* (both in PL 65). An anonymous anti-Arian *Psalmus abecedarius*, imitating Augustine's *Psalmus contra partem Donati*, may also have Fulgentius as its author. Of the anti-Arian Books *Contra Fabianum* extensive fragments survive. For a pilgrim en route to Jerusalem, Fulgentius composed a handbook *De fide seu de regula fidei ad Petrum* against all heresies, which was to serve as an ancestor for medieval collections of "Sentences." Almost all its *capitula* exhibit numerous quotations and references illustrating the biblical foundation of classical orthodoxy in the Christian West. Some letters and sermons add to the literary legacy of Fulgentius. Remarkable for its classical clarity, the African bishop's thought expresses a strict fidelity to Augustinian doctrine. Seven Books against Faustus of Riez are lost. Fulgentius's firm grasp of theological issues, articulated in a style of dense assertions, expressed his familiarity with scripture, Pauline references prevailing in his anti-Arian writings.

EDITIONS

PL 65.

Fraipont, J.: CCL 91–91A (1968).

TRANSLATIONS

German

Kozelka, L.: BKV, 2nd series, 9. Munich 1934.

STUDIES

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Lemarié, J., "Un sermon inédit sur Mt 16:13-19 de l'école de Fulgence de Ruspe." *REAug* 18 (1972): 116-23.

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IV
ARATOR (FIRST HALF 6TH C.)

Born in Liguria, Arator was educated in Milan under the direction of the famous poet Ennodius. He studied law and entered the career of a civil servant at the court of the Goths in Ravenna. Shifting over into clerical status under the pontificate of Virilius, he was ordained a sub-deacon. He wrote an epic paraphrase, *De actibus apostolorum*, in two books of 1,076 and 1,250 hexameters, remarkable for its classical vocabulary and its elaborate interpretations, in particular about numerological symbolism (H. Kraft).

Book I comments on Acts 1–12, from the Ascension to Peter's nocturnal escape from prison. Book II follows the narratives from Acts 13 to 28. Every thirty or forty verses, a short summary in prose of one or two sentences signals the part of the Book of Acts which is to be versified. The verses themselves show from beginning to end the author's familiarity with Virgil, Ovid, and Statius, and also with the whole tradition of Christian Latin poetry. Interspersed with exclamations (*Nova pompa triumphi!* I 34, with reference to the Ascension; *O quantum distant humana supernis/Iudiciis!* I 108–109; *O gratia quantum/improvisa parat!* II 315–16; *O sacer et felix numeri modus!* II 620), and relevant interrogations (*Quid non credentibus offert/Indubitata fides?* I 952–53), the paraphrase takes on a lively and entertaining tone by which the text of Acts is faithfully and in all candor accommodated to the taste of Arator's cultivated readership.

Theological themes of the patristic tradition surface here and there in short allusions: *Christus post, mysticus Adam*, "Later, Christ, the mystic Adam," I 1038. The OT secures a relevant background for dramatic scenes: *sed cum vigilaret in illo/Quae nescit dormire fide, hoc Cantica clamant: 'Dormio corde vigil'*, "but, as faith which knows of no sleep was awake in him, the Canticles proclaim: 'I sleep but my heart keeps awake' (Sg 5:2)," I 1025–27; see also II 136–37. Well-known hermeneutical categories enrich numeral symbolism: *Qui canit ecclesiae tria dogmata saepius edit/Historicum, morale sonans, typicumque volumen./Sic etenim ternas capiunt sex vasa metretas./Quae veteri de lege novo rubuere liquore*, "The one [Paul] who sings the three beliefs of the church, often declares the Book historical, with a moral sounding, and typological. For thus the six vases contain three measures of OT drink rubied by NT" II 890–93. The editor of CSEL adds very interesting indexes "*rationis typicae*," highlighting the play of contrasting light and shade in Arator's imaginative poetry (181–82), his agricultural metaphors (182–83), his so-called "mystic figures" filled with traditional typology (183–89), and his

symbolic numerology (189–90). In the scriptural index the references to the Johannine Apocalypse outnumber those to Matthew and John. Among the ecclesiastical authors Sedulius, with his *Carmen paschale*, dominates, whereas among the classical authors Virgil remains the most quoted or alluded to. It is not surprising that Arator became one of the most appreciated Christian poets in medieval humanities.

EDITIONS

PL 68.

Ennodius, *Epistulae* 8, 4, 11, 33; 9, 1; *Dictiones* 9; 11; 18; 22 *praef.*; *Carmina* 2, 105, 114; *Cassiodorus, Variae* 8, 12.

McKinley, A.: CSEL 72 (1951); review by J. Schwind, *Arator Studien*. Göttingen 1990.

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TRANSLATIONS

English

Roberts: above; in need of revision.

STUDIES

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CAESARIUS OF ARLES (469/470–542)

After a short-lived eremitic experiment at Lérins, Caesarius settled in Arles where he became a priest, then the abbot of a monastic community. Consecrated bishop of Arles shortly before Christmas 502, he managed, under the Gothic rulers, to maintain close relations with the bishops of Rome, in particular Pope Symmachus. His pastoral activity embodied the reforming ideals of Lérins, while his theology was strictly Augustinian. His oratorical accomplishment communicated a vision of society based on a christianized Stoicism inherited from Chrysostom and other patristic authorities. Caesarius made it his custom to interpret Scripture in an unpretentious style: “It was ‘lowly speech,’ a true *sermo humilis*, often modelled on the Bible with the pronunciation, morphology, and diction of the vernacular Latin spoken by his audience. Caesarius preferred ‘ordinary, everyday, rustic speech’ (*sermo* 1, 20; 86, 1; 114, 2) to the ‘elegant and luxuriant worldly eloquence’ (*sermo* 1, 20) that bishops like Sidonius and Avitus employed because he believed that it could be understood by the whole congregation whereas the latter could be appreciated by only a few cultivated persons (*sermo* 1, 20)” (Klingshirn, 148).

That strategy gave Caesarius the possibility of popularizing a wealth of spiritual values destined to consolidate the community life of his parishioners. It also allowed him to rewrite for peasant audiences sophisticated sermons borrowed from Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and others. The collections of Caesarius’s sermons, firmly secured in the hand-written traditions by numerous witnesses from the early eighth century on, were initially arranged by Caesarius himself following the example of Augustine. Among them figure a *Collectio biblica de mysteriis Veteris Testamenti*, counting twenty-nine sermons and a *Collectio biblica altera de mysteriis Veteris Testamenti*, counting fifty other sermons.

Dom Morin’s edition “II *Sermones de Scriptura*” includes sermons 81–186 (pp. 319–719): the first fifteen deal with the stories of the Patriarchs, a third of them dedicated to Joseph; the next twenty-one sermons comment on Exodus, Leviticus (only one sermon), and Deuteronomy. This means that *sermones* 81–113 focus on the Pentateuch. *Sermo* 100, dealing with Ex 5:7–12, 20:3–5, is borrowed from Augustine; *sermones* 110, on Num 16:37–39, and 113, on Num 22, are taken over from Jerome. The Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings provide the readings on which Caesarius preaches in *sermones* 114–130. Again Augustine provides the substance of *sermones* 118 (on

Judges 13–14 and 16), 121 (on 1 Sam 17, David and Goliath), 122 (on 2 Sam 24:16–18), 123 (on 1 Kgs 3:16–28), 124 (on 1 Kgs 17:9–11), and Ambrose provides *sermo* 117 on Jgs 6:11–13. Thirteen other sermons deal with the OT: *sermo* 131 and the first half of 132, on Job; 132 (second part)–137, on Psalms; 138–139, on Proverbs; 140 (from Augustine) and 141 on Ecclesiastes; 142 (only!) on Is 53:2; and 143, on Jonah.

The NT is interpreted in forty-six sermons (144–186; add 158A, 160A, 160B), of which sixteen deal with Matthew, only one focusing on Mark, a proportioning similar to what can be noted in Peter of Ravenna. Nine sermons (160–166; add 160A and B) comment on passages from Luke; nine others (167–175) on John. Only one (176), borrowed from Augustine, deals with Acts (10:9–15). Eight more (177–184) explain Pauline Letters, three of them (177, 172, 183) deriving from Augustine. The last two sermons of the biblical series (185–186) focus on 1 John, the other apostolic letters of the NT and the book of Revelation being ignored.

The next section, *III. Sermones de tempore* (pp. 1127–1129), should also be taken into consideration for a more complete survey of Caesarius's exegetical preaching. Indeed sermons delivered for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany (*sermones* 187–195), Lent (*sermones* 196–202), Easter (*sermones* 203–206), Ascension, Trinity Sunday, and Pentecost (*sermones* 210–213), polarize the listeners' attention on scripture, or more precisely, on the Gospel narrations.

In addition to sermons entirely adapted from one or the other of his prestigious predecessors, when composing his own sermons Caesarius keeps close to the sources he directly used, quoted, or imitated. It was an essential part of his pedagogy as a biblical commentator to let his congregation hear the voices of the "Fathers" from the pulpit. Thus in a time of severely reduced literacy, his congregation at Arles benefited from Caesarius's own "patristic" culture, which he drew upon with the sole purpose of commenting on scripture.

In the series of exegetical sermons on the OT, Caesarius's collection witnesses a constant recourse on Origen for expounding the Pentateuch. Origen's *Homilies on Genesis* remained open on the bishop's desk, when he prepared his own sermons on the book of Genesis, and the same is true for Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Only rarely did he call upon other patristic authorities, such as Jerome, Ambrose, Pelagius, Cyprian, or on contemporaries like Salvian of Marseilles or the anonymous author of the *Symbolum athanasianum*. In the composition of the other OT sermons, mainly on Psalms and Wisdom literature, Augustine takes the lead as a model. He stands behind most of the sermons of the NT, replaced only in four or five cases by Eusebius Gallicanus. It is striking to note how Caesarius read Augustine's sermons

in their proper order from *sermo* 85, when composing his own *sermo* 154 to *sermo* 211, on the eve of delivering his *sermo* 185. An interruption of the recourse to Augustine's sermons was occasioned by Caesarius's interest in the Augustinian *Quaestiones evangeliorum*, when preparing *sermones* 161, 163, and 165, and to his use of the homilies 2 and 3 for the Epiphany by the mysterious Eusebius Gallicanus, when writing *sermones* 167 and 168. Morin's annotation indicates the main data of the patristic sources displayed by Caesarius in his sermons.

One can easily subscribe to a remark made by M. J. Delage about Caesarius's borrowings from patristic authors throughout his collection of sermons: "Finally, in his borrowings like in other features of his literary legacy, we may perceive the same marks of his personality: a sincerity strong enough for being untroubled by appearances, much modesty, true sensibility, a great attention to the needs and the abilities of his public and a constant concern about efficacy" (SC 175, 110). In the Introduction to her edition of the "Sermons au Peuple," Delage offers a broad analysis of Caesarius's "Patristic Sources and Biblical Quotations" (94–117), with a *caveat* still accurate since 1971: "The working method of Caesarius, his way of choosing and integrating his borrowings deserved a more extensive study" (110).

EDITIONS

CCL 103–104 (1953), G. Morin.

Courreau, J.: SC 447 (2000), *Sermons sur l'Écriture (Sermons 81–105)*. Delage, M. J.: SC 175 (1971, bibliography: not a single title on Caesarius's use of scripture), 243 (1978), 330 (1986).

TRANSLATIONS

French

Courreau, Delage: above.

STUDIES

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VI
EUSEBIUS GALLICANUS (7TH C.)

A set of homilies originally collected by Caesarius of Arles, completed with sermons by Faustus of Riez and others, was compiled in Gaul during the seventh century. The name of the compiler is unknown. The work circulated in manuscript traditions under the name of Pseudo-Eusebius Emesinus or Eusebius "Gallicanus." It preserves a total of eighty-five homilies dating from the third to the sixth century, from Novatian (CCL CI, IX), Cyprian of Carthage, Zeno of Verona, Eusebius of Verceil, Ambrose, Augustine, Hilary of Arles, Faustus of Reiz, a "Eusebius Alexandrinus," and others. If "Eusebius" gave the name to the final compilation, it is because, in the original collection, Caesarius of Arles borrowed his sermons *de pascha* mainly from expositions transmitted under that name (F. Glorie, CCL 101, XXI). In fact, "Eusebius" was a Latin translation of a Greek collection of homilies, dating from the end of the fifth or from the sixth century (J. Leroy – F. Glorie, 46–47).

Scripture is addressed and interpreted in the following homilies:

I–II	De natale domine
III	De sancto Stephano protomartyre
IV–VII	De epiphania domini (IV: . . . et de innocentibus)
VIII	De quadragesima
XII–XXIII	De pascha
XXIV	De latrone beato
XXVI	De paenitentia Ninivitarum
XXVII–XXVIII	De ascensione domini
XXIX	De Pentcosten
XXX–XXXI	De sancto Johanne Baptista
XXXII	De Machabaeis
XXXIII	In natale apostolorum Petri et Pauli
XXXIV	De trinitate
XLVI	De vidua "Quae duo aera in gazophylacium misit" expectante domino (Mark 12:42; Luke 21:2)
XLVII	In natale ecclesiae, I
XLIX	In dedicatione ecclesiae
L	De eo quod de domino dicitur: "Arundinem quassatam non confringet" Matthew 12:20.
LII	De eo quod ait "Ubi duo vel tres fuerint congregati in nomine meo ibi sum et ego in medio eorum" (Mt 18:20)

- LIV De eo quod ait "Ecce quam bonum et quam iucundum habitare fratres in unum" Ps 132:1)
- LIV De eo quod dicit in evangelio: "Oportet semper orare et non deficere" (Lk 18:1)
- LXXIII Sermo castigationis
- CCL CIB 5 Sermo S. Augustini (De parasceve) De passione domini
8 Homilia Eusebii (Caesariensis) De resurrectione domini
9 De trinitate

EDITIONS

Glorie, F.: CCL CI (1970), CIA (1971)–CIB (1971).

Bibliography: manuscripts, editions, studies in CCL CI, xlvi–li.

VII
VERECUNDUS OF JUNCA (D. 552)

Bishop of Junca in the African Province of Byzacena (the southern part of modern Tunisia), wrote a commentary on the nine Canticles found in the OT, *Commentarium super cantica ecclesistica libri novem* (Pitra, *Spicilegium Solesmense*, IV, Paris, 1858, 1–131): the Canticle of Moses in Exodus 11; his farewell Canticle, Deuteronomy 33; the Lamentation of Jeremiah over the destruction of Jerusalem, Lamentations 5; the Canticle of Habakkuk, Habakkuk 3; the prayer of Manasseh; the prayer of Jonah from the belly of the whale, Jonah 3; the song of Deborah, Judges 5. The pervasive allegorism in the work of Verecundus does not exclude a full recognition of the literal sense. He is mainly concerned to find useful applications for the spiritual progress of his readers.

EDITIONS

PLS 4, 39–234.

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Demeulenaere, R.: CCL 93 (1976).

Pitra, J. B., *Spicilegium Solesmense: Commentarii super cantica ecclesiastica*. Paris 1858.

STUDIES

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VIII
DIONYSIUS EXIGUUS (FIRST HALF 6TH C.)

Coming from Scythia (modern Dobrudja on the western shore of the Black Sea), the learned monk Dionysius lived in Rome from 497; he died in Rome between 537 and 555. Cassiodorus knew him personally. A legal expert in ecclesiastical matters, he served under several popes as a dedicated supporter of Roman primacy above Constantinople and other churches. By collecting and sorting out papal decisions, the “Decretales,” and by his Latin edition of synodal canons from the Greek traditions, he established a valuable basis for the Roman ecclesiology of future centuries. Perfectly bilingual, he was eager to translate from Greek into Latin hagiographical sources and philosophical works, such as Gregory of Nyssa’s *De opificio hominis*, to which he was critical, and dogmatic documents such as letters of Cyril of Alexandria, or Proclus of Constantinople’s *Tomus* to the Arminians, which he enhanced with a quotation from Augustine!

Required to solve the problem of a possible discrepancy between the date of Easter in Rome and in Alexandria, Dionysius (who surnamed himself “the Little”) worked out a treatise *De Paschate* on the basis of the Alexandrian cycles of nineteen years (Lozito), but in replacing the references to the reign of Diocletian by a time-count from “the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ (*anno domini*),” in which he made a four-to-seven year error. He discussed principles of sacred scripture (Lozito, *Culti*), and he invoked the alleged authority of the Council of Nicaea in the matter. After his death, it took about a century until his determination of the Christian era became generally accepted.

EDITIONS

PL 67, 9–520; 73, 223–82, 661–64.
PLS 4 (1967) 17–22.

STUDIES

Lozito, V., “Gli *inordinati circuli* nella polemica *De Paschate* di Dionigi el Piccolo”:
VetChr 9 (1972) 233–44.
—, *Culti e ideologia politica negli autori cristiani*. Bari 1987, 57–72.
Rambaud-Buhot, J.: *NCE* 4 (1967) 877–98.
Weigand, R.: *LACL* 2nd ed., 1999, 174–78.

IX
BOETHIUS (CA. 480–524)

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born in Rome between 475 and 480. His ancestry was Christian since the fourth century. Educated in Latin and Greek classics, in 522 Boethius attained the top position of a civil servant as *magister officiorum* (the equivalent of a Prime Minister) at the court of Theoderic. The victim of a political plot, he was tortured to death in October 524. Having dedicated many years of his life to the translation of Plato and Aristotle into Latin, he wrote his masterpiece, the *Consolatio Philosophiae*, when incarcerated. These thirty-nine expositions in prose, alternating with thirty-nine poetic passages, represent a dialogue between Boethius and personified Philosophy. The work lacks any mention of Christ or any biblical reference (but see Magee). Like Boethius's handbooks dedicated to each discipline of the *quadrivivium*—arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy—the *Consolatio* exercised a decisive influence on Western humanism until the rise of Modernity.

Boethius composed some *opuscula sacra* (Cassiodorus confirms their authenticity: *Anecdota Holderi*) on Trinity and metaphysics, *Against Eutychen and Nestorius*, and various commentaries on theological definitions of the human person, of nature in general, and eternity. His contribution to the history of biblical exegesis remains very limited and peripheral.

EDITIONS

PL 63–64.

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Brandt, S.: CSEL 48 (1906).

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TRANSLATIONS

English

Stewart: above.

German

Elsässer: above.

STUDIES

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X

BENEDICT OF NURSIA (CA. 480–CA. 560)

Benedict, born in Nursia (modern Norcia), near Spoleto, Umbria, went to Rome for completing his education, but chose to join a group of ascetics. In Subiaco, he headed a settlement of solitaries following the rule of Pachomius. From there, he fled with a few monks, at an unknown date, to the top of Monte Cassino. Difficult conditions of survival in the valleys of the region, due to barbarian invasions, accelerated the growth of his community. About 540, he wrote a *Rule* for his monks. He died twenty years later. Almost three centuries were needed before the *Rule's* widespread acceptance in the West, a result of the religious politics of Charlemagne and his descendants. The main source for the biography of Benedict is Gregory the Great, *Dialogues* (PL 66, 126–204; SC 251).

The hermeutical principles regulating the use of scripture in the *Rule* have been well pointed out in a Harvard paper by M. Marrion (“Biblical hermeneutics”): God speaks to the monks in the unity of all scriptures; this sapiential address calls the monks to a response which actualizes scripture in the monastic way of life. Thus a continuity is established between the biblical world and the monks’ world. A thorough analysis of biblical references in the seventy-three chapters of the *Rule*, or at least in forty-six of them, by J. Schildenberger, stresses the prevalence of the Psalms (Egli, on Ps 14) and the pastoral, or practical attitude of Benedict towards scripture. P. Gordan emphasizes even more that attitude in regard to Benedict’s references to Pauline literature: they serve essentially a practical and ecclesial purpose in ordering the daily activity of the monks. All Benedictine commentators of the *Rule* keep in mind the same rhetorical question by which Benedict ended his writing: *quae enim pagina, aut que sermo divinae auctoritatis veteris aut novi testamenti, non est rectissima norma vitae humanae*, “Does not each page and each statement of divine authorship in OT and NT provide a perfect norm for human life?” (73, 3).

EDITIONS

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TRANSLATIONS

English

- Fry: above.
 Holzherr, G.: Dublin 1994.

French

- Vogüé: above.

German

- Holzherr, Salzburger Äbtekonzferenz, Steidle (see above).

Italian

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Spanish

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XI
VICTOR OF CAPUA (FL. 541–554)

Victor, bishop of Capua from 541 to 554, a *vir doctissimus et sanctissimus* according to Bede, *De temporum ratione*, 51 (CCL 123B, 441, 87–88), was famous during the Middle Ages for having compiled patristic sources to be used in his commentaries on biblical books. The attribution lacks certainty. Victor ordered and edited a copy of the NT (*cod. Fuldensis*, dated 546/7) including the *Diatessaron*. In his Preface, *De evangelicas harmonias Ammonii*, Victor reports on the discovery of the *Diatessaron*, joined with the Latin apocryphal *Letter of Paul to the Laodicians*.

EDITIONS

PL 68, 251–256.

Pitra, J.-B., *Spicilegium Solesmense*, I, Paris 1852, 287–89; *E libello Reticulo seu de arca Noe*; reprinted by A. Hamman in PLS 4, 1183–99; add *Analecta sacra et classica*, Va. Paris 1888, 163.

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XII

PRIMASIUS OF HADRUMETUM (FL. 550–560)

Bishop of Hadrumetum (modern Sousse in Tunisia) in the fertile Province of Byzacena in the mid-sixth century. Primasius wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse, which borrowed from the lost Commentary of Tyconius and was influenced by Augustine. Cassiodorus mentions Primasius's work in *Institutiones divinarum literarum* 9, in 543–544.

EDITIONS

PL 68, 793–936.

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XIII
IUNILIUS AFRICANUS (SECOND HALF 6TH C.)

As *quaestor sacri palatii* at Justinian's court at Constantinople about 542, Iunilius wrote an essay entitled *Instituta regularia divinae legis*, or *De partibus divinae legis libri duo*, consisting of a loose Latin translation of a work written in Greek by the Persian, Paul of Nisibis, which in itself was an introduction to biblical studies through teachings repeated from Antiochean exegetes.

The questions of D(iscipulus) and the answers of M(agister) proceed in a catechetical way, in multiplying definitions and distinctions. The OT is figurative of the NT (20D). Prophecy should not always be seen as *allegorias mysticas*, because it would harm *narrationis veritas*, and lead to abuses (18D). *Typus*, or *forma/figura*, is the best hermeneutical category (33C–34D). The lack of a christological focus is striking.

EDITIONS

PL 68, 15B–42D

STUDIES

Kihn, H., *Theodor von Mopsuestia und Junilius als Exegeten*, Freiburg, 1880, 465–528.

XIV
CASSIODORUS (485/490–CA. 580)

Born of high nobility from a family of Syrian ancestry, his father being *praefectus praetorio*, Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus was nominated *quaester sacri palatii* by the Ostrogothic King Theoderic the Great (474–526) as early as 506–507. He was *consul ordinarius* in 514, and in 523 he replaced Boethius as *magister officiorum*. In 533 he became *praefectus praetorio* under the ruling of Athalaric; but in 537 the Byzantine takeover by Justinian and his commander-in-chief Belisarius brought him back to private life. He left Ravenna at the latest in 540. Ten years later, he is mentioned in Constantinople, closely linked with Pope Vigilius. He must have left the eastern capital in 554 after the publication of Justinian's *Pragmatica sanctio*. In modern Calabria, next to his birthplace in Scyllaceum, today's Squillace, he founded a double monastery in a place called Vivarium Castellum, to which he added a well furnished library, all costs being covered by his private funds. He was a ninety-two year old layman when he compiled for his monks his last work, a treatise *De orthographia*. Most probably unmarried, he devoted his ascetical idealism to the preservation of the cultural heritage of the church.

Soon after his return to private life in 537, when still in Ravenna, Cassiodorus had started to write an *Expositio Psalmorum*, or *Commenta Psalterii*, on which he continued working for a full decade. Using Augustine's *Enarrationes* as a main source, and basing it on his own rhetorical and stylistic ideas, Cassiodorus commented on the Psalms line by line in stressing their literary form. In his estimation the whole message of the Psalter was messianic. For the monks of Vivarium, he wrote *Institutiones*, more precisely *Institutiones divinarum litterarum*, an introduction to the study of scripture, and *Institutiones saecularium litterarum*, also entitled *De artibus ac disciplinis liberalium litterarum*, a short outline of the seven liberal arts. In his later years, Cassiodorus composed an *Expositio epistolae ad Romanos*, which was a new edition of Pelagius's *Commentary on Romans* expurged from any heresy, and *Complexiones apostolorum*, short summaries of Acts, NT Letters, and Revelation. Among the translations from Greek into Latin secured at Vivarium and referred to in the *Institutiones*, figure translations of John Chrysostom by Mutianus (PG 63) and of "Didymus," *Expositio septem canonicarum (= catholicarum) epistolarum*, which modern scholarship identified as a sixth century *catena*; see K. Staab, "Die griechischen Katenenkommentare zu den katholischen Briefen": *Bib* 6 (1924) 314–18.

The *Expositio Psalmorum* is properly a single commentary conceived as a whole, according to a set of interpretive notions carefully enumerated in a lengthy pedagogical introduction (325). The work was addressed to Pope Virgilius (537–555). According to Cassiodorus, there are seventeen basic notions, or distinctions, to keep in mind when reading the Psalms:

1) *Prophecy.*

The Psalms were “prophesied” by the Spirit, *per Spiritum sanctum psalmos fuisse prophetatos*, (7). Hence they prefigure what is to come or explain what happened. As prophecy they are: *magnificum nimis et verilocutum dicendi genus*, “a magnificent and truthful way of communicating” (89); their inspiration warrants their constant actualization by inspiring their interpreters: *Nam et quibus data est facultas bene intellegendi vel interpretandi scripturas divinas, a munere prophetiae non videntur excepti*, “To whom the capacity is given well to understand, or to interpret divine Scriptures, they are not themselves deprived of the gift of prophecy” (9).

2) *Davidic Psalms.*

The different names in the titles of Psalms do not designate “authors,” but only executants. No historical testimony speaks in favour of many psalmists: *Psalmigraphos autem fuisse historia nulla testatur* (10). Hence, *pater Augustinus* was right: *congruentur omnes psalmos dicit esse davidicos*, “he conveniently stated that all psalms are Davidic” (11), a unique authorship of the psalms fitting well with Cassiodorus’s own unified strategy as a commentator.

3) *“In finem.”*

Frequently the titles include the phrase *in finem* which calls on Christ, according to Romans 10:4, *Finis enim legis, . . .* as a focus for our attention when reading psalms.

4) *Psalter.*

The psalter is a musical instrument reminding us that psalms are identified with music and songs.

5) *Psalm.*

A psalm is created, *Psalmus est, cum ex ipso solo instrumento musico, id est psalterio, modulatio quaedam dulcis et canora profunditur*, “when out of the very musical instrument, the psalter, a sweet and harmonious melody is poured out” (12).

6) *Canticum.*

One produces a “canticle” by “freely employing one’s voice” without an instrument.

7) *Psalmocanticum.*

When the choir joins the instruments, after the liturgy of the Word, *divinis dumtaxat sermonibus obsecutus*, “exactly following the reading of sacred scripture” (13).

8) *Canticum psalmus*.

When the instruments repeat in unison the song of the choir.

9) *Five Books*.

The division of psalms into five books may occasionally contribute to the spiritual meaning of the verses read, *mystica interpretatione contradunt* (13).

10) *Titles of Psalms Interpreted*.

Some titles seem irrelevant, *tamquam sacrata vela pendent*, “they hang like sacred curtains” (14), hiding what the psalms mean. They need to be treated *ad tropicum intellectum*, through a “symbolic perception.”

11) *Diapsalma*.

Of that controverted notion, Jerome derives the sense of “ever,” “throughout,” from the Hebrew; but Augustine understands it more as referring to a division. Indeed it indicates *sermonum rupta continuatio docens ubicumque repertum fuerit, aut personarum aut rerum fieri permutationem*, “a broken succession of words, indicating in all its occurrences a shift of persons or things” (15). One could compare with Tyconius’s Rule IV, *de specie et genere*.

12) *The unity of the Book of Psalms*.

Jerome divides the prophecies of the Psalms into five, one prophecy for each Book; but with Hilary and Acts 1:20, “we” (Cassiodorus) prefer speaking of *one Book*; *In libro psalmorum* (15).

13) *Christology of Psalms*.

The psalms let Christ speak in his humanity, his divinity, and as the Head of the church.

14) *Steps in Interpretation*.

First, the title should be interpreted. Secondly, the psalm needs to be properly divided. Thirdly, the hidden significance of the psalm must be clarified, *partim secundum spiritalem intellegentiam, partim secundum historicam lectionem, partim secundum mysticum sensum, subtilitates rerum discutiens proprietatesque verborum*, “partly in its spiritual significance, partly in a historical reading, partly in its mystic relevance, by discussing the subtleties of the data and the proprieties of the words” (17). Fourthly, the “efficiency,” *virtus*, of the psalm should be demonstrated, its “divine inspiration, by which its heavenly intention is unveiled for us; thus the Davidic text removes us from vices and engages us into a correct way of life” (17). Finally, the numbering of certain psalms will be considered.

15) *Scripture’s Diction (De eloquentia totius legis divinae)*.

Firmly beyond time—past, present and future—scriptural truth keeps its relevance in regard to the three temporal dimensions. Its divine authority admits “ordinary talk,” *communes sermones* and “highly sophisticated” inquiries, *subtilissima*. It also admits a full display of rhetorical devices, *non tamen ab eis accipiens extraneum decorem, sed potius illis propriam conferens*

dignitatem, “not so much for gaining from them an external decoration, as for enabling them to bear its own dignity” (19). Following Augustine’s remarks in *De doctrina christiana*, III, and the examples of Jerome, Ambrose, Hilary, “we” (Cassiodorus) expressly mention these devices. Indeed Cassiodorus never misses an opportunity to stress them in his commentary.

16) *The Diction Proper to the Psalter*.

Starting with Christ’s beatitude in Psalm 1, the Psalter runs through “all mysteries of the Old and New Testaments” (*novi et veteris testamenti sacramenta percurrrens*); it celebrates the Lord’s triumph over all calamities afflicting the Church, and gives consolation and strength in regard to all human miseries, as Athanasius had emphasized so well in a letter written to his “very dear Marcellinus” (22, with a quotation of *Ad Marcellinum*, 11).

17) *Laus Ecclesiae*.

The psalms are the voice of the universal church proclaiming faith in Christ and Divine Trinity.

The *Expositio* covers more than 1300 pages in the CC edition, each psalm calling for an average of three hundred lines of comment, only the last five explanations being shortened, whereas Psalm 118 (119) totals 3330 lines of exegesis. The style and the disposition of Cassiodorus’s text remain unchanged from beginning to end of what became the unique *Commentary* on all the psalms, handed down in its integrity from Late Antiquity. Clearly dependent on Augustine, for whom he expresses a sincere admiration in the very first page of the Preface, and whose *Enarrationes in Psalmos* he kept open on his desk when composing his work, Cassiodorus none the less acted as a creative interpreter in his own right. He assumed the general norms of the patristic tradition for his task, but he applied them with a careful strategy that he decided for himself. His work still waits for a thorough study.

De institutione divinarum litterarum, written for the monks of Vivarium when the author was at least in his seventies, presents a concise introduction to the study of the Bible, apparently unpretentious, but in fact surprisingly original. It is a scholarly work for uneducated readers, and specifically destined for the local community of Vivarium.

The Preface starts with some biographical reminders of the time when Cassiodorus, then *praefectus praetorio* (533–537) became involved with Pope Agapetus I (May 535–April 536) in the foundation of a Roman school of theology. The Pope had already converted his family house on the Clivus Scauri into a library to be part of the planned academy, but warfare in Italy (*bella ferventia et turbulenta* 1106D) ruined the whole enterprise. Cassiodorus confesses that *gravissimo sum (fateor) dolore permotus, quod*

scripturis divinis magistri publici deessent, cum mundani auctores celeberrima procul dubio traditione pollerent, “I am (I must confess) utterly saddened by the fact that scripture is still banished from education when secular authors strongly benefit from a very popular tradition” (1105D). To overcome his frustration, he now produces both *Institutiones*, one on divine, and the other on secular literature.

At once, the *De institutione* is announced as an introduction to scripture in line with the history of patristic exegesis, a very unusual concept indeed, inaugurating by anticipation medieval scholarship: “Without hesitation, dearest brothers, let us climb to divine scripture through the worthy expositions of the Fathers, like on a sort of visionary ladder. Conveyed by their perceptions we may effectively be granted to contemplate the Lord. Possibly that is Jacob’s Ladder on which angels go up and down (Gn 18:12)” (1107AB). Cassiodorus adds a curriculum of biblical studies, joined to a series of sanguine encouragements, supported by the authority of Augustine and earlier interpreters, both Greek and Latin.

Chapters 1 to 9 introduce (1) the Octateuch, that is, the Pentateuch to Judges (2) Kings, (3) Prophets, (4) Psalms, (5) the Books of Solomon, (6) Hagiographers, (7) Gospels, (8) Apostolic Letters, and finally, (9) Acts and Revelation. Each time Cassiodorus stresses how the biblical books were made available to the church at large, thanks to the study of given Fathers. Chapter 10 makes a special mention of a group of interpreters “whom I put together (namely in a codex) with diligent curiosity” *Ticonium Donatistam, sanctum Augustinum, “De doctrina christiana,” Hadrianum, Eucherium et Junilium quos sedula curiositate collegi* (1122D), the “common purpose,” *similis intentio*, of these authors being to clarify biblical obscurities due to the symbolic language of scripture. “They start to open for us what remained closed” *aperire nobis incipiunt, quae prius clausa manserunt*, in teaching us “six ways of understanding,” *sex modos intellegentiae* (1123A), the more mysterious passages of the Bible. Cassiodorus obviously refers to the prologue of Tyconius’s *Book of Rules*, quoted by Augustine in *De doctrina christiana* III. In chapter 11 he adds a short mention of the four general synods of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon, before giving a detailed survey of what he calls *divisio scripturae*, the canonical lists of biblical writings: first, the books as listed by Jerome (ch. 12), then by Augustine (ch. 13), finally by the authors of the *antiqua translatio* and the Septuagint (ch. 14). The long chapter 15 multiplies advice and examples with regard to the systematic correction, *emendatio* of copies of the Bible, entrusted to the monks. The latter should always be aware of their responsibility: *considerate igitur qualis vobis causa commissa sit: utilitas christianorum, thesaurus ecclesiae, lumen animarum*, “Consider, then,

the task you are entrusted with, the well-doing of the Christian people, the church's treasure, the enlightening of souls" (1130D).

Chapter 16, *De virtute scripturae divinae*, describes scriptural "power" in its prophetic dimension and actual relevance: *Lectio divina cuncta virtus est, verbum non inaniter cadens, nec tardat effectus quod promittit affectus*, "The reading of scripture is all power, no word falls vainly; it does not take long before its impression produces the promised effect," (1131D). Scripture's efficiency invests the whole human psyche; in faith, it transfigures life as such. It is worth exploring the accounts given of scripture by earlier interpreters, such as the church historians who followed Josephus (chapter 17), Hilary (chapter 18), Cyprian (chapter 19), Ambrose (chapter 20: only four lines!), Jerome (chapter 21), Augustine (chapter 22); and last but not least the accounts of two contemporaries, the Abbots Eugippius and Dionysius (Exiguus, died ca. 527), as *generat etiam hodieque catholica ecclesia viros illustres, probabilium dogmatum decore fulgentes*, "even today the catholic church generates famous men, glittering with the beauty of proven opinions" (1137B).

Invariably, scripture should always be read *with its interpreters* (ch. 24). Cosmography may also help (ch. 25), abbreviations be used (ch. 26), figures of style and other rhetorical schemes analysed (ch. 27); even illiterate members of the community deserve to receive the needed help in this regard (ch. 28). After a few additional recommendations, the *Expositio* ends with a fervent prayer in chapter 33—a number as always in Cassiodorus's writings charged with "biblical" symbolism, especially as it was for him the age of Christ (*De artibus ac disciplinis liberalium litterarum*, Preface, 1149CD).

Complexiones in epistulis apostolorum is a summary of Pauline and other apostolic Letters, limited to their essential content. Having assimilated all this information, the reader would be able to claim *ut altius ad intellectum perveniat*, "a higher understanding" (1321A).

Of Romans, Cassiodorus quotes thirty-six verses, in part or in full, according to the Vulgate (1:1, 8, 18, 24; 2:1, 14; 3:1, 27; 5:1, 28; etc.; 1321B–1332A). Each quotation is followed by a paraphrased indication of its content and immediate context. Some explicit references to other passages of the Bible and other biblical figures or objects enrich the paraphrase. Clearly, the intention is to keep the summary on the literal level of Paul's text. No theoretical observation of an interpretive nature, nor any call on other interpreters interfere in these condensed explanations of Pauline verses. The comments hardly ever exceed ten lines in Migne's columns, the same being true for the rest of the *Complexiones*, concerning the other Pauline Letters, the "seven canonical letters," (1361D–1380D), Acts and Revelation (1381A–1481A).

The last section is the only one introduced by a Prologue, and in that

Prologue the only interpretive authority invoked in the whole work is Tyconius, who explained the Book of Revelation “with subtlety and diligence” *subtiliter et diligenter exposuit* (1382A). In the comment on Rev 11: 15, Cassiodorus adds a very unusual reference to Tyconius, *sicut Tychonius refert* (1411B), only paired with a more general call on the “consensus of the Fathers” about the “thousand years” mentioned in the comment on Rev 19:17 (1415B). At a closer analysis more Tyconian reminiscences would probably surface in Cassiodorus’s notations.

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PG 70, 1105–1150: *De institutione divinarum litterarum*.
 Adriaen, M.: CCL 97–98 (1958): *Expositio Psalmorum*.

TRANSLATIONS

English

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XV
GREGORY THE GREAT (C. 540–604)

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Stephan C. Kessler, S.J.

1. GREGORY THE GREAT AND THE BIBLE

As author in the Latin speaking west of the Roman Empire at the end of the patristic era, Gregory the Great (540–604) is the heir to a long tradition of Christian interpretation of the Bible. But the affinity of his exegetical writings with the works of his predecessors as Origen, Augustine or Cassiodorus should not allow ourselves to be misled. As distinguished from the times of his inspiring models for expounding the Holy Scriptures Gregory's world had definitely changed. At the end of the 6th century it had become a Christian world: Gregory could take Christianity for granted. Therefore the framework of Gregory's understanding, of explanation and discourse was defined by Christian authors, mainly Augustine and John Cassian. Therefore his culture was essentially a biblical culture and interpreting the scriptures of the Bible by commentaries and homilies meant for Gregory to address an audience already well established in the Christian faith. Consequently, the interpretation of the scriptures had to alter as well. How to be a Christian, how to live the perfect Christian life was Gregory's central preoccupation in all his exegetical writings. What interested Gregory in expounding the scriptures was what they say about the Christian life.¹

In accordance with the conservative program of the sixth century the focus of Gregory's theological interest was not primarily centered on systematic development of doctrinal issues. In his sight theology and theological questions were already answered by the authority of the tradition and the definitions of the "four Synods" (*Ep* 1,24 [CCL 140, 321]). Gregory was not a systematic theologian. His aim was the interpretation of the Bible in the sight of a committed Christian life. Conversion, culminating in the ascetic life of contemplation, is his perspective of understanding the scriptures. Using the traditional patristic pattern of biblical interpretation he developed through his pastoral and at the same time spiritual interpretation a method of exegesis as authentic instrument of a distinctly ascetic-monastic theology.² Without denying the different sources of his classical training and the

1. Markus, Gregory the Great, 1997, 40–50.

2. J. Laporte, "Une théologie systématique chez Grégoire?," *Grégoire le Grand*

multiple influences of Christian literature the Bible and its interpretation are the undisputed centre of Gregory's activities. The role of the Bible in the works of Gregory surmounts all other elements of his actions.

Research on Gregory the Great and in the field of the history of exegesis in recent years has brought to view rather new insights.³ Despite the undeniably great influence of Augustine's thought on his writings, Gregory modifies the exegetical practice of Late Antiquity by going back to the Origenist tradition.⁴ Thus the first pope from a monastic background became the founder of a new and independent Bible-theology on the eve of the Middle Ages. By his exegetical work Gregory developed an independent theological and most of all pastoral access to the world of the Bible.

1.1 Biographical Remarks

Although Gregory left no autobiography, he is known quite well by biographical notes in his own writings, especially in his letters which came down to us. Gregory was born in Rome around 540. His family belonged to the leading elites of the city and was most probably of senatorial rank. His father Gordianus and his ancestors worked in the civil service and ecclesiastical administration whereas three aunts and also his mother Silvia after the death of her husband embraced the ascetic life. The family was handsomely rich with estates in Sicily in addition to the palace on the Caelian hill and properties in the neighbourhood of Rome. Gregory was born into a world in which peace and stability could not be taken for granted. Fighting of Gothic invaders and imperial-byzantine defenders, destruction, depopulation and, especially, famine must have been among Gregory's earliest memories.

Due to the restoration of Byzantine power in parts of Italy under the reign of Justinian 1. (527–565) Gregory spent the important years of his formation in a time of relative peace. The Pragmatica sanctio (554) ended

(1986) 235–242; G. Zevini, "La metodologia dell'Intelligenza spiritualis' della Sacra Scrittura come esegesi biblica secondo Gregorio Magno," *Parola e spirito* (Studi in onore di S. Cipriani), C. Casale Marcheselli (ed.), Brescia 1982, 867–915.

3. Margerie, Introduction (1990) 141–181; Mijller, *Das Hohelied* (1991); Fiedrowicz, *Das Kirchenverständnis Gregors* (1993); Reventlow, *Epochen der Bibelauslegung* (1994) 105–114; S. C. Kessler, *Gregor der Große als Exeget* (1995); Recchia, *Gregorio Magno papa ed esegeta* (1996); S. C. Kessler, "Gregory the Great: A figure of tradition and transition in Church Exegesis." In *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of its Interpretation*, 1.2, 135–47. Edited by M. Saebo. Göttingen, 2000.

4. V. Recchia, "La memoria di Agostino nella esegesi biblica di Gregorio Magno," *Aug 25* (1985) 405–434; Kessler, *Gregor der Große als Exeget* (1995): 175–190.

the war against the Goths and decreed normality before the conquest of the greatest parts of Italy by the Lombards in 568. Gregory received the best education available in sixth century Rome with special emphasis on grammar and rhetoric, and he probably had legal training as well which qualified him for a career in public service and later as a theologian and bishop. In 573 Gregory reached the summit of his public career likely being Prefect of the City (*praefectus urbi*), the highest civil dignitary in Rome.

In 574/5 he resigned from public life, sold parts of the patrimony and changed his palace into a monastery dedicated to St. Andrew. He experienced his conversion (*conversio*) to monastic life and, as a simple monk, he spent his happiest years working on the exposition of biblical scriptures. From now the Bible stands at the very centre of Gregory's activities and becomes a main source of inspiration for his acting and writing. But this contemplative tranquillity of the monastic life was short-lived, for in 578/9 he was called by the Pope to serve the Church as a deacon and later as papal legate (apocrisarius) to the court of Constantinople, where he was accompanied by a group of fellow monks and must have learned at least some Greek.⁵ "Unwilling and resisting," Gregory accepted the ecclesiastical assignment with "the burden of pastoral care" it brought him. He returned to Rome in the middle of the next decade and performed the duties of a deacon while living in his monastic community and working on biblical commentaries. But again he could stay only for a little while at the "tranquil shores of prayer," because he was elected Pope in February 590.

Considering the breakdown of civil authorities during the sixth century the bishop of Rome became more and more responsible for the economic and political destiny of the city. Therefore Gregory "was tossed about on the seas of secular affairs," and yet he found the time for the exposition of the Sacred Scriptures by popular sermons and series of homilies to Biblical books. Of great significance for the development of Western Christianity was his missionary activity in the neglected rural parts of Italy and abroad. By sending missionaries to the Frankish and English Churches Gregory established a model of a European Church, no longer confined to the Mediterranean world as the natural milieu of Christendom. He held office until his death after long periods of illness on 12th March 604.⁶ In the person and work of Gregory

5. Kessler, *Gregor der Große als Exeget* (1995) 158–166; G. J. M. Bartelink, "Pope Gregory the Great's knowledge of Greek," *Gregory the Great. A Symposium* (1995) 117–136.

6. Historical and biographical data: Riché, Grégoire (1995); Markus, Gregory (1997); M. Fiedrowicz, "Gregor I., der Große," *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, ed. S. Depp – W. Geerlings, Freiburg: Herder 2 1999, 259–62.

the ideal of ancient Roman traditions and of Christian loyalty became fused together: as the last Roman on Peter's chair, his epitaph characterised him as Pastor and Consul Dei.

2. GREGORY'S WRITINGS

The life of Gregory and particularly the years of his pontificate were overshadowed by the conquest of Italy through invaders, by hunger and diseases. Under difficult conditions he reorganised by means of his capacities in the field of administration and spirituality the clergy, the ecclesiastical possessions and the church's charity. However, the high esteem of Gregory in history was not established by his ecclesiastical reform but in his work as a biblical theologian. The Holy Scriptures and their interpretation was the undisputed focus of Gregory's life as monk and remained the well of inspiration for his activities as bishop: His exegetical works made Gregory "the first pope-exegete in history—le premier pape exégète de l'histoire."⁷ Gregory's legacy in the interpretation of scripture comes down to posterity in different exegetical works. But naturally, the place accorded by Gregory to the Bible and its interpretation cannot be limited to his exegetical works alone. In fact, he never ceases to invoke its authority as can be shown clearly in the not expressly exegetical works of Gregory.

2.1 The Non-Exegetical Works

Of originally 14 volumes of letters written during the time of Gregory's pontificate survived a collection of more than 850 documents (*Registrum Epistularum*).⁸ These letters allow deep insights into the way how the pope applied the Bible to the different situations of his life. The large number of biblical quotations clearly shows how the literary works of Gregory are imbued with a profound biblical orchestration. Despite the more official character of the majority of these documents addressed to emperors, kings and bishops, to monks, deacons and simple citizens dealing with questions of church-administration, pastoral counselling and spiritual advice a great number of these letters are very personal testimonies which afford an insight into Gregory's use of the Bible as practical guide for the every-day problems

7. Margerie, Introduction (1990) 142.

8. Cf. Index locorum Sacrae Scripturae, CCL 143B, 1115–1120.

of his correspondents.⁹ In his typical empathic manner he gives advice even to read and meditate the Holy Scriptures. He recommends Barbara and Antonina to love to read the holy scriptures that they may know how to live and how to run their home (*Ep* 1,59 [CCL 140A, 966]). Bishop Natalis of Salona did not find enough time to read the Bible because he was too busy. Gregory admonishes the bishop that the word of God is written to console the distressed; therefore those under pressure should read regularly the word of God (*Ep* 2,44 [CCL 140,135]). He wrote to Theodore the Emperor's physician to read and meditate the biblical scriptures because they are a "letter of the almighty God to his creature—*epistula omnipotentis Dei ad creaturam suam*": "What else are the Sacred Scriptures if not a letter of the omnipotent God to his creature?" If it were a letter from the Emperor—Gregory assumes—Theodore would not rest until he understood its message. Therefore he should read and muse each day on the letter written for his salvation by the Emperor of heaven (*Ep* 5,46 [CCL 140,339]). Since it is not enough just to read the Bible, Gregory admonishes that one also should conform his actions with the holy texts. He writes to a bishop that he shall always act in such a way that those who are illiterate should be able to read the Bible through his deeds (*Ep* 3,13 [CCL 40,160]). The collection of the letters is a proof that Gregory as a pastorally minded man does not look on the Bible from a theoretical point of view: From the scripture texts he goes immediately to ordinary life.

The importance of the Bible for Gregory is also shown in the Pastoral Rule (*Regula Pastoralis*). Published shortly after the beginning of his pontificate the newly elected pope draws his ideal of men in power according to the Bible: He distinguishes between those with worldly duties and political power (*rector*) and those with a spiritual task (*praedicator*).¹⁰ The main assignment of both consists in ruling over the lives and souls of the faithful ones. In order to get acquainted with this political art (*ars artium*) of governing the souls it is their first obligation to muse on the "divine laws" (Rpast I, I [SC 381, 128]). Therefore Gregory requires and emphasizes biblical studies as unalterable condition for all pastors. The rector or preacher has to make

9. G. Rapisarda Lo Menzo, "L'écriture Sainte comme guide de la vie quotidienne dans la correspondance de Grégoire le Grand," *Grégoire le Grand* (1986) 215–25.

10. G. Cremascoli, "La Bibbia nella 'Regola Pastorale di San Gregorio Magno,'" *VetChr* 6 (1969) 47–70; B. Judic, "La Bible miroir des pasteurs dans la 'Règle pastorale' de Grégoire le Grand," in: *Bible de tous les temps*, vol. 2: Le monde latin antique et la Bible, ed. Ch. Kannengiesser, Paris: Beauchesne 1985, 455–73; R. A. Markus, "Gregory the Great's 'Rector' and his Genesis," *Grégoire le Grand* (1986) 137–46.

the Bible speak through his words and his life in all the ways it is designed to do, and to make himself a suitable interpreter of its message. Therefore Gregory postulates interpreting the bars in the golden rings of the ark (Exod 25:12–15) that men in worldly or spiritual power should “meditate diligently and every day on the precepts of the sacred word” because the bars shall be put through the four golden rings, which are the four books of the holy Gospels; for it is evidently necessary that they who devote themselves to the office of preaching should never depart from the occupation of sacred reading (Rpast 2,11 [SC 381, 252–254]). The true pastor according to Gregory should always keep a balance between the inner life of meditating the truth of the Scriptures and the outward activities of life. The model of this equilibrium according to the Pastoral Rule is the biblical figure of Moses: “Thus Moses frequently goes in and out of the Tabernacle; and while within he is caught up in contemplation, outside he devotes himself to the affairs of the weak. Inwardly he considers the hidden things of God, outwardly he bears the burdens of the carnal men” (Rpast 2,5 [SC 381,198]).¹¹

The last non-exegetical work—in the strict sense of the word—are the four books of the *Dialogues* (*Dialogorum libri quatuor de miraculis patrum italicorum*), a hagiographical collection of miracle-stories, written by Gregory during the early years of his pontificate, most probably between 593/4. At first sight it seems that the scriptures of the Bible in this work on “the life and the miracles of the Italian fathers” do not play the same role which is granted to them in the other works of Gregory. From an exegetical point of view, the *Dialogues* seem so different from the rest of the corpus of Gregorian texts that the authenticity of this work has been disputed.¹² The conversation of the author with his dialogue-partner, the deacon Peter, gives the answer to the different structure of this work: there are pedagogical and pastoral reasons which lead the author to a different use of the Bible. Gregory states that there are some people more inspired by examples of holy lives than by preaching the Scriptures (*Dial* 1, prol. 9 [SC 260,16]). Instead of exposing biblical passages in his *Dialogues* Gregory interprets the life and deeds of contemporary holy men. He regards the miracles of his days as the continuation of the history of salvation and applies the same exegetical method to

11. Cf. *Mor* 23,20,38 (CCL 143B, 1172s).

12. F. Clark, *The Pseudo-Gregorian Dialogues* (Studies in the History of Christian Thought 37.38), Leiden: Brill 1987; against the theories of Clark: P. Meyvaert, “The enigma of Gregory the Great’s *Dialogues*. A response to Francis Clark,” in: *JEH* 39 (1988) 335–381; A. de Vogüé, “Les *Dialogues*, œuvre authentique et publiée de Grégoire lui-même,” *Gregorio Magno e il suo tempo* (1991) 27–40.

these miracle-stories as in his biblical works. The same God who spoke and acted in the two Testaments of the Bible is now at work in the lives of these Italian saints of the sixth century. Therefore telling the life of a saint of this world means a more popular kind of pastoral exegesis for those Christians not able to read and meditate on the Bible.

Despite the non-biblical contents in the legendary work of the *Dialogues* again the Bible plays a determinate role. Biblical patterns are the key for the correct understanding of the structure of the miracle-stories.¹³ Gregory tells the remarkable stories of holy men performing miracles according to biblical concepts. The heroes of the *Dialogues* are shaped according to the prototypes of biblical personalities: Benedict, the central figure of the second book, acts like Moses, Elisha, Elijah and David (Dial 2,8,8 [SC 260,164–166]).¹⁴ In the sight of Gregory the secular world has become an allegory which has to be interpreted like the Holy Scriptures. The *Dialogues* adapt in a narrative form the exegetical method known in the explicit biblical writings and therefore can be regarded as an authentic work of Gregory written for the edification of a more popular audience.

2.2 The Exegetical Works

Gregory's earliest exegetical work in the proper sense of the word is the interpretation of the Song of Songs (*Expositio in Canticis Canticorum*). The commentary breathes exclusively the contemplative spirit of a monastic setting and it was most probably developed during his first years as monk between 575–579 but definitively completed before his pontificate. The interpretation shows Gregory's growing interest in the monastic world of contemplation since the text of the Song of Songs was regarded as a book on contemplation according to the exegetic tradition of the interpretation of the books attributed to Solomon. After a lengthy introduction with exegetical remarks he interprets only the first eight verses of the biblical text but one gets the impression that this fragment is the complete text of this commentary because everything seems to be said.¹⁵ In Jewish exegesis, as well as in the interpretation of the Early Church, this biblical book of love-songs is regarded as a text which has no significance in its literal meaning

13. S. C. Kessler, "Das Rätsel der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen: Fälschung oder Bearbeitung?" *ThPh* 65 (1990): 566–78: 576f.

14. M. Mahler, "Evocations bibliques et hagiographiques dans la 'Vie de Saint Benoît' par Saint Grégoire," *RBen* 83 (1973): 398–429.

15. Müller, *Das Hohelied* (1991): 234.

but only an allegorical one: “In these bodily and external words one must look for what lies within, and talking about the body we must become as it were outside the body.”¹⁶ The objective of Gregory’s reading of the Song of Songs is an identification which permits the reader of his commentary to enter into the role of the bride: what is understood there is an exhortation about the nuptial garment: “We must come to this holy wedding of bridegroom and bride with the interior knowledge of love, this means with the nuptial garment. This is necessary because if we do not dress with the nuptial garment which is the dignified knowledge of love, we might be repudiated from the wedding banquet into the external darkness which means into the blindness of ignorance” (*in Cant* 4 [CCL 144,4f.]). In the Song of Songs God descends to the language of human love in order to inflame and to exalt man to the divine love (*In Cant* 3 [CCL 144,41]). Therefore allegorical interpretation is the appropriate and only way to explain these verses of the Bible. Gregory compares the technique of allegory to a fitting mechanism or pulley (*quandam machinam*) which raises up the souls who are far from God through sin (*In Cant* 2 [CCL 144,3]). The love-relationship of the Song of Songs describes—according to Gregory who follows in this the patristic tradition, especially Origen—the love of Christ for his Church or for the single soul of a faithful Christian. Perfection of the Church and of the single soul is the aim of the exegesis of the Song of Songs. From this follows a twofold scheme of interpretation: general (*generaliter*) in regard to the church, special (*specialiter*) in regard to the individual soul (*in Cant* 39 [CCL 144,38]). The prevailing ecclesiological dimension of Gregory’s exegesis finds its expression in the interpretation of the passage where the king introduces the bride into his chamber. For Gregory this “cubiculum” signifies the Church which is similar to a royal house where one enters through faith (*in Cant* 26 [CCL 144,27f.]).

In Constantinople during his years in diplomatic service (579–585) Gregory laid the fundament with exegetical lectures on the prophet Job to an audience of like-minded friends to his 35 books of the *Moralium Libri sive Expositio in Librum Beati Job*.¹⁷ In the years after his return to Rome,

16. *In Cant* 4 [CCL 144,4]; K. S. Frank, “Hoheslied,” *RAC* 16 (1994): 58–87; R. J. DeSimone, *The Bride and the Bridegroom of the Fathers. An Anthology of Patristic Interpretations of the Song of Songs* (Sussidi Patristici 10), Roma: Istituto Patristico “Augustinianum” 2000.

17. Patristic exegesis of Job: E. Dassmann, “Hiob,” *RAC* 15 (1991): 366–442; *Le Livre de Job chez les Pères* (Cahiers de Biblia Patristica 5), Strasbourg: Centre d’Analyse et de Documentation Patristiques 1996; P. Cazier, “Lectures du Livre de Job chez Ambroise, Augustin et Grégoire le Grand,” *Graphè* 6 (1997): 81–111.

but before his election to the papacy, he was occupied to rearrange these oral talks as a verse-by-verse commentary in book form.¹⁸ What interested Gregory in expounding the book of Job was what it says about the committed Christian life: Conversion, culminating in the wisdom of contemplation, is the objective of his understanding of Job and the Bible. Gregory explains the book of Job because in the life and teachings of this biblical figure he discovers an inspiring example of the *ordo praedicatorum*. In addition to this he feels a close relationship and a very personal identification with the enduring righteous one of the Bible. Through his own sufferings Gregory believes he understands Job better than others: “Perhaps was it the plan of the divine providence, that as a beaten man I shall explain the beaten Job (*percussus Job percussus exponerem*)” (*Mor, ep. dedic.* 5 [CCL 143,6]). In his exegesis Job is stylized as the ideal man who found wisdom.¹⁹ He bears all the sufferings God sends and, despite the vicissitudes of life, is always calm and of steadfast in mind (*constantia mentis*). One should learn to suffer adversity and prosperity as Job did, both loving and fearing God in the ups and downs of life.²⁰ The suffering righteous one in the *Moralia* is interpreted at first as a *typos* of Jesus Christ who also had to bear tribulations. Since Christ is head and body of the Church Job can also signify the community of the Church (*Mor* 1, 24, 33 [CCL 143, 43]). The main theological question of Gregory’s commentary on Job is given through the discussion of the ordeals suffered by the righteous. The problem of evil and suffering is conveyed at the literal level of the book of Job, and the pope—despite lengthy digressions always returns to this crucial quest. The whole commentary on the biblical book of Job has the intention to give through the exegetical explanations a full compendium of theology as Gregory conceived it. The *Moralia* is the attempt to be an encyclopedia of the Christian life. The perspective of this compendium is ascetic-monastic and its structure not logical but strictly biblical.

The 40 Homilies on the Gospels (*Homiliae in Evangelia XL.*) is a collection of sermons on NT passages of the liturgical readings of the Roman Liturgy mainly delivered at eucharistic celebrations at the beginning of Gregory’s pontificate between Advent 590 and February 592. This collec-

18. *Ep* 1,41 (CCL 140,49) indicates that the revision of the *Moralia* must have been basically completed at the beginning of Gregory’s pontificate at the latest by 591.

The final publication and transmission took place in 595 (*Ep* 5,53 [CCL 140, 348]).

19. S.E. Schreiner, “‘Where shall wisdom be found?’ Gregory’s interpretation of Job,” *ABenR* 39 (1988): 321–42.

20. C.E. Straw, “‘Adversitas’ et ‘Prosperitas’: une illustration du motif structural de la complémentarité,” *Grégoire le Grand* (1986): 277–88.

tion with homiletic interpretations of the liturgical Gospel readings is an attempt at a popular exegesis where examples play an important role: “Since examples more than words (plus *exempla quam verba*) rouse the hearts of the listeners to the love of God and the neighbor, ... one shall report to you a miracle story (narrare *miraculum*)” (*HEv* 2,39,10 [FontChr 28.2, 828]). Gregory reads the Bible in the light of the actual events of his days when he e.g. states that his experience of the political situation of Rome signifies the fulfilment of the eschatological prophecies of the Gospel (Lk 21:25–33). The Langobard invasion of the Italian peninsula is a secure sign that the end of the world must be at hand: “But when many of the things foretold have already come to pass, there is no doubt but that even the few that remain will follow. The accomplishment of things past is a clear indication of the things to come.” (*HEv* [FontChr 28.1, 50–52] cf. 4,2 [92–94]). By means of the Bible Gregory interprets his present time, which becomes a confirmation and accomplishment of the divine words. As in the sight of Gregory both the OT and the NT reflect the one mystery of the salvation in Christ and they elucidate each other (*HEv* I,1 1,5 [FontChr 28.1,188–190]; 2, 25, 3 [FontChr 28.2, 450–452]).²¹ Therefore words and examples, especially from the OT, enrich and deepen the understanding of the NT. Beyond the proof of the truth of the Gospel the allegorical interpretation of the OT passages leads to the spiritual understanding of the NT making it more meaningful for the individual (*HEv* I 7, 8–12 [FontChr 28.1, 278–288])

The twenty-two homilies on the visions of the prophet Ezekiel (*Homiliae in Ezechielem Prophetam*) are not a full commentary of the biblical book although Gregory most probably intended to give a complete interpretation of the biblical text similar to his exegesis of the book of Job.²² But the political circumstances prevented a verse-by-verse exegesis. The first twelve homilies explain the call narrative of the prophet and his initial vision (Ezekiel 1, 1–4, 3). The state of siege of the city of Rome through the Langobards between 593/94 caused an interruption of these homiletic explanations. But the spiritually interested audience of clerics and monks encouraged Gregory to resume his exegesis of Ezekiel. Despite the political difficulties he started again with his homilies—most probably delivered at the matins-services in the Basilica of the Lateran. For the last decade of homilies delivered in a second book he chose the concluding vision of the new temple (Ezekiel

21. L. Giordano, “L’antico testamento nelle Omelie sui Vangeli di Gregorio Magno,” *ASEs* 2 (1985): 257–62; idem, “La metaphora nelle Omelie sui Vangeli di Gregorio Magno,” *ASEs* 8 (1991): 599–613.

22. S. C. Kessler, “Die Exegese Gregors des Großen am Beispiel der ‘Homiliae in Ezechielem.’” *StPatr* 30 (1997): 49–53.

40–48). The figure of the prophet Ezekiel who lived in exile and witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple described for Gregory and his audience the actual political situation they had to go through. As the people of Israel was without hope of return from exile in the days of Ezekiel Gregory sees the condition of Rome and Italy as hopeless. The pope identifies himself and his task with the situation and the role of prophet: As Ezekiel was the watchman for Israel (Ezekiel 3,17) Gregory sees himself now as the guardian (speculator) of Rome and of the Church (*HEz I, I* 1,46 [CCL 142, 170–172]). This way of personal identification with the biblical figures is the reason for his very personal approach in the exegetical writings on Holy Scripture.²³ Gregory develops a special exegetical technique to identify with the biblical personalities, preferably taken from the OT, and to discover in them models for his ascetic ideal of a monastic and pastoral life, living and working in the world and at the same time striving for the heights of contemplation.²⁴ It seems that the difficulties in understanding Ezekiel and the darkness of his visions were of special interest to Gregory. He describes the visions as “shut in deep obscurity—in *magnis obscuritatibus clausum*” (*HEz* 1, 9, 1 [CCL 142, 123]) and the architecture of the new temple in the final vision as so complicated and covered by impenetrable fog that intellectual understanding can hardly recognize anything in the vision (*HEz* 2, *praef.* [CCL 142, 205]). The “obscurity” of the Bible is a characteristic sign of Gregory’s theology of scripture. Gregory overcomes the hidden aspects of the Bible through personal identification with the figures of the text and allegorical interpretation because scripture is divided in parts for literal and allegorical exegesis (*HEz* 2,3,18 [CCL 142, 250]). Through the technique of spiritual interpretation Gregory surmounts the difficulties of understanding the text.

The last exegetical work after long discussions handed down under the name of Gregory is a commentary on 16 chapters of I Samuel under the traditional LXX title On I Kings (*in Primum Regum*). Recent research led to

23. *Refomatorisches Schriftprinzip in der säkularen Welt*, ed. H. H. Schmid Mehlhausen, Gütersloh: Mohn 1991, 262–78.

24. Biblical figures as examples of Christian life and models of a reconciled harmony between contemplation and action in the *HEz*: Joseph in Egypt (2,9,19 [CCL 142,373f.]); Rachel and Lea (2,2,10 [CCL 142,231f.]); Moses (1,7,11–13 [CCL 142,90s]); 2,3,21 [CCL 142,252–54]; Aaron (1,7,12 [CCL 142,911]); Samuel (1,7,12 [CCL 142,911]); Elijah (2,2,3 [CCL 142,226f.]); David (1,7,14 [CCL 142,92]); Job (1,9,14f. [CCL 142,13of.], 2,7,20 [CCL 142,332–34]); Peter (2,6,9–11 [CCL 142,300–302], 2,3,6 [CCL 142,240f.]); Paul (2,6,12–13 [CCL 142,302–305], 2,1,12 [CCL 142,218]jl 1,11,18–19 [CCL 142,176f.]); Stephan (2,6,14–15 [CCL 142,305f.]).

the assumption that this work by internal and external reasons seems to be Pseudo-Gregorian.²⁵ on account of the length of the interpretation and of manuscript evidence Peter of Cava-Venosa a 12th-century abbot was proposed as author.²⁶ Yet, it seems that authentic material from Gregory was used because there are unmistakably authentic Gregorian traits.²⁷ Similar to the *Moralia* and the other exegetical writings, in most cases a twofold spiritual interpretation to each passage is given: typological and moral or merely spiritual. In this biblical commentary the Church and its structure are more explicitly in focus, especially in its moral interpretation whereas Gregory in his authentic commentaries mainly dealt with themes like the announcement of the word of God (*praedicatio*) and the tension between action and contemplation (*vita mixta*). Other exegetical works of Gregory mentioned in the *Registrum Epistularum* as on the Heptateuch, the Proverbs and other biblical prophets seem to be lost (*Ep* 12, 6 [CCL 140A,975]).

3. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF GREGORY'S BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION
THEORETIC FUNDAMENT OF GREGORIAN EXEGESIS:
LITTERA AND SPIRITUS

Twice in his literary work, Gregory gives an explicit report on the theoretical foundations of his exegetical practice: in the long proemium to the Commentary on the Canticle; and in the programmatic work by which he dedicates the *Moralia* to Leander of Seville,²⁸ his episcopal colleague and

25. A. de Vogüé, "L'auteur du Commentaire des Rois attribué à Grégoire: un moine de Cava?," *RBen* 106 (1996): 319331; A. de Vogüé (ed.), Grégoire le Grand—(Pierre de Cava), *Commentaire sur le Premier Livre des Rois* (SC 432), Paris: Cerf 1998, 9–28:9f.

26. A. de Vogüé (ed.), Grégoire le Grand—(Pierre de Cava), *Commentaire sur le Premier Livre des Rois* (SC 449), Paris: Cerf 2000, 9–20.

27. F. Clark, "Authorship of the commentary 'In 1 Regum': Implications of A. de Vogüé's discovery," *RBen* 108 (1998) 61–79:69f.; cf. review article of A. de Vogüé's edition of *In I Rg* (SC 432): S. C. Kessler, *ZKG* 111 (2000): 252–54.

28. *Tn Cant* 1–11 (CCL 144,3–14; SC 314,68–88); *Mor*, *Epistula ad Leandrum* (= *Mor*, *Ep. dedic.*): CCL 143,1–7; SC 32bis, 114–134; S. C. Kessler, "Gregor des Große und seine Theorie der Exegese: Die 'Epistula ad Leandrom.'" In *L'esegesi dei Padri Latini dalle origini a Gregorio Magno*, 690–700. SEA 68. Rome, 2000.—The detailed presentation of the exegetical theories of *Tn Cant* comprises more than a quarter of the commentary (11 of together 46 chapters). The text is regarded as a general introduction to Gregory's exegesis (Müller, *Das Hohelied* [1991] 44).

friend. Both texts, serving as introductions, are carefully written out according to classical criteria. The author presents the hermeneutical conception, the structure of exposition, and the purpose of his exegetical endeavor. A closer analysis perceives Gregory's understanding of scripture, his implicit theory of exegesis, and his originality as an interpreter of scriptures near the end of the patristic age.

The preface of the commentary on the Canticle, as well as the dedicatory letter of *Moralia* start by linking their exegetical consideration with the topic of the attachment to the fallen world. Keeping human aspirations trapped in circumstantial situations, that world (*praesens mundus*) has reached old age (*mundus senescens*) in the view of this pope at the closing of Antiquity (*H Ev* I. 1.5 [FC 28.1.50.60]). The fascination of people with mundane reality results in a blindness of the human heart.²⁹ For that reason people no longer understand holy writ, nor follow its precepts which are spiritual by nature. They have lost the indispensable spiritual insights (*intelligentia spiritalis*) required by the Bible: "If the divine voice would say to the blind heart 'Follow God' or 'Love God,' as it is said to it by the law, once exiled and grown stiff by insensibility, it does not catch on to what it hears" (*in Cant* 1 [CCL 144,3]). The *Moralia* explains that the wrong attachment to mundane affairs makes it difficult for people to convert to a life of contemplation (*conversionis gratia*). With notions familiar to him, Gregory exposes the central themes of his spiritual anthropology, presupposed by his exegesis:³⁰ since his exile from Paradise, due to the Fall, the human being has become blind to divine reality, hence, people miss the spiritual understanding of scripture (*interior scripturae intelligentia coelestis*) applying to it only their external senses. They are deaf and unreachable for God's call to follow him as transmitted by the biblical writings. However, people are still filled with a deep longing for the celestial homeland and its unsearchable mysteries.³¹ In Gregory's view

29. *In Cant* 1 (CCL 144,3). Gregory received the idea of the "blind heart—*cor caecum*" from Augustine (*Tractatus in Joannis evangelium* 44,1 [CCL 36,381]; 34,9 [CCL 36,315]; *Sermo* 28,3 [CCL 41,3691]). Regarding the concept of the world in its old age and Gregory's eschatological theory: P. Siniscalco, "L'età del mondo in Gregorio Magno," Grégoire le Grand (1986): 377–86.

30. The gregorian spiritual concept and terminology: C. Dagens, Saint Grégoire le Grand (1977): 165–204; C. E. Straw, Perfection in Imperfection (1988); M. Schambeck, *Contemplatio als Missio* (1999).

31. "Postquam a paradisi gaudiis expulsum" *In Cant* 1 [CCL 144,3]; "caelesti sum desiderio afflatus" (*Mor*, Ep. dedic. 1 [CCL 143,1]); "patria caelestis" (*Dial* 4,1 [SC 265,181]); "mysteria tantae profunditatis aperirem" (*Mor*, Ep. dedic. 1 [CCL 144,2]).

such an alienation can only be overcome by a contemplative life dedicated to the study of divine scripture. In scripture God has given lost human beings the possibility to convert and to recuperate the awareness of their earliest blessedness.³² With a reference to Ps. 119.105, the Bible is seen as a light in the darkness of that pilgrimage,³³ a mirror of the soul (*speculum animae*) allowing again interior intelligence and self-awareness,³⁴ a food and drink keeping people alive.³⁵

As sinners cannot appropriately understand God's message, divine dispensation managed to let God meet people on their own level through sacred scripture. In speaking, God lowered himself (*se loquendo humiliat*), for instance, in the Canticle he addresses humans in the familiar terms of bodily love (*amoris quasi corporei*) in order to turn them toward divine love (*ad amorem qui supra est*).³⁶ Hence, scripture addresses people on two different levels: "The demand of his commandments is on one side high, on another low. What perfect people call spiritual, fits the weak ones literally, and what the small ones take according to the letter, those who are instructed turn it upwards in their spiritual understanding." (*HEz* I.6.2 [CCL 142, 67]). In consequence, Gregory states in general a double structural principle for biblical texts: each passage of scripture shows an inner and an outer aspect. The Bible as a whole is divided into letter and allegory (*in littera dividitur et allegoria*), as it offers a literal-historical and an allegorical-spiritual way to be understood (*HEz* 2, 3, 18 [CCL 152, 250]).

Gregory follows with this hermeneutical concept the classical Pauline pattern of *littera and spiritus* (2 Cor 3,6) and the decisive trait of

32. *Mor* 8,28,34 (CCL 143,406); F. Lieblang, *Grundfragen der mystischen Theologie nach Gregor des Großen Moralia und Ezechielhomilien* (Freiburger theologische Studien 37), Freiburg: Herder 1934, 29–43; M. Schambeck, *Contemplatio als Missio* (1999) 83–101.

33. *Mor* 19,11,18 (CCL 143A,969f); *Rpast* 3,24 (SC 382,420); *HEz* 1,7,17 (CCL 142,93f).

34. *Mor* 2,1,1 (CCL 143,59); gregorian continuation of an Augustinian metaphor: A.-M. LaBonnardière, "Le speculum quis ignorat," *Saint Augustin et la Bible* (Bible de tous les temps 3), Paris: Beauchesne 1986, 401–9.

35. *Mor* 1,21,29 (CCL 143,40f.); cf. *HEz* 1,10,3 (CCL 142,145f.). Gregorian imagery of the Bible cf. Catry, *Lire l'écriture* (1972).

36. *In Cant* 3 (CCL 144,4). The idea of God humiliating himself through his word in order to exalt the human spirit: *In Cant* 3 (CCL 144,4); similar in *Mor* 2,35 (143,81).

Jewish-Christian biblical interpretation over centuries.³⁷ Every page of the Bible has according to Gregory two dimensions: on the one hand side, the literal and historical sense which is the beginning and fundament of all exegetical investigation and, on the other hand, the spiritual meaning whose discovery is the proper aim of exegesis.³⁸ This, indeed, is the fundamental dichotomy of the Bible, the distinction between literal and allegorical, carnal and spiritual, historical and typical sense and between outer and inner understanding. Gregory develops a powerful metaphor for the literal/historical dimension of scripture when commenting on the roll inscribed recto and verso, which the prophet Ezekiel is ordered by God to devour (Ezekiel 2,8, 3,4): “The book of the Holy Scripture is written allegorically inside and allegorically outside. Inside for spiritual understanding, outside in the simple literal sense” (HEZ 1,9,30 [CCL 142,139]).³⁹

The interpreter’s main task according to Gregory consists in creating an equilibrium while exposing the text between the outward “letter” and the “inner” spirit of the Bible. The plan for the commentary on Job perfectly comprises the idea of a correct balance between the inward and the outward in exegesis, as it is said about Job, Ezekiel or other biblical figures who in all their external ordeals are an example of a balanced and even tempered mood (*constantio menus*). Gregory recognizes the need to keep an equilibrium between straining for an inward and spiritual interpretation, on the one hand, and forcing a historical interpretation of the letter, on the other. There is always a weighing of the reading of the biblical text between literalness and allegorical mysticism.

37. For Gregory’s use of 2 Cor 3,6: e.g. *Mor* 11,16,25 (CCL 143A, 601); 18,39,60 (CCL 143A, 926); *In Cant* 4 (CCL 144,5); M. Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria. Un contributo alla storia dell’esegesi patristica* (SEAug 23), Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum 1985.

38. According to Gregory the Jews merely understand the Bible in the letter (*Mor* 18,39,60 [CCL 143A,927]). Regarding the hermeneutical consequences cf. R. A. Markus, “The Jew as hermeneutic device: The inner life of a Gregorian topos,” *Gregory the Great. A Symposium* (1995): 1–15; J. Stern, “Israel et l’Église dans l’exégèse de Saint Grégoire,” *Lesegesi dei Padri Latini dalle origini a Gregorio Magno* (SEAug 68), Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum 2000, 675–89.

39. The complementary concept of inward and outward understanding of the Bible is regarded as the core of the Gregorian exegesis: C. Dagens, *Saint Grégoire le Grand* (1977): 234–237, 242; P. Aubin, “Intériorité et extériorité dans les *Moralia* in Job de Saint Grégoire le Grand,” *RevSR* 62 (1974): 117–166; similar in: Hieronymus, *In Ez.* 1,3,1a (CCL 75,31).

3.2. The technique of Gregorian exegesis: The steps from allegorical interpretation to moral action

On the basis of the two dimensions of the Holy Scriptures Gregory developed his three steps of exegesis. From the three dimensions of the classical anthropology (body-mind-soul) and from the tradition of Christian biblical interpretation Gregory inherited the threefold form of exegesis (literal-spiritual-mystical). He adapted this system for his purposes. Every page of the Bible reflects three senses which the exegete has to recognize and to explain (*tripliciter indagamus*) because “in one and the same sentence of Scripture at the same time all three senses can be found” (HEz 1,7,10 [CCL 142,88]). According to this theoretical triad the first step in dealing with the Scriptures is the literal understanding of the text as it is given (*verba historiae*). Thereafter the same passage should be interpreted in its allegorical meaning (*allegoriarum sensus*), and then at a third level the text should be applied to the moral practice of a Christian ascetic life (Mor, ep. dedic. 1 [CCL 143,2]). In a programmatic passage Gregory compares this exegetical method metaphorically with the construction of a mental edifice as a spiritual stronghold:

One should know, that we shall run quickly through some passages with a historical exposition; some we shall examine by means of allegory for their typical sense; others again we shall discuss by means of allegory only for their moral bearing; some, finally, we shall investigate thoroughly in all three ways. In the first place we lay the foundations of the history; then we raise in spirit a mental edifice as a stronghold of faith by the typical meaning, and finally through the decoration of the moral interpretation we put, as it were by paint, colour on the building (Mor, ep. dedic. 3 [CCL 43,4]).

Gregory makes a distinction between a literal or historical sense, and an spiritual or allegorical sense, which may be either typical, moral or mystical. The literal interpretation of the historical facts is the undisputed fundament of all exegesis: “In the words of the Holy Scriptures we must first attend to the literal truth, and than seek to understand the spiritual allegory. The fruit of the allegory is easily plucked when it is rooted in the truth through the literal meaning” (HEv 2,40,1 [FontChr 28.2,836]). In the *Moralia* Gregory repeatedly takes a special concern for the letter of Scripture and for history: “Who sometimes ignores accepting the words of the history according to the letter, hides himself from the light of truth” (Mor, ep. dedic. 4 [CCL 143,5]).⁴⁰ Upon the historical facts of the text the interpreter has to construct

40. *Mor*, praef. 10,21 (CCL 143,24); 22,47 (CCL 143A,1096); cf. P. Catry, “Epreuves

the spiritual edifice as a stronghold of faith by typological allegorisation. The allegory with its spiritual interpretation finally leads to the goal of all exegesis: Christian morality and contemplative ascent which is the colour on the building of Christian existence.

But this threefold order of exegesis (*ordo exegeticus*) with the historical, allegorical and moral-mystical interpretation exists mainly in the theory of the introductory parts of the *Moralia* and some rare examples in his biblical interpretations. The exegetical practice of Gregory looks quite different: beginning already with the fourth book of the *Moralia* the original triad of senses is no more recognizable.⁴¹ Only a few passages of his Bible commentaries show that the author applies the proposal in the theoretic forewords. Despite his emphasis on the literal understanding as basis in his exegesis Gregory normally passes rather quickly over the literal-historical sense and goes immediately to the allegorical and mystical interpretation. Exegesis for Gregory in practice turns out to be merely twofold, despite his strong emphasis of three senses. This, indeed, is the fundamental dichotomy and the distinction variously stated in Gregory's exegetical works between carnal and spiritual, literal and allegorical, historical and typical, outer and inner understanding.

Allegorical interpretation of the biblical texts for Gregory becomes a synonym for spiritual exegesis under a dual aspect: biblical respectively christological typology and moral tropology for the active and contemplative life. It is impossible to discern these two stages of Gregory's spiritual interpretation. In his sight they melt into the one spiritual sense that should lead towards the morality of a Christian life and the heights of contemplation. Allegory in the view of Gregory as a pastorally minded churchman implicitly means a moral interpretation aiming at the practice of faith. Gregory describes the pastoral aim of his exegesis: ... "that I do not interpret the wording of the narrative only according to the allegorical meaning (*verba historiae per allegiarum sensus excuterem*), but also apply it to the moral conduct

du juste et mystère de Dieu. Le commentaire littéral du Livre du Job par saint Grégoire le Grand," *ReAug* 18 (1972) 124–144 = idem, *Paroles de Dieu, amour et Esprit-Saint chez saint Grégoire le Grand* (Vie Monastique 17), Bégrolles en Mauge: Abbaye de Bellefontaine 1984, 38–58.

41. The last lines of *Mor* 3,37,70 (CCL 143,157) announce that the threefold exegesis is coming to an end. Starting with book five *Mor* 5,1,1 (CCL 143,218) Gregory comments on the biblical text of Job in a solely allegorical and mystical way.

(*in exercitium moralitatis inclinarem*) (*Mor*, Ep. dedic. I [CCL 143,2]). The perceptive focus of Gregorian exegesis and the scope of its interpretation of the Bible belong to the spiritual interpretation, bound to the ethical or moral praxis of the Christian way of life. For giving an impressive illustration of that concern, Gregory uses testimonies and examples. In the exegetical writings as the *Moralia* or his *Homilies on Ezekiel* these “*exempla*” are strictly taken from the Bible whereas in the more popular interpretations of biblical passages Gregory uses miracle stories from the lives of the saints, e.g. in his *Gospel Homilies* or in the *Dialogues*.

In regard to his exegetical procedure, Gregory formulates the methodology of his interpretation: the exegesis of the sacred text proceeds “partly by serving the [literal] sense, partly through the higher perception of contemplation, partly in a moral instruction,” and the author signals that he would freely shift from one of these levels of interpretation to another in order to stress his own viewpoints (*Mor*, Ep. dedic. 2: [CCL 143,3]). He intends to emphasize certain elements of the classical threefold division (*ordo expositionis*: literal-allegorical, moral), in order to occasionally reduce the literal explanation in favor of a more explicit presentation of the mystic and moral sense, which in fact will be more and more the case. In view of the spiritual edification and the *delectatio* of the listeners or readers, Gregory considers it as the first requirement of an exegete to communicate to them the *rectus loquendi ordo*. Therefore the interpreter has the licence and the power to modify the *ordo expositionis*. Gregory projects the ideal image of the exegete by comparing him with running water. The good expositor of the Bible shall take turns like a meandering river: “He that treats the Sacred Scriptures should follow the way of a river, as it flows along its channel, meets with open valleys on its side, into these it immediately turns the course of its current, and when they are copiously supplied, presently it pours itself back into its bed. Thus unquestionably, thus should it be with everyone that treats the Divine Word, that if, in discussing any subject, he chance to find at hand any occasion of seasonable edification, he should, as it were, force the stream of discourse towards the adjacent valley, and when he has poured forth enough upon its level of instruction, fall back into the channel of discourse which he had prepared for himself” (*Mor*, Ep. dedic. 2 [CCL 143,4]). This kind of natural behavior of a river, Gregory notes, ought to serve as a model for the interpreter of Scripture. He shall take every reasonable opportunity to divert the course of his interpretation, as it were, and provide useful exegesis for his audience or readers. The technique Gregory uses most often for finding or inventing as he expounds the biblical text is word association which is to us a

rather annoying system. Gregory cites several other biblical passages all with the same term. He adduces these “testimonies” in accordance with the rule that one passage in Scripture can be interpreted by comparison with others. The spiritual interpretation of his text suggests another text containing the expression which has the same spiritual meaning as the first. This second text is then interpreted according to its spiritual meaning; this suggests another; and so on, until the commentator falls “back into the channel of discourse which he had prepared for himself.”

Interpretative theory and praxis in Gregory’s exegetical work show a certain inner tension between them: the presumed threefold interpretation shrinks in the praxis of his exegesis to the classical duality of the literal and the spiritual interpretation. Origen’s triad of a fleshly, moral, and spiritual understanding of scripture is transformed in Gregory into an explanation which is literal-historical, allegorical-typological, and finally, moral-contemplative. The threefold exegesis is reduced to a brief mention of literary-historical data, and on the level of allegory Gregory tries most explicitly to reach a practical-moral understanding.⁴² Gregory does not elaborate on the theoretical assessment nor on the systematic commitment of Augustine, who expounded his hermeneutical principles in the *De doctrina Christiana*. Though familiar with the Augustinian legacy, Gregory ignored its analytical and systematic stance. He also dismisses Augustine’s fundamental distinction between *res* und *signa*. His aim to cross over from *signa ignota et ambigua* to the *res significatae* refers to the Origenian triad of scriptural senses, which he had probably learned through Evagrius Ponticus and John Cassian. Pope at the closing years of Antiquity, Gregory lived at a time which called for a new form of exegesis. Prior to any dogmatic concern, the biblical culture of Gregory was directed towards the moral and spiritual plane. Based on his own biographical experiences in the domain of an interpretation of scripture at once active and contemplative, his exegesis reached its proper goal in the spirituality of the contemplative life. Gregory interprets scripture in order to achieve the transparency of the past in regard to the future, of the visible reality in regard to the invisible, and the terrestrial data in regard to the heavenly.

42. *Mor* 3,27,56 (CCL 143,150 6,5,6 (288); *HEz* 1,12,20 (CCL 142,195) 2,10,3 (380).

43. K. Pollmann, *Doctrina Christiana. Untersuchungen zu den Anfängen der christlichen Hermeneutik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustinus, ‘De doctrina Christiana’* (Paradosis 41), Freiburg/Schweiz: Editions Universitaires 1996, 147–196. Three senses in Origen e.g.: *Hom. in Gen.* 2,6 (GCS 29.1,36). H. de Lubac described the relationship between Origen and Gregory as “peut-être connatuelle” (*Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l’écriture* 1/1 (Theol(P) 41), Paris: Aubier 1959, 211.

3.3. The Gregorian dynamic of exegesis: Growing Scripture (*divina eloquia crescunt*)

Gregory is witness for a dynamic understanding of the Bible. It is a living reality which reveals itself constantly through attentive reading (*lectio divina*). In his sight the biblical Scriptures have different grades or levels according to the mental and spiritual capacity of the reader or hearer of the word. Gregory construes the Augustinian idea, that all knowledge useful to man is contained in Scripture, to mean that each text contains, or points towards, what is useful. Scripture resembles the wheels in the vision of Ezekiel. The wheels of God's throne seen by the prophet are described as touching the ground and leading upwards at the same time. Correspondingly the Bible gives simple words to those on the ground of an active life and leads with the same words to the heights of contemplation those who are spiritually mature. This dynamic understanding of the word of God finds in Gregory its expression in the idea of a growing understanding of the Bible: "While being read the divine Scriptures grow—*divina eloquia cum legente crescunt*."⁴⁴ Reading the divine Scriptures leads into a process of spiritual growth even of the text of the divine revelation which is always appropriate to the situation of the reader.⁴⁵ The Scripture feeds the life of the spirit at every level. It accommodates itself to the capacity of the intellect seeking to understand it: "You have progressed to the active life, it walks with you. You have arrived to an unchanging constancy of spirit, it stands with you. You have come by God's grace to the contemplative life, it flies with you" (*HEz*, 7,16 [CCL 42,93]). The Bible teaches both the perfect action and the beginning of the life of contemplation (*HEz* 2,2,23 [CCL 142,255f.]). Correspondingly Gregory applies the literal interpretation to the active life whereas the spiritual exegesis refers to the mystical path of contemplation.⁴⁶ The Scriptures contain riches to exercise the learned and to encourage the weak; they are at the same time

44. *HEz* 1,7,8 (CCL 142,87); cf. *Mor* 20,1,1 (CCL 143A,1003) and John Cassian, *Conlationes* 14,11 (CSEL 13,411). One can find a similar idea in Augustine's Genesis-exegesis, *Confessiones* 13,20,27 (CCL 27,257); 13,24,37 (263f.).

45. P. C. Bori, "Circolarità e sviluppo nell'interpretazione spirituale: 'Divina eloquia cum legente crescunt,'" *ASEs* 3 (1986) 263–274; idem, *L'interpretazione infinita. Lermeneutica cristiana antica e le sue trasformazioni*, Bologna: Il Mulino 1987 (french: *L'interprétation infinie*, Paris 1991).

46. B. McGinn, "Contemplation in Gregory the Great," *Gregory the Great. A Symposium* (1995) 146–67.

“a deep and a shallow river, where a lamb can walk and an elephant swim” (Mor, ep. dedic. 4 [CCL 143,6]).

The enigmatic texts of the Bible give to the author the chance to show that the literal meaning of the Bible exists only for the sake of a higher spiritual interpretation. The Scriptures for Gregory are dark and concealed, occult and mystic (*liber involutus*: HEz 1,9,29 [CCL 142,138]).⁴⁷ Not all parts of Scripture have a literal meaning. The dimensions of the temple-building described in Ezekiel for example have according to Gregory’s homiletic interpretation no lasting significance. He determines that it is impossible that the architecture could have any durability according to a literal understanding: “*iuxta litteram accipi nullatenus potest*” (HEz 2,1,3 [CCL 142,208]). There is, Gregory says, evidence for this in the biblical text itself: Ezekiel speaks of a “*quasi aedificium*.” The new temple is only described “as if” it were a building and therefore the text must be interpreted in an allegorical sense. Since the origin of the Bible lies in God there can be no contradiction in the Bible and therefore this passage must be understood and interpreted in a spiritual way. Apparent contradictions result in the wrong understanding of the Scriptures. It is the task of the exegete to discern the two sides of Scripture: inside and outside.

In the view of Gregory there is an inseparable unity between the two Testaments of the Bible. Therefore according to the patristic concept of the *concordantia testamentorum* each passage of the OT can be interpreted in a NT sense. The idea of the inspiration of the whole Bible by the Holy Spirit gives one theological foundation, But despite their differences both Testaments announce concordantly Christ as the mediator between God and mankind (HEz 1,6,5 [CCL 142,76]). Gregory points out that under the letter of the OT the NT is hidden through allegory: “*in Testamenti veteris littera Testamentum novum latuit per allegoriam*” (HEz 1,6,12 [CCL 142,73]).⁴⁸ The unity of the Bible as a whole provides the reason for the considerable OT orchestration of all the works of this monk and bishop of Rome. Gregory expounds his theory of the essential unity of the Bible in the exegesis of Ezekiel’s vision of the wheel in the wheel. The two wheels represent the two Testaments of

47. Regarding the idea of “*obscuritas*” of the Bible cf. Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana* 2,7 (CSEL 80,36f).

48. Parallels to the unity of the two Testaments of the Bible: Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmum* 105,36 (CCL 40,1567); 118,2 (2073); Jerome, *Commentariorum in Esaiam* 9,29,9/12 (CCL 73,374).

the Bible. The OT is the “prophecy” of the NT and the NT is the “exposition” of the OT (HEz 1,6,15 [CCL 142,76]). The aim of the Bible as a whole rests on the proclamation of Christ. The OT announces Christ who is to be born as a man whereas the NT tells about Jesus who is to come at the end of time (HEz 2,4,14 [CCL 142,268]) Besides the christological interpretation especially of OT passages Gregory develops a second branch of an ecclesiological reading in accordance with his theory that “Christ and the Church are one person.”⁴⁹ Just as every person and every event of the Bible can be interpreted as a *typos* of Christ, in the same way the same things can be understood as a symbol of the Church. The Church is the predominant hermeneutical place for reading and interpreting the scriptures of the Bible.

Exegesis for Gregory always means an actualisation and an identifying *lecture existentielle* of the divine words.⁵⁰ Interpreting the Bible for him is far more than a mere technical application of the theory of different senses. The place to read and to interpret the Sacred Scriptures is the church. The *raison-d'être* of the church is the reading of the Bible and only there the word of God comes to its fulfilment (HEz 1,10,37 [CCL 142,163]). Despite the fact that Gregory owed very much to the thinking of Augustine, in his exegesis he followed the Origenian pattern of interpretation and received practical information from Jerome, whereby in his pastoral perspective he was influenced by Ambrose and breathed over all the monastic spirituality from John Cassian and others—the Bible and its interpretation remained the undisputed centre of his thinking, writing and pastoral activities. With his particular way of interpreting the Bible Gregory opened a way to the coming centuries of Christian exegesis.

At the end of the age of Antiquity the first pope coming from a monastic background created an original way of interpreting the Bible. Gregory's commentaries and homilies to single passages and to whole biblical books suited for the theological and spiritual necessities of the coming centuries. On the one hand side he summarized the exegetic traditions of the patristic era and opened on the other hand the way to the medieval understanding

49. M. Doucet, “‘Christus et ecclesia est una persona.’ Note sur un principe d'exégèse spirituelle chez saint Grégoire le Grand,” in: *CCist* 46 (1984) 37–58.

50. B. Studer, “Die patristische Exegese, eine Aktualisierung der Heiligen Schrift. Zur hermeneutischen Problematik der frühchristlichen Bibelauslegungen,” *Mysterium Caritatis. Studien zur Exegese und Trinitätstheologie in der Alten Kirche* (StAns 127), Roma: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo 1999, 97–127.

of the Scriptures.⁵¹ Gregory therefore can justly be called “one of the keys to the understanding of the medieval mentality” and his exegetical method was aptly characterized as “perhaps the most significant single influence upon the detailed working out in the West of the system of interpretation.”⁵² Regarding the constant stream of influence exerted by the exegetical writings of Gregory on the biblical culture of the Middle Ages the expression of “the Gregorian Middle Ages—le moyen age Grégorien” was coined and one justly can refer to Gregory as “father of medieval Bible-exegesis.”⁵³

One of the first witnesses for the particular interest taken in Gregory’s exegesis is the *Liber testimoniorum* of Paterius. As papal official he had free access to the notes of Gregory’s exegetic works preserved in the archives of the Lateran. There he compiled an anthology of biblical interpretations arranged in order of the books of the Bible. He wanted to produce a commentary on the whole Bible drawn from Gregory’s writings.⁵⁴ The high estimation for Gregory’s writings and in particular for the *Moralia* is shown by the Spanish bishop Taio of Zaragoza who was sent on purpose to Rome between 646 and 649 to obtain a copy of the book for Spain.⁵⁵ From this work he published two compilations of passages arranged according to doctrinal issues and to biblical books not explained by Gregory.⁵⁶ About the same time the Irish monk Lathcen (Lathacen) made yet another compilation of the *Moralia*, this one following the original order of the book but with

51. I. Backus (ed.), *The reception of the Church Fathers in the West. From the Carolingians to the Maurists* (2 vol.), Leiden: Brill 1997; G. Dahan, *Lexégèse chrétienne de la Bible en Occident médiéval (XIII^e–XI^e siècle)*, Paris: Cerf 1999, 37–73.

52. R. Manselli, Gregorio (1963): 70; G. R. Evans, *The thought of Gregory the Great* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought 4.2), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988, 147.

53. H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l’écriture* 1/1 (Theol(P) 41), Paris: Aubier 1959, 187; 537–548; H. Graf Reventlow, *Epochen der Bibelauslegung* (1994): 114.

54. The first volume (Genesis – Song of Songs) of originally three came down to us: Paterius, *Liber de expositione Veteris ac Novi Testamenti de diversis libris Sancti Gregorii concinnatus* (PL 79, 683–916); R. Etaix, “Le ‘Liber testimoniorum’ de Paterius,” *RevSR* 32 (1958): 66–78.

55. R. Wasselynck, “Les ‘Moralia in Job’ dans les ouvrages de morale du Haut Moyen Age latin,” *RTAM* 31 (1964): 5–31.

56. Taio of Zaragoza, *Sententiarum libri quinque* (PL 80,727–990; PLS 4,1670–1678); R. Wasselynck, “Les compilations des ‘Moralia in Job’ du VII^e au XII^e siècles,” *RTAM* 29 (1962): 5–32.

particular attention to Gregory's allegorical interpretation.⁵⁷ During the Middle Ages Gregory was generally considered as miraculous interpreter of the divine scriptures—*scripturarum divinarum mirabilis interpretator* and hailed as exegete who “opened nearly all the mysteries of the New and of the Old Testament—*paene totius Novi ac Veteris Testamenti patefecit arcana*.”⁵⁸ Guibert of Nogent praises Gregory as the master of “spiritual exegesis,” in whose words “the keys to this art may best be found” and claims that nobody surpassed him in knowledge of the Bible (*sacrae paginae scientiam*).⁵⁹ The strongest impression left by Gregory and his interpretation of the Scriptures on medieval Bible study was described as the idea that “exegesis is teaching and preaching” and that “teaching and preaching is exegesis.”⁶⁰

The Reformation and the Age of Enlightenment with their new historical approach and critical exegesis regarded the exegesis of Gregory and especially his allegorical method as second-class interpretation of the Bible. His way of dealing with the Scriptures was unwarranted considered as pre-critical and unsystematic. The modern criticism failed to fathom the fecundity, and creativity of the theological, moral and spiritual realities of the gregorian reading of the Scriptures which enlarges the interpretative capacities of its reader. As Gregory proved to be a figure of tradition and transition in exegesis between the Patristic Era and the Middle Ages his exegetical writings still are an appropriate way to understand the objective of the divine revelation through the words of Scripture “that we may learn the fervor of love—*fervorem discamus amoris*” (*in Cant* 10 [CCL 144,14]).

57. Lathcen, *Egloga quam scripsit Lathcen filius Baith de Moralibus quas Gregorius fecit*, ed. M. Adriaen (CCL 145); another anthology with topics concerning morality: Peter of Waldham, *Remediarum Conversorum: A synthesis in latin of Moralia in Job by Gregory the Great*, J. Gildea (ed.), Villanova. Pa. 1984; engl.: *A synthesis of Moralia in Job by Gregory the Great: A translation of Peter Waldham's 'Remediarum Conversorum'*, J. Gildea (ed.), New York 1991.

58. Taio of Zaragoza, *Epistula* 4 (MGH.AA 14,288).

59. Guibert of Nogent, *De vita sua* (ed. G. Bourgin, Paris 1907, 66) “... Gregoriana dicta, in quibus artis huius potissimum reperiuntur claves ...”; idem, *Liber quo ordine sermo fieri debeat* (PL 156, 29B).

60. B. Smalley, *The study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, Oxford: Blackwell 1984,35; R. Wasselynck, *L'influence de l'exégèse* (1965): 157–204.

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XVI
GREGORY OF AGRIGENTUM (D. 630)

Bishop of Agrigentum in Sicily during the reign of Justinian (685–711), Gregory authored a continuous *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* in ten Books. In it priority is given to the literal meaning, but moralizing allegories are not entirely omitted. The author takes into account the interpretations of predecessors. He shows expertise and fairness in his exegesis, with a remarkable openness to Greek classics, Aristotle, and Greek patristic authorities, such as Gregory of Nazianzus. He is at variance with LXX in many of his biblical references. “This commentary has hardly been studied so far” (Aubert, 1464).

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XVII
ISIDORE OF SEVILLE (CA. 560–636)

Isidore was the youngest son of Hispano-roman parents. He replaced his brother, Leander, as archbishop of Seville, when he was approximately forty years of age, his exegetical activity belonging to the early stage of his episcopal career. Isidore's encyclopedic retrieving of liberal arts in *Etymologies* (J. Fontaine, *Isidore*) called for a theological complement. "Nothing is purely secular; to give an account on the world means reaching out to the mysteries of creation engineered by God; to study vocabulary, grammar and rhetorics, signifies to master the key of biblical interpretation" (P. Cazier, *Isidore*, 56). Isidore's achievement as an exegete consists in short handbooks, conceived as tools for the interpretation of biblical texts. He did not compose any proper commentary, but he came close to one in his *Mysticorum expositiones sacramentorum seu Quaestiones in vetus testamentum* PL 83, 207–424; CPL, 2nd, ed., 1195), dealing with Genesis (col. 207–287), Exodus (287–321), Leviticus (321–339), Numbers (339–359), Deuteronomy (359–370), Joshua (371–379), Judges (379–392), I–IV Kings (391–422), Esdras (422–424), Maccabees (423–424).

In the Preface of *Quaestiones*, Isidore first states that all scripture is about the *praefigurationis mysterium*, "mystery of prefiguration" (207B), announcing in advance what was to come. Isidore's purpose is to explore *quae in ea figuratim dicta vel facta sunt, et sunt plena myticis sacramentis*, "the figurative sayings and deeds, filled with spiritual mysteries," in collecting former statements made about them in the church, like well-chosen and pleasant flowers on the fields. Isidore insists on the shortness of the testimonies collected, fit to interest even readers *fastidiosis lectoribus*, "quickly bored" . He noted: *et quia iam pridem iuxta litteram a nobis sermo totus contextus est, necesse est ut, praecedente historiae fundamento, allegoricus sensus sequatur*, "though our whole exposition remains bound to the letter (of scripture), it is necessary after having retraced the story as a starting point, to follow the allegorical sense," adding, "for we perceive in them (the scriptures) some data as figurative, which means as prophetic notations anticipating what was to come" (208B). Isidore refuses to specify the domain of allegory too narrowly: "Clearly, not all the writings of the Law and the Prophets are covered with riddles of mysteries, but those that have such a meaning are linked with those that do not." One has but to touch the strings of a cithara, and the whole instrument vibrates; the same is true when someone interprets pro-

phetic texts in which “either some elements resound in signifying the future or, if they do not resound, function in connecting the ones who resound” (208C–209A). The borrowings from former interpreters, condensed or completed, *de multis breviter perstringentes, pleraque etiam adjacentes* (207B), will be compressed in a one volume summary, in which: *quod enim ego loquor illi dicunt; et vox mea ipsorum est lingua*, “the reader would not read us but read again ancient authors, for if I say something, they say it and my voice is their language.” As quoted authorities, Isidore enumerates Origen, Victorinus, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Fulgentius, Cassian, “and our highly eloquent contemporary, Gregory (the Great)” (209A).

The learned archbishop of Seville could not have been clearer in presenting his work. Far from producing a simple catena of patristic interpretations, he organizes his commentary on the OT as a continuous text of his own, in giving it the form of an intricate lacework of tacit citations. The gigantic puzzle still waits for the modern expert who would study its many pieces and their multiple connections, building on the initial work of identification by F. Arévalo, published in 1797 and printed by Migne.

Allegoriae quaedam sacrae scripturae (= *De nominibus legis et evangelii*), (PL CHECK 83, 97–130; CPL 2nd ed., 1190) seems an authentic work of Isidore (R. J. H. Collins, 312). With an average of only one sentence, the allegorical significance of 127 OT figures and 121 NT figures is clarified in the light of the traditional christo-ecclesiological focus.

Differentiarum, sive de proprietate sermonum libri duo (PL 83, 9–98; CPL 2nd ed., 1187) may well be Isidore’s earliest writing. In Book I, classical terms, from A to Z are defined by pairs of notions close to each other, from the pair 1. *Inter ‘aptum’ et ‘utile’: aptum ad tempus, utile ad perpetuum* (9A), until the pair 610. *Inter ‘zelum’ et ‘invidiam’* (70B). As many times as needed, Isidore specifies the use of scripture, thereby building a bridge from common to biblical Latin. Book II offers a theological complement through a list of “different realia”: God and Lord, Trinity and Unity; divine substance and essence, *unigenitus* and *primogenitus*, the different titles of the Son, “Christ’s birth and ours”; the double Paradise, on earth and in heaven; angels and human beings, the list shifting over to theological anthropology, hermeneutics, spirituality, ethics. More than one sentence is needed in Book II for characterizing each of these “differences.” Though scripture is rarely quoted, even hardly mentioned, in Book II, the analysis of each notion rests on a biblical foundation.

Prologus in librum sedecim prophetarum CPL, 2nd ed., 1196).

Praefatio in Psalterium (CPL, 2nd ed., 1197): Isidore starts by describing Origen’s *Hexapla*; then he goes on to focus on the Psalms, or at least on their inscriptions (PL 81, 971–972).

De ortu et obitu patrum, On the Birth and the Death of the Fathers (CPL, 2nd ed., 1191), of disputed authenticity, offers a short outline to be learned by heart on sixty-four outstanding figures of the OT, from Adam to the Macabees, and twenty-two NT figures from Zechariah and Elizabeth to Titus. In the latter series, Mary is introduced with a litany of devotional titles (148C), Judas Iscariot is completely ignored, and the evangelization of Spain is attributed to the Apostle James (154A). Among the OT figures, some are mentioned with their typological relevance in regard to the NT, starting with Melchisedech (*in typo viri sacrificii* 132C), followed by Isaac who “in the figure (*in figuram*) of Christ did not refuse death” (133C); Aaron, who “by offering victims and bloody sacrifices expressed the future passion of Christ” (138A); David, buried in Bethlehem “where also Our Lord Jesus Christ was born in the flesh” (140A); Solomon, who “revealed the *sacramenta* of Christ and the Church” (140B). The burial places are located according to biblical and apocryphal traditions, in particular for Noah “in Armenia on the top of Mount Ararat” (132B).

In libros veteris ac novi testamenti prooemia (CPL, 2nd ed., 1192), a similar tool for memorized knowledge, starts by a careful listing of the seventy-two canonical books of both Testaments, the last of them, the Johannine Apocalypse, Isidore strongly recommends as being divinely inspired like the other Books. In 633, the fourth national Council of Toledo, over which Isidore presided, had threatened excommunication by Canon 17 against those who refused to consider the Apocalypse as authentic scripture or excluded it from liturgical readings between Easter and Pentecost (A. Humbert, 674f.). “*Prooemia*” equals “summaries”; the essential content of each biblical book is very concisely retraced; differences between the “Hebrews,” which means the Jewish tradition of canonical books, and the “Latins” are noted according to Jerome, the most Latin of the “Latins,” the LXX being practically ignored by Isidore who probably knew no Greek. A few allegories and many prefigurations are mentioned. Describing the Book of Psalms, Isidore states: “For this Book is remarkable because of its allegorical and typological mysteries; in particular, about Christ’s birth, death and resurrection the instrument of almost all the psalms resounds,” *Est autem hic liber allegoricis ac typicis sacramentis signatus; specialiter autem, quod natus, quod passus, quod resurrexit Christus, pene hoc omnium psalmorum resonat organum* (163B).

Among the NT writings, the longest summary by far is dedicated to the Apocalypse (178C–180A).

PL 83, (col. 179–200) counts and analyses, with a fervent interest for their symbolism, many of the numbers met in scripture. It announces elementary principles of numerology (chap. 1–2) before investigating scriptural binaries

(chap. 3), ternaries (chap. 4), quaternaries (chap. 5), etc.. The number seven possesses a very rich symbolism (chap. 8).

A treatise *De fide catholica contra Judaeos* originated from a collection of *Testimonia*.

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XVIII
ILDEFONSUS OF TOLEDO (CA. 610–667)

Possibly of Visigothic stock, Ildefonsus received a good education before his ordination to the diaconate ca. 632. About 650 he became abbot of the monastery Agaliense in the outskirts of Toledo, and in 657 archbishop of the same city. Among his few writings figures a tractate *De virginitate perpetua beatæ Mariæ*, whose intricate rhetoric celebrates the virginity of Mary, as Díaz y Díaz suggests, at the time of the tenth synod of Toledo in 656. Another essay, *Annotationes de cognitione baptismi*, gives a pastoral explanation of baptism borrowed from Augustine, Isidore and Gregory the Great. The essay is completed with a second part, *De progressu spiritalis deserti*, which rests again on Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, Gregory's *Moralia*, and on Isidore. In the first essay, Ildefonsus adapted the biblical figure of Mary to Spanish devotion; in the second, he compared the spiritual progress of the baptised to the wanderings of Israel in the desert.

EDITIONS

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN
SYRIAC CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

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I

A GENERAL SURVEY OF SYRIAC TRADITIONS

Syriac culture underwent a development which differentiated western Syriac and eastern Syriac traditions. However, through the foundations laid before the fifth century an eventual rapprochement was made possible between the two exegetical traditions of East and West. During the fifth to the seventh centuries, both types of Syriac traditions progressively tended to meet in fruitful interaction (L. Van Rompay 1995, summarized here). The exegetical literature on NT in Syriac is surveyed by G.C. McCullough 1982; and on OT by L. Van Rompay 1996.

Eastern Syriac exegesis was given a new impetus at Edessa in the early fifth century by the work of the Syriac translators of Theodore of Mopsuestia's legacy (L. Van Rompay 1987; Reinink 1995). The study of Theodore's commentaries was so intense in that school that it tended to obliterate the earlier teaching which had been mainly based on Ephraem. The same interest in history and in the historical aspect of biblical narratives characterized the exegetical mind set in Antioch and Edessa. Hence in both schools, teachers had a kind of natural antipathy to the Alexandrian approach to scripture, whose paradigms had been fixed by Philo and Origen.

The strict method of Theodore combined historical exactness with philological accuracy. It resulted in a drastic reduction of theological typology: only a minimal number of OT passages were still recognised as prophecies referring to Christ and church. However, in the mid-fifth century, two gifted poets of Edessa voiced opposition to Theodore: both, Narsai belonging to the eastern Syriac tradition, who followed Ephraem in his metrical homilies, and Jacob of Sarug, of the western Syriac tradition, passionately opposed Theodore in the name of Ephraem (Frishman 1989, 1992; Alwan 1989; Sony 1979–80).

During the sixth century, the gap between both exegetical traditions widened. Theodore's disciples left Edessa and established their school in Nisibis, from where the biblical scholarship of Antiochene "dyophysites" (stressing the duality of natures in Christ according to Nestorius) spread all over the Persian empire. An improved study of Theodore led to the creation of a proper genre of biblical commentary in the eastern Syriac tradition. Though using Theodore's method as a basic frame, the teachers of Edessa still clung to certain features of Ephraem's style; they also developed new tendencies of their own. Finally, a crisis occurred near the end of the sixth century around Henana of Adiaben, director of the school of Nisibis, when he decided to

integrate John Chrysostom's legacy with that of Theodore as a foundational model for his exegesis (Vööbus 1965; Macina 1982–1983).

Ca. 550, in the western Syriac tradition, Daniel of Salah composed an important *Commentary on the Psalms*, the oldest known biblical commentary in that tradition (Cowe 1987). It shows affinities with the moderate line held by Theodoret, half-way between Antiochene and Alexandrian hermeneutics. The author climbs from the historical level “to the height of the spiritual vision” (*kad...met 'allinan lwot rawmo d-te'oriya*) (Diettrich 1901, 135, 11–12). With a bold initiative, he added to these “two theories” (Diettrich 1901, 137, 2) a third, more obviously allegorical.

Over a century later, under the ruling of Islam, Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), who, like Daniel of Salah, belongs to the western Syriac tradition, held a leading position in the Christian community. His collections of scholies and his letters testify to his special interest in the literal transmission and interpretation of scripture. Together with the Syriac version of the Bible, the Peshitto, he used the Hebrew bible and the LXX, in line with Antiochene scholarship. His interpretation was historical (*tas itonoyo*), with a sporadic addition of “a spiritual theory” (*te'oriya ruhonoyto*) including symbolic and allegorical interpretations. He probably knew the writings of Eusebius of Emesa (Phillips 1864; Nau 1905; Buytaert 1949).

In the second half of the seventh century, Dadiso' Qatraya, an ascetic and a monk of the eastern Syriac tradition, deals with exegesis in the *Commentary of the Work of Abba Isaia* (Macina 1982, 56–72; Bettliolo 1986; Draguet 1972). He distinguishes between three levels of exegesis: “historical,” “homiletic,” and “spiritual.” The first level, conforming to the rules of Theodore of Mopsuestia, is proper to the work of professional exegetes; the second level, exemplified in the homilies of Basil of Caesarea and John Chrysostom, addresses lay people; and the third level is reserved to monastic circles. Influenced by a fervent reading of Evagrius' writings (Bettliolo 1989), and possibly by Macarius (Thuren 1983), Dadiso Quatraya insistently pleaded in favour of a monastic use of scripture. Isaac of Ninive, by birth close to Dadiso, is a witness to the same influence. Isaac was determined to maintain his allegiance to Theodore of Mopsuestia “in accord with Evagrius, in a dual exegetical polarity which was to remain a proper mark of Mesopotamian monasticism” (Broek 1995).

During the eighth and ninth centuries both traditions practised an uneasy cohabitation: the exegetes of the eastern tradition persisted in their loyalty to the legacy of Theodore of Mopsuestia; those of the western tradition admitted a more eclectic choice of authorities (Ephraem, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, the Cappadocians, etc.). In the Eastern tradition, com-

pilations of exegetical writings included a *Commentary on Genesis-Exodus 9:32*, preserved ms. Diyarbakir 22, dating probably from the first half of the eighth century (Van Rompay 1986); Theodore bar Koni's *Book of Scholies* from the late eighth century (Scher 1910–12; Draguet 1981–82); and Iso'bar Nun (d. 828), *Questions and Answers* (Clarke 1962; Molenberg 1990). The latter was primarily interested in the "theoria" of the OT, thereby introducing spiritual and allegorical exegesis into the strict methodology inherited from Antioch, a clear sign of the widespread influence of Didiso' among eastern Syriac scholars.

The supreme level attained in that same tradition dates from mid-ninth century with Iso'dad of Merv's highly learned Commentaries. This author consulted a great variety of sources, Theodore of Mopsuestia and others; he also was in command of a rich oral tradition. However, he departed from Theodore in finding more references to Christ in OT. Though admitting only four Psalms as directly messianic, he proposed a double application of other parts of Psalms, one on Israel, the other on Christ (Voste; Van den Eynde 1950). He claimed a messianic relevance for parts of the Twelve Prophets, privileged John Chrysostom as a source for interpreting the book of Job and called on Gregory of Nyssa and John Chrysostom, in addition to Theodore, for commenting on the Canticle. He also introduced into his own tradition the Syro-Hexaplar text of the Bible, of western Syriac origin, established in the early seventh century by Bishop Paul of Tella (Braun 1901; Bidawid 1956). C. Van den Eynde (1950) identified Iso'dad as representing "the authentic Nestorian exegesis of his time." By his moderate synthesis he greatly contributed to the rapprochement between both Syriac traditions. His work was continued by Moses bar Kepha (d. 903) (Reller 1990, 1994); it exercised a major influence on the Western Syrian "Renaissance" in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Kaweran 1955), with Dionysius bar Salibi (d. 1171) (Baum 1982; Samir 1978; Strothmann 1988) and Barhebraeus (d. 1286) (Bundy 1993), who realized a complete synthesis of both Syriac traditions (Sprenghing-Graham 1931; Fiey 1986; Gottsberger 1900; Wensinck 1919).

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II APHRAATES (FIRST HALF 4TH C.)

It is thought that Aphraates was born from non-Christian parents in the early fourth century. After his conversion, he became a monk and the superior of a community of ascetics, possibly a bishop. No precise dates are known, Aphraates may have lived in the region of Ninive (later confused Nisibis)-Mossul, in the convent of Mar Mattai.

“The Persian Sage” is the oldest author in Syriac patristics whose work has been integrally preserved. He composed twenty-three *Demonstrations* which, with the exception of the last, build an acrostich presenting the letters of the Syriac alphabet in their natural order (23d *Dem* starts again with *alaf*). The *Demonstrations* found an Armenian translator in the second half of the fifth century, and were placed under the name of Jacob of Nisibis (d. 338). *Dem* 5 and 8 were also translated into Ethiopic, and *Dem* 6 into Georgian. Fragments of five *Demonstrations* are transmitted in Arabic.

The first ten *Demonstrations* date from 336 /337, twelve others from 343/344. The last one was composed in 345, as a recapitulation of the whole salvation history.

The poet claims to be “a disciple of holy scripture,” not only in the content, but also in the literary disposition of his work. The twenty-two *Demonstrations* correspond to the twenty-two letters of biblical writing; they are delivered in two groups, first ten, and then twelve others, as a reminder of the two Tables of the Law, the two Testaments, the two commandments of love, the new Law (“Jesus” = 10) ruling all people (= 12). The author’s purpose is not apologetic, nor is it directed by abstract metaphysics: “He is entirely traditional, which means he transmits a teaching which he has received, and presents the scriptural *Testimonia* for each topic, in order to persuade and reassure readers whose intelligence is regulated by that logic of faith” (Pierre 1988, 66).

Aphraates’ native familiarity with rabbinic traditions conditions his interpretation of scripture. He knew well “the principles and traditional procedures of text analysis.” He “re-centers and recapitulates the whole (biblical) legislation in the sole phrase ‘You shall love.’ Deliberately ignoring *halakha*, he analyzes scriptural texts according to the flexible hermeneutics of *haggada*, seen by him as primal teaching; he compares similar passages, and shows their inner coherency, their “types” which serve as measure for the spiritual experience” (Pierre 1988, 122).

At least, 740 explicit OT quotations and endless OT allusions (Owens),

with over 500 NT quotations (Baarda), testify in the *Demonstrations* to the Syriac version of the Bible used by Aphraates, and to his scriptural canon (the whole Hebrew Bible, with 1–2 Macc, possibly Tobit; the Gospels, according to the *Diatessaron*; Pauline letters, possibly James, surely 1 John). The titles given to the themes developed in the first ten *Demonstrations* are: 1. Faith; 2. Love; 3. Fasting; 4. Prayer; 5. Wars; 6. Members of the Order (the monks, assimilated to the Jewish B'nai Q'yama: bibliography in Pierre 1968, 4f.); 7. Converts; 8. On the Resurrection of the Dead; 9. Humility; 10. Pastors (without hierarchical order). The twelve *Demonstrations* of the second group comment on: 11. Circumcision; 12. Pascha; 13. Sabbat; 14. Synod; 15. Distribution of Food; 16. The Election of Nations; 17. The Messiah Son of God; 18. Virginity; 19. On the Fact that Jews will not be brought together again; 20. The Assistance of the poor; 21. Persecution; 22. Death and last times.

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III
EPHRAEM THE EXEGETE (306–373)

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY IN THE WORKS OF EPHRAEM THE SYRIAN

A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION
by Sidney H. Griffith

I

The name of Ephraem the Syrian (c. 306–373) was widely revered among Christians in Late Antiquity. Well within the patristic period itself his reputation as a holy man, poet, exegete, and theologian of note was widely proclaimed well beyond the borders of his native Syria and the territories where Syriac was spoken. Within fifty years of his death, Palladius included a notice of Ephraem among the accounts of the ascetic saints whose memory he celebrated in the *Lausiaca History*.¹ Sozomen, the early fifth century historian, celebrated Ephraem's memory as a popular ecclesiastical writer. He said of Ephraem's works, "They were translated into Greek during his lifetime, . . . and yet they preserve much of their original force and power, so that his works are not less admired when read in Greek than when read in Syriac."² Even Saint Jerome, a man not always ready with praise for the work of others, claimed to recognize Ephraem's theological genius in a Greek translation he said he read of a book by Ephraem on the Holy Spirit.³ But surely the most striking testimony to the Syrian writer's popularity in patristic and medieval times is the fact that in the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, the number of pages it takes to list the works in Greek attributed to Ephraem is second only to the number of pages devoted to listing the works of the ever popular John Chrysostom.⁴

Actually, there is a problem with the numerous works attributed to Ephraem in Greek. Almost all of them have to do with spiritual growth and

1. See C. Butler, *The Lausiaca History of Palladius* (2 vols., Texts and Studies, 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898, 1904), vol. 2, 126–27.
2. J. Bidez and G. H. Hansen (eds.), *Sozomenus, Kirchengeschichte* (GCS, 50; Berlin, 1960), 127–30.
3. See E. C. Richardson (ed.), *Hieronymus, Liber de Viris Illustribus* (TU, 14; Leipzig, 1896), 51.
4. See M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (vol. II; Turnhout: Brepols, 1974), 366–468.

development, and many of them are straightforwardly monastic in character. That is why in Byzantine times, so important a monastic figure as Theodore of Stoudios (759–826) held up the example of Ephraem for the inspiration of his monks. In a sermon he mentioned together the ascetical example of John Chrysostom and of “Ephraem, famous in song.”⁵ And in his *Testament* he listed Ephraem together with Barsanuphius and Antony as the exemplars *par excellence* of oriental monasticism.⁶ But in fact the Greek works attributed to Ephraem, while sometimes reflecting his spiritual teaching, do not for the most part come from his pen.⁷ They are the products of a Graeco-Syrian monastic establishment that grew up after Ephraem’s lifetime and which helped to produce an icon of Ephraem, the monastic paragon, that owed little to what we know of the biography of the Syrian teacher and biblical commentator.⁸

In the Syriac tradition, Ephraem is remembered as a teacher, and as

5. See “S. *Theodori Studitae Parva Catechesis*,” in A. Mai, *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca* (vol. IX; Rome, 1888, 102.

6. See “S. *Theodori Studitae Testamentum*,” in *PG*, vol. 99, col. 1815.

7. The Greek works are listed, together with the bibliographical details of their publications and translations in Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 366–468. A re-printing of the Greek works, together with a translation into modern Greek, is available in Konstantinou G. Phrantzolas (ed. and trans.), *Osiou Ephraim tou Surou Erga* (6 vols.; Thessaloniki: Ekdoseis ‘To Periboli tes Panagias’, 1988). For English translations of a selection of these works see the web site of Archimandrite Ephrem Lash, “Saint Ephrem the Syrian: Ascetical and Other Writings Extant Only in Greek,” <http://www.orthodox.org.uk/Ephr-Int.htm>. See also the pioneering studies of Democratie Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, “L’authenticité sporadique de l’Éphrem grec,” in *Akten des XI. internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongresses* (München, 1960), 232–36; “Les doublets de l’édition de l’Éphrem grec par Assemani,” *OCP* 24 (1958), 371–82; “Vers une nouvelle édition de l’Éphrem grec,” *StPatr* 3 (1961), cols. 800–819; “Les citations évangéliques de l’Éphrem grec,” *Byz(T)* 4 (1973), 315–73; “Éphrem: versions grecque, latine et slave: addenda et corrigenda,” *Epeteris Hetaire-sias Byzantinon Spoudon* (1975–1976), 320–59. See also J. Kirchmeyer and D. Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, “Saint Éphrem et le ‘Liber Scintillarum,’” *RSR* 46 (1958), 545–50. Selected works of Ephraem Graecus, and their relationship to Syriac works of Ephraem, are the subject of a forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton Theological Seminary by Wonmo Suh.

8. See Edward G. Mathews, Jr., “The Vita Tradition of Ephrem the Syrian, the Deacon of Edessa,” *Diakonia* 22 (1988–1989), 15–42; Sidney H. Griffith, “Images of Ephraem; the Syrian Holy Man and his Church,” *Tr* (1989–1990), 7–33; Joseph P. Amar, “Byzantine Ascetic Monachism and Greek Bias in the Vita Tradition of Ephrem the Syrian,” *OCP* 58 (1992), 123–56.

an interpreter of the scriptures. Jacob of Sarug (c. 451–521), wrote a verse homily on “the holy man, Mar Ephraem, the teacher (*malpānā*),” in which he presents Ephraem as a skilled speaker and composer of “teaching-songs” carefully wrought to commend right doctrine and refute error. Jacob celebrates Ephraem as: a marvelous rhetor, who surpassed the Greeks in declamation; who could include a thousand subjects in a single speech. A divine citharist; he set his phrases to verse, to make joyful sound in mighty wonder.⁹

It is customary to reckon the year 306 as the year of Ephraem’s birth. When he reached his majority, he came into the service of bishop Jacob of Nisibis (ca. 308–338), and he remained in the episcopal service of Nisibis through the tenure of the next three bishops, Babu (d. 346), Vologeses (d. 361), and Abraham (d. 363). Ephraem’s diocesan service, therefore, lasted some forty years until the day in the reign of bishop Abraham, in the year 363, when he and other refugees left Nisibis on the occasion of her surrender to the Persians as part of the agreement Emperor Jovian (363–364) made after his predecessor Julian had met his death deep in Persian territory.¹⁰ After the surrender of Nisibis, and his flight from the city westward, Ephraem came eventually to Edessa; there he entered the service of bishop Barses (361–371), whom the Arianizing Emperor Valens (364–378) translated to the lesser see of Harran in 371.¹¹ Two years later—on 9 June 373, according to the *Chronicle of Edessa*—Ephraem died.¹²

Everything we know about Ephraem’s career in Nisibis and in Edessa, most of it from his own pen, suggests that he participated wholeheartedly in the pastoral work of the bishops whom he served. In his *Hymns against Heresies* he spoke of himself as a “herdsman” (*allanā*), who by his writing helped the shepherd/bishop (*ra’yā*) tend the flock.¹³ He was not so much a

9. Joseph P. Amar, “A Metrical Homily on Holy Mar Ephrem by Mar Jacob of Sarug; Critical Edition of the Syriac Text, Translation and Introduction,” *Patrologia Orientalis* (tome, 47, fasc. 1, no. 209; Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), 32–33.

10. See Ephraem’s own reflections on these events in his Julian hymns in E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso und Contra Julianum* (CSCO, vols. 174, 175; Louvain: Peeters, 1957). See also Sidney H. Griffith, “Ephraem the Syrian’s Hymns ‘Against Julian’: Meditations on History and Imperial Power,” *Vig-Chr* 41 (1987), 238–66.

11. See Ephraem’s own reflections on the bishops he served in E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Carmina Nisibena, erster Teil* (CSCO, vols. 218, 219; Louvain: Peeters, 1961).

12. See I. Guidi, *Chronica Minora* (CSCO, vol. 1; Paris, 1903), 5.

13. See Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen contra Haereses* (CSCO, vols. 169, 170; Louvain: Peeters, 1957), LVI:10.

cleric as he was a teacher. Jacob of Sarug, in the homily on Ephraem from which we quoted earlier, characterized him as “a godly Philosopher in his actions, who as he was acting would also be teaching whoever would listen to him.”¹⁴ He was not a “monk” in the modern sense of the term, although, as an unmarried man, he was probably a “single” person (*ihidayâ*) dedicated to God’s service.¹⁵ It is possible that he was a deacon, but he was surely a catechist, biblical exegete, liturgical composer, and sometime polemicist in the employ of the Nicene bishops whom he served. Politically he supported the alignment of Syria with the Roman empire and its ecclesiastical orthodoxy.¹⁶

II

Ephraem wrote in Syriac, a dialect of the Aramaic language which carried with it a family relationship to the Jewish world in which Christianity first appeared in the synagogue communities of Mesopotamia and Syria/Palestine. Nevertheless he was intellectually very much attuned to the Greek-speaking culture of Asia Minor, and of the major ecclesiastical centers in Antioch and Constantinople. In ecclesiology he followed the line of Eusebius of Caesarea Maritima (ca. 260–ca. 340); in theology he adhered to the teaching of the council of Nicea, strenuously combatting what he perceived to be the inquisitive rationalism of those he called “Arians” and “Aetians”; in the east he was the relentless opponent of the teachings of Marcion, Bar Daysan, and Mani.¹⁷

14. Amar, “A Metrical Homily on Holy Mar Ephrem,” 30–31.

15. On the significance of this title see Sidney H. Griffith, “Asceticism in the Church of Syria: the Hermeneutics of Early Syrian Monasticism,” in Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis (eds.), *Asceticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 220–45.

16. See Sidney H. Griffith, “Ephraem, the Deacon of Edessa, and the Church of the Empire,” in Thomas Halton and Joseph P. Williman (eds.), *Diakonia: Studies in Honor of Robert T. Meyer* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), 22–52.

17. See Peter Bruns, “Arius Hellenizans? . . . Ephrem der Syrer und die neoarianischen Kontroversen seiner Zeit,” *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 101 (1990), 21–57; Sidney H. Griffith, “Faith Seeking Understanding in the Thought of St. Ephrem the Syrian,” in George C. Berthold (ed.), *Faith Seeking Understanding: Learning and the Catholic Tradition; Selected Papers from the Symposium and Convocation Celebrating the Saint Anselm College Centennial* (Manchester, N.H.: Saint Anselm College Press, 1991), 35–55; *idem*, “Setting Right the Church of Syria: Saint Ephraem’s

Always he spoke and wrote from the perspective of his deep familiarity with the scriptures. As he put it, "Faith in the scriptures is the second soul."¹⁸ As we shall see, Ephraem read the scriptures with close attention to the text in the Syriac versions of his day, in the manner that modern scholars have sometimes associated with the so-called 'school of Antioch.' But as Lucas Van Rompay has pointed out, Ephraem's exegesis is in fact not so much "Antiochian" as it is "a Christian counterpart to Jewish exegesis."¹⁹

Although Ephraem wrote biblical commentaries, prose refutations of the teachings of those whose views he regarded as false, prose meditations, dialogue poems and metrical homilies (*mêmrê*), there can be no doubt that his preferred genre was the "teaching song" (*madrashâ*).²⁰ Translators have often called these songs "hymns", but since they are not primarily songs of praise, the term is not really apt.²¹ Rather, they are "teaching songs", as Andrew Palmer has happily styled them; they were to be chanted to the accompaniment of the lyre (*kennarâ*), on the model of David the Psalmist.²² Perhaps their closest analogues are the Hebrew *Piyyûtîm*, synagogue songs which enjoyed great popularity in Palestine from the eighth century on, and which feature biblical themes and literary devices very similar to those regularly

Hymns against Heresies," to appear in William E. Klingshirn and Mark Vessey (eds), *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R. A. Markus* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Paul S. Russel, *St. Ephrem the Syrian and St. Gregory the Theologian Confront the Arians* (Kottayam, Kerala: St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, 1994).

18. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, XLI:11.

19. Lucas Van Rompay, "Antiochene Biblical Interpretation: Greek and Syriac," in Judith Frishman and Lucas Van Rompay (eds.), *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation; a Collection of Essays* (Traditio Exegetica Graeca, 5; Louvain: Peeters, 1997), 122. See also L. Van Rompay, "La littérature exégétique syriacque et le rapprochement des traditions syrienne-occidentale et syrienne-orientale," *ParOr* 20 (1995), 221-35.

20. See the convenient presentation of the titles of Ephraem's Syriac works by genre, their editions, and notice of the available translations into English in Sebastian P. Brock, "A Brief Guide to the Main Editions and Translations of the Works of Ephrem," *The Harp* 3 (1990), 7-29. See also Joseph Melki, "S. Ephrem le Syrien, un bilan de l'édition critique," *ParOr* 11 (1983), 3-88.

21. See Michael Lattke, "Sind Ephraems Madrašê Hymnen?" *OrChr* 73 (1989), 38-43.

22. See Andrew Palmer, "A Lyre without a Voice, the Poetics and the Politics of Ephrem the Syrian," *ARAM* 5 (1993), 371-99.

used by Ephraem.²³ They are also comparable to the Byzantine *Kontakion*. In fact, a good case can be made for the suggestion that the most famous composer of *Kontakia*, Romanos the Melodist (d. after 555), who was a native of Emesa in Syria, was actively influenced by Ephraem's compositions.²⁴

Ephraem's works became better known in the west in the eighteenth century, with the publication of the six-volume Roman edition of texts attributed to him in Syriac, Greek, and Latin.²⁵ While many of the Greek and Latin texts had long been known, the publication of Ephraem's works in Syriac, the only language in which he is known to have written, brought the first glimpse of his true genius to western Christians. The Syriac works, with Latin translations, were included in volumes IV to VI of the *Editio Romana*. In subsequent years, beginning in the nineteenth century, and reaching well into the twentieth century, scholars in England, Belgium, and other parts of Europe, making use of the numerous manuscripts recently acquired in the west, made major strides in publishing newer editions of the Syriac texts. T. J. Lamy's edition of Ephraem's *Hymns* and *Homilies*²⁶ at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought Ephraem's works in Syriac into the mainstream of religious discourse in Europe, and arguably led directly to Pope Benedict XV's proclamation of Ephraem as a Doctor of the Universal Church on 5 October 1920.²⁷ But already it was becoming clear that the first

23. See J. Schirmann, "Hebrew Liturgical Poetry and Christian Hymnology," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* n.s. 44 (1953–1954), 123–61; J. Yahalom, "Piyyût as Poetry," in L. Il Levine (ed.), *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia, 1986), 123–134; W. Jac. Bekkum, "Anti-Christian Polemics in Hebrew Liturgical Poetry (*Piyyut*) of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries," in J. Den Boeft and A. Hilhorst (eds), *Early Christian Poetry; a Collection of Essays* (Supplements to *VigChr*, vol. 22; Leiden: Brill, 1993), 297–308.

24. William L. Petersen, "The Dependence of Romanos the Melodist upon the Syriac Ephrem; its Importance for the Origin of the *Kontakion*," *VigChr* 39 (1985), 171–87; *idem*, *The Diatessaron and Ephrem Syrus as Sources of Romanos the Melodist* (CSCO, vol. 475; Louvain: Peeters, 1985); *idem*, "The Dependence of Romanos the Melodist upon the Syriac Ephrem," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. XVIII, 4; Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications and Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 274–81; S. P. Brock, "From Ephrem to Romanos," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. XX; Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 139–51.

25. See J. S. Assemani (ed.), *Sancti Patris Nostri Ephraem Syri Opera Omnia quae exstant Graece, Syriace, Latine* (6 vols.; Rome, 1732–1746).

26. See T. J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones* (4 vols.; Malines, 1882–1902).

27. See Benedict XV, "Principi Apostolorum Petro," *AAS* 12 (1920), 457–63.

publications of Ephraem's Syriac works left much to be desired in terms of the quality of the editions of the texts; many of them were not based on the best available manuscripts, and the work of many of the editors did not satisfy the requirements of truly critical editions. To remedy this situation, Dom Edmund Beck, O.S.B. (1902–1991) began in 1955, and continued for the next quarter century, to publish critical editions and German translations of the genuine, Syriac works of Ephraem in the Louvain series *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*.²⁸ While Beck has not been alone in the task of editing and publishing Ephraem's works in the twentieth century, the sheer volume of his output in this enterprise makes his name almost synonymous with the production as it were of the "complete works" of Ephraem the Syrian.

The modern publication of the Syriac works of Ephraem has been accompanied by a crescendo in the number of studies devoted to them, and to his life and thought more generally.²⁹ The effect of all this attention has been gradually to bring Ephraem's Syriac works into the mainstream of modern patristic scholarship, although one can even now consult the index of too many studies of early Christian thought in areas on which he wrote extensively and still not find a mention of his name.

III

From the beginning Ephraem has been known as an exegete. In the Syriac *Vita* which circulated in the Greco-Syrian monastic milieu of the fifth and sixth centuries, in which Ephraem is portrayed as a paragon of the monastic life, the text makes much of the fact that he is also remembered to have written a commentary on the Torah, full of theological insight and spiritual perspicacity.³⁰ In fact, for Ephraem, the scriptures, and particularly the

28. Beck published his last edition in 1979 (CSCO, vols. 412, 413). In the end, in addition to numerous studies, he produced 19 volumes of editions and translations of Syriac works attributed to Ephraem.

29. The surest way bibliographically to oversee what is being published in Ephraem studies is to consult the ongoing classified bibliography in Syriac studies compiled by Sebastian P. Brock in *ParOr*: 4 (1973), 393–465 [1960–1970]; 10 (1981–1982), 291–412 [1971–1980]; 14 (1987), 289–360 [1981–1985]; 17 (1992), 211–301 [1986–1990].

30. See Joseph P. Amar, "The Syriac "Vita" Tradition of Ephrem the Syrian," (Ph.D. thesis, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., 1988, no. 8919389; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1989), 102–3; 238–40.

Gospel, are the ultimate religious authority. In one of his “teaching songs” *On Faith* he wrote:

The scriptures are set up
like a mirror;
one whose eye is clear
sees there
the image of the truth.

Set up there
is the image of the father;
depicted there
is the image of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.³¹

Truthfully one may say that all of Ephraem’s works are in some sense commentaries on the scriptures. But for practical reasons one may consider them under two broad headings: the prose commentaries, which were written for purposes of Bible study; and the verse compositions, “homilies” (*mêmrê*) and “teaching songs” (*madrashê*), which for the most part had a liturgical setting. It will be useful to discuss the prose commentaries first.

The Roman edition of Ephraem’s *Opera Omnia* contains commentaries attributed to him on most of the books of the OT *Peshitta*, and the searches of subsequent scholars have uncovered even more texts purporting to contain such commentaries.³² While much scholarly work remains to be done on these often fascinating compositions, it seems clear enough that few of them can be authentic.³³ In fact, of the OT books, only the Syriac commentaries

31. Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Fide* (CSCO, vols. 154, 155; Louvain: Peeters, 1955), LXVII:8–9.

32. See the early survey by T.-J. Lamy, “Lexégèse en orient au IV^e siècle ou les commentaires de saint Éphrem,” *RB* 2 (1893), 5–25, 161–81, 465–86. Severus of Edessa, a ninth-century monk who composed a *catena* of *scholia* on numerous biblical passages, attributed the OT commentaries mostly to Ephraem and Jacob of Edessa (c. 640–708). See Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), 279. See also D. Kruisheer, “Ephrem, Jacob of Edessa, and the Monk Severus; an Analysis of MS Vat. Syr. 103, ff. 1–72,” in R. Lavenant (ed.), *VII Symposium Syriacum*, forthcoming volume in the series, *OCA*.

33. See, e.g., Edward G. Mathews, Jr., “The Armenian Commentary on Genesis Attributed to Ephrem the Syrian,” in Frishman and Van Rompay, *The Book of Genesis in Jewish and Oriental Christian Interpretation*, 143–61.

on Genesis and Exodus³⁴ are generally considered by modern scholars as likely to be in large part genuine works of Ephraem.³⁵ It is not unlikely that a certain school tradition was the setting for the attribution of commentaries on the other books of the OT *Peshitta* to Ephraem.

A particular dimension of Ephraem's OT commentary which most modern scholars seldom fail to mention is the Jewish connection. It is not only the fact that the Syriac versions of the OT he and his continuators and imitators knew have the Hebrew Bible rather than the LXX behind them, but that many aspects of the interpretation seem to have their closest analogues in the Jewish exegetical tradition rather than in other Christian traditions.³⁶ This fact reminds the modern reader of Ephraem's work that in the Christian world of the Semitic languages there was a certain continuity of thought and imagination with the Jewish world about the meaning of the biblical narratives that one does not always find in Greek and Latin commentaries of the patristic period.

In his commentaries on Genesis and Exodus Ephraem does not discuss each verse. Rather, he concentrates on the passages of greatest importance, such as the creation narratives, where there is much at issue for his polemics against adversaries like the Marcionites, the followers of Bar Daysan and Mani. He seems to be in a hurry, as if the commentaries are meant to serve

34. See R. M. Tonneau, *Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim et in Exodum Commentarii* (CSCO, vols. 152, 153; Louvain: Peeters, 1955). See also the English translation by Edward G. Mathews, Jr. and Joseph P. Amar, *St. Ephrem the Syrian: Selected Prose Works; Commentary on Genesis, Commentary on Exodus, Homily on our Lord, Letter to Publius* (Kathleen McVey, ed., The Fathers of the Church, vol. 91; Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994).

35. There are some dissenters. See Paul Féghali, "Influence des Targums sur la pensée exégétique d'Éphrem?" in H. J. W. Drijvers, et al. (eds.), *IV Symposium Syriacum 1984* (OCA, 229; Rome, 1987), 71–82; *idem*, "Notes sur l'exégèse de s. Ephrem; commentaire sur le deluge (Gen. 6, 1–9, 17)," *ParOr* 8 (1977–1978), 67–70. See also David Bundy, "Ephrem's Exegesis of Isaiah," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. 18, 4; Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications and Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 235–37, who includes the commentary among the *dubia* ascribed to Ephraem, but cites the impressive list of scholars who accept its authenticity, including Dom Edmund Beck (236). Actually, Beck names only the commentary on Genesis in his list of Ephraem's authentic works. See Edmund Beck, "Éphrem le Syrien (saint)," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* (vol. IV; Paris: Beauchesne, 1959), col. 790.

36. See N. Sed, "Les hymnes sur le paradis de saint Éphrem et les traditions juives," *Le Muséon* 81 (1968), 455–501; Tryggve Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian; with Particular Reference to the Influence of Jewish Exegetical Tradition* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1978); Féghali, "Influence des Targums;" Sebastian P. Brock, "Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources," *JJS* 30 (1979), 212–32.

only some immediate, academic purpose. In fact, at the beginning of the *Commentary on Genesis* he begins with the following remark:

I had not wanted to write a commentary on the first book of Creation, lest we should now repeat what we had set down in the metrical homilies and “teaching songs.” Nevertheless, compelled by the love of friends, we have written briefly of those things of which we wrote at length in the metrical homilies and in the “teaching songs.”³⁷

This remark indicates not only haste, but Ephraem’s conviction that the heart of his scriptural commentary is to be found in his liturgical compositions. Nevertheless, there is some valuable information in the prose text about his exegetical thought. For example, at the end of his discussion of a number of passages in Genesis, when he comes to the account of Jacob’s blessings for his sons (Gen 49:2–27), and after he has set out what, according to him, the text literally means, he says:

Now that we have spoken of the literal meaning (*su’rana’it*) of the blessings of Jacob, let us go back and speak of their spiritual meaning (*ru’hana’it*) as well. We did not fittingly speak of their literal meaning nor will we write of their spiritual meaning as we ought, for we spoke too sparingly of their literal meaning and we will write of their spiritual meaning much too briefly.³⁸

While it is clear that Ephraem’s feeling of haste is still evident in this paragraph late in his discussion of Genesis, almost by the way he gives some information about his exegetical method. What he says allows one to see that he expressly recognizes two senses of the scriptural text, the literal sense and the spiritual sense. In the sequel it is evident that for him the spiritual sense consists in whatever there is in the terms of the blessings in Genesis that one might take to refer in a typological way to the ultimate economy of Salvation in Christ and in the church, the types and symbols of what is yet to come in the unfolding of the history of Salvation, as recorded in the Gospel. From this perspective, one might also associate Ephraem’s style of exegesis of the OT with the so-called “Antiochene” school of biblical interpretation and its exercise of *theoria*. Robert Murray has even written of Ephraem that his exegetical attitude probably expresses the most beautiful form of the Antiochene orientation (“doch stellt seine exegetische Haltung vielleicht die

37. Tonneau, *Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim*, 3. English translation from Mathews and Amar, *St. Ephrem the Syrian; Selected Prose Works*, 67.

38. Tonneau, *Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim*, 118. English translation from Mathews and Amar, *St. Ephrem the Syrian; Selected Prose Works*, 209. See also Sten Hidal, *Interpretatio Syriaca; die Kommentare des heiligen Ephräm des Syrers zu Genesis und Exodus mit besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer auslegungsgeschichtlichen Stellung* (Lund: Gleerup, 1974), 56–60.

schönste Ausprägung der antiochenischen Richtung dar").³⁹ But the matter is more complicated than this, as will soon become clear.⁴⁰

As with the OT, so in the patristic tradition of Syria Ephraem is credited with prose commentaries on most of the NT books as well. There are works attributed to him on the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline epistles, which survive only in Armenian,⁴¹ and which have not been much studied. There is also an *Exposition of the Gospel*, an anti-Marcionite work attributed to Ephraem and preserved only in Armenian, about the authenticity of which there have been some doubts.⁴² But the most important work on the NT is the well known and often quoted commentary on Tatian's *Diatessaron*. Although the text survives in only a single manuscript in the original Syriac,⁴³ and in

39. R. Murray, "Der Dichter als Exeget: der hl. Ephräm und die heutige Exegese," *ZKTh* 100 (1978), 486.

40. For other studies of Ephraem's methods of exegesis, see C. Bravo, *Notas Introductorias a la Noematica de San Efrén* (Excerpta ex dissertatione ad Lauream in Facultate Theologica Pontificiae Universitatis Gregoriana; Rome, 1956); L. Leloir, *Doctrines et méthodes de s. Éphrem d'après son commentaire de l'évangile concordant* (CSCO, vol. 220; Louvain: Peeters, 1961); S. Hidal, *Interpretatio Syriaca*; P. Yousif, "Exegetical Principles of St Ephraem of Nisibis," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. XVII, 4; Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications and Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 296–302. Somewhat boldly, it seems, given the intricacies of the matter, one recent writer even develops four "laws" or principles to summarize Ephraem's exegetical method. See Bertrand de Margerie, *An Introduction to the History of Exegesis* (vol. 1, "The Greek Fathers," trans. L. Maluf; Petersham, Mass.: St. Bede's Publications, 1993), 143–63. See especially Lucas Van Rompay, "The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation," in Magne Sæbø (ed.), *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; the History of Its Interpretation* (vol. 1, "From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages," part 1, Antiquity; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), esp. 622–28.

41. See the Mechitarist Fathers, *S. Ephrem Syri Commentarii in Epistolas D. Pauli nunc primum ex Armenio in Latinum sermonem a Patribus Mekhitaristis translati* (Venice, 1893); N. W. Akinian, *Des hl. Ephraem Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte* (Vienna, 1921).

42. See George A. Egan, *Saint Ephrem; an Exposition of the Gospel* (CSCO, vols. 291–292; Louvain: Peeters, 1968).

43. See Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant; texte syriaque (MS Chester Beatty 709)* (Chester Beatty Monographs, 8; Dublin, 1963); *idem*, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant; texte syriaque (MS Chester Beatty 709), folios additionnels* (Leuven: Peeters, 1990). An English translation of the text is available in Carmen McCarthy, *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron; an English Translation of Chester Beatty MS 709 with Introduction and Notes* (Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement, 2; Oxford: Oxford University Press on Behalf of the University of Manchester, 1993). See also the French translation by Louis Leloir, *Éphrem de Nisibe: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant ou Diatessaron, traduit du Syriaque et de l'Arménien* (Sources Chrétiennes, no. 121; Paris: Cerf, 1966).

two manuscripts in Armenian translation,⁴⁴ Louis Leloir pronounced it to be “the most important of Ephrem’s exegetical works.”⁴⁵ However, in a series of articles, in which he subjects portions of the commentary to an intense literary scrutiny, based on comparisons with passages in Ephraem’s surely genuine homilies and “teaching songs”, Edmund Beck came to the conclusion that “Ephraem was not the author of the commentary. On the other hand, the many and large connections with Ephraem’s hymns and homilies allow the supposition that the work originates from his school.”⁴⁶ And therefore one may conclude that the commentary does in fact preserve many of Ephraem’s exegetical insights.

Although the *Diatessaron* commentary does not cover the whole text, the commentator takes his time in discussing not only the literal meaning of the words in the verses he considers, but he also frequently enlarges on a theme which the text suggests, often in the process recalling the types and symbols from OT narratives which, from his perspective, find their proper point of reference in the Gospel. His basic attitude is evident in the following passage:

Many are the perspectives of his word, just as many are the perspectives of those who study it. [God] has fashioned his word with many beautiful forms, so that each one who studies it may consider what he likes. He has hidden in his word all kinds of treasures so that each one of us, wherever we meditate, may be enriched by it. His utterance is a tree of life, which offers you blessed fruit from every side. It is like that rock which burst forth in the desert, becoming spiritual drink to

44. Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant (version arménienne)* (CSCO, vol. 137; Louvain, 1953); *idem*, *Saint Ephrem: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant (traduction latine)* (CSCO, vol. 145; Louvain: Peeters, 1954).

45. Leloir, *Doctrines et méthodes*, 40.

46. Edmund Beck, “Ephräm und der Diatessaronkommentar im Abschnitt über die Wunder beim Tode Jesu am Kreuz,” *OrChr* 77 (1993), 119. Five earlier studies which led Beck to the same conclusion are: E. Beck, “Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu Jo. 1, 1–5,” *OrChr* 67 (1983), 1–31; *idem*, “Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu der unvergebbaren Sünde wider den Heiligen Geist übersetzt und erklärt,” *OrChr* 73 (1989), 1–37; *idem*, “Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu der Perikope von der Samariterin am Brunnen,” *OrChr* 74 (1990), 1–24; *idem*, “Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu der Perikope von der Sünderin, Luc. 7, 36–50,” *OrChr* 75 (1991), 1–15; *idem*, “Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zur Perikope vom reichen Jüngling,” *OrChr* 76 (1992), 1–45. See also William L. Petersen, “Some Remarks on the Integrity of Ephrem’s Commentary on the Diatessaron,” in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. 20; Leuven: Peters, 1989), 197–202.

everyone from all places. [They ate] spiritual food and drank spiritual drink. (1 Cor 10:3–4)

Therefore, whoever encounters one of its riches must not think that that alone which he has found is all that is in it, but [rather] that it is this alone that he is capable of finding from the many things in it. Enriched by it, let him not think that he has impoverished it. But rather let him give thanks for its greatness, he that is unequal to it. Rejoice that you have been satiated, and do not be upset that it is richer than you. . . . Give thanks for what you have taken away, and do not murmur over what remains and is in excess. That which you have taken and gone away with is your portion and that which is left over is also your heritage.⁴⁷

IV

As Ephraem himself says, in the passage quoted above from the beginning of his commentary on the book of Genesis, biblical exegesis is “that of which we wrote at length in the metrical homilies and in the “teaching songs.”⁴⁸ And the context of the homilies and “teaching songs” was often the divine liturgy. Specifically, as St. Jerome says of these compositions of Ephraem, “in some churches his writings were publicly recited after the reading of the scriptures.”⁴⁹ This means that the proximate occasion for the composition of many of Ephraem’s *mêmêrê* and *madrashê* was the reading of a set of passages from the scriptures chosen for their relevance to the liturgical celebration of the day or the season. Therefore the commentary they elicited must have had about it the quality of applied exegesis, which fit in with the general presentation of the truths of the faith, and not some more abstract, hermeneutical consideration. So, for example, the titles of the collections of “teaching songs” reflect their practical character. There are the more obviously liturgical titles, such as *de Jejuniò*, *de Azymis*, *de Crucifixione*, *de Resurrectione*, and *de Nativitate*; there are doctrinal titles, such as *de Fide*, *contra Haereses*, *de Ecclesia*, and *de Paradiso*; there are titles which elicit the memory of places or events, such as *Carmina Nisibena*, and *contra Julianum*, even the verse

47. Mc Carthy, *Saint Ephrem’s Commentary on Tatian’s Diatessaron*, 49–50.

48. Mathews and Amar, *St. Ephrem the Syrian; Selected Prose Works*, 67.

49. “Ephrem, Edessenae ecclesiae diaconus, multa Syro sermone composuit, et ad tantam venit claritudinem, ut post lectionem Scripturarum publice in quibusdam ecclesiis eius scripta recitentur.” Richardson, *Hieronymus*, 51.

homilies, *On Nicomedia*, for the most part, preserved only in Armenian.⁵⁰ These were all “occasional pieces,” in the sense that Ephraem wrote them for specific occasions or seasons, be they liturgical or topical.

The transmission of Ephraem’s *madrashê*, the “teaching songs,” in liturgical cycles arranged according to considerations both of prosody and melody, as well as subject matter,⁵¹ should not blind one to their essentially didactic character. As the name itself implies, *madrashâ* being cognate to the Hebrew *midrash*, biblical commentary, or interpretation, is the heart of the enterprise, and that from an instructional point of view.⁵² In fact, according to Jacob of Sarug, the singers of Ephraem’s *madrashê* were trained precisely to proclaim the Gospel, and could accordingly be called “teachers” in the churches.⁵³ The instruction was meant to be both positive, in the sense of communicating a definite point of view in biblical faith, and defensive, in the sense of enabling the congregation to recognize and refute error. Ephraem himself highlights this character of the *madrashê* in the last of his “teaching songs” *Against Heresies*. He says,

O Lord, may the works of your herdsman
not be cheated.
I will not then have troubled your sheep,
but as far as I was able,

50. These Latin titles, which have become conventional in the scholarly literature, reflect the Syriac notices of the contents of the collections of *madrâshê* as they are found in the manuscript tradition. See the bibliography cited in the next note below. For the homilies on Nicomedia see Charles Renoux, *Éphrem de Nisibe Mēmre sur Nicomédie* (Patrologia Orientalis, t. 37, fasc. 2, 3, nos. 172–173; Turnout: Brepols, 1975).

51. On these matters see André De Halleux, “Une clé pour les hymnes d’Éphrem dans le MS. Sinai Syr. 10,” *Muséon* 85 (1972), 171–199; *idem*, “La transmission des Hymnes d’Éphrem d’après le MS. Sinai Syr. 10, f. 165v–178r,” in *Symposium Syriacum 1972* (OCA, 197; Rome, 1974), 21–36; B. Outtier, “Contribution à l’étude de la préhistoire des collections d’hymnes d’Éphrem,” *ParOr* 6, 7 (1975–1976), 49–61; S. P. Brock, “The Transmission of Ephrem’s *madrashê* in the Syriac Liturgical Tradition,” in Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. 23; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 490–505.

52. On the role of *midrash* in the Jewish instructional tradition see the comments of James L. Kugel, “Two Introductions to Midrash,” in G. H. Hartman and S. Budick (eds.), *Midrash and Literature* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986), 103.

53. Amar, J. P., “A Metrical Homily on Holy Mar Ephrem,” nos. 40–44, pp. 34–35. In context, Jacob is celebrating Ephraem’s role as the “second Moses for women,” (no. 48, p. 37), having specially trained them to perform his *madrâshê* in church.

I will have kept the wolves away from them,
 and I will have built, as far as I was capable,
 enclosures of “teaching songs” (*madrashê*)
 for the lambs of your flock.

I will have made a disciple
 of the simple and unlearned man.
 And I will have given him a strong hold
 on the herdsmen’s staff,
 the healers’ medicine,
 and the disputants’ armor.⁵⁴

V

In the *madrāshê* Ephraem teaches not only the particular lessons of the scripture passages appointed to be read at a given liturgical celebration, or chosen because of their doctrinal relevance, but he also communicates a definite view of the role of the scriptures in general in the process of God’s revelation of himself and of the economy of salvation. He teaches that Nature and Scripture together are the twin sources of revelation. For example, in a “teaching song” in which he had been reviewing some ways in which Nature reveals its Creator he says,

Look and see how Nature and Scripture
 are yoked together for the Husbandman:
 Nature abhors adulterers,
 practicers of magic and murderers;
 Scripture abhors them too.
 Once Nature and Scripture had cleaned the land
 —they sowed in it new commandments
 in the land of the heart, so that it might bear fruit,
 praise for the Lord of Nature
 glory for the Lord of Scripture.⁵⁵

54. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, LVI:10, 11.

55. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, XXVIII:11. The English translation is from Sebastian Brock, *Saint Ephrem the Syrian; Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1990), 191.

In another passage Ephraem likens Nature, and the two testaments of scripture, to three lyres, to the accompaniment of which the Word of God sings; the lyre of Nature then testifies that it is Christ himself who sings to the lyre of Moses and the lyre of the Gospel. Ephraem says,

The Word of the Most High came down
and clothed himself in
a weak body with two hands.
He took up and balanced two lyres,
one in his right hand and one in his left.
A third he put in front of him,
to be a witness for the other two;
for it was the middle lyre corroborating
that their Lord was singing to their accompaniment.⁵⁶

For Ephraem, scripture is the rule of faith which even Nature confirms. And he means the integral scripture, the Old and New Testaments together—the Christian Bible, which has Christ as its focal point. He says,

In the Torah Moses trod
the Way of the “types and symbols”⁵⁷ before that People
who used to wander every which way.
But our Lord, in his testaments,
definitively established the path of Truth
for the Peoples who came to the Way of Life.⁵⁸
All the “types and symbols” thus travelled
on that Way which Moses trod
and were brought to fulfillment in the Way of the Son.

56. Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Virginitate* (CSCO, vols. 223, 224; Louvain: Peeters, 1962), XXIX:1. See Kathleen E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian; Hymns* (The Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 390.

57. The Syriac term behind this expression is *râzê* (sing., *râzâ*), which will be discussed below. Suffice it now to say that it includes the senses of the Greek terms “type” and “mystery” in similar contexts, but extends well beyond their reach in Syriac usage, often having the sense of “mystery symbol.”

58. On the People/Peoples, or Nation/Nations (*-ammâ/-ammê*) motif in early Syriac literature, i.e., Jews/Gentiles, see Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom; a Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 41–68.

Let our mind then become
cleared land for that Way.
Instead of on the ground, my brothers,
let us, in our souls, tread the Way of Life.⁵⁹

For Ephraem, only the integral scriptures can be the measure of truth. He says in one of the “teaching songs” *Against Heresies*,

Like the body of the alphabet,
which is complete in its members,
neither subtracting a letter,
nor adding an extra one,
so is the Truth which is written
in the Holy Gospel,
in the letters of the alphabet,
the perfect measure which does not accept
less or more.⁶⁰

The problem of the heretics, according to Ephraem, was precisely their penchant for mutilating the canon of the scriptures, which he envisioned as a living body. In another one of his “teaching songs” *Against Heresies*, he put it this way:

The Sons of Error say
the two testaments,
that they were combined and put together,
and had become a true body.
They cut off and took away [parts] of them,
and pasted them up to make books.
They cut off and took away narratives
that were opportune.
This is the disgrace,
that they wanted to put together
a sound body
from the mutilation of members.⁶¹

59. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, XXV:3.

60. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, XXII:1.

61. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, II:19.

Ephraem's judgment of such people is that:

They have indicted themselves;
they have cut up, mangled the books,
and they have made strangers of phrases
whose intention is one and the same.⁶²

In Ephraem's parlance, the Prophets and the Apostles, that is to say the record of their sayings in the Bible, are the milestones and the inns respectively,⁶³ on the Way of Life, and they all lead to Christ, who alone reveals his Father. According to Ephraem, as Sebastian Brock has put it, "what is 'hidden' in the symbols of Nature and of Scripture is revealed in Christ at the Incarnation."⁶⁴ Furthermore, according to Ephraem, the lines of writing in the scriptures form a bridge over the ontological chasm that separates creatures from their Creator, bringing the human mind, by way of the incarnate Son of God, to the Godhead itself.⁶⁵ For just as in the Son, God clothed himself in flesh, in the scriptures, one might say, God clothed himself in human words.⁶⁶ Ephraem put it this way:

62. Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, II:15.

63. See Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Fide* (CSCO, vols. 1154, 155; Louvain: Peeters, 1955), LXV:1. See also Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, XXV:1 and XXVII:3. Ephraem develops the image of the Way quite extensively at a number of places in his works. See Edmund Beck, "Das Bild vom Weg mit Meilensteinen und Herbergen bei Ephräm," *OrChr* 65 (1981), 1–39.

64. Sebastian Brock, *The Luminous Eye; the Spiritual World Vision of Saint Ephrem the Syrian* (Cistercian Studies Series, 124; Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 28–29.

65. On the significance of Ephraem's conception of the ontological chasm that separates human beings from God, which only love, but not knowledge, can cross, see Thomas Koonammakkal, "The Theology of Divine Names in the Genuine Works of Ephraem," (D. Phil. thesis presented to the University of Oxford, Oxford, 1991); *idem*, "Divine Names and Theological Language in Ephrem," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. XXV; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 318–23; *idem*, "The Self-Revealing God and Man in Ephrem," *The Harp* 6 (1993), 233–48. On Ephraem's "bridge" imagery in this context, see Edmund Beck, "Zwei ephrämisches Bilder," *OrChr* 71 (1987), 1–9.

66. On the importance of clothing imagery in Ephraem and other Syriac writers see Sebastian P. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in M. Schmidt (ed.), *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter* (Eichstätter Beiträge, 4; Eichstatt, 1982), 11–40.

Let us give thanks to God who clothed Himself in the names of the
 body's various parts:
 Scripture refers to His 'ears', to teach us that He listens to us;
 it speaks of his 'eyes', to show that He sees us.
 It was just the names of such things that He put on,
 and, although in His true Being there is not wrath or regret,
 yet He put on these names too because of our weakness.
 We should realize that, had He not put on the names
 of such things, it would not have been possible for Him
 to speak with us humans. By means of what belongs
 to us did He draw close to us:
 He clothed Himself in our language, so that He might
 clothe us
 in His way of life.⁶⁷

There is an extended passage in one of Ephraem's "teaching songs" *On Paradise* that beautifully expresses his conception of the faithful Christian's encounter with the scriptures, probably outside of the liturgical setting, in the context of *lectio divina*, praying with the text in hand. The setting evokes the scene of the poet's reading in the book of Genesis. He says,

In his book Moses
 described the creation of the natural world,
 so that both Nature and Scripture
 might bear witness to the Creator:
 Nature, through man's use of it,
 Scripture, through his reading of it.
 These are the witnesses
 which reach everywhere;
 they are to be found at all times
 present at every hour,
 confuting the unbeliever
 who defames the Creator.

I read the opening of this book
 and was filled with joy,

67. Beck, *Hymnen de Fide*, XXXI:1–2. The English translation is from Brock, *The Luminous Eye*, 60.

for its verses and lines
 spread out their arms to welcome me;
 the first rushed out and kissed me,
 and led me on to its companion;
 and when I reached that verse
 wherein is written
 the story of Paradise,
 it lifted me up and transported me
 from the bosom of the book
 to the very bosom of Paradise.

The eye and the mind
 traveled over the lines
 as over a bridge, and entered together
 the story of Paradise.
 The eye as it read
 transported the mind;
 in return the mind, too,
 gave the eye rest
 from its reading,
 for when the book had been read
 they eye had rest
 but the mind was engaged.

Both the bridge and the gate
 of Paradise
 did I find in this book.
 I crossed over and entered;
 my eye remained outside,
 but my mind entered within.
 I began to wander
 amid things indescribable.
 This is a luminous height,
 clear, lofty and fair:
 Scripture named it Eden,
 the summit of all blessings.⁶⁸

68. Beck, *Hymnen de Paradiso*, V:2–5. The English translation is from Brock, *St. Ephrem the Syrian; Hymns on Paradise*, 102–4.

Here Ephraem teaches that when one reads the scriptures the eye remains outside, but the mind enters within and wanders among “things indescribable (*dlâ ktîb*).” These “things indescribable” then offer the mind the opportunity to contemplate God’s beauty, as Ephraem explains in another place. In the *Prose Refutations* he says,

Moses testifies that while it was granted to him to do everything like God, at last he abandoned everything and prayed to see the Lord of all. For if the creatures of the Creator are so pleasant to look upon, how much more pleasant is their Creator to look upon; but because we have not an eye which is able to look upon his splendour, a mind (*tar’îtâ*) was given us which is able to contemplate his beauty.⁶⁹

Beauty (*shuprâ*) then, according to Ephraem, provides the perceptible horizon against which the power and presence, indeed the love of the Creator God is revealed to the created human being. In another one of the “teaching songs” *On Paradise* Ephraem specifies further his view of the mind’s role in the human encounter with God. He says,

Far more glorious than the body
 is the soul,
 and more glorious still than the soul
 is the mind (spirit),
 but more hidden than the mind
 is the Godhead.
 At the end
 the body will put on
 the beauty of the soul,
 the soul will put on that of the mind,
 while the mind shall put on
 the very likeness of God’s majesty.⁷⁰

69. J. Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni Balaei Aliorumque Opera Selecta* (Oxford, 1865), 25. English translation slightly adapted from C. W. Mitchell, *S. Ephraim’s Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan* (2 vols.; London and Oxford: Williams and Norgate, 1912, 1921), vol. I, p. iv. See also Edmund Beck, “Ephraem’s Brief an Hypatios; übersetzt und erklärt,” *OrChr* 58 (1974), 85, n. 22 and 95, n. 60, for a discussion of *tar’îtâ* in Ephraem’s works.

70. Beck, *Hymnen de Paradiso*, IX:20. The English translation is adapted from

God's majesty is surely the source of the beauty that the human soul and mind perceives. For Ephraem, the mind can be likened to a mirror (*mahzîtâ*) in which one sees the types and symbols from Nature and Scripture, which themselves in turn function like a mirror in which one sees the hidden things of God. Therefore, Ephraem says the scriptures too are like a mirror which God has set up for the mind's eye, in which one sees the images of the truth.⁷¹ He says,

The scriptures are set up
like a mirror;
one whose eye is clear
sees there
the image of the truth.
Set up there
is the image of the Father;
depicted there
is the image of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.⁷²

VI

According to Ephraem, what one finds in scripture, as in Nature, are the types and symbols, the names and titles, in terms of which the invisible God reveals himself to the eyes and minds of persons of good faith. These types and symbols then prepare one to recognize the incarnate Word of God in Jesus of Nazareth. Ephraem says,

In every place, if you look, his symbol is there,
and wherever you read, you will find his types.
For in him all creatures were created

Brock, *St. Ephrem the Syrian; Hymns on Paradise*, 143. Brock here translates *tar'îtâ* as "spirit." I have chosen to use the word "mind" as more communicative of the sense of the passage in the context of the present discussion. In Ephraem's psychology, "mind" is an aspect of "spirit." See the discussion in Edmund Beck, *Ephräms des Syrers Psychologie und Erkenntnislehre* (CSCO, vol. 419; Louvain: Peeters, 1980), esp. 10–11, 33, 43, 126–47.

71. See Edmund Beck, "Das Bild vom Spiegel bei Ephräm," *OCP* 19 (1953), 5–24, esp. 5–10.

72. Beck, *Hymnen de Fide*, LXVII:8–9.

and he traced his symbols on his property.
 When he was creating the world,
 he looked to adorn it with icons of himself.
 The springs of his symbols were opened up to run down
 and pour forth his symbols into his members.⁷³

In another “teaching song” Ephraem speaks similarly of the symbols and types of God’s Son and Messiah to be found in the scriptures. He says,

See, the Law carries
 all the likenesses of him.
 See, the Prophets, like deacons,
 carry
 the icons of the Messiah.
 Nature and the scriptures
 together carry
 the symbols of his humanity
 and of his divinity.⁷⁴

In divine revelation, according to Ephraem, what one looks for are the types and symbols God has put there to focus the searching minds of creatures attracted by their beauty. He most often calls them *râzê* (sing. *râzâ*) in Syriac, manifest symbols, which in turn, by God’s grace, disclose to the human mind those aspects of the hidden reality or truth (*shrarâ, qushtâ*) which are within the range of the capacities of human intelligence. To pry further than this into the essence of God, for example, is to fall into the chasm that separates the creature from the Creator, and to wander in error. Religious thought or “theology” then rightfully consists in the contemplation of the *râzê*, the “mystery symbols” in which God reveals the truth about himself and the world to human beings.⁷⁵

73. Beck, *Hymnen de Virginitate*, XX:12. See also the English translation in McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns*, 348–49.

74. Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Pachahymnen; (de Azymis, de Crucifixione, de Resurrectione)* (CSCO, vols. 248, 249; Louvain: Peeters, 1964), *De Azymis*, IV:22–24.

75. See Griffith, “Faith Seeking Understanding in the Thought of St. Ephraem the Syrian.” For more on the theological context of Ephraem’s exegesis see the remarks of Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 145–57.

The term *râzâ* came to Syriac via ancient Persian and old Aramaic, where it basically meant “secret,” and in this sense it appears in the book of Daniel (e.g., Dan. 2:18).⁷⁶ Ephraem and other Syriac writers use the word more in the sense of a “mystery symbol”, which is not so much mysterious in its function as it is indicative, disclosing to human minds according to their capacities what is hidden from human knowledge in its essence, such as the being of God and the course of the economy of salvation. While *râzâ* is often synonymous with “type” (*typos*, *tupsâ*) in Ephraem’s works, his use of the term goes well beyond what one normally thinks of as the typological sense of the scriptures, i.e., words, actions, facts, and narratives in the OT that foreshadow their models in the NT. For Ephraem, biblical typologies are indeed *râzê*, but so are many things in nature, and also in the apostolic kerygma and the life of the church, like sacraments. For him, the *râzê* all point to the incarnate Christ, who is “the Lord of the *râzê*, who fulfills all *râzê* in his crucifixion.”⁷⁷ So they may point forward from Nature and Scripture to Christ, who in turn reveals his Father to the eye of Faith, or they point from the church’s life and liturgy back to Christ, who in turn reveals to the faithful believer the events of the eschaton, the ultimate fulfillment of all creation in the economy of salvation.⁷⁸

As was mentioned above, in Ephraem’s thought “beauty” (*shuprâ*) provides the perceptible horizon against the background of which one achieves an awareness of the power and presence of God. And it is in the context of such “beauty” that in the scriptures the revealed *râzê* disclose the mysteries of salvation. Perhaps it is for this reason that Ephraem often portrays the God who reveals himself in Nature and Scripture as an artist. As a matter of fact, the image of the image maker, or artist, is one of Ephraem’s favorite figures of speech.⁷⁹ He uses it to advantage in two stanzas of the “teaching

76. See R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (2 vols.: Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879, 1883), vol. II, cols. 3871–75. See also Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990), 520.

77. Beck, *Paschahymnen, De Azymis*, III:1, *·unitâ*.

78. On this aspect of Ephraem’s thought, see in particular Tanios Bou Mansour, *La pensée symbolique de saint Ephrem le Syrien* (Bibliothèque de l’Université Saint-Esprit, 16; Kaslik, 1988). See also Edmund Beck, “Symbolum-Mysterium bei Aphraat und Ephräm,” *OrChr* 42 (1958), 19–40; *idem*, “Zur Terminologie von Ephrâms Bildtheologie,” in Schmidt (ed.), *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie*, 239–77; Robert Murray, “The Theory of Symbolism in St. Ephrem’s Theology,” *ParOr* 6, 7 (1975–1976), 1–20; *idem*, “Der Dichter als Exeget.”

79. See S. H. Griffith, “The Image of the Image Maker in the Poetry of St. Ephraem

songs” *On Virginity* to give a good summary of the functioning of the *râzê* in his thought. In these stanzas, Ephraem addresses himself to Christ, “the painter of his own *râzê*.”⁸⁰ He says,

You have gathered up scattered *râzê*
 from the Torah, that are pertinent to your comeliness.
 You have published the models (*tapenkê*)
 which are in your Gospel,
 along with the prodigies and signs of Nature.
 You have mixed them together as the paints for
 your portrait; you have looked at yourself,
 and painted your own portrait.
 Here is the painter, who in himself has painted
 his Father’s portrait;
 two portrayed, the one in the other.
 The prophets, the kings, and the priests,
 who were creatures, all of them painted
 your portrait, but they themselves bore no resemblance.
 Created beings are not capable;
 you alone are capable of painting the portrait.
 They indeed drew the lines of your portrait;
 you in your coming brought it to completion.
 The lines then disappeared due to the strength of the paints,
 the most brilliant of all colors.⁸¹

VII

Ephraem the Exegete canvassed the scriptures in search of the *râzê* which in the ensemble of them would disclose the whole economy of salvation, as it found its focus in the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. In the metrical homilies and “teaching songs” he composed he invited those who would hear them in the context of the liturgy to consider the revealed mysteries of the scriptures as they gave focus to their Christian faith. In the

the Syrian,” in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *StPatr* (vol. XXV; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 258–269.

80. Beck, *Paschahymnen, de Crucifixione*, II:5.

81. Beck, *Hymnen de Virginitate*, XXVIII:2–3. See McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian; Hymns*, 386.

prose commentaries on the scriptures that have come down to us from his pen, Ephraem paid most attention to the literal sense of the text, clarifying obscure words and phrases, and explaining what at first sight might seem to be historical or logical conundrums, or giving what he considered to be the correct interpretation of passages that were used in a contrary sense by adversaries such as the Marcionites, the followers of Bar Daysan, or of Mani, and even of those whom he identified as “Arians” or “Aetians.”⁸² In all of this Ephraem was writing from within a community of biblical interpretation that was firmly “Nicene” in its theological convictions, giving voice to the orthodoxy of the “Church of the Empire.” But unlike other well-known figures of the fourth century, particularly those who wrote in Greek, Ephraem had little taste for abstract, or philosophical theology.⁸³ Rather, the Bible, and particularly the Gospel, was the one true expression of the faith for him. He interpreted the Bible literally, but also typologically, in terms of the virtually sacramental *râzê* he saw strewn everywhere in the text. His posture was not that of the biblical fundamentalist, in the modern sense of the word, but he did say,

Between God and man,
 faith is what is required.
 If you put faith in Him, you honor him;
 if you investigate him, you belittle him.
 Between man and God then,
 there is but faith and prayer.⁸⁴

For Ephraem, the Bible, when it is accurately read and interpreted, elicits both faith and prayer through the almost kaleidoscopic interplay of the *râzê* in a narrative of verbal icons designed by God to display to the human mind the

82. See, Griffith, “Setting Right the Church of Syria.”

83. For this reason some scholars have used the expression “symbolic theology” to characterize Ephrem’s approach to religious discourse, and they often contrast it to Greek or Latin modes of thought, not to mention modern systematic theology. Sebastian Brock, for example, says, “If a label is required, ‘symbolic theology’ would be the least inappropriate designation of Ephrem’s approach. The freedom of this kind of theology from Greek modes of thought is striking.” Sebastian Brock, “The Poet as Theologian,” *Sobornost* 7 (1977), 243–44.

84. Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones de Fide* (CSCO, fols. 212, 213; Louvain: Peeters, 1961), II:485–92. See also E. Beck, “Glaube und Gebet bei Ephräm,” *OrChr* 66 (1982), 15–50.

drama of salvation history from the focal point of the cross. Everything in Ephraem's exegesis then served to sharpen the believer's vision of the drama as seen from the vantage point of scripture. He did every thing he could to enable the eye and the mind of the believer to travel over the lines of the text, as over a bridge, and so, as he would put it, to enter Paradise.⁸⁵

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85. See Beck, *Hymnen de Paradiso*, V:4.

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IV
MAR ABA (LATE 4TH C.)

Mar Aba was a disciple of Ephraem. His legacy includes a *Commentary on the Diatessaron*, some homilies and explanations of the psalms.

EDITIONS

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Nau, F.: *ROC* 17 (1912): 69–73.

V

RABBULA (D. 435)

Born near Alep from a non-Christian priest and a Christian mother, Rabbula received a Greek education before converting. From Syriac country, he came to Jerusalem and was baptized in the Jordan. Back home, he distributed all his belongings to the poor and entered a monastic community. Ca. 415, he was consecrated bishop of Edessa, at a time when Ibas, the head of the School of Edessa, propagated the teachings of his friend Theodore of Mopsuestia. Rabbula was soon involved in the Christological debate. Having signed in Ephesus (431) documents hostile to Cyril of Alexandria, he changed his mind when back in Edessa, reconciled with Cyril, and ordered the books of Theodore to be burned. For that reason, he entered into a severe conflict with Ibas. He died on August 7, 435. Rabbula decided to replace *Diatessaron* with a new Syriac translation of the NT. He also translated the treatise *De recta fide* of Cyril.

STUDIES

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 —. *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac* (CSCO 128, subs. 3). Leuven 1951.

VI
ISAAC OF ANTIOCH (5TH C.)

Under the name of “Isaac of Antioch” the writings of several authors, dating from 404 until after 477, reached posterity. Some of these authors call on Chalcedon against Nestorius and Eutyches, others witness to their Monophysite persuasion.

VII
NARSAI OF EDESSA (CA. 399–502)

Born ca. 399 in the village of Ain Dulbe on the river Tigris, at the age of sixteen, Narsai entered the monastery of Kefar-Mari, where his uncle Emmanuel was the superior. However, he soon left for Edessa, where he remained for ten years as a student. Back in his monastery as a teacher, he was overcome by nostalgia, and returned to Edessa for another decade. Recalled by his dying uncle, he could not avoid being chosen for his replacement, but in 435 he traveled to Mopsuestia, eager to learn from Theodoulos, the successor of Theodore.

In 437 he became the head of the School of Edessa, a tenure which he held for two decades. He promoted the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia and was befriended with the local bishop Ibas who was opposed to the decisions of Chalcedon 451. After 457, the replacement of Ibas, Bishop Nonnus, deposed Narsai as a Nestorian. Narsai found shelter in Nisibis. He moved the School of Edessa to his new residence and thereby became the founder of the School of Nisibis, which he presided for another four decades, except for five years when he served as superior of the monastic community of Kefar-Mari. A man whose life spanned three centuries, Narsai died at the age of 103.

EDITIONS

See I. Ortiz de Urbina, 108f.

VIII

PHILOXENUS OF MABBUG (CA. 450–CA. 522)

A student at the School of Edessa, after 460 Philoxenus became deeply committed to the Monophysite doctrine. He became bishop of Mabbug in 485 and governed his diocese in peace until 499, when the pro-Chalcedonian Flavian, newly elected to the see of Antioch, began to harass him. On a visit to Constantinople, he was excommunicated by Patriarch Macedonius, but he was astute enough to achieve the deposition of Macedonius and the expulsion of Flavian, who was then replaced by Severus of Antioch. He also engineered the deposition of Elias, the pro-Chalcedonian patriarch of Jerusalem. Soon after the death of Emperor Anastasius in 518, he had to face the repressive measures of Emperor Justin II by whom he was sent into exile, where he died.

Philoxenus wrote commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John, of which only fragments survive. In addition he produced dogmatic treatises, ascetical homilies, and letters. He also supervised a revision of the Syriac NT and composed a treatise (*memra*) *On the Tree of Life*, quoted by Moses bar Kepha.

EDITIONS

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STUDIES

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IX
JACOB OF SARUG (451–521)

Born on the shore of the Euphrates, in Curtam, the son of a priest, and himself a monk from his youth on, Jacob finally became bishop of Batnam in 518/519, known as Sarug in Arabic. In his abundant literary legacy, in particular one finds homilies with extensive biblical commentary, such as the *Discourses on the Passion* in 3,300 verses. Through his Christological doctrine, Jacob positioned himself at equal distance between Nestorianism and Eutychianism, stressing the unity of person in Christ, and the integrality of his two natures, the human and the divine.

(Bibliography: P. Bruns, in *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, S. Döpp and W. Geerlings, eds., Crossroad, New York, N.Y. 2000, 315–316). In particular, note:

TRANSLATIONS

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STUDIES

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X
SYMEON OF MESOPOTAMIA

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Stapelmann, W., "Die Heilige Schrift bei Symeon von Mesopotamien": *ThG(R)* 44 (1954): 26–39.

XI
JOHANNES BAR APHTONAJA (D. 537)

The Archimandrite John, son of Aphtonius, founded several monasteries, in particular the one in Qennesrin, where the young Jacob of Edessa had studied scripture under the direction of Severus Sebokt.

STUDIES

Krüger, P. "Johannes bar Aphtonaja und die syrische Übersetzung seines Kommentars zum Hohen Lied": *OrChr* 50 (1966): 61–71.

XII
DANIEL OF SALAH (FL. MID-6TH C.)

The Monophysite Daniel of Salah in Mesopotamia claims to have authored a *Commentary on the Psalms* in three books in 541–542. His commentaries on Ecclesiastes and on the plagues of Egypt are lost.

EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

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Diettrich, G. *Eine jacobitische Einleitung in den Psalter in Verbindung mit zwei Homilien aus dem grossen Psalmenkommentar des Daniel of Salah zum ersten Mal herausgegeben*. Giessen 1912 (German translation).

XIII
SIMEON OF EDESSA (6TH C.)

Simeon was the administrator of a hospice (*nosocomus xenodochii*) in Edessa. He wrote a *Commentary on Genesis* (British Museum Add. 17, 189) and another one on *Daniel* (British Museum Add. 12, 172).

TRANSLATION AND STUDIES

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Kobert, R., "Zur Daniel-Abhandlung des Simeon von Edessa": *Bib* 63 (1982): 63-78.

XIV
MARTYRIOS-SAHDONA (7TH C.)

A student at Nisibis, then a monk, Martyrios became bishop of Mahoze in Beth Garmai. Considered as a heretic inside the Nestorian church, he was deposed under the Catholikos Maremmeh (640–50) and found refuge in the West. Soon back in Persia, he was once more banished by the Catholikos Iso'jahb III. He spent the rest of his life as a monk in Edessa. He authored ascetical writings and letters.

EDITION AND STUDIES

Bedjan, P., *S. Martyri, qui et Sahdona, quae supersunt, omnia*. Paris 1902.

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61–112.

XV

ISAAC OF NINIVEH (SECOND HALF 7TH C.)

A Nestorian monk and spiritual writer, Isaac of Niniveh was born near the Persian Gulf. Consecrated Bishop of Niniveh between 660–680, he remained only five months in office, before retiring among the hermits of Mount Bet-Huzaye, and later into the monastery of Rabban Shabbour. There he is said to have studied scripture with such intensity that he became blind. He continued dictating to his disciples who surnamed him “Didymus because of his suavity, docility, humility, and sweetness of speech.” He died in old age and was buried at Rabban Shabbour. His writings on monastic life and mystical experiences, in most part yet unpublished, rested on the legacy of Evagrius Ponticus but foremost on John of Apamea. He quotes Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia as exegetes.

EDITIONS AND STUDIES

For the editions, see I. Ortiz de Urbina, 1958, 136.

Hansbury, M. T., “*Evidence of Jewish influence in the writings of Isaac of Nineveh, text and commentary.*” Diss., Temple University, 1987.

Khalife-Hachem, E., “Isaac de Ninive”: *DSp* 7 (1971): 2041–54 (bibliography).

XVI
JACOB OF EDESSA (633–708)

Jacob was born in the proximity of Antioch ca. 633. During his studies, he learned Greek and Hebrew. In Alexandria, he became a pupil of John Philoponos, who initiated him in Aristotelism. After his return to Edessa he became its Monophysite bishop. After four years, he resigned and found refuge with a few disciples in a monastery near Samosata. Soon he joined another monastic community in Eusebona, near Antioch, where for eleven years he taught biblical exegesis based on the Greek text. Then he spent nine other years in the monastery of Teleda (Djebel-Berakat), where he revised parts of the Syriac OT (the Peshitta), until his death in 708 except for four months, when he was obliged to occupy again his see in Edessa.

“Jacob of Edessa is the most outstanding representative of Christian Hellenism in the Syriac speaking world” (Drijvers, 469). Fluent in Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac, Jacob wrote short commentaries on at least eight books of scripture, of which only fragments are known through *catenae*. His attention was directed to the literal content of the passages interpreted, checking it in the Peshitto and in the Hebrew original. His interpretation itself remained historical in the Antiochene style, but with occasionally adding to it some “spiritual theory” (*te’oriya ruhonoyto*) with symbolic and allegorical elements. He knew in particular the commentaries of Eusebius of Emesa. Of his OT scholarship not less than 2860 *scholia* entered the *catena* of Severus in the ninth century (Philips). In his later years, he wrote a *Hexaemeron* in seven Books, covering all scientific areas of his time. He promoted Syriac grammar and orthography, when Arabic started to become the spoken language in the region. He collected canonical documents and prescribed his own rules for liturgy, clergy, and monks. He actively popularized liturgical texts and songs deriving from Severus of Antioch. His *Chronicle*, depending on Eusebius of Caesarea, reached the year 691–692. It was continued by a disciple until 709–710 and became one of the main sources of Micheal the Syrian’s *Chronicum Syriacum*. In addition to philosophical treatises, he reworked the 125 *Homiliae cathedrales* of Severus of Antioch in their Syriac translation of the sixth century. A series of seventeen letters to John of Litharb the Stylite deal mainly with biblical questions, but he could just as well write to the presbyter Abraham a letter entirely dedicated to vineyards and wine.

EDITIONS

CSCO, *Script. Syri*, ser. II, 56.

STUDIES

Bravo, C., "Un Comentario de Jacob de Edesa al Gen 1:1-7 atribuido a S. Efren.":

Bib 31 (1950): 390-401.

Bruns, P.: *LACL* 2nd ed. 1999, 327-29.

Drijvers, H. J. W.: *TRE* 16 (1987): 468-70, bibliography.

Graffin, F.: *DSp* 8 (1974): 33-35, bibliography.

Philips, G., *Scholia on Passages of the OT by Mar Jacob Bishop of Edessa*, London
1864.

XVII
ISO‘BAR NUN (D. 828)

A Nestorian monk, Iso‘bar Nun was ordained Catholikos of Seleucia in 823. He died in 828. The *Book of Questions* of Iso‘bar Nun is transmitted in an abbreviated by a unique manuscript, *Cambr Add.* 2017.

STUDIES

Clarke, E. G., “The Selected Questions of Iso‘bar Nun on the Pentateuch”: *OLZ* 59 (1964): 482ff.

Molenberg, C., *The Interpreter Interpreted: Iso‘bar Nun’s Selected Questions on the OT*. Diss. Groningen 1990.

Rompay, L. van, “Iso‘bar Nun and Iso‘dad of Merw: New data for the study of the interdependence of their exegetical works” *OLoP* 8 (1977): 229–49.

XVIII
ISHO'DAD OF MERW (FL. CA. 850)

Born in northeastern Persia, Bishop of Hedhatha on the Tigris, the Nestorian exegete Isho'dad flourished around the middle of the ninth century. In his works he continues a great reform movement initiated in Persian Christianity during the sixth century. His exegesis joins the allegorism of the Monophysites (Jacobite tradition) with Theodore of Mopsuestia's historical-grammatical method, followed by the Nestorians. Therefore his legacy was well preserved by medieval Monophysites. He composed all his commentaries on OT-NT in the form of questions and answers.

STUDIES

- Diettrich, G., *Išo'dahs Stellung in der Auslegungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (Beih. ATW 6), 1902.
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- Rompay, L. van. "Iso'bar Nun and Iso'dad of Merw: new data for the study of the interdependence of their exegetical works." *OLoP* 8 (1977): 229-49.
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- Voste, J. M. "Mar Išo'dad de Merw sur les Psaumes." *Bib* 25 (1944): 261-96.
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- . "L'introduction de Mar Išo'dad de Merw aux livres de l'AT." *Bib* 26 (1945): 182-202.
- . "La table ethnographique de Den X d'après Mar Išo'dad de Merw." *Mus* 59 (1946): 319-32.

XIX
MOSES BAR KEPHA (D. 903)

A ninth-century versatile Monophysite theologian, Moses bar Kepha wrote commentaries on scripture and the liturgy, as well as on Aristotle. In a commentary on the baptismal service, he gives priority to NT over OT as the normative source for the rite of the consecration of the chrism (W. Strohtmann, "Patriarch Johannes I": *Symposium Syriacum* 1972, OCA 197. Rome 1974, 259).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
PATRISTIC EXEGESIS IN ARMENIAN,
GEORGIAN, COPTIC, AND ETHIOPIAN
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

CONTENTS

	I. Armenian	1449
	II. Georgian	1455
	III. Coptic	1457
i	General Survey	1457
ii	Antony the Hermit	1460
iii	Pachomius	1465
iv	Rufus of Shotep	1466
v	Benjamin of Alexandria	1467
	IV. Ethiopian	1471

I ARMENIAN

Armenia (*Hayastan*) was visited by Christian missionaries coming from Edessa as early as the third century or the late second century, but it was more decisively exposed to the influence of Cappadocian Christianity during the third and the fourth centuries, with the effect that Gregory the Illuminator, educated in Caesarea of Cappadocia and first bishop of Greater Armenia, converted King Tiridat and his court in 314, and with them the whole Armenian nation. Consecrated by the Metropolitan of Caesarea, Gregory instituted a priestly family dynasty, modeled on the political establishment in Armenia and favourable to exchanges with Greek Christianity. Another priestly dynasty, close to Syriac traditions and opposed to Roman influence, rivaled Gregory's hierarchy. In the late fourth century, Nerses I (the Great), like Gregory educated in Caesarea, adopted the ideals of the Caesarean Bishop Basil, in creating a structured Armenian monasticism with welfare institutions of all sorts. Consecrated by the Metropolitan of Caesarea, he favoured one-sidedly Greek influence to the point of provoking a reaction after 373, which led to the foundation of an autocephalic Church headed by a "Catholikos." That hierarchical structure subsisted during the next century, with an increasing number of bishops, throughout the turmoil of invasions and partitions, and beyond the extinction of a national kingship in the late fourth century, when Armenia was integrated in 428 into the Persian empire.

The Armenian alphabet of thirty-six letters, borrowed from Greek and Syriac, was the work of the chorepiscopus Mashtots around 406. An immediate and intensive activity of translators secured Armenian versions of the Bible from the Syriac, influenced by Tatian's *Diatessaron* (Vööbus 1950), and from Greek sources (Alexanian 1992). Translations of Patristic commentaries and secular literature soon followed.

One of Gregory's sons, Aristakes was present at Nicaea in 325. The decisions of Ephesus 431 were quickly ratified by the Armenian Catholikos at a local synod; but Chalcedon 451 was unnoticed because of war conditions, so that the Armenian church found itself positioned in the anti-Chalcedonian camp until it became involved in the inner struggle of Monophysite factions (Hage 1979).

Biblical and patristic scholarship kept its prominent position in Armenian literary activities throughout the centuries. "Armenian biblical manuscripts number well over 2500, including approximately ninety complete

Bibles and 2100 Gospels” (Alexanian 1992, 807). In regard to patristics, Armenian translations are numerous, occasionally priceless. Their alphabetic lists speaks for itself:

Andreas of Creta, *Commentary on John* (translated 1179)

Athanasius of Alexandria, *Life of Antony* (tr. 451); *Orations* (tr. 5th c.)

Basil, *Homilies on the Hexaemeron*, and others; *Rules*, etc. (tr. 5th c.)

Cyril of Alexandria, *Orations, Commentaries, and Letters*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Instructions*.

Dionysius Areopagita (tr. 8th and 12th c.)

Epiphanius: apocryphal writings.

Evagrius, *Centuries*, etc.

Gregory of Naziance, *Homilies*.

Gregory of Nyssa: almost all works.

Gregory Thaumaturgos, *Orations*.

Hesychius, *Commentary on Job*.

Hippolytus of Bostra, *Commentary on Canticle*, etc.

Ignatius of Antioch, *Letters*.

Irenaeus, *Apostolic Predication, Against Heresies*.

John Climacus, *Life, Scale*.

John of Damascus, different writings

John Chrysostom, *Commentary on Genesis, Isaiah, Psalms, Matthew, Luke, John, Job, Pauline Epistles, Homilies*.

Origen: only fragments.

Proclus: about ten homilies.

Severian of Gabala: *Homilies*

All these translations were made from the Greek. From the Syriac, Ephraem, Jacob of Sarug and Philoxenus were also translated into Armenian.

Original work was executed mainly in form of homilies for liturgical feasts, in the fifth century by David Anyat (“the Invincible”), Eznik of Kolb, John Mandakouni, Bishop Eghiehe, Moses of Khoren; in the seventh century, by Moses Siounetsi and the Catholikos Isaac III; in the eighth century by John Odsenietsi and Stephen of Siouni; in the ninth century by the Catholikos Zacharias, who wrote commentaries on the four gospels and on Canticle (lost); and Hamam Areveletsi (“the Oriental”), who commented on Job 38 and Proverbs (lost). In the twelfth century Nerses IV Snorhali (“the Gracious,” 1102–1173), whose biography is summarized by I. Kechichian in the Introduction to Sources Chrétiennes 203, 1973, including one of Nerses’ most beautiful poems, *Jesus, Only Begotten Son of the Father*. In this poem of 960 strophes, followed by a “Memorial” of forty other strophes, Nerses con-

templates many OT and NT figures, from Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc., to the Apostles of Jesus, with historical concreteness and an intense personal awareness: "I laid down its foundations, I built and structured it,/I furnished and decorated it,/I brought together and accumulated./Elevated it and presented it;/I produced as a magnificent homogeneous work,/the various compositions of that fruitful writing,/me, Gregory, a religious and a priest,/the last of the poets/and the least of the doctors." The ninety-five *Prayers*, followed by the *Memorial About the Composition of this Book*, from which come the verses cited above, puts their author in line with the greatest Christian poets of all times. It would be a highly rewarding task to analyze the biblical texture, constantly apparent, of Gregory's literary legacy.

Thanks to the successful diplomacy of Ashod the Great, an Armenia recovering its independence was recognized by the two rival Empires of the Byzantines and the Arabs, deciding about the fate of the Armenian nation. In the remarkable flourishing of cultural and spiritual values that followed, the monastery of Narek on the south shore of Lake Van played a central role with Gregory of Narek, son of Chosroes the Great (ca. 944–1010), as its most eloquent poet. His work includes twenty *Hymns* for religious festivities, a *Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles*, inspired by Gregory of Nyssa, as an allegory of the union between Yahweh and Israel in OT, of the Logos and the church in NT (Thomson 1983); a *Panegyric on the Holy Cross*, in which the paragraphs start with the letters of the Armenian alphabet in their natural order; a superb *Panegyric on Holy Virgin*, close to the Byzantine Acatist hymn, a master piece anticipating Bernard of Clairvaux; *Panegyric on the Apostles and the Seventy-Two Disciples*; finally, *Book of Prayers* (completed in 1002), Gregory's last and greatest work.

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II GEORGIAN

The word "Georgia" is "identical in root with the Persian *Gurgistan*"; its Russian form is *Gruziya*. Pliny (1st c. C.E.) called its inhabitants *Georgi*. "An older name Iberia, which is linked with the Armenian and Parthian designations for the region: the inhabitants were called *Iberi* or *Iveri*, from which the formerly Georgian monastery on Mount Athos, the *Iviron*, derives its name" (Birdsall 1992, 810). The synonymy with "Iberia" = Spain is purely accidental. The oldest documents in Georgian, all Christian, date from the fifth century. Ancient Georgian literature was essentially the work of translators from Greek and Armenian, Syriac and Arabic. Georgia diverged from Armenia in the early seventh century by adopting the Chalcedonian form of orthodoxy. Closely linked with Byzance, it experienced a "golden age" in its literary development from the end of the tenth to the middle of the thirteenth century, thanks in the main to the foundation of the *Iviron* on Mount Athos. Georgian literature served as the primary spiritual nourishment for monks.

The Georgian language is totally unrelated to any language which figures in the account of the early translation of the scriptures in ancient and medieval Christendom. The language is almost *sui generis*, since its only relatives are three languages spoken in the same area, namely Laz, Mingreli, and Suran. These together form the South-Caucasian or K'artvelian languages (from *K'artvelebi*, 'Georgians') (Birdsall, 811).

A complete list of patristic writings surviving in Georgian translations is presented by Garitte 1967, 247–250. Many of these writings are lost in the original Greek.

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III COPTIC

I. GENERAL SURVEY

The script of the Coptic language was borrowed in the first century C.E. from the Greek uncial script, to which seven letters from demotic writing (the final form of ancient Egyptian writing) were added for the purpose of designating certain sounds that were foreign to Greek" (P. Bellet, 310). There are five distinct dialects: *Sahidic*, spoken in Upper Egypt, the general literary language of the classical period; *Bohairic*, at home in Nitria and in the Delta, used in particular in the monastery of St. Macarius, since the tenth century the liturgical idiom of the Coptic Church up to the present day; *Fayumic*, *Akhmimic*, and *Sub-Akhmimic*, respectively predominant in the oasis of El Fayum, in the region of Akhmim, and around Asyut.

For the translation of the Bible into Coptic, "the date cannot be later than the third century C.E. The conversion of St. Antony through the hearing of scripture around 270 C.E. indicated the existence of a Coptic version, since he knew no Greek, and about fifty years later, Pachomius in writing a rule for monks in Egypt, demanded the capacity to read scripture, or to recite it, from postulants" (J. Neville Birdsall 790).

The lack of a speculative dimension in Coptic thinking excluded theoretical initiatives in the reception of scripture. Even the biblical exegesis of Greek patristic authors, from whom Coptic translators adapted some edifying homilies, remained unknown to the Copts. But the Apostolic Fathers with Gnostic works, in particular those discovered at Nag Hammadi, and Manichean literature, were translated. The sub-Akhmimic dialect was the most frequently used for versions of Gnostic and Manichean writings, but it was superseded by Sahidic with the eventual triumph of orthodoxy.

Old Testament and NT apocryphals represented the most popular Christian literature, originally written in Greek, for a Coptic readership. They were followed by acts of martyrs and legends about angels. In the monastic tradition inaugurated by Antony and Pachomius, the Coptic language was the only in use, at least in the case of Antony dictating his letters, or of Pachomius writing his rule. The *Apophtegmata of the Desert Fathers* were originally transmitted in Coptic. Shenoute of Atripe Abbot of the White Monastery in Upper Egypt (died ca. 450) has left an important legacy of letters, sermons, and reglementations in Sahidic. Among his homilies translated into Greek, many unauthentic pieces circulated under the names of

Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Basil, Cyril of Alexandria and Ephraem.

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II. ANTONY THE HERMIT (251-356)

The recent rediscovery of seven authentic *Letters* attributed to Antony the Hermit is one of the many happy improvements in the field of patristic studies during the second half of the twentieth century. As in other cases, for example the *Book of Rules* by Tyconius, (the very oldest preserved essay on Christian hermeneutics), what was needed for presenting Antony's *Letters* in a new light was a thorough reading and translating of known sources. The critical breakthrough for the *Letters* was due to the pioneering research of D. J. Chitty (1901-1971) and the more recent exploration of Samuel Rubenson.

The *Letters* are addressed to fellow monks in the deserts of Egypt, the sixth and longest being explicitly destined to "the dear brethren who are at Arsinoe and in its neighbourhood" (Chitty, 17). Dating most probably from around 340, they are repetitive in style, but with significant variations from letter to letter. They present a cosmo-theology of an Origenian type, applied to the actual experience of monasticism. The *Letters* represent a highly significant initiative for the later development of monastic spirituality.

Numerous thematic parallels between Origen and Antony, difficult to trace as they may be on a strictly literary basis, seem verifiable for J. Roldanus, *Origène*. P. Bright, *The Combat*, concludes her comparative analysis of *Peri Archon* and the *Letters* by noting: "As in Books I and II, the treatment of the demonic powers in Book III of *Peri Archon* finds constant echoes in theme and logic with *Letter 6* of Antony.... Antony's *Letters* are representative of a pastoral, or rather an applied theology, secured by an overarching systematic theology as an unquestioned reference. He is a practitioner within the Origenian schema" (Bright). For Antony, the actualized mystery of salva-

tion is entirely embodied in the ascetic experiment of which he stresses the universal and ecclesial dimensions. In the context of urban Christianity, a similar actualization, possibly inspired by Antony's spirituality, was attempted by Athanasius of Alexandria when composing his essay *On the Incarnation* (Kannengiesser).

Antony made the decision to actualize the ideals of the Gospel in a solitary lifestyle, by listening to the liturgical readings of scripture (Athanasius, *Life of Antony*, 2). In his *Letters*, "scriptural quotations are such as we should expect from one who owed all his knowledge of scripture to the attentive ear—many echoes, a certain number of isolated quotations, but chiefly a few chosen verses or passages repeated again and again, notably Is 53:5, Rom 8:15–18, and 32, and Phil 2:6–11. Quotations from the Gospels are actually rare. There appears no evidence of apocalyptic or other apocryphal writings such as is found in the Letters of Antony's disciple and successor, Ammonas" (Chitty, *The Letters*, x).

In *Letters* 2 and 6, Moses, who received the written Law, is presented as the founder of the "House of Truth" in which the "choir of saints" (the prophets) prays for the coming of the "True Physician." Indeed, Antony's favoured texts for mentioning divine incarnation in this context are Philippians 2 and Isaiah 53. In *Letter* 6, a teaching about "intellectual substances" is linked with Prv 9:9, "Give occasion to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser"; it focuses on the Pauline image of Christ's Body (Col 1:15–18), which prevails more generally in Antony's ecclesiology.

A scriptural index for Antony's *Letters* must be considered as provisional, even hazardous, due to the unavoidable lack of a direct access to most of their original text. The following is a list of references suggested by Chitty's translation of the Coptic. Other translations would show more affinities with biblical writings, as for instance the French translation of *Letter* IV by the Monks of Mont des Cats, Introduction A. Louf, *Saint Antoine. Lettres* (Spiritualité Orientale, 19), Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1976, quoting Rv 21:4. A fair guess would be to perceive Antony's oral or written communication fully permeated by its scriptural foundation.

The prevalence of psalmic quotations or allusions is hardly surprising in Antony's monastic setting. The scarcity of references to Genesis and the Pentateuch in general is more puzzling, given the importance of Creation themes in the *Letters*. The regular recurrence of verses like Prv 9:9 and Is 53:5, not only signals privileged aspects of Antony's thought, but it betrays also something like a structural awareness in the composition of the *Letters*. Among NT references, Pauline literature occupies almost the whole space available, without any mention of other apostolic letter writers, except in I, 4: "The Apostle James testifies to us and says..."

OT

Genesis	12:1	I, 1
	32:24-30	III, 1
1 Samuel	2:25	IV
1 Kings	18:38-44	VI, 7
Psalms	19:7	I, 1
	30:9	V, 3
	34:7	VI, 7
	88(89):8 LXX	III, 4
	101:5	I, 4
	103:10	VII, 2
	116:11	V, 3; VII, 2, 8
	119:130	I, 1
	132:4	V, 1; VI, 3, 10
	141:2	I, 4
Proverbs	8:8	I, 4
	9:9	II, 4; III, 4; VI, 12; VII, 8, 11
	12:18	I, 4
Wisdom	1:14	VI, 7
Isaiah	35:10	VI, 12
	40:1-2	VII, 10
	53:5	II, 2; III, 3; V, 2; VI, 2, 9; VII, 3, 8
Jeremiah	8:22	II, 2; V, 2
	31:34	VII, 4
	51:9	II, 2; V, 2
Ezekiel	12:3 LXX	V, 2 (cp. Jer 46:19)
Joel	2:13	II, 4; VII, 2

NT

Matthew	5:12	VII, 7
	6:19	III, 4
	34	III, 4
	11:12-13	III, 2
	12:45	VI, 5
Luke	2:34	II, 4
	11:26	IV, 5
	12:49	III, 4
	21:19	VII, 7
	34	I, 3
John	4:24	VII, 9

	36	VI, 3
	13:4-5	IV, 11
	4-7	VI, 11
	15:15	II, 4; III, 3; IV
	20	VII, 7
	16:33	VII, 7
Romans	1:1	IV
	21	VII, 4
	3:19	VII, 4
	8:15	II, 4; IV
	17	II, 4; IV
	18	VII, 7
	32	II, 2; III, 3; V, 2; VII, 3
1 Corinthians	1:23-24	VII, 4
	8:20	VII, 2
	9:17	I, 2
	27	I, 3
	10:31	I, 4
	12:21-27	VI, 9
2 Corinthians	1:22	VI, 12
	2:16	II, 4
	5:16	II, 4
	16-17	VII, 1
	8:9	VII, 1, 5
Galatians	1:4	II, 12; VII, 8
	3:27-28	VII, 9
	4:29	VII, 7
Ephesians	3:1	IV
	4:25	V, 2; VI, 9; VII, 3, 8
	8:18	I, 3
Philippians	2:6-11	II, 2
	7	IV, 9; VI, 9
	7-8	VI, 2; VII, 5
	8	III, 3; VII, 5
	14	V, 5
Colossians	1:15-18	VI, 9
	3:5	I, 4
2 Timothy	3:5	V, 3; VII, 6
	12	VII, 7
Hebrews	1:3	VII, 1

	2:14	VII, 5
	4:15	II, 3; VII, 4
	11:39	II, 1
James	1:26	I, 4
	3:5	I, 4

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III. PACHOMIUS (292/293–346)

Born in the city of Snèh (Latopolis), south of Thebes, Pachomius received little education in his rural family. Enrolled by force into the imperial army, he met by chance compassionate Christians. After his release, he opted for a solitary life in Chenoboskeion (Senesît). He dedicated himself to works of charity and was baptized. After 313 he started to create monastic communities, the first of their kind in Christian tradition. He called them the *Koinonia*. His foundation in Tabenessi dates from 323–325. In 330, Pachomius and his monks greeted Athanasius, the newly elected bishop of Alexandria, in Syènè (Assouan), on one of his pastoral visitations. On that occasion Pachomius avoided to be ordained priest. Before he died in 346, he founded nine monasteries for men and two for women, all in the same region of Upper-Egypt between Panopolis in the north and Latopolis in the south. After his death, Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria (385–412) created the only Pachomian monastery outside of the Thebaid, at Canope, east of Alexandria.

In the founding intuition of Pachomius, monasticism was a practical way of life true to the ideals of scripture. The "traditions of the apostles and prophets" were for him the essential norm for establishing such a new institution in the church. "It is in scripture that Pachomius searches for his inspiration, even for his most down-to-earth prescriptions about dress, food, etc." (Guy 1961, 161). "Even if, in the mind of the first disciples, the divine mission and assistance given to Pachomius substantiated the formulation of the Rule, the latter in no way claimed to replace or to reduce the teaching of scripture, it rather 'actualized' it. That intention is obvious in Basil's

Asceticon as shown at once by its many biblical quotations; the same is true for Pachomius and his disciples” (Bacht 1984, 13).

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IV. RUFUS OF SHOTEP (FL. LATE 6TH C.)

Monk and bishop of Shotep, probably under Damian, Patriarch of Alexandria (ca. 569–605), Rufus wrote his homilies in Sahidic Coptic, but he quoted scripture from the Greek. He was familiar with Greek literature, citing his predecessors in Alexandria. The remains of his commentaries on Matthew 1–5 and Lk 1:1–46 cover 126 pages, in which he occasionally quotes the Gospels of Marcion. An exponent of the Alexandrian tradition, Rufus was influenced by Origen; he used some of his exegetical principles and techniques; in his expositions he practised *allegoria* and *typos*.

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VI. BENJAMIN OF ALEXANDRIA (CA. 590–665)

Born ca. 590, Benjamin was a monk at the Canope monastery. He became Patriarch of Alexandria in 626. He succeeded in maintaining his position under Muslim ruling, securing thereby the future of the Coptic Church. He died in 665.

His exegetical legacy, written in Coptic and translated into Arabic, includes a homily on the Wedding of Cana and a set of smaller tractates, not yet edited, answering questions on OT and NT (*fr.*).

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IV ETHIOPIAN

A vast territory south of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, bordered in the west by modern Sudan, in the south by Kenya, was populated five or six centuries before the common era by immigrants coming from southern Arabia. The original culture of Ethiopia was of a Semitic type as was its written language, “the first Semitic language written with vocalization” (Heyer, 576). Christianity penetrated Ethiopia in the early fourth century, thanks to a merchant called Frumentius and his companion Aedesius, both originating from Tyre, Syria (Gaza). After a certain time Frumentius was ordained priest in Alexandria by the recently consecrated bishop Athanasius (ca. 330/335). In the sixth century, a second foundation in Ethiopia was the work of the so-called “Seven Saints,” Monophysite monks exiled from Syria.

Christian literature in Ethiopia started with the translation of the Bible from the LXX into Geez, then the vernacular language, during the fifth and sixth centuries. The NT was translated on the basis of the Lucianic version of Antioch. Later, numerous revisions of the NT in Geez occurred based on Arabic versions provided by the Coptic patriarchate of Alexandria. “The church teaches that its canonical scriptures are eighty-one” (Haile 1999, 354).

Versions of ancient apocryphals, such as the *Book of Enoch*, the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, *IV Esdras*, and the *Physiologos*, often reproduced the oldest form known of the original text. The *Qerillos*, translated from Greek, was a collection of christological documents and citations starting with *On the Right Faith*, by Cyril, hence its title. The collection referred to Ephesus 431 with a distinctively Monophysite flavour. Other apocryphals, with apocalyptic overtones, were *The Testament of Our Lord*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Qalementos* (“Clement”), and others (Velat, 1468).

Monastic sources, such as the *Rule of St. Pachomius*, the *Rule of St. Antony*, the *Apophthegmata*, or the *Filkesyus* (“Philoxenos” of Mabbug, d. 523), were also translated in the older, or Axiumite period, and so was the *Didascalia*. A special devotion for Mary found its expression in hymns and in other poetic forms of a remarkable quality, the oldest of them, the *Weddase Maryam* (“Praises of Mary”), dating from the fourth or the sixth century.

Among translated patristic works figure, in particular, some homilies of John Chrysostom, such as his commentary on Hebrews, on the Gospels of Mark, Luke, John and on the Ten Commandments, all in their Geez versions.

Other patristic works are only partially transmitted in *catenae*. Though declared “heretics” by the “Monophysite” church of Ethiopia, Isaac of Nineveh and Isoḏad of Merw became part of the Ethiopian tradition thanks to their monastic and exegetical writings.

For a description of the current practice of biblical studies in Ethiopia, see the report of a practitioner and insider, G. Haile 1999.

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EPILOGUE

A VOICE FROM THE “ENDS OF THE
EARTH”: THE VENERABLE BEDE’S USE
OF SCRIPTURE

The “end” of the patristic era as an historical phenomenon was marked by extreme fluidity, covering several centuries and many different developments. Patristic voices were silenced by the destruction of the church institutions through which they had delivered their message. Augustine of Hippo, agonizing on his deathbed during the summer of 430 in a city surrounded by the Vandals, serves here as an eloquent example. After his death, Hippo no longer existed on the map of patristic exegesis. By the middle of the eighth century, at the other end of the Mediterranean, John Mansûr, noble citizen of Damascus and author of the Πηγὴ γνώσεως, *The Fount of Knowledge*, died at the age of 104, with his ancient metropolis already transformed into a predominantly Islamic city.

Throughout this long period—the protracted “ending” of the patristic period from 430 until 750—the interpretation of scripture underwent dramatic changes inside the ongoing pastoral and scholastic activities of the Christian communities. The explanation of the Bible had already imposed on generations of Christian intellectuals tremendous challenges, and the relentless response to these challenges given by community leaders resulted in the inculturation of the Bible among the churches established inside the Roman Empire and along its borders. Once such a result had been secured, biblical exegesis tended to retreat from a creative invention of commentaries to an exegesis of the commentaries themselves. In the Greek-speaking world, thematic collections of extracts started circulating for an easier distribution of what was henceforth perceived as the classical message of the Fathers. The Latin West produced its own recapitulative forms of scholarship, imposed by the ravages of barbarian invasions, culminating in the encyclopedic work of Isidore of Seville, who died in 636.

What happened to the legacy of patristic exegesis beyond the cultural and political shifts marking the end of Antiquity? In the recent past a number of fine scholars have faced the complexity of the shifts to be considered, but so far their efforts have been punctual at best, and the results give a blurred overall impression of the earliest reception of patristic exegesis by the first wave of medieval commentators. For this new generation of scholars a first requirement was to gain control over the original languages in which the Bible itself was transmitted since the beginning of the Christian era—Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. Again, a degree of text criticism was indispensable when newly converted barbarian groups acquired different copies of biblical texts. Readings of copies from patristic commentaries was often a source of amazement for these new scholars, as the Fathers had sometimes based their explanations on versions of the Bible unknown to their readers in the early medieval period. Then began the needed confrontation with the thought of the ancient commentators and the cultural background shimmering through

that thought, in other words, their confrontation with a world gone forever in which the early Christian traditions had sacralized their innermost self-affirmations. A fresh inculturation of the Bible in new forms of language and society became the basic imperative, even if, at first glance, the earliest medieval generations of exegetes seemed singularly ill-prepared for such a task.

In the living organism of Christian traditions, the same challenge resurfaces each time when a new generation of believers finds itself alienated from its own religious past, or when Christians attempt to redefine themselves and to deliver their spiritual message in a new culture. From the northernmost territories of the newly converted Anglo-Saxon tribes, the eighth century English monk, Bede invites us to a modest case-study set in this winding road marked by new beginnings in the history of Christian hermeneutics.

The Venerable Bede and the Reception of Patristic Exegesis

At the age of seven, Bede (672–735) entered a Northumbrian community of monks, established in the region of Durham, at Wearmouth and Jarrow, hardly two miles away from Hadrian's Wall. Until his death at the age of 63, he never left that remote spot but he developed within its comparative isolation, the universal vision of a great scholar and the fervent enthusiasm of a spiritual teacher. For almost half a century, as he states about himself at the end of his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, "amid the observance of the discipline of the Rule and the daily task of singing in the church, it has always been my delight to learn or to teach or to write" (V, 24; transl. B. Ward, *The Venerable Bede*, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1998, 2). His written legacy (PL 90–95) provided an important foundation for the interpretation of the Bible in the Latin Middle Ages by transmitting the riches of spiritual exegesis as taught by the third century Alexandrian Origen and by Pope Gregory the Great, just a few generations before the time of Bede. Completely neglected by the historians of Christian exegesis during the first half of the twentieth century because of their bias against allegorism, the exegetical works of Bede made a spectacular entry into the *Corpus Christianorum* from 1950 on, thanks to the editorial achievement of the Benedictine Daniel Hurst.

In their chronological order, over twenty of Bede's exegetical writings deserve here a special mention:

Ca. 709 *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum*: CCL 121, M. L. W. Laistner, 1983 = 1939; English transl. L. T. Martin, Kalamazoo, 1989. The *Expositio* was

completed by a list of *Nomina regionum atque locorum de Actibus Apostolorum*: CCL 121, M. L. W. Laistner 1983; a toponymy inspired by Jerome, based on Pliny, *Natural History*, Orosius, *History*, and Isidore, *Etymologies*.

Between 709 and 715 *Expositio evangelii Lucae*: CCL 120, D. Hurst, 1950. *In Epistolas evangelii Lucae*: CCL 120, D. Hurst, 1950. *In Epistolas septem catholicas*: CCL 121, D. Hurst, 1983.

Between 710 and 716 *Apocalypsin*: PL 93, 129–206.

Ca. 716 *In primam partem Samuhelis libri IV*: CCL 119, D. Hurst 1962. *De mansionibus filiorum Israel*.

720 *In Genesim*.

720–725 *De tabernaculo*: CCL 119A, D. Hurst, 1959. *De eo quod ait Isaias 'Et claudentur'*.

720–730 *In Tobiam, In Proverbia Salomonis, and In Cantica Cantorum*: CCL 119B, D. Hurst, 1983.

Ca. 725 *In Regum librum XXX Quaestiones*: CCL 119, D. Hurst, 1962.

725 *De temporum ratione*, in which Bede reworks an earlier essay *De temporibus*: CCL 123B, C. W. Jones, 1977.

725–730 *Expositio evangelii Marci*: CCL 120, D. Hurst, 1950.

725–731 *In Ezram et Neemiam*.

729–731 *De templo*: CCL 119A, D. Hurst, 1959.

Before 731 *Expositio in canticum Habacuc prophetae*: CCL 119B, J. E. Hudson, 1983.

730–735 *Homeliarum evangelii libri II*, including fifty homilies of Bede, selected and edited by himself: CCL 122, D. Hurst, 1955.

After 731 *Retractationes in Acta*: CCL 121, M. L. W. Laistner, 1983 = 1939.

734, Nov 5, *Letter to Egbert of York*

At a very early stage of his teaching career, Bede wrote a number of didactic essays for student monks, such as a treatise *De orthographia* (CCL 123A, C. W. Jones, 1975 = 1943), and so he began as a writer, where Cassiodorus had ended, with “a notebook, with words grouped under letters of the alphabet, with brief warnings about difficulties in spelling, a few grammatical rules about certain forms, sometimes alternative meanings” (B. Ward, *The Venerable*, 22); a *De arte metrica*, a *De natura rerum*, and a *De schematibus et tropis*, with examples of the forms of speech most often used in scripture and Christian poetry.

Bede's own familiarity with classical Latin enabled him to express himself in a serene and communicative prose, characterized by a firm grasp of syntax. The words of the bridegroom in Canticum could have been spoken by Bede himself: “I would always secure a limpid appearance for my conversation and

a clear and graceful voice for what I have to say”, *faciem meae conversationis limpidam ac vocem meae locutionis puram semper offeram et gratam*.

The poetic meter of Bede’s *De die iudicii*, *On the Day of Judgment*, translated into Old English, was a source of inspiration for the later Carolingian poets. Other hymns and prayers versified by Bede were edited by J. Fraipont in CCL 122 (1955) 405–451; these paraphrases of biblical psalms continued a tradition inaugurated by Paulinus of Nola in the fourth century.

Commentary on Revelation (PL 93, 131–134)

The *Commentary on Revelation* begins with a summary of Tyconius’ *Book of Rules* as quoted in Augustine’s *De doctrina christiana*. The *Book of Rules* had already been summarized by Augustine in his *De doctrina christiana*, but Bede’s summary, unlike Augustine’s, includes appropriate references to the Book of Revelation and thus enriches the presentation of almost all the seven Rules of Tyconius. In a sober paraphrase Bede rewrites the whole sacred text, verse by verse, occasionally calling on nine patristic authorities enumerated here in their chronological order:

Ignatius of Antioch 187B; Cyprian 158B; Tyconius 145D, 155A, 156A, 166C, 174B, 178A, 181D, 183C, 191A and 194A; Dionysius of Alexandria 205A, Jerome 154C, 176C; Augustine 144A, 173D, 191D; Arator 200A; Gregory the Great 143A, 146B, 176D; Fortunatus 138A. In addition, Bede calls on an “old saying” *vetus dictum* (150A): “Consider how the earth is divided in four parts, for stating that faith prevails everywhere”, *Respice distinctis quadratum partibus orbem, ut regnum fidei cuncta tenere probes* (150A). This focus on the “universality” of the church will be a constant refrain in Bede’s commentaries of scripture.

Bede’s remarks in the *Commentary on Revelation* are well described by Benedicta Ward: “Bede was not fanciful at the expense of teaching; he used allegory only as a servant of his main purpose of edification” (*The Venerable*, 54).

Commentary on Acts

Bede’s *Commentary on Acts*, possibly his earliest exegetical work, is also the first extensive explanation of Acts written by a Latin author. As Greek models like the *Homilies on Acts* by John Chrysostom were unknown to him, the Northumbrian monk could freely invest his own genuine resources in this interpretive task. Indeed throughout *On Acts* he displays a variety

of methods and a broad range of information, which may well reflect the more personal aspects of his attitude towards scripture. An instance of an original initiative running throughout the Commentary highlights the way in which Bede was applying the principle of intertextuality which he had inherited from the patristic tradition. He constantly refers the verses of Acts to the text of the Gospels as the only key capable of opening the correct understanding of Luke's historical narrative. Thus he starts by clarifying the meaning of "all the things which Jesus did" in Acts 1:1 by quoting John 20:30 about Jesus' "signs which are not written." The same recourse to the Gospels occurs ten other times in Bede's remarks on the twenty-six verses of Acts 1, and this continues to be prevalent all through the following chapters of the Commentary. When Bede cites Ambrose on the famous vision of Peter in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10), he mentions "those living things shown in the evangelical vessel" (10:16A; Martin, 99), namely the vessel of Acts 10:11, which he calls "evangelical" precisely in calling on them in the light of Mt 28:19. Indeed the "evangelical" focus of Bede's intertextual reading of Acts gives a valuable introduction to his self-invented reception of the biblical story "according to the faith of the Gospels" (on Acts 1:13b).

The historical narrative of Acts is treated by Bede in a sound and down-to-earth paraphrase, allowing here and there an amplification reflecting the author's geographical interests (on Acts 1:12b, "according to the historical sense"; Martin 14), or to arithmology (on Acts 1:15; 2:1; 4:22), or again asking for historical remarks concerning ancient Rome (on Acts 2:5). Once at least, in the explanation of Acts 20:7–8, the interpreter deliberately chooses to allegorize: "We can speak allegorically here, for the upper room is the loftiness of spiritual gifts; night is the obscurity of the scriptures; the abundance of lamps is the explanation of the more enigmatic sayings; the Lord's day is the remembrance of either the Lord's resurrection or our own" (Martin, 151). In this case allegorism serves to articulate a spiritual lesson fitting for Bede's contemporaries, arising out of Luke's anecdote concerning the young Eutychus, sitting at the window and overcome by sleep, falling down from the third floor. The same procedure is applied in the comment on Acts 27:33 where Bede notices "a most beautiful allegorical sense" (Martin, 181) with a call for the practice of virtues, similar to the one added to the comment on Acts 20:9–10.

The concern about the universal relevance of Acts is another feature of Bede's originality in his interpretation of Acts. From the start he explains that the addressee is called Theophilus, because it means "lover of God, or beloved of God", as Jerome already had observed in *De nominibus Hebraeorum* (CCL 72, 149, 516). This prompts Bede's comment: "Therefore, anyone who is a

lover of God may believe that this (work) was written for him” (Martin 9). In Acts 1:8, he subsumes a prophecy of the “Kingdom of God” to be spread “finally throughout the farthest borders of the world” (Martin, 12). Commenting on Acts 2:3a (the “tongues of fire” at Pentecost), he concludes “that the holy church, when it had spread to the ends of the earth, was to speak in the languages of all nations” (Martin, 29); “every soul” in Acts 3:23 becomes in Bede’s comment “all the nations” (Martin, 45). In Acts 8:27b, “the queen of the South came from the end of the earth” (Martin, 82), just as Bede positions himself on another “end” of the earth.

In Acts 10:7, the two servants and the soldier sent by Cornelius to Peter personify in Bede’s view “the gentile world, which was to believe in the faith of the apostles” and which “had subjugated Europe, Asia and Africa” (Martin, 96). In Acts 10:11b, “the four corners by which the linen sheet hangs down designate the four regions of the world to which the church extends” (Martin, 97). Commenting on Acts 11:18, Bede insists that “the splendour of faith first sprang to life in the cold heart of the gentile world” (Martin, 108). In Acts 14:8, he sees the lame Lycaonian imploring Peter and John “cured in the midst of the new joy of the converted gentile world” (Martin, 125). Thus Bede’s constant awareness of being engaged in a world-wide process of evangelization finds a first expression in his *Commentary on Acts* before becoming increasingly vocal in his later writings.

Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles

The *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles* is one of the earliest commentaries put into writing by Bede. By their diversity and their well focused content Bede’s explanations on the seven Catholic Epistles may well reflect the normal range of his teaching, versatile to a certain degree, but always kept in a practical adjustment to his immediate readership. First of all, the seven commentaries witness to the author’s intimate familiarity with scripture. A massive quoting of biblical references characterizes the texture of the seven essays, *On James*, *First Peter*, *Second Peter*, *First John*, *Second John*, *Third John*, and *On Jude*, in a stark contrast to the very few patristic sources mentioned by their author. The Greek and Latin languages are treated as belonging to the distant past and obviously unknown by Bede’s audience. They need special and detailed explanations (*On James* 3: 15; Hurst, 44–45; 5: 19–20, “the ambiguity of the Greek”, Hurst, 64). The monastic setting of the commentary is referred to through Ps. 27 (26):1, “that salvation is certainly of which we sing, ‘the Lord is my light and my salvation’” (*On James* 4:8; Hurst, 51), or by a reminder on “the frequent sweetness of psalm-singing” capable of

driving "away the harmful disease of sadness" (*On James* 5:13; Hurst, 61).

Just as in the *Commentary on Acts*, the reference to the Gospels themselves as a hermeneutic key is crucial in *On 1 Peter* (1, 15, 23; 2, 25; 3, 13, 14, 18), the longest of the seven exegetical essays, Bede does not produce in it any allegories of his own, not even in the amplified paraphrase of "living stones" (1 Peter 2:5; Hurst, 82–85). With a constant paraphrasing of biblical texts in support of his own statements, he closely follows the composition of the epistle—"Up to this point blessed Paul has been instructing the church in general... From this point on he skillfully urges..." (1 Peter 2:11; Hurst, 89). The straight logic of Bede's statements keeps the flavour of a peaceful conversation among monastic partners in consensual unanimity. If his biblical culture derives from the Fathers, Bede's piety places him already inside the medieval confines of a monastic world.

On 2 Peter starts by claiming that the apostle "wrote that letter (1 Peter) for beginners, this one (2 Peter) for the more perfect" (on 1:2; Hurst 124). On the matter of the authenticity of 2 Peter, Bede states that "if there are certain persons who say that this letter was not written by the blessed apostle Peter", such an opinion is to be rejected "according to the faith of the Gospels" (on 1:18; Hurst, 131), consistently using the Gospel references as his interpretative key. Hence his comments on the "thousand years" included in the eschatology of 2 Peter remain edifying and realistic, without any trace of symbolism (on 3:7–13; Hurst 189–192), and he ends them by stressing once more the universality of the sacred message: "What the same Paul wrote particularly to certain churches he is proven to have written generally to all the churches which are throughout the world and which make up the one catholic church" (on 3:15; Hurst, 153).

On 1 John presents a short dissertation based on a continuous paraphrase of 1 John, a sort of companion text to Augustine's exegesis of 1 John which Bede quotes at least forty times, next to a few lines borrowed here and there from Gregory the Great. The abundance of explicit citations, produced as such by the author with a didactic purpose is unusual in Bede's exegetical writings. His commentary *On 2 John* is a learned and concise piece of anti-heretical polemics, entirely resting on patristic information concerning Papias, Marcion and Cerinthus. *On 3 John*, exercises Bede's historical wit about the Gaius to whom the epistle was addressed, and the "proud and arrogant heresiarch" Diotrefes mentioned in verse 9. The paraphrase remains sober, without a trace of spiritual exegesis, and with only one patristic citation calling on Gregory the Great.

The comments on Jude are more elaborate, with some anti-Arian and anti-Pelagian overtones. Bede's comments are clearly presented in his own right,

without any call on predecessors. They are rich of biblical substance and they highlight the literal sense of Jude's epistle according to the interpreter's historical and theological focus.

Homilies on the Gospels

A Preface by Benedicta Ward and an Introduction by Lawrence T. Martin present the English translation of the *Homilies on the Gospels* by L. T. Martin and D. Hurst as specially opportune today because of "a precipitous decline in knowledge of Latin even among the clergy and religious" (xxiii). The translation reads the more easily as style and vocabulary in the homilies seem to have been deliberately kept by Bede on a level of crystal clear simplicity. Fifty short compositions, all written by Bede himself, follow the sequence of seasons and feasts all through the liturgical calendar of the year. Each of them explains a passage from the Gospels, supposedly read on given days. Despite an occasional direct address to the "brotherhood" of a monastic audience and the regular doxologies by which they are closed, one may doubt that these homilies were actually preached as we read them. Martin notes "a striking lack of overlap between Gregory (the Great)'s forty *Homilies on the Gospels* and Bede's fifty *Homilies*"; and he concludes "that Bede perhaps deliberately chose to compose his *Homilies* only on texts that Gregory had not treated" (xvi). Thus the Northumbrian teacher would not only have adopted the homiletic paradigm of his preferred patristic role model, he would also have re-enacted Gregory's ministry as a preacher in producing a complementary series of homilies.

In such a perspective, Bede's use of scripture as a homilist becomes indicative of his basic attitude toward the patristic legacy. As Martin well observes, "Bede does not generally use direct quotations from the Fathers in his *Homilies on the Gospels*" (xvii); "he does not use the Fathers primarily as authorities to strengthen his own position in matters of interpretation" (xxii). Familiar as he is with patristic sources, Bede contents himself with deriving from them very freely chosen images and "motifs to enrich and ornament his own words" (xxii). The legacy of the Fathers contributes to the literary aesthetics of the learned monk, the substance of their teaching having become like a second nature for him; but the unique focus of his preaching in these *Homilies of the Gospels* are the Gospels themselves, which he quotes and paraphrases on his own initiative. And here Bede has a remarkable reaction: the more his quoting of the Gospels is directly applied to the daily experience of his supposed monastic audience, the more does he call on technical terms of patristic hermeneutics, with an insistence absent in his other exegetical

writings. It looks as if the codified structure of exegesis fixed since the fourth century secured for the eighth century monk, out of the cultural frame of Antiquity, a solid ground for his own reading of the Gospels.

In Homily I, 3, Bede distinguished between “a more profound level in relation to the sacraments of the Lord’s incarnation” (25) and “the historical sense” (26); in I, 7 he checks “the whole course of the Old Testament (*veteris instrumenti*)” (65) about angels; “mystically however”, on another level of reading, he states his findings; in I, 8, “we are taught typologically” (73); in I, 9, after the apocryphal narrative concerning the death of the apostle John, one needs to shift again, with the words “However mystically speaking...” (90), from one level of reading to another. The double-levelled reading is clearly required in I, 10, “figuratively speaking” and “according to the literal sense” (97ff.); in I, 11, with “typologically speaking” (108); and in I, 13, again with “figuratively speaking” (131). In I, 14, which is a more elaborate homily on the miracle of Cana, Bede states that “figural meanings regarding heavenly sacraments aside, even according to the literal sense this (miracle) confirms the faith of right believers” (134), and he goes on, “typologically speaking”, with the story’s “mystical meaning” in view (136), or by “looking at the literal sense” (142). He opens Homily I, 16 with a hermeneutical ruling which announces the medieval practice of centuries to come: “The sublimity of divine scripture is so great and of such a sort that not only words reported as having been said by holy people or by our Lord himself are full of spiritual mysteries, but so are even the circumstantial details which seem to be set down simply” (156). In I, 17 and 23, the “mystical meaning” (167, 222) is again pointed out; in I, 23, “the Lord also shows us something typologically” (226) by operating a miracle on the Sabbath, and “mystically this instructs us...” (227). In I, 24, the white garments of the transfigured Lord “represent typologically the church of his saints” (238), and in I, 25, when Jesus writes with his finger on the ground, “typologically this teaches us” (247) something else, which one may only perceive “figuratively speaking” (248).

It would be awkward to enumerate the constant repetition of that same distinction between the literal and the spiritual approach to the Gospels as it runs uninterruptedly through the second set of twenty-five *Homilies* in the edition of L. T. Martin and D. Hurst. However a few remarks made by Bede in order to render his spiritual approach more appealing may highlight his proper reception of patristic hermeneutics: The monastic teacher of Northumbria seems to understand as “typological” the symbolic meaning of a biblical person or object in so far as it allows a “mystical” reception of that person or object in the actual awareness of his audience. First Bede claims: “Those who read or listen to the signs and miracles of our Lord and Saviour

properly do not receive them in such a way that they pay attention to what in them produces outward astonishment, but instead they consider what they themselves ought to be doing inwardly” (13). In other words, he calls for the inner space of a subjectivity modeled and motivated by scripture. His “typological” reading of the Gospels is directly connected with that “mystical” space proper to the understanding of believers by which the “mystical sense” can be assimilated to the actual life experience. Typology no longer resonates primarily with its christo-ecclesiological focus of patristic times. Actually, this focus always being presupposed by Bede, it directly pours its “mystical” meaning into the actual spirituality of the monastic community.

In II, 12, Bede starts by discussing “the old explanation of the Fathers” (108) concerning questions of the apostles unanswered by God, but in examining the lack of a spiritual reception by the disciples of what Jesus announced to them, he adds: “These words of the Lord are mystical, and, as he himself bore witness, spoken as parables, but the disciples to whom they were spoken were still so fleshly-minded that they did not grasp their deeper meaning. Not only did they not understand the hidden mysteries of his words, but they did not even understand their own ignorance...; they were not yet able to grasp the mysteries underlying his words” (114). Now the “words of the Lord are mystical”, because “we understand all these things spiritually” (II, 25; 255). Now, “according to the typological understanding, bread signifies love” (II, 14; 129); “the symbolic event agrees point by point with its fulfillment” (II, 15; 145); the Book of Psalms displays “so many recitations of hidden spiritual mysteries” (II, 16; 156), and “the type and figure of the feast of the law is in agreement with our festivity” (II, 17; 171); for, “if we understand all these things spiritually, they denote true sincerity” (II, 25; 255). The *Homilies on the Gospels* are entirely pervaded by Bede’s eagerness to educate and confirm the self-understanding of the “brotherhood” as gifted, like “the venerable father Tobit... with mystical voice” (II, 16; 155), and “stirred up to a mystical understanding” (II, 5; 46), thanks to which all “types” are now perceived with “mystical meaning” (II, 20; 204) or “mystically” (208).

The Commentary on the Song of Songs

The imposing commentary *In Cantica canticorum* fills six Books (CCL 119B, 167–375) with a literary investment and a richness of thought which was to be highly appreciated by generations of medieval scholars. Here Bede takes his place beside Origen of Alexandria and Gregory the Great, the best patristic commentators of the Song of Songs, and for modern readers he

already announces the most original interpreter of that book in the middle ages, Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153).

A detailed study of Bede's Commentary on Canticles would exceed the limits of the present Epilogue. But, briefly noting the most obvious features of its content, a clear picture should emerge showing how the patristic legacy framed and inspired the Northumbrian commentator's mind in this task. In the light of the preceding analysis of others of his exegetical writings, Bede's independent and consistent creativity as an interpreter should also be confirmed.

The Canticle is a work in which "Solomon, the most wise among kings, described the mysteries of Christ and the church, which means of the eternal king and his city, under the figure of a bridegroom and his bride" (190, 1–3). Bede's introductory sentence announces the symbolic interpretation popularized by Origen and continuously repeated by Christian interpreters throughout the patristic period. By taking over the traditional ideas and images linked with that interpretation, the eighth century commentator at once pays a tribute to his predecessors and at the same time expresses his own understanding of their legacy. Whereas it is possible that Bede was primarily concerned with his own way of conforming to the patristic canon of interpretation, a contemporary critic would incline to focus on the traces of Bede's originality in that submission to the tradition. At least, one must note one striking initiative which conditions his whole writing on Canticle from the very start: he explicitly bases his statements on biblical intertextuality, with quotations from scripture apparent on all the pages of his text, but he very rarely mentions patristic authorities (Apponius: 223, 470; 285, 534. Jerome: 316, 48). Rather, he identifies with such authorities, not by plagiarizing them, but by creating a literary expression of his own thought under the mantle of their past discourse. Far from simply making collections of the patristic sources as did contemporary authors of florilegia, Bede brings to new life the intuitions of Origen or the lyrical effusion of Gregory the Great by letting these authorities resonate through his own prose. The mirror effect resulting from such a double-levelled composition demonstrates the symbolic value not only of figures and events reported from Canticle, but of Bede's understanding of himself as an exegete: by their implicit presence in speaking with his voice, these former interpreters gave warrant to his own task as a teacher. His own diction was in his view only the living symbol of a substantial message delivered by the "holy doctors" of the past, as he calls them.

Bede's Commentary on Canticle is written for a "learned readership" (*studioso lectori*, 237, 254). Verse by verse each element of the biblical poem

requires a continuous explanation, claiming to discern a semantic continuity from one verse to another, or coordinating the alleged meaning of chosen elements in these verses with images and phrases found in neighbouring verses. Thus the interpreter's thematic agenda decides the symbolic content to be attributed to each line of *Canticle* according to the typology Christ-church. The notion of "Christ" seems the less problematic for Bede: a central focus in his symbolic interpretation, it hardly attracts any polemical apologetics against heretics or unbelievers (*Fotiniani* and *Manichei* are mentioned 337, 820), whereas the notion of "church" requires a fundamental clarification. Using the term in its etymological significance as the "community of those who are called" by God to become part of his chosen people, Bede starts by insisting that it includes the synagogue of biblical times as well as Christian people (191, 4–25). In short, "church" means the spiritual identity of any believer within the Judeo-Christian tradition (as in Augustine, *City of God* Book XII), though the commentary privileges the "souls reborn in Christ" (193, 119f.), considered together or individually. As we already noticed in other essays of Bede's, of that mystical reality he emphasizes in particular, the "catholicity", which means its actual extension in the known world of his day. Conscious as he was of living on a small island on the edge of the vast ocean which marks the western "end" of the world ("because Britain lies almost under the North Pole", *prope sub ipso septentrionali vertice iacet: Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. B. Colgate and R. A. B. Mynors, Oxford 1969, 16–17), he must have perceived his belonging to a world-wide community of believers as a special privilege, a practical sign of the salvation granted by Christ. Church Fathers like Ambrose and John Chrysostom had emphasized the baptismal entry into global salvation-history as a personal experience of God's universal gift of redemption; Bede, whose special interest for geography is well known, transferred that apologetical theme into *spatial* universality.

Bede's insistence on the inner cohesion of the universal church is very clear: the Bridegroom, in the figure of Christ, says in *Canticle*: "for our vineyard blossomed, once again calling his many vineyards one vineyard, as he wanted the many churches in the world to be for him one church", *nam vinea nostra floruit (Ct 2:11), ita enim multas vineas unam appellat vineam sicut per orbem ecclesias unam sibi ecclesiam voluit* (226, 297ff.). Bede combines universality with unity in the *sancta universalis ecclesia* (227, 636), based on the Pauline metaphor of the church as the Body of Christ (Col 1:18), and, in reference to baptism and eucharist (228, 654–668), he concludes that doctrinal unity in the church flows from the church's intrinsic unity

due to the gift of the Holy Spirit (268, 931–935), that church being called in *Canticle* “spouse, or sister, or beloved, or in similar fashion in order to signify that she remains one and undivided throughout the world”, *ob id vero sponsa vel soror vel amica vel aliquid huiusmodi vocatur ut una esse nec divisa quamvis longe lateque per orbem difusa signetur* (297, 993–996). Even with a part of it already in heaven, there exists only “one and the same church of Christ”, *una eademque ecclesia Christi* (302, 126). Finally Bede stresses a last characteristic in his notion of the universal church: it is the church of the gentiles, *de gentibus ecclesia* (230, 749), of which the Lord takes no less care than of the church assembled by the Jews of old (234, 151f.).

With the apostles, whom he calls “the very first doctors of the church”, *ipsi primi doctores ecclesiae, id est apostoli* (330, 549), *primi ecclesiae doctores, id est apostoli duodecim* (335, 740f.), and among whom Paul is declared *praedicator egregius*, “outstanding preacher” (348, 423), Bede mentions no other teaching authority of an ecclesiastical rank, nor does he refer in his *Commentary on Canticle* a single time to any hierarchical power inside the church, except in three passages where he comments on the “guardians of the walls” in Ct 3:7: “the guardians of the walls are in a similar way the supreme doctors, as those who are in charge of governing and defending the church”, *custodes murorum idem summi doctores sunt cum eos quoque qui ecclesiam gubernare ac munire sufficiant instruere satagunt* (282, 417ff.; see also 350, 496–506 and 353, 613–619). Indeed the *doctores sancti* (279, 316; 282, 401; 331, 595; 336, 768), the *praedicatores* (210, 778; 244, 45; 287, 614; 288, 659), the *ecclesiae doctores* (202, 491; 334, 708), or simply *doctores* (in about thirty other occurrences), without any clerical attributions, but masters of spiritual progress and dispensers of sacramental benefits, are constantly on Bede's mind when projecting his vision of the church over his *Commentary on Canticle*. It leads him to distinguish between simple believers and others whom he calls “perfect” (219, 320ff.; compare 223, 484f.), but contrary to Origen he never applied that distinction to his biblical hermeneutics by suggesting that the deeper meaning of scripture is only available to the more advanced.

Thus Bede succeeded in delivering a message that spoke to his contemporaries and to future generations. His reception of the patristic legacy concerning the literal and the spiritual meaning of scripture could not have functioned in a simpler way. He dispenses from any critical elaboration on the senses of scripture; he does not differentiate between specific schools of thought concerning biblical interpretation. His preconceived symbolic approach to the Song of Songs enables him to reach directly beneath the

“surface of the letter”—“For the meaning of this verse beneath the surface of the letter is as following”, *Et quidem huius versiculi iuxta superficiem litterae hic sensus est* (206, 613)—and to search for the allegorical significance,—“as we catch only little from the surface of the letter, let us turn our inquiry right now to the allegorical meaning”—*quia de superficie litterae pauca perstrinximus iam nunc ad exinterandus allegoriae sensus stilum vertamus* (221, 405). What Bede is looking for is the “type” signified by the literal content of the verse, meaning by “type” the symbolic prefiguration in Canticum of something relevant for Christian life. “For by way of a type” (*typice autem*, 206, 619) ‘wine’ stays for “the grace of the Holy Spirit” because of what Jesus says of the old and new vessels in Mt 9:17 (258, 567–259, 570); “myrrh” refers to the bitter wine handed to the crucified Jesus according to Mk 15:13 (206, 619) or it symbolizes Christian asceticism (267, 885); Mary of Magdala is a type of the church (259, 592–596; 265, 810; also 285, 565), and so is Esebon, if one accepts Jerome’s etymology (332, 269). The aromatic (*turis...?*) is another type of the virtuous life whose scent fills the realm of the church (262, 696). The pool of Probatica refers *typice* to Christian baptism (322, 265). As always, “types” are identified by Bede as specific objects or persons mentioned in Canticum.

Often these types are authorized by a reference to the Gospels. The network of “typical” realities is woven into the bare *littera* of the biblical poem, the intricate texture of the spiritual interpretation being consistently threaded from one line to the other, thanks to a set of alternating phrases like *ac si patenter diceret*, “as if he would openly say” (191, 47); *quod est aperte dicere*, “which openly states” (ten times); *ac si aperte dicat*, “as if he openly said” (217, 235; 224, 524); or *ac si patenter dicat* (217, 266; 333, 673; 360, 39); *hoc est enim aperte dicere*, “for this openly states” (242, 256); *ac si dicat*, “like saying” (274, 127). By their variety and their frequency such phrases in Bede’s explanation create the effect of a delicate lacework marking the texture of his symbolic analysis.

That delicate network is constantly signalled by a discreet *id est*, “which means” (almost a hundred times). Nothing in Canticum escapes the strict control of Bede’s *id est*, whereby the interpreter never misses the needed attention required by the literal disposition of the text. Occasionally he observes: *Mirandus sane ordo verborum*, “The sequence of words is quite amazing” (207, 661), or he furnishes historical and geographical information whenever appropriate. But because in his view the whole story of Canticum is metaphorical, it must be “assimilated”, *assimilatur* (261, 675), to the very experience of faith in the present reality of the church.

Expositio in Lucae evangelium

A great deal more needs to be analyzed in other exegetical writings of Bede, should one claim to give a full report on his reception of the patristic legacy in regard to biblical hermeneutics. What follows is only by way of a few complementary notes.

The *Expositio in Lucae evangelium* presents another facet of Bede's learned dedication to the exegesis of the Fathers. A continuous commentary on Luke's Gospel, it has the appearance of a mosaic, the author's own commentary yielding space to extended patristic quotations whose beginnings and ends are signalled in the margins by initials such as "A...M" for Ambrose of Milan, "A...V" for Augustine, "G...R" for Gregory the Great, "H...R" for Jerome (Hieronymus). Composed very early in Bede's teaching career (709–715 according to D. Hurst), this Commentary on Luke takes on the shape of a deliberately didactic piece of literature. It would be interesting to examine more closely the choices which decided the quoted extracts, among which those borrowed from Gregory the Great are by far the most extensive.

Expositio in Marci evangelium

As the Commentary on the Gospel of Mark displays the identical disposition of the text, with inserted citations signalled in the margins, one may wonder if this Commentary which dates from 725–730 and the Commentary on Luke, at least two decades older, have not been edited by Bede himself with a same pattern in mind. In that case Bede's decision would have been to give a literary form strictly homogeneous to his commentaries on the Gospels. Should both commentaries have received the mosaic shape independently from each other, presumably the reason would have something to do with a pattern imposed on him by patristic authorities themselves. As such a pattern is absent from his other exegetical essays, *On Tobit*, *On Proverbs*, *On the Prayer of Habacuc*, and *On Canticle*, it may be argued that, in Bede's mind, this form was proper to interpretations of the Gospels.

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A few additional remarks to the bibliography:

M. Bévenot dated the Leningrad Bede from 731–746, whereas D. H. Wright, more cautiously, opted for 746. B. Clausi stated that allegory was for Bede the biblical trope *par excellence*. P. Kitson observed that Bede relied mainly on Jerome’s *In Esaiam* 54:11–14, but on Epiphanius when writing in *Explanatio Apocalypsis* 21 on the jewels which built up the foundation of the Holy City. R. Ray (1982) emphasized how Bede’s commentaries help to appreciate his *History of the English Nation*; Ray (1987) concluded that in his biblical commentaries Bede had access to Cicero’s *De inventione*. M. Simonetti noticed that in his *Commentary on 1 Kings* Bede was rather independent of Gregory the Great, hence one reaches a more distinctive picture of Bede’s own exegetical procedures, giving real value to historical facts and stressing their christological relevance. According to Steinhäuser, Bede, in PL 93, 134A, speaks about his own commentary on the Apocalypse, not about Tyconius. At least, Weiss states that Ps.-Salonius adapted Bede for schools, possibly in Germany after 800.

* * *

In sum, Bede, “the greatest scholar of his age and the finest theologian between the early Church and the Carolingian age” (Ward, 2001, 57) presents a clear picture of the process by which the legacy of patristic hermeneutics would shift over into the monastic culture of the Middle Ages. In a Latin style of his own, Bede succeeded in keeping alive the biblical vision of the Fathers in the burgeoning Christianity of his homeland. He assimilated their notion of salvation in his own geographical terms, and he measured their distance from him in the past by a careful re-counting of time, only to find

himself, lost as he was in the woods of Northumbria, and his contemporaries in the British Isles included in the universal unity of the church. As a learned interpreter of the Bible, Bede applied the principles of patristic exegesis in a narrative form of commentary, which was no longer patristic, but a limpid and eloquent testimony to the spiritual culture of his own monastic environment.

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