

STUDIA PATRISTICA

VOL. LVI

Papers presented at the Sixteenth International Conference
on Patristic Studies held
in Oxford 2011

Edited by
MARKUS VINZENT

Volume 4:
Rediscovering Origen



PEETERS
LEUVEN – PARIS – WALPOLE, MA
2013

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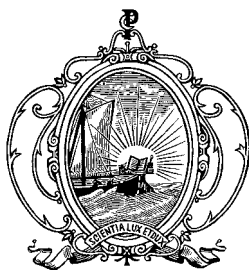
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Table of Contents

Lorenzo PERRONE, Bologna, Italy Origen's 'Confessions': Recovering the Traces of a Self-Portrait	3
Róbert SOMOS, University of Pécs, Hungary Is the Handmaid Stoic or Middle Platonic? Some Comments on Origen's Use of Logic	29
Paul R. KOLBET, Wellesley, USA Rethinking the Rationales for Origen's Use of Allegory	41
Brian BARRETT, South Bend, USA Origen's Spiritual Exegesis as a Defense of the Literal Sense.....	51
Tina DOLIDZE, Tbilisi, Georgia Equivocality of Biblical Language in Origen.....	65
Miyako DEMURA, Tohoku Gakuin University, Sendai, Japan Origen and the Exegetical Tradition of the Sarah-Hagar Motif in Alexandria	73
Elizabeth Ann DIVELY LAURO, Los Angeles, USA The Eschatological Significance of Scripture According to Origen...	83
Lorenzo PERRONE, Bologna, Italy Rediscovering Origen Today: First Impressions of the New Collection of Homilies on the <i>Psalms</i> in the <i>Codex monacensis Graecus</i> 314....	103
Ronald E. HEINE, Eugene, OR, USA Origen and his Opponents on <i>Matthew</i> 19:12	123
Allan E. JOHNSON, Minnesota, USA Interior Landscape: Origen's Homily 21 on <i>Luke</i>	129
Stephen BAGBY, Durham, UK The 'Two Ways' Tradition in Origen's <i>Commentary on Romans</i>	135
Francesco PIERI, Bologna, Italy Origen on <i>1Corinthians</i> : Homilies or Commentary?	143

Thomas D. MCGLOTHLIN, Durham, USA	
Resurrection, Spiritual Interpretation, and Moral Reformation: A Functional Approach to Resurrection in Origen	157
Ilaria L.E. RAMELLI, Milan, Italy, and Durham, UK	
‘Preexistence of Souls’? The ἀρχή and τέλος of Rational Creatures in Origen and Some Origenians	167
Ilaria L.E. RAMELLI, Milan, Italy, and Durham, UK	
The <i>Dialogue of Adamantius</i> : A Document of Origen’s Thought? (Part Two)	227

Abbreviations

AA.SS	see ASS.
AAWG.PH	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen Philologisch-historische Klasse, Göttingen.
AB	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
AC	Antike und Christentum, ed. F.J. Dölger, Münster.
ACL	Antiquité classique, Louvain.
ACO	Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum, ed. E. Schwartz, Berlin.
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers, ed. J. Quasten and J.C. Plumpe, Westminster (Md.)/London.
AHDLMA	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge, Paris.
AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History, Cambridge, Mass.
AJP	American Journal of Philology, Baltimore.
AKK	Archiv für katholisches Kirchenrecht, Mainz.
AKPAW	Abhandlungen der königlichen Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin.
ALMA	Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi (Bulletin du Cange), Paris/Brussels.
ALW	Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft, Regensburg.
AnalBoll	Analecta Bollandiana, Brussels.
ANCL	Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Edinburgh.
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers, Buffalo/New York.
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt, ed H. Temporini <i>et al.</i> , Berlin.
AnSt	Anatolian Studies, London.
AnThA	Année théologique augustinienne, Paris.
APOT	Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, ed. R.E. Charles, Oxford.
AR	Archivum Romanicum, Florence.
ARW	Archiv für Religionswissenschaft, Berlin/Leipzig.
ASS	Acta Sanctorum, ed. the Bollandists, Brussels.
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Zürich.
Aug	Augustinianum, Rome.
AugSt	Augustinian Studies, Villanova (USA).
AW	Athanasius Werke, ed. H.-G. Opitz <i>et al.</i> , Berlin.
AZ	Archäologische Zeitung, Berlin.
BA	Bibliothèque augustinienne, Paris.
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid.
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, Conn.
BDAG	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd edn F.W. Danker, Chicago.
BEHE	Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Paris.
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, Louvain.
BGL	Benedictinisches Geistesleben, St. Ottilien.
BHG	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca, Brussels.
BHL	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina Antiquae et Mediae Aetatis, Brussels.

BHO	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis, Brussels.
BHTh	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, Tübingen.
BJ	Bursians Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertums- wissenschaft, Leipzig.
BJRULM	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Manchester.
BKV	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. F.X. Reithmayr and V. Thalhofer, Kempten.
BKV2	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, ed. O. Bardenhewer, Th. Schermann, and C. Weyman, Kempten/Munich.
BKV3	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter. Zweite Reihe, ed. O. Bardenhewer, J. Zel- linger, and J. Martin, Munich.
BLE	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique, Toulouse.
BoJ	Bonner Jahrbücher, Bonn.
BS	Bibliotheca sacra, London.
BSL	Bolletino di studi latini, Naples.
BWAT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament, Leipzig/Stuttgart.
Byz	Byzantion, Leuven.
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift, Leipzig.
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, Berlin.
CAR	Cahiers Archéologique, Paris.
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Washington.
CChr.CM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SA	Corpus Christianorum, Series Apocryphorum, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, Turnhout/Paris.
CChr.SL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Turnhout/Paris.
CH	Church History, Chicago.
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin.
CP(h)	Classical Philology, Chicago.
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum, ed. M. Geerard, vols. I-VI, Turnhout.
CPL	Clavis Patrum Latinorum (SE 3), ed. E. Dekkers and A. Gaar, Turnhout.
CQ	Classical Quarterly, London/Oxford.
CR	The Classical Review, London/Oxford.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain. Aeth = Scriptores Aethiopici Ar = Scriptores Arabici Arm = Scriptores Armeniaci Copt = Scriptores Coptici Iber = Scriptores Iberici Syr = Scriptores Syri Subs = Subsidia
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna.
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn.
CTh	Collectanea Theologica, Lvov.
CUF	Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé, Paris.
CW	Catholic World, New York.
DAC	Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, ed. J. Hastings, Edinburgh.

DACL	see DAL
DAL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, ed. F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq, Paris.
DB	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Paris.
DBS	Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément, Paris.
DCB	Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects, and Doctrines, ed. W. Smith and H. Wace, 4 vols, London.
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique, ed. A. Baudrillart, Paris.
Did	Didaskalia, Lisbon.
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies, Cambridge, Mass., subsequently Washington, D.C.
DR	Downside Review, Stratton on the Fosse, Bath.
DS	H.J. Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer, ed., Enchiridion Symbolorum, Barcelona/Freiburg i.B./Rome.
DSp	Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, ed. M. Viller, S.J., and others, Paris.
DTC	Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, ed. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, and E. Amann, Paris.
EA	Études augustinienes, Paris.
ECatt	Enciclopedia Cattolica, Rome.
ECQ	Eastern Churches Quarterly, Ramsgate.
EE	Estudios eclesiasticos, Madrid.
EECh	Encyclopedia of the Early Church, ed. A. Di Berardino, Cambridge.
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Neukirchen.
EH	Enchiridion Fontium Historiae Ecclesiasticae Antiquae, ed. Ueding-Kirch, 6th ed., Barcelona.
EO	Échos d'Orient, Paris.
EtByz	Études Byzantines, Paris.
ETL	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses, Louvain.
EWNT	Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum NT, ed. H.R. Balz <i>et al.</i> , Stuttgart.
ExpT	The Expository Times, Edinburgh.
FC	The Fathers of the Church, New York.
FGH	Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, Berlin.
FKDG	Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Göttingen.
FRL	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Göttingen.
FS	Festschrift.
FThSt	Freiburger theologische Studien, Freiburg i.B.
FTS	Frankfurter theologische Studien, Frankfurt a.M.
FZThPh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg/Switzerland.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller, Leipzig/Berlin.
GDV	Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit, Stuttgart.
GLNT	Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento, Genoa.
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera, Leiden.

GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
GWV	Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht, Offenburg.
HbNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Tübingen.
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion, Missoula.
HJG	Historisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft, successively Munich, Cologne and Munich/Freiburg i.B.
HKG	Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, Tübingen.
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, Leiden.
HSCP	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Cambridge, Mass.
HTR	Harvard Theological Review, Cambridge, Mass.
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift, Munich/Berlin.
ICC	The International Critical Commentary of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, Edinburgh.
ILCV	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, ed. E. Diehl, Berlin.
ILS	Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, ed. H. Dessau, Berlin.
J(b)AC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Münster.
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature, Philadelphia, Pa., then various places.
JdI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Berlin.
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies, Baltimore.
JEH	The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, London.
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies, London.
JLH	Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie, Kassel.
JPTh	Jahrbücher für protestantische Theologie, Leipzig/Freiburg i.B.
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review, Philadelphia.
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies, London.
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period, Leiden.
JSOR	Journal of the Society of Oriental Research, Chicago.
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies, Oxford.
KAV	Kommentar zu den apostolischen Vätern, Göttingen.
KēTh	Kerk en Theologie, 's Gravenhage.
KJ(b)	Kirchliches Jahrbuch für die evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, Gütersloh.
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library, London/Cambridge, Mass.
LNPF	A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, Buffalo/New York.
L(O)F	Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Oxford.
LSJ	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, new (9th) edn H.S. Jones, Oxford.
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche, Freiburg i.B.
MA	Moyen-Âge, Brussels.
MAMA	Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, London.
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, Florence, 1759-1798. Reprint and continuation: Paris/Leipzig, 1901-1927.
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie, Münster.

MCom	Miscelanea Comillas, Comillas/Santander.
MGH	Monumenta germaniae historica. Hanover/Berlin.
ML	Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, Louvain.
MPG	See PG.
MSR	Mélanges de science religieuse, Lille.
MThZ	Münchener theologische Zeitschrift, Munich.
Mus	Le Muséon, Louvain.
NGWG	Nachrichten der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.
NH(M)S	Nag Hammadi (and Manichaean) Studies, Leiden.
NovTest	Novum Testamentum, Leiden.
NPNF	See LNPF.
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version.
NRTh	Nouvelle Revue Théologique, Tournai/Louvain/Paris.
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen, Münster.
NT.S	Novum Testamentum Supplements, Leiden.
NTS	New Testament Studies, Cambridge/Washington.
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis, Freiburg, Switz.
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta, Rome.
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica, Rome.
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies, Oxford.
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Louvain.
OLP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, Louvain.
Or	Orientalia. Commentarii editi a Pontificio Instituto Biblico, Rome.
OrChr	Oriens Christianus, Leipzig, then Wiesbaden.
OrSyri	L'Orient Syrien, Paris.
PG	Migne, Patrologia, series graeca.
PGL	A Patristic Greek Lexicon, ed. G.L. Lampe, Oxford.
PL	Migne, Patrologia, series latina.
PLRE	The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, ed. A.H.M. Jones <i>et al.</i> , Cambridge.
PLS	Migne, Patrologia, series latina. Supplementum ed. A. Hamman.
PO	Patrologia Orientalis, Paris.
PRE	Paulys Realenzyklopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft, Stuttgart.
PS	Patrologia Syriaca, Paris.
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen, Bonn.
PTHr	Princeton Theological Review, Princeton.
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien, Berlin.
PW	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, ed. G. Wissowa, Stuttgart.
QLP	Questions liturgiques et paroissiales, Louvain.
QuLi	Questions liturgiques, Louvain
RAC	Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana, Rome.
RACH	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Stuttgart.
RAM	Revue d'ascétique et de mystique, Paris.
RAug	Recherches Augustiniennes, Paris.
RBen	Revue Bénédictine, Maredsous.
RB(ibl)	Revue biblique, Paris.

RE	Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, founded by J.J. Herzog, 3e ed. A. Hauck, Leipzig.
REA(ug)	Revue des études Augustiniennes, Paris.
REB	Revue des études byzantines, Paris.
RED	Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, Rome.
RÉL	Revue des études latines, Paris.
REG	Revue des études grecques, Paris.
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses, Strasbourg.
RevThom	Revue thomiste, Toulouse.
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e d'istruzione classica, Turin.
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. Gunkel-Zscharnack, Tübingen
RHE	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Louvain.
RhMus	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Bonn.
RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions, Paris.
RHT	Revue d'Histoire des Textes, Paris.
RMAL	Revue du Moyen-Âge Latin, Paris.
ROC	Revue de l'Orient chrétien, Paris.
RPh	Revue de philologie, Paris.
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift, Freiburg i.B.
RQH	Revue des questions historiques, Paris.
RSLR	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa, Florence.
RSPT, RSPH	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques, Paris.
RSR	Recherches de science religieuse, Paris.
RTAM	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, Louvain.
RthL	Revue théologique de Louvain, Louvain.
RTM	Rivista di teologia morale, Bologna.
Sal	Salesianum, Roma.
SBA	Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft, Basel.
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien, Stuttgart.
ScEc	Sciences ecclésiastiques, Bruges.
SCh, SC	Sources chrétiennes, Paris.
SD	Studies and Documents, ed. K. Lake and S. Lake. London/Philadelphia.
SE	Sacris Erudiri, Bruges.
SDHI	Studia et documenta historiae et iuris, Roma.
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica, Brussels.
SHA	Scriptores Historiae Augustae.
SJMS	Speculum. Journal of Mediaeval Studies, Cambridge, Mass.
SM	Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige, Munich.
SO	Symbolae Osloenses, Oslo.
SP	Studia Patristica, successively Berlin, Kalamazoo, Leuven.
SPM	Stromata Patristica et Mediaevalia, ed. C. Mohrman and J. Quasten, Utrecht.
SQ	Sammlung ausgewählter Quellenschriften zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, Tübingen.
SQAW	Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt, Berlin.
SSL	Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, Louvain.

StudMed	Studi Medievali, Turin.
SVigChr	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, Leiden.
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, ed. J. von Arnim, Leipzig.
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Grand Rapids, Mich.
TE	Teologia espiritual, Valencia.
ThGl	Theologie und Glaube, Paderborn.
ThJ	Theologische Jahrbücher, Leipzig.
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung, Leipzig.
ThPh	Theologie und Philosophie, Freiburg i.B.
ThQ	Theologische Quartalschrift, Tübingen.
ThR	Theologische Rundschau, Tübingen.
ThWAT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament, Stuttgart.
ThWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Stuttgart.
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift, Basel.
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae.
TP	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association, Lancaster, Pa.
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Berlin.
TS	Theological Studies, New York and various places; now Washington, D.C.
TThZ	Trierer theologische Zeitschrift, Trier.
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen, Leipzig/Berlin.
USQR	Union Seminary Quarterly Review, New York.
VC	Vigiliae Christianae, Amsterdam.
VetChr	Vetera Christianorum, Bari (Italy).
VT	Vetus Testamentum, Leiden.
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary, Waco.
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Tübingen.
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Vienna.
YUP	Yale University Press, New Haven.
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum, Berlin.
ZAM	Zeitschrift für Ascese und Mystik, Innsbruck, then Würzburg.
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, Leipzig.
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, Gotha, then Stuttgart.
ZKTh	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie, Vienna.
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Giessen, then Berlin.
ZRG	Zeitschrift für Rechtsgeschichte, Weimar.
ZThK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Tübingen.

REDISCOVERING ORIGIN

Origen's 'Confessions': Recovering the Traces of a Self-Portrait*

Lorenzo PERRONE, Bologna, Italy

ABSTRACT

Origen's writings at first sight seem to offer a rather elusive and disappointing case for autobiographical reconstruction. Yet Eusebius relied on many statements of the Alexandrian in order to depict his life in the *Ecclesiastical History*. By exploiting the scant evidence of autobiographical nature at our disposal it is possible to draw a first perspective on rights and limits of autobiography according to Origen. It is his task as interpreter of the Bible which gives way to personal anecdotes, recollections of the past, claims to personal experience. As shown also by the memories of traditions and the self-quotations, Origen is led to trace his own autobiographical 'portrait' only as long as this helped his readers to see him as a scholar, teacher, and preacher in the presence of God and by the way to promote and defend this image in front of men.

Introduction: Autobiographical discourse in ancient Christianity

The great Thomas Mann once wrote: 'Perhaps I do not love my life enough to become a good autobiographer'.¹ Notwithstanding that, his autobiographical writings make up a corpus of considerable size even when compared to the huge literary output of the German author. If this proves that a writer cannot totally avoid the autobiographical dimension, be it in a more or less explicit way, Mann's statement is disputable as a general rule of autobiographical discourse. It does not seem to be valid for ancient Christian literature especially, which tends rather to create autobiographical works in virtue of the opposite principle, that is, when one 'does not love his own life' (obviously meaning the 'past'). As we know, early Christian autobiographical works are relatively few in number, particularly when compared to the rich biographical or hagiographical literature that flourished in the post-Constantinian period.² Among the few

* I would like to thank Dr. Cristian Găşpar (Central European University, Budapest) for the careful revision of the English text.

¹ 'Vielleicht liebe ich mein Leben nicht genug, um zum Autobiographen zu taugen', Thomas Mann, *Meine Zeit* (1950), in *id.*, *Über mich selbst. Autobiographische Schriften* (Frankfurt a.M., 2010), 5.

² See Alexander Sizoo, 'Autobiographie', *RAC I* (1950), 1050-5; Marek Starowieyski, 'Les éléments autobiographiques dans la littérature chrétienne ancienne', *SP* 40 (2006), 289-307;

names and titles that one may call to mind – such as Cyprian's *Ad Donatum*, Gregory of Nazianzus' *Carmen de vita sua* or Augustine's *Confessions* –, autobiography expressed in the framework of a conversion story is frequent.³ However, Augustine's *Confessions* cannot be easily defined in generic terms, insofar as they are a writing without parallels in late antique literature.⁴ Only in later times would they come to be perceived as a model, as we can observe in Rousseau's *Confessions*. On the other hand, as it is generally admitted nowadays, one should not consider the term 'confession' merely in the light of its penitential implications. In fact, autobiography may emerge either from the feelings of a fulfilled life (as suggested by Mann) or from the awareness of an existential failure that has been happily overcome (as in Augustine's case and with all those who narrate the turn towards salvation imposed on their lives). As a consequence, some form of apologetic concern is inherently associated with autobiographical accounts, although the autobiographical dimension may present itself in many other contexts and with different functions and aims. For instance, the autobiographical element can be inscribed indirectly in writings such as hagiographic accounts. By depicting the story of a saint, these often reflect the ideals and experience of the author more than those of the protagonist. Jerome's *Life of Malchus* is a prime example of the autobiographical reflex in hagiographic writings.⁵

In contrast to Augustine and other ancient Christian authors such as Gregory of Nazianzus or Jerome, whose writings are rich in autobiographical details, Origen's case at first sight does not seem to be very promising. In his *œuvre* there is apparently almost nothing of the sort and we are easily led to conclude that 'he was a man who did not like to speak about himself'.⁶ But this

Johannes van Oort and Dietmar Wyrwa (eds), *Autobiographie und Hagiographie in der christlichen Antike* (Leuven, 2009). For a general presentation within the hagiographical production of Late Antiquity, see Adele Monaci Castagno, *L'agiografia cristiana antica. Testi, contesti, pubblico* (Brescia, 2010).

³ We can add to the list Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. See Arthur Darby Nock, *Conversion. The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford, 1933), 254-73.

⁴ As stated by A. Momigliano, 'la prima opera che combina perfettamente l'informazione biografica e la coscienza di se stesso sono naturalmente le *Confessioni* di sant'Agostino', Arnaldo Momigliano, *Lo sviluppo della biografia greca* (orig. title, *The Development of Greek Biography* [Cambridge, MA, 1971]) (Torino, 1974), 20. According to Therese Fuhrer, 'De-Konstruktion der Ich-Identität in Augustins *Confessiones*', in Alexander Arweiler and Melanie Möller (eds), *Vom Selbst-Verständnis in Antike und Neuzeit. Notions of the Self in Antiquity and Beyond* (Berlin and New York, 2008), 175-88, 178, 'eine mit den *Confessiones* vergleichbare Form gibt es nicht in der antiken Literatur'.

⁵ See Ernst Dassmann, 'Autobiographie und Hagiographie. Zur Selbstdarstellung des Hieronymus in seinen Mönchsviten, Nekrologen und Trostbriefen', in Johannes van Oort and Dietmar Wyrwa (eds), *Autobiographie und Hagiographie* (2009), 63-88.

⁶ A. Monaci Castagno, *L'agiografia* (2010), 5. See also Henri Crouzel, *Origène* (Paris, 1985), 46: 'Origène ... habituellement ne parle jamais de lui'. For Richard P.C. Hanson, 'Was Origen

conclusion is only partially justified. We should not forget that information of autobiographical nature permits to recompose, at least to some extent, a biographical profile of Origen, as it happened already starting with Eusebius. The bishop of Caesarea exploited the indications that the Alexandrian delivered to his readers concerning particular circumstances of his life and some of his writings. Accordingly, the autobiographical material incorporated by Eusebius both in the sixth book of his *Ecclesiastical History* and in the *Apology of Origen* he wrote together with Pamphilus have made the object of several investigations, most of all by Pierre Nautin.⁷ Yet only rarely have these materials been seen as an opportunity for exploring the autobiographical dimension of the Alexandrian as such.⁸ Now, even leaving aside Völker's conviction about how decisive is Origen's personal experience in order to understand him,⁹ there is an intrinsic connection with our topic in one of his most characteristic themes: the idea of the *image*, with all its anthropological and theological implications. A passage of the *Second Homily on Psalm 38* is particularly revealing, since it elaborates on the concept of the *image* as a *self-portrait* shaped by man in words and deeds:

Everything we do in every hour or moment forges a certain image of us. Therefore, we should consider all our deeds and examine ourselves in order to know whether, in that particular deed or word, a heavenly or an earthly image is depicted in our soul.¹⁰

Here Origen, while inviting his audience in Caesarea to practice a 'spiritual exercise' resulting in an examination of conscience, displays a sharp awareness of the construction of the self and of his spiritual destiny as a process taking place in an uninterrupted time *continuum*. The image of man as his own self-portrait predisposes in a sense the space for autobiographical discourse, inasmuch as autobiography is a self-remembering in the temporal sequence of one's own life.¹¹ Therefore, when looking for the autobiographical materials in the

Banished from Alexandria?', *SP* 17 (1982), 905: 'Origen, like most men of the ancient world, tells us little about himself. The ancients had many discomforts and limitations to endure, but they were very mercifully free from the experience of having to listen to writers and artists talking about themselves endlessly on the media'.

⁷ Pierre Nautin, *Lettres et écrivains chrétiens des 2^e et 3^e siècles* (Paris, 1961); *id.*, *Origène. Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1977).

⁸ This is also the case with the otherwise stimulating contributions collected in Adele Monaci Castagno (ed.), *La biografia di Origene fra storia e agiografia* (Verucchio, 2004).

⁹ Walther Völker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes. Eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte der Frömmigkeit und zu den Anfängen christlicher Mystik* (Münster, 1931), 16.

¹⁰ *H38Ps* II 2: 'Omne ergo quod agitur a nobis per singulas horas vel momenta, imaginem aliquam deformat: et ideo per singula scrutari debemus actus nostros et nosmetipsos probare in illo opere vel in illo sermone, utrum caelestis an terrena imago in anima nostra depingitur.'

¹¹ Autobiography has been defined by Philippe Lejeune, *Le pacte autobiographique* (Paris, 1975), 14 as a 'récit rétrospectif en prose qu'une personne réelle fait de sa propre existence, lorsqu'elle met l'accent sur sa vie individuelle, en particulier sur l'histoire de sa personnalité'.

writings of the Alexandrian, it is important to consider the nexus between self-consciousness and autobiography. As already hinted at, more than from specifically autobiographical materials – to be reviewed first of all, though rather quickly in the actual condition of the sources – the expressions of Origen's subjectivity offer us the principal way to approach our topic. Some recurrent accents and subjects contribute to create, so to say, a temporal self-recollection of autobiographical nature. As a result, it is not out of place to consider these statements as a background of sorts before eventually moving towards an analysis of those passages more likely to be regarded as 'confessions' in the proper sense of the word.

The 'autobiographical core' of Origen's writings: Apologetic purpose and anecdotic evidence

Among the extant works including more directly relevant autobiographical evidence, we should mostly refer to the letters, which are generally regarded as a privileged testimony of autobiographical discourse.¹² Ever since Nautin's contributions on the topic, it has become common to refer to one of Origen's attested letters in particular as the *Autobiographical Letter*, identifying it with the *Letter to Alexander of Jerusalem* (CPG 1496). Other scholars, however, associate this with the *Letter to Alexandrian Friends* (*Epistula ad caros* [CPG 1491]) or even with the *Letter to Fabian of Rome* (CPG 1492) because of the similarity in their contents and purpose.¹³ Unfortunately, the *Letter to Alexandrian Friends* has been preserved only partially, in Latin, independent translations by Rufinus and Jerome, who both took it from the *Apology of Origen* by Pamphilus and Eusebius. Scholarly attention has mainly been directed towards the reconstruction of the apologetic purpose which supported Origen's presentation of some controversial episodes having to do with his doctrines and public debates (specifically on the issue of the devil's free will and his eventual salvation). Less interest has been devoted to some personal

¹² See A. Momigliano, *Lo sviluppo* (1974), 17. With regard to Plato's *Seventh Letter* he observes: 'La lettera come trasmettitrice di esperienze fondamentali della propria vita fu creata nel IV secolo a.C., almeno per quanto riguarda i Greci; e sembra che Platone abbia avuto una parte considerevole nella sua creazione' (*ibid.* 64).

¹³ See, e.g., Gilles Dorival, 'Est-il légitime d'éclairer le *Discours de remerciement* par la *Lettre à Grégoire* et réciproquement? Ou la tentation de Pasolini', in A. Monaci Castagno (ed.), *La biografia di Origene* (2004), 9-26, 22: '[In Alexandria] il n'y avait pas de formation à la philosophie comme à Césarée ... C'est ce qu'il suggère dans sa *Lettre autobiographique* qu'il écrit en 233 à Alexandre de Jérusalem et où il revient sur ses activités alexandrines'. For John McGuckin (ed.), *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Louisville and London, 2004), 27: 'This is possibly the same as the letter Origen wrote to Pope Pontianus of Rome [*sic!*] to defend himself against charges (by Demetrios of Alexandria) of irregularity of ordination and unorthodoxy in doctrine. It is mentioned by Jerome in *Ep.* 84.9'.

features in the Alexandrian's recollection of these episodes, such as the vindication of his own peculiar *stilus* in Rufinus' extract of the letter.¹⁴ Whereas the autobiographical narrative is here functional to his self-defence and rejecting the charge of heresy, for a proper evaluation of the controversial reports Origen demanded to take into account also the criterion of his 'personal style' in writing and dealing with certain subjects. By pleading for a distinctive 'trademark', he thus argued for recognizing the autobiographical element. Also the *Letter to Firmilian of Caesarea* (CPG 1493) appears to imply this, though in a less transparent formulation, which depends on the introductory lemma for its interpretation: Origen argues there for the treatment of *quaestiones* as an exercise reserved to those who are capable of it, while on the contrary the simple faithful should abstain from it.¹⁵

Probably more important, from the autobiographical point of view, than the *Letter to Alexandrian Friends* is the fragment of a *Letter to Alexander of Jerusalem* transmitted by Eusebius' *Ecclesiastic History* (VI 19, 12-4) and considered by Nautin as the proper *lettre autobiographique*. Once again, this is a document of apologetic character, aimed at justifying the recourse to philosophy because of the needs and sensibilities of the Alexandrian audience, which consisted also of heretics and philosophically trained people.¹⁶ A few precious details trace a retrospective picture of the scholarly life in Alexandria. Origen narrates that he frequented for a while a philosophical school, meeting there Heraclas, who subsequently would become his assistant at the *didaskaleion* and later on, as bishop of Alexandria, his staunch enemy. The little bit of gossip, an element otherwise so rarely found in Origen's writings, contributes here to paint a surprisingly 'malicious' picture of his former collaborator, whom the Alexandrian describes as still wearing the mantle of a philosopher.¹⁷ It continues to be a matter of dispute whether such anecdotes enriched the text with other details on Origen's earlier life, going back to his infancy and youth. At all events, Eusebius exploited such details in the sixth book of the *Ecclesiastic History*, drawing presumably on Origen's lost correspondence.¹⁸ The autobiographical

¹⁴ Rufinus, *De adulteratione librorum Origenis* 7: 'Poposci ut liber deferretur in medium, <ut> stilus meus agnosceretur a fratribus, qui utique cognoscerent quae soleo disputare vel quali soleo uti doctrina.' Neither Nautin nor Crouzel seem to be interested in this detail: see respectively P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 167-8 and Henri Crouzel, 'A Letter from Origen "to Friends in Alexandria"', in David Neiman and Margaret Schatkin (eds), *The Heritage of the Early Church. Essays in Honor of G.V. Florovsky* (Roma, 1973), 135-50.

¹⁵ The introductory lemma reads: 'Ex epistula Origenis ad Firmilianum, de his qui fugiunt quaestiones.' See P. Nautin, *Lettres* (1961), 250; and also *id.*, *Origène* (1977), 174. According to Nautin, the source for this was once again the *Apology of Origen*.

¹⁶ P. Nautin, *Lettres* (1961), 126-9.

¹⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* VI 19, 14.

¹⁸ Clementina Mazzucco, 'Il modello martiriale nella vita di Origene di Eusebio', in A. Monaci Castagno (ed.), *La biografia di Origene* (2004), 207-55, 217-8 aptly summarizes the scholarly debate after Nautin in the following way: 'A questa lettera, che doveva essere stata inserita da

perspective drawn by the *Letter to Alexander* converges again with the apologetic aim, but it also describes an intellectual genealogy: Origen invokes the name of Pantaenus as the model for his own behaviour. This unique mention of one of the previous Alexandrian teachers impresses us all the more because of Origen's enigmatic silence with regard to his nearer predecessor, Clement.

However, the most rewarding anecdotic tale preserved in the epistolary documents can be found in the *Letter to Fabian of Rome*, originally transmitted by Eusebius in the sixth book of the *Apology of Origen*. Jerome summed up its content as a kind of 'penitential apology' that Origen addressed to the bishop of Rome excusing himself for some of his most controversial doctrines and accusing his patron, Ambrose, for publishing this genre of writings.¹⁹ However, the preserved fragment strikes quite a different note, devoid of any 'penitential' or polemical implications, and emphasizing rather the hard conditions in which Origen had to work. Curiously enough, the relation of the teacher with his sponsor reminds us of Eusebius' description of Origen's infancy and his father's role in educating him. Ambrose, yearning for the 'holy science' – in Origen's words a true *ἔρως* –, progressed more than his teacher, so that the latter now felt unable to answer his 'questions' (προτάσεις), not unlike to what had happened to Leonidas with his son.²⁰ This autobiographical *cameo* becomes even more impressive when it comes to describe Origen's daily routine, apparently a 'nightmare' of restless work from dawn to dusk. We can see here, on the one hand, the impact of 'philology' on Origen's way of life, that is the incessant and truly gigantic work of collating manuscripts and, on the other hand, the insistence on the weariness of the 'body' (σώματιον) constantly submitted to hard work, an unexpected revelation with Origen, whom we are usually led to consider almost exclusively as an 'intellectual' figure dominated by his *Geist*!²¹

Eusebio nel libro VI dell'*Apologia*, Eusebio farebbe riferimento ogni volta che in questa parte richiama parole di Origene (2, 14; 4, 3; 14, 10), e da essa deriverebbe il passo citato direttamente in 19, 12-14, e attribuito a una lettera di Origene (...) Tutto il documento aveva dunque carattere apologetico e i singoli argomenti esposti erano funzionali a tale scopo'.

¹⁹ Jerome, *Ep.* 84, 10: '*Ipse Origenes in epistula, quam scribit ad Fabianum Romanae urbis episcopum, paenitentiam agit cur talia scripserit et causas temeritatis in Ambrosium refert, quod secreto edita in publicum protulerit.*' See P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 58.

²⁰ The fragment is transmitted by the *Suda* and *Cedrenus*: 'Ο ἱερὸς καὶ θεῷ γνησίως ἀνακείμενος Ἀμβρόσιος πολλὰ προσαγορεύει σε ὅστις νομίζων με φιλόπονον εἶναι καὶ πάνυ διψᾶν τοῦ θείου λόγου ἤλεγξε τῇ ἰδίᾳ φιλοπονίᾳ <καὶ> τῷ πρὸς τὰ ἅγια μαθήματα ἔρωτι, ὅθεν ἐπὶ τοσοῦτόν με παρελήλυθεν, ὥστε κινδυνεύειν ἀπανδᾶν πρὸς τὰς αὐτοῦ προτάσεις; see P. Nautin, *Lettres* (1961), 250. According to Jerome, *Ep.* 43, a letter written by Ambrosius to Origen reflected the inverted perspective: '*Ambrosius, quo chartas, sumptus, notarios ministrante, tam innumerabiles libros vere Adamantius, et Chalcenterus noster explicavit, in quadam epistola, quam ad eundem de Athenis scripserat, refert, nunquam se cibum Origene praesente sumpsisse; nunquam inisse somnum, nisi unus e fratribus sacris litteris personaret. Hoc diebus egisse et noctibus, ut et lectio orationem exciperet, et oratio lectionem.*'

²¹ Οὔτε γὰρ δειπνῆσαι ἔστιν ὅτι μὴ ἀντιβάλλοντα, οὔτε δειπνήσαντα ἔξεστι περιπατῆσαι καὶ διαναπαύσαι τὸ σῶματιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς ἐκείνοις φιλολογεῖν καὶ

In line with this, the wording of the fragment mirrors the ethos of the Alexandrian philological tradition, by stressing the value of φιλοπονία, the 'love of labour', together with φιλολογία, the 'love of learning' applied to the inspection of manuscripts. Both elements come together in the service of the 'divine studies' culminating in the reading and investigation of the Holy Scriptures, which fill the time not devoted to the philological examination of the manuscripts.²² Though the fragment remains somewhat elusive with regard to concrete details, it does propose a self-representation which is largely in accordance with the way Origen portrays himself as a biblical scholar.

Forms of Origenian subjectivity: The exegete at work

The few passages of openly autobiographical nature that we have chosen as a premise to our investigation (also because of their rich anecdotic content), all tend to present the figure of Origen in a certain light. Before speaking *tout court* of a predictable 'self-fashioning' as industrious and orthodox teacher born out of highly apologetic concerns, we should try to explore the forms of the Origenian subjectivity and take them as a criterion for a correct evaluation of the autobiographical *loci*. While there is no lack of evidence on this aspect, the personal expressions to be found in Origen's writings again point first and foremost to his activity as a biblical scholar. Naturally, one has to take into account the problem of circumscribing an individual rather than a collective *ego*, since the Alexandrian often resorts to formulations in the first person, which acquire a certain paradigmatic value. It is not always easy to distinguish the transition from 'I' to 'we', and vice versa, as the clear mark of a passage from an individual to a collective meaning (and the same is true of the no less frequent interplay between 'I' and 'you').²³ Most of all when preaching, we can note in Origen's words a process of identification with the audience and this may lead us to question the real extent of his subjective expressions. Probably the best known example is the appeal frequently addressed by the preacher to his public: 'has this story anything to do with *me*?', or, in similar words, 'what

ἀκριβοῦν τὰ ἀντίγραφα ἀναγκαζόμεθα, οὔτε μὴν ὅλην ἐπὶ θεραπεία τοῦ σώματος τὴν νύκτα ἔξεστιν ἡμῖν κοιμᾶσθαι, ἐπὶ πολὺ τῆς ἑσπέρας τῆς φιλολογίας παρατεινούσης (P. Nautin, *Lettres* [1961], 250-1). Note the unique occurrence of the word σωματίον, a word of Stoic imprint. It is not clear whether the ecdotic work meant here is that on the *Hexapla* or on Origen's writings in general, *id.*, *Origène* (1977), 59 opts for the second hypothesis, although the fragment is too elusive to allow a definite conclusion.

²² Ἐὼ δὲ λέγειν καὶ τὰ ἔωθεν μέχρι τῆς ἐννάτης ἔσθ' ὅτε καὶ δεκάτης ὥρας πάντες γὰρ οἱ θέλοντες φιλοπονεῖν τοὺς καιροὺς τούτους τῇ ἐξετάσει τῶν θείων λόγων καὶ ταῖς ἀναγνώσεσιν ἀνατιθέασιν (P. Nautin, *Lettres* [1961], 250).

²³ G. Dorival, 'Est-il légitime...' (2004), 17²⁸ notes that 'Nautin, *Origène*, 447-8, montre que la même alternance entre «je» et «nous» se retrouve dans la préface aux psaumes d'Origène et dans sa *Lettre à Alexandre*'.

is the use for *me*?²⁴ With regard to the pneumatic interpretation of the Bible pursued by the Alexandrian, a dynamic process is always going on between ‘me’ and ‘we’ (or ‘you’); both the interpreter/preacher and the reader/listener are engaged in a spiritual ascension overcoming the mere letter of the text.²⁵ In spite of such reservations, I believe we have access to Origen’s self-awareness in many ways, especially when we are able to perceive in him an effort to distinguish himself somehow and incidentally to touch a more personal chord, often leading to an admission of personal inadequacy.

Going back once more to an epistolary text, let us see how Origen positions himself with a personality of comparable intellectual dimensions in his *Letter to Julius Africanus*. If Origen’s commitment to the rhetorical *topoi* of epistolography comes forth in the initial declaration of modesty based on ‘self-recognition’,²⁶ he subsequently downgrades the status of Africanus as a biblical scholar. The Alexandrian namely criticises the triviality of some questions raised by Africanus in connection with the story of Susannah and wonders how his colleague, after so many debates and studies on the Holy Writings, could still ignore important characteristics of the prophetic language.²⁷ The self-evaluation of a rather different and positive kind encoded in such criticisms is evident on many occasions. However, in no other context does it appear so free from any restraint as in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*. Here we meet the most daring formulation: ‘According to myself and to the Logos of God’.²⁸ Although the issue at stake is the problem of the immortality of the soul – one of the most obvious doctrinal tenets of Christian belief –, the juxtaposition of the ‘I’ with the ‘Word of God’ is striking. Even if this remains a unique occurrence, it nevertheless betrays the identification constantly sought for by the interpreter with the message of revelation he is commenting upon. Not incidentally, at an earlier point in the same *Dialogue* the Alexandrian confessed that to explain Jesus’ entrusting his ‘spirit’ to the Father at the moment of his death on the cross was ‘above himself, above his capacity and beyond his mind’.²⁹

²⁴ For instance, *Hier* I 2: τί οὖν πρὸς ἐμὲ αὕτη ἡ ἱστορία.

²⁵ *Hier* XIX 13: κάμοι δέ, ἐὰν διδάσκω τὸν θεῖον λόγον, φησὶν ὁ λόγος· ἐπ’ ὅρος ὑψηλὸν ἀνάβηθι, ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος Σιών (*Isa.* 40:9).

²⁶ *EpAfr* 2: Ἐγὼ δὲ τὸ ἐμαυτοῦ τῆς διανοίας μέτριον, ὅση δύναμις, κατανοῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀναισθητοῖην ἐμαυτοῦ, θεωρῶ, ὅτι ἀπολείπομαι τῆς ἀπαιτουμένης ἀκριβείας εἰς τὴν ἀντιγραφὴν τῆς ἐπιστολῆς σου.

²⁷ *EpAfr* 17: Τὰ γε μὴν ἄλλα σου ἐπαπορήματα ἐδόκει μοι ἀσεμνότερον εἰρῆσθαι, καὶ οὐκ ἔχεσθαι τῆς πρεπούσης σοι εὐλαβείας. – 21: Καὶ ἐθαύμασα, πῶς πολλὰς διατριβὰς ἔχων ἐν ταῖς ἐξετάσεσι καὶ μελέταις τῆς Γραφῆς, οὐ τετήρηκας συγχρωμένους προφήτας προφητῶν λόγοις σχεδὸν αὐταῖς λέξεσι.

²⁸ *Dial* 23: Κατὰ δὲ ἐμὲ καὶ τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἡ ἀναλύσασα ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδρώτων ψυχῇ, ἡ ἀπολυθεῖσα τοῦ σώματος ... ἐξέρχεται ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ μετὰ Χριστοῦ ἀναπαύεται.

²⁹ *Dial* 7-8: Τίνι οὖν ἔδει τὴν παρακαταθήκην παραθέσθαι τὸ πνεῦμα τῷ Πατρὶ; Ὑπερ ἐμὲ ἐστὶν καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξιν καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν νοῦν, – οὐ γάρ εἰμι τηλικούτος εἰπεῖν ὅτι ὥσπερ τὸ σῶμα οὐχ οἶόν τε ἦν εἰς ἄδου καταβῆναι. After distinguishing between the destiny of body, soul and spirit in Jesus’ death, he leaves the question open, as far as the spirit is concerned.

Consequently, such effort of interpretation is often described in terms of 'torment' and 'fight'. By facing obstacles of different nature, for Origen the exegetic task appears to be constitutively an 'agonistic' one and the interpreter now and then feels obliged to point out these difficulties to his audience.³⁰ As shown by the *Homilies on Jeremiah*, to announce a problem can lead to different types of responses. When dealing with particularly difficult passages, admitting his own incapacity leads the interpreter to pray for divine help;³¹ in other cases it can represent the first step towards solving the problem, or it becomes instrumental for emphasizing the 'mystical' nature of the text and to make the readers attentive to its depth.³² Moreover, Origen's is a self-consciousness depending upon the exigent model of a dynamic and reciprocal relation between teacher and pupil and commanding in addition a whole range of attitudes which govern the interpretative act while ensuring a cooperative audience. As part of this learning process, we see the Alexandrian preparing the explanation, gradually advancing in its formulation, caring both for self-improvement,³³ and for the progress of his audience towards a higher understanding of the text.³⁴ Not only does he strive to formulate the expectations of his audience – who may reckon, for instance, with an overall interpretation of the text under examination in light of the viewpoint introduced by the exegete³⁵ –, but is also concerned with certifying, so to say, the interpreter's own hermeneutic expertise by means of self-quotation. Yet this is not simply a self-certification apt to reinforce the authority of the interpreter in the eyes of his audience. Whereas evoking previous treatments of the topics under scrutiny or of other similar

³⁰ See, for example, the use of the term ἀγωνία to indicate the challenge of explanation for the 'wise' exegete in *Hier* I 7. Origen also uses the verb θλίβω to denote the presence or lack of an exegetical difficulty: see, e.g., *Hier* I 6: τὰ δὲ παρατεθησόμενα πάνυ θλίβει καὶ τὸν πάνυ συνετώτατον. Other terms to which the Alexandrian has recourse are ἀπορία and ἀπορῶ.

³¹ This happens, for instance, with the famous interpretation of *Jer.* 20:7 in *Hier* XIX 11: ἐνθάδε ὁ ἀγὼν ἐστὶ παραστήσαι τὸ βούλημα τούτων τῶν γραμμάτων. Καὶ δὴ ὁμολογῶ κατ' ἐμαυτὸν μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτὰ διηγῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ δεῖσθαι ... ἐπιφανείας τῆς δυνάμεως Ἰησοῦ, καθ' ὃ σοφία ἐστὶ, καθ' ὃ λόγος, καθ' ὃ ἀλήθεια, ἵνα ἡ ἐπιφάνεια αὐτοῦ ποιήσῃ φῶς ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου μου. On this passage see my book *La preghiera secondo Origene. L'impossibilità donata* (Brescia, 2011), 380.

³² *Hier* XIV 18: μυστήριον δέ μοι δοκεῖ ἐνταῦθα δηλοῦσθαι ἐν τῷ ἀποκαταστήσω σε. For a more general statement of the same kind see *HLc* XIX 5: 'Quomodo tu, si quando scripturas legis, quaeris in eis sensum cum dolore quodam atque tormento, non quo scripturas errasse aut perperam quid habere arbitreris, sed quod illae intrinsecus habeant veritatis sermonem atque rationem, et tu nequeas invenire, quod verum est.'

³³ *Hier* I 8: ὅρα εἰ δύνασαι τι ἀξιόλογον καὶ μέγα περὶ τὸν σωτῆρα ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἰδεῖν; πῶς παραστήσεις μέγα καὶ ἔνδοξον εἶναι... In these instances, we could say: 'you' means 'me'.

³⁴ *H36Ps* III 3: 'Volo etiam amplius aliquid in his locis positus aperire, ne semper de inferioribus loquamur ad vos, sed aliquando etiam superiora pulsemus.'

³⁵ *Hier* I 7: Ἐρεῖ μοί τις τῶν ἀκουόντων· γύμνασον καὶ τὸν ἄλλον λόγον καὶ ὅλα πειράθῃτι παραστήσαι τὰ γεγραμμένα ἁρμόζοντα τῷ σωτῆρι; *Hier* X 6: οὕτως ἀνάβα μοι τῷ λόγῳ ἐπὶ τὴν διάταξιν πᾶσαν...

topics contributes to consolidate the profile of the interpreter and to show his consistency, at the same time it calls for a participation or complicity of the audience, expected to have already been trained by the interpreter.³⁶

What is perhaps most striking is the chance to observe the process of the exegetic discovery *in actu*. One can detect a note of personal satisfaction and relief for all his laborious endeavours, when Origen says, in his *Second Homily on Jeremiah*: ‘Maybe now I find the reason’, apparently recognizing here *en passant* the significance of Jesus’ baptism ‘with the Holy Spirit and fire’ (*Luke* 3:16).³⁷ Even if such a process, in reality, is described *post eventum* and with the aim of soliciting the audience to accomplish a mimetic performance following the same method, it does nevertheless reveal the excited subjectivity of the exegete finding a successful way to explain a given passage. Recalling what we have said before about the agonistic component of exegesis in Origen, we may be allowed to see in a passage of the *Sixteenth Homily on Jeremiah* his appropriation of the proverbial *veni, vidi, vici*. The Alexandrian, asking for an explanation of the ‘crevices of the rocks’ in *Jer.* 16:16 (‘After that I will send others who will hunt them out like hunters from all the mountains, all the hills, and the crevices in the rocks’), goes on to propose an approach consisting of three steps:

I go (ἔρχομαι) to Exodus, I look for (ζητῶ) a trace in order to find an explanation of the crevices of the rocks, I find (εὐρίσκω) there Moses who wants to know God.³⁸

Of course, it would be inaccurate to take the triadic presentation of a ‘triumphant’ process of exegesis as a fixed scheme in Origen, an author who generally is not very likely to be schematic.³⁹ It is rather, once more, his self-perception

³⁶ A few instances will suffice to illustrate this well-known aspect. See *Hier* I 13: πολλάκις εἵπομεν, ὅτι ἔστι κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον εἶναι παιδίον, κἂν ἐν γεροντικῇ τις ἢ ἡλικίᾳ σώματος; *Hier* V 7: πολλάκις εἵπομεν τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς γεννήματα, ὅτι τὰ νοήματα μὲν εἰσιν υἱοί, τὰ δὲ ἔργα καὶ πράξεις θυγατέρες; *Hier* V 13: μέμνημαι τῶν πρόην εἰρημένων περὶ τοῦ Ἰούδα καὶ τῶν κατοικούντων ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τροπολογιῶν; *HLC* VIII 3: ‘*Memini quondam Deuteronomium disserentem...*’ For an overall assessment see my article: ‘*Origenes pro domo sua*: Self-quotations and the (Re-) Construction of a Literary œuvre’, in Sylwia Kaczmarek and Henryk Pietras (eds), *Origeniana Decima: Origen as Writer* (Leuven, 2011), 3-38.

³⁷ *Hier* II 2: τάχα νῦν εὐρίσκω τὸν λόγον. In *HLC* XXIV there is no allusion to any exegetic difficulty regarding this passage. See also *HNm* III 1.

³⁸ *Hier* XVI 2: πόθεν οὖν νοήσω τὰς πέτρας καὶ τὰς ἐν ταῖς πέτραις τρυμαλιᾶς; ἔρχομαι ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑξοδον, ζητῶ ἵχνος εὐρεῖν διηγέσεως τῶν τρυμαλιῶν τῶν πετρῶν, εὐρίσκω Μωσέα ἐκεῖ βουλόμενον γνῶναι τὸν θεόν.

³⁹ For a similar passage structured in a ‘triadic’ format see *Hier* XX 9: ζητῶ τί διαφέρει τὸ συνιέναι νεφροὺς καὶ καρδίας (*Jer.* 20:12) ... ἐφίστημι γὰρ τῷ σημαινομένῳ τοῦ ἐτάζειν ... εἰ μὴ ἄρα ἐνταῦθα λέγω. A more complex articulation appears in *Hier* XVI 3: Ἄλλ’ εἶδρον μίαν ὅπην μιάς πέτρας, μεταβαίνω τῷ λόγῳ ἀπὸ τῆς ὅπης ἐπὶ τὴν τρυμαλιὰν τῆς πέτρας, ζητῶ καὶ τὰς πολλὰς πέτρας. ἐὰν ἔλθω ἐπὶ τὸν χορὸν εἴτε τῶν προφητῶν εἴτε τῶν ἀποστόλων εἴτε καὶ ἐπαναβεβηκότων ἁγίων ἀγγέλων, λέγω ὅτι πάντες οἱ Χριστοῦ μιμηταὶ ... πέτραι γίνονται. Also *Dial* 27 describes a situation of exegetic *inventio*: Ζητῶ ἵν’ εὕρω ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανε χωρὶς Θεοῦ (2*Cor.* 5:15; *Hebr.* 2:9).

that matters to us here, inasmuch as the fact of detailing in this or that way the discovery *in actu* implies an emphasis on a personal dimension of involvement and risk.

More than the characteristic formulations of 'aesthetic' appreciation recognizing the 'gracefulness' of a given explanation – which may sometimes apply to a particular 'tradition' as in the Alexandrian *Commentary on the Psalms* –⁴⁰, Origen's emphasis on his venturing onto a new level of interpretation also deserves to be taken into account because of its frequency.⁴¹ By signalling the hazards of interpretation Origen mainly aims to increase the creativity of the exegete and to enhance his freedom and courage, accompanying them otherwise with a perceptible sense of responsibility. The latter emerges especially in the concerns of the exegete/preacher in regard to the reactions of his audience. Though trained to be responsive, the audience could fail to follow the interpreter in case he should venture to put forward too bold or too paradoxical an explanation. Thus, when dealing with such indications we may get a glimpse of the controversial atmosphere that surrounded Origen's unconventional activity as a biblical scholar or, at least, was contemplated by him as a possible scenery. Occasionally, the Alexandrian defends his penchant for paradoxes by invoking the words of Paul on the 'foolishness of God' (1Cor. 1:25): if it weren't for the precedent of the Apostle, who had resorted to such a provocative formulation, Origen himself would have been attacked by those who are 'fond of bringing accusations'.⁴² It is not by chance, then, that when trying to elaborate a more precise argument, Origen comes up with exegetic formulations by way of approximation, frequently introducing a paradox or even neologisms and *hapax legomena*.⁴³

⁴⁰ CPs 1-25 = Phil. 3: Μέλλοντες δὲ ἄρχεσθαι τῆς ἐρμηνείας τῶν ψαλμῶν, χαριεστάτην παράδοσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἑβραίου ἡμῖν καθολικῶς περὶ πάσης θείας γραφῆς παραδεδομένην προτάξωμεν. The appreciation can also refer to a provisional explanation as in *Hler* XVIII 4: ἐχέτω καὶ αὕτη ἡ διήγησις χάριν.

⁴¹ Origen's daring vocabulary includes several terms and expressions only a few of which are listed here. See, for example, the similar formulations in *Hler* VIII 8: Μέλλει τι ἐπιτολμᾶν ὁ λόγος καὶ λέγειν; and in *Hler* XX 8: Μέλλει τι ὁ λόγος τολμᾶν, οὐκ οἶδα δὲ εἰ συμφέρον τῷ τοιοῦτῳ ἄκροατηρίῳ καὶ τοιοῦτῳ. See also *Hler* VIII 9: Παράδοξόν τι μέλλει λέγειν ὁ λόγος; *Hler* XII 2: εἰ δὲ βούλει τολμηρότερον με εἰπεῖν; *Hler* XIX 15: τολμῶ καὶ λέγω πολλὰ χαλεπώτερα; *Clo* VI 56, 291: Ἰνα γὰρ τολμηρότερον βασανίζων τὸν λόγον σὺ πρὸς τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν πλείστων ὑπονοούμενα. We find similar formulations in the Latin versions, e.g., in *HLc* XIII 5: 'Si audacter expedit loqui scripturarum sensum sequenti.'

⁴² *Hler* VIII 8: εἰ ἐγὼ εἰρήκειν' τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, πῶς ἂν οἱ φιλαίτιοι <ἐν>ἐκάλεσαν μοι; πῶς ἂν χιλίων μὲν εἰρημένων τῶν νομιζομένων καὶ αὐτοῖς καλῶν, τούτου δὲ ὡς οἶνται οὐ καλῶς εἰρημένου κατηγορήθην, διότι εἶπον τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ; Νυνὶ δὲ Παῦλος ὡς σοφὸς καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἔχων ἀποστολικὴν ἐτόλμησεν εἰπεῖν πᾶσαν τὴν ἐπὶ γῆς σοφίαν, καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἐν Πέτρῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, πᾶσαν τὴν ἐπιδημήσασαν τῷ κόσμῳ εἶναι τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

⁴³ This feature appears both in Latin and in Greek in *H38Ps* II 8: 'Sicut autem peccatum increscere facit, ita e contrario virtus subtilem animam reddit et ut extorqueam quodammodo

Recollection of the past, claims to personal experience

Self-awareness in connection with Origen's task as an exegete can at times take the shape of a recollection related to the past or to personal experiences, frequent or occasional, purposefully selected from among his memories. In response to Africanus, who criticised him for supporting the authenticity of the story of Susannah, Origen pointed both to his careful inspection of the Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible and to his acquaintance with rabbinic teachers. The Alexandrian, probably writing towards the end of his career,⁴⁴ emphasized not only his own expertise of the text that was based on the collation of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, but also the amount of 'labour' (κάματος) he invested in such activity. With an unmistakable hint at his work on the *Hexapla*, Origen assured Africanus that he had devoted a lot of time to assess the meaning of the different 'editions' after having spent already much effort with the Septuagint.⁴⁵ Not satisfied with this, he personally consulted rabbis to learn about some characteristics of the Hebrew language and to gain comparative evidence for the treatment of the Greek versions.⁴⁶ Furthermore, while inquiring about the canonical status of some writings, he found out that *Judith* and *Tobias* were not part of the Jewish canon and even of their *apocrypha* in Hebrew.⁴⁷

The debate with Julius Africanus was not the only occasion when Origen referred to his contacts with the Jewish milieus of Caesarea and Palestine (if he had not already made such contacts even before, when he was still in Alexandria).⁴⁸ It was not unusual for him to participate in discussions with rabbis, as attested by Origen in some exegetical fragments and also in the *Contra*

vocabuli novitatem, omne quod in ea corporeum est, abstergit et perimit et purius eam incorpoream reddit' = 'Ἡ ἀρετὴ δὲ λεπτύνει τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἐκτὴν αὐτὴν καὶ ἵνα βιασάμενος ὀνομάσω, πᾶν τὸ σωματικὸν αὐτῆς ἐξαφανίζει, καὶ καθαρῶς αὐτὴν παρίστησιν ἀσώματον. I treated this aspect in 'Approximations origéniennes: notes pour une enquête lexicale', in Mireille Loubet and Didier Pralon (eds), *EUKARPA. Études sur la Bible et ses exégètes, en hommage à Gilles Dorival* (Paris, 2011), 365-72.

⁴⁴ P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 182 dates *EpAfr* shortly before the Decian persecution, i.e., in 249-250.

⁴⁵ *EpAfr* 3: περὶ ἄλλων μυρίων, ἃ κατὰ τὴν μετριότητα ἡμῶν τοῖς Ἑβραϊκοῖς συγκρίναντες ἀντιγράφοις τὰ ἡμέτερα, πολλαχοῦ εὗρομεν; 5: Εἰ μὴ φορτικὸν γοῦν εἰπεῖν, ἐπὶ πολὺ τοῦτο, ὅση δύναμις, πεποιήκαμεν, γυμνάζοντες αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐκδόσεσι καὶ ταῖς διαφοραῖς αὐτῶν, μετὰ τοῦ ποσῶς μᾶλλον ἀσκεῖν τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τῶν Ο΄; 6: Καὶ τί με δεῖ καταλέγειν ἃ μετὰ πολλοῦ καμάτου ἀνελεξάμεθα, ὅπερ τοῦ μὴ λανθάνειν ἡμᾶς τὴν διαφορὰν τῶν παρὰ Ἰουδαίους καὶ ἡμῖν ἀντιγράφων.

⁴⁶ See especially *EpAfr* 10.

⁴⁷ *EpAfr* 19.

⁴⁸ See Hans Bietenhard, *Caesarea, Origenes und die Juden* (Stuttgart, 1974); Nicholas de Lange, *Origen and the Jews. Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third-Century Palestine* (Cambridge, 1976); Giuseppe Sgherri, *Chiesa e Sinagoga nelle opere di Origene* (Milano, 1982), 42-55. For a new approach see now Anna Tzvetkova-Glaser, *Pentateuchauslegung bei Origenes und den frühen Rabbinen* (Frankfurt a.M., 2010).

Celsus. According to one of his commentaries on the *Psalms*, once he discussed the exact number of the *Psalms* to be attributed to Moses with the Jewish patriarch Hillel the Younger and another rabbi; the latter supported his opinion against the patriarch.⁴⁹ As for the *Contra Celsus*, a passage of the first book (CC I, 45) recalls how the Alexandrian debated with some 'so-called Jewish sage' and made use, as an apologetic argument on behalf of Christianity, of a comparison between Moses and Jesus and their historical impact among the Jews and the Gentiles. In this case the recollection results in a short piece of biblically and historically founded apologetics, whereas the autobiographical record of the dispute is simply evoked as a pretext to summarize its content. A more vivid and detailed description of such debates comes a few chapters later (CC I, 55-56), once again preceded by the same introductory formula indicating a personal memory (μέμνημαι).⁵⁰ One wonders whether disputes such as these ever became the object of a written record, as we have seen in other cases of Origen's public performances, but it is reasonable to assume it at least for some of them.

A new discussion then develops concerning the interpretation of the section of *Isaiah* on the 'suffering servant' (*Isa.* 52, 13:53, 8) and other prophetic texts such as *Psalms* 44. In his way of presenting such episodes, Origen seems at first willing to stress his *individual* confrontation with a *collective* body of rabbinic teachers, who 'are held' to be 'wise'. Yet the dispute may have been held individually, with Origen facing a single rabbi, as he tells us when recollecting a further discussion on *Ps.* 44:3-8.⁵¹ In view of the apologetic challenge faced by the Alexandrian in the *Contra Celsus*, especially in response to Celsus' fictitious Jew, one is not surprised by Origen's emphatic construction here of the rabbis as collective body of uncertain reputation contrary to his clear appreciation of them as exegetical informants elsewhere.

On the other hand, apart from generic mentions of travels and contacts with philosophers and Christian heretics dictated by his 'love of learning' (φιλομαθεια), Origen surprisingly avoids the recourse to direct autobiographical arguments.⁵² Undoubtedly, he would not shied away from using these in his

⁴⁹ PG 12, 1056B-1057C. According to P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 278, it should be a fragment of the Caesarean *Commentary on the Psalms*. In another case, Origen declares to have received 'the most exact' interpretation from the same Hillel the Younger (*CIs* XXX = Jerome, *Contra Ruf.* I 13).

⁵⁰ CC I 55: Μέμνημαι δέ ποτε ἔν τινι πρὸς τοὺς λεγομένους παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις σοφοὺς ζητήσῃ ταῖς προφητείαις ταύταις χρησάμενος, ἐφ' οἷς ἔλεγεν ὁ Ἰουδαῖος ταῦτα περροφητεῦσθαι ὡς περὶ ἑνὸς τοῦ ὅλου λαοῦ, καὶ γενομένου ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ καὶ πληγέντος, ἵνα πολλοὶ προσήλυτοι γένωνται τῇ προφάσει τοῦ ἐπεσπάρθαι Ἰουδαίους τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσι.

⁵¹ CC I 56: Καὶ μέμνημαί γε πάνυ θλίψας τὸν Ἰουδαῖον νομιζόμενον σοφὸν ἐκ τῆς λέξεως ταύτης (*Ps.* 44:7-8).

⁵² In CC V 62 Origen contests the existence of heretic groups whom Celsus supposedly met: ἡμεῖς δὲ οἱ διὰ τὴν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἡμῖν φιλομάθειαν οὐ μόνον τὰ ἐν τῷ λόγῳ καὶ τὰς

eloquent defense of the Christians, both from the doctrinal and the practical point of view, yet he refrained from using them. I suspect that this has something to do with the fact that the *Contra Celsum* is the apologetic work of a ‘reluctant’ exegete, interested first of all in promoting his own image as an authoritative biblical scholar.⁵³ The sparing use of other memories, such as the occasional recollection of readings from philosophical or heretical writings, agree with this picture, incidentally underlining Origen’s concern for the scholarly ethos.⁵⁴

To corroborate his vindication of φιλομάθεια, the Alexandrian also evokes his travelling throughout the Mediterranean world. In view of the importance attributed to this aspect by Eusebius’ biographic account in the sixth book of his *Ecclesiastic History*, the Church historian must have drawn extensively on personal statements made by Origen and more detailed ones than what we can read in the *Contra Celsum*. Actually, several such travels frame Eusebius’ narrative and provide it with a more or less definite chronological structure.⁵⁵ Among the different reasons for travelling, the autobiographical elements at our disposal mostly reflect the need of ἱστορία, that is the direct ‘observation’ of places or things. Whereas in the *Contra Celsum* Origen contents himself with generically mentioning his personal ‘observation’ of miraculous deeds that were still being accomplished among Christians, acknowledging that such an argument may appear dubious to his pagans counterpart, he relies, on the contrary, on his own experience when dealing with topics of biblical geography.⁵⁶ In a well-known passage of the *Commentary on John* he supports the variant Βηθαβαρά instead of Βηθανία in *John* 1:28 against the majority of the manuscripts and he argues for the former by detailing his personal inspection of the spot beyond the Jordan.⁵⁷ This must have been more than an occasional

διαφορὰς τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐξετάσαντες, ἀλλ’ ὅση δύναμις καὶ τὰ τῶν φιλοσοφησάντων φιλαλήθως ἐρευνήσαντες οὐδέ ποτε τούτοις ὁμιλήσαμεν.

⁵³ See my contribution ‘Fra silenzio e parola: dall’apologia alla testimonianza del cristianesimo nel *Contro Celso* di Origene’, in Antonie Wlosok (ed.), *L’apologétique chrétienne gréco-latine à l’époque prénicénienne* (Vandœuvres and Genève, 2005), 103-41.

⁵⁴ In *CC* VI 24, after declaring that the Ophites’ diagram has come into his hands, Origen asserts once again that he never met proponents of such doctrines in his many travels: Τοῦτ’ ὅ’ ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὸ φιλομαθὲς ἡμῶν περιτετεύχαμεν ... Οὐδενὶ γοῦν, καίτοι γε πολλοὺς ἐκπεριελθόντες τόπους τῆς γῆς καὶ τοὺς πανταχοῦ ἐπαγγελλομένους τι εἰδέναι ζητήσαντες, περιτετεύχαμεν πρεσβεύοντι τὰ τοῦ διαγράμματος.

⁵⁵ John McGuckin, ‘Caesarea Maritima as Origen Knew It’, in Robert J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana Quinta* (Leuven, 1992), 3-25, 12: ‘Origen himself seems to have been no stay-at-home as we trace his steps in Egypt, Rome, Jerusalem, Caesarea, Athens, and Arabia’.

⁵⁶ *CC* I 46. See also the motivation for the journey to Rome in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* VI 14, 10: εὐξάμενος τὴν ἀρχαιοτάτην Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίαν ἰδεῖν.

⁵⁷ *Clo* VI 40, 204: Ἐπείσθημεν δὲ μὴ δεῖν Βηθανία ἀναγινώσκειν, ἀλλὰ Βηθαβαρά, γενόμενοι ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐπὶ ἱστορίαν τῶν ἰχνῶν Ἰησοῦ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν. For the exegetical discussion concerning this location see Jeremy M. Hutton, “‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’ in Text, Tradition, and Historical Geography”, *Biblica* 89 (2008), 305-28.

journey, because Origen claims to have undertaken it with the aim of 'following the traces of Jesus, his disciples and the prophets'. The healing of the Gadarene demoniacs (*Matth.* 8:28-34), added as a further example of the confusion of names in the following section of the *Commentary on John*, witnesses a similar familiarity with the region around the Lake of Tiberias, while discussing the three toponyms of Gerasa, Gadara and Gergesa, and opting for the third one as the true place of the Gospel story.⁵⁸

Just as his correspondent and friend Firmilian, the bishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia, the Alexandrian has to be reckoned among the few pre-Constantinian visitors who made an 'exegetic pilgrimage' through the country that would become the 'Holy Land' of Christians only in the fourth century. The precise indication of the distance between Bethany and the Jordan seems already to betray some use of a map or itinerary.⁵⁹ Topographical knowledge gained by his experience as a traveller comes to the fore also elsewhere. Origen, who preached in Jerusalem upon the invitation of bishop Alexander, had perhaps the chance of seeing the Jews weeping over the ruined Temple, according to the moving introduction to the *Seventeenth Homily on Joshua* in which he suggests to the Jews reasons for hope.⁶⁰ One would expect also a location in Jerusalem for the Judeo-Christian tradition concerning Adam's burial on the Calvary reported in the *Commentary on Matthew*.⁶¹ Origen probably went to Bethlehem or was otherwise acquainted with the local tradition that identified the Grotto of Nativity, as he writes in a famous passage of the *Contra Celsum*.⁶² Moreover, when commenting on *Jos.* 11:8 ('The Lord handed them over to Israel

⁵⁸ *Clo* VI 41, 208-11. Note the description of Gergesa which implies a setting for the story on this spot: 'Ἀλλὰ Γέργεσα, ἅφ' ἧς οἱ Γεργεσαῖοι, πόλις ἀρχαία περὶ τὴν νῦν καλουμένην Τιβερίαδα λίμνην, περὶ ἣν κρημνὸς παρακείμενος τῇ λίμνῃ, ἅφ' οὗ δέικνυται τοὺς χοίρους ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμόνων καταβεβλήσθαι.

⁵⁹ *Clo* VI 40, 205: Βηθανία γάρ, ὡς ὁ αὐτὸς εὐαγγελιστὴς φησιν, ἡ πατρὶς Λαζάρου καὶ Μάρθας καὶ Μαρίας, ἀπέχει τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων σταδίου δέκα πέντε (*John* 11:18): ἧς πόρρω ἐστὶν ὁ Ἰορδάνης ποταμὸς ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίων πλατεῖ λόγῳ ἑκατὸν ὀγδοήκοντα. Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὁμώνυμος τῇ Βηθανίᾳ τόπος ἐστὶν περὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην· δέικνυσθαι δὲ λέγουσι παρὰ τῇ ὄχθῃ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου τὰ Βηθαβαρὰ, ἐνθα ἱστοροῦσιν τὸν Ἰωάννην βεβαπτικέναι.

⁶⁰ See *Hlos* XVII 1. With regard to this passage, Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy. Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven and London, 1992), 74, comments: 'Origen had also seen Jews weeping in Jerusalem'.

⁶¹ *CMtS* 126: Περί τοῦ κρανίου τόπου ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμέ, ὅτι Ἑβραῖοι παραδιδόασιν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἀδάμ ἐκεῖ τετάφθαι. See Alain Le Boulluec, 'Regards antiques sur Adam au Golgotha', in M. Loubet and D. Pralon (eds), *EUKARPA* (2011), 355-63.

⁶² *CC* I 51: Περί δὲ τοῦ γεγεννησθαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐν Βηθλεὲμ εἰ βούλεται τις μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Μιχαῖα προφητείαν καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀναγεγραμμένην ἐν τοῖς εὐαγγελίοις ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰησοῦ μαθητῶν ἱστορίαν καὶ ἄλλοθεν πεισθῆναι, κατανοησάτω ὅτι ἀκολούθως τῇ ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ περὶ τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ ἱστορίᾳ δέικνυται τὸ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ σπήλαιον, ἐνθα ἐγεννήθη, καὶ ἡ ἐν τῷ σπηλαίῳ φάτις, ἐνθα ἐσπαργανώθη. Καὶ τὸ δεικνύμενον τοῦτο διαβόητόν ἐστιν ἐν τοῖς τόποις καὶ παρὰ τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ἀλλοτρίοις, ὡς ἄρα ἐν τῷ σπηλαίῳ τοῦτῳ.

and they struck them down and chased them all the way to Greater Sidon'), he remembers his stay in Sidon and testifies that he knows only one city with this name.⁶³ On occasions Origen would claim, in more generic terms, an intimate knowledge of countries like Palestine and Egypt based upon his long-standing experience of them: he did so, for instance, in response to Africanus, and again in reply to the letter of a young disciple.⁶⁴ In both cases the autobiographical detail is just a hint, but Nautin was right when in Origen's own words he stressed in the *Letter to Gregory* the 'heart of a father'.⁶⁵

Memories of traditions and self-quotations: Progressing in self-promotion

So far we could observe how directly autobiographical materials converged with the expressions of Origen's self-awareness as an exegete, further confirming the image that emerged at the beginning in our discussion of the 'autobiographical core' of his writings. The relative scarcity of autobiographical elements can be partly counterbalanced by another type of occasional information that we are able to gather from the works of the Alexandrian. Therefore, before concluding this investigation, let me briefly point to a triple set of evidence consisting of traditions, self-quotations, and confessions. Such materials will allow us to move on in the reconstruction of Origen's self-promotion as teacher and writer in the eyes of his public, with the help of specific traditions recalled by him and especially with the help of his many self-quotations. In addition to this, such passages that can be defined as 'confessions' will give us a more immediate access to the secret of the Alexandrian's self-identity.

For a creative mind such as that of Origen, who understands himself as decisively marked by his vocation as interpreter of the Bible, as teacher, and as preacher, the fact of pointing to certain traditions indicates the wish to situate himself within a particular stream of thought and to appropriate a doctrinal heritage or integrate himself in a religious milieu. Strangely enough, apart from the unique mention of Pantaenus and Heraclas in the *Letter to Alexander of*

⁶³ *HIos* XIV 2.

⁶⁴ See respectively *EpAfr* 20: καὶ τοῦτο ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τοῦ ἔθνους πολὺν διατρίψαντες χρόνον μεμαθήκαμεν; and *EpGr* 3 = *Phil.* 13, 3: ἀγὼ δὲ τῇ πείρᾳ μαθὼν εἶποιμ' ἂν σοι, ὅτι σπάνιος μὲν ὁ τὰ χρήσιμα τῆς Αἰγύπτου λαβὼν καὶ ἐξελθὼν ταύτης καὶ κατασκευάσας τὰ πρὸς τὴν λατρείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. See also the important information in *EpAfr* 20 concerning the political situation of the Jews: Καὶ νῦν γοῦν Ῥωμαίων βασιλευδόντων, καὶ Ἰουδαίων τὸ διδραχμα αὐτοῖς τελούντων, ὅσα συγχωροῦντος Καίσαρος ὁ ἐθνάρχης παρ' αὐτοῖς δύναται, ὡς μηδὲν διαφέρειν βασιλεύοντος τοῦ ἔθνους, ἴσμεν οἱ πεπειραμένοι.

⁶⁵ *EpGr* 4. See P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 157: 'Origène fait allusion à son "expérience" personnelle du milieu intellectuel d'Alexandrie; beaucoup s'y perdent, mais quelques-uns, dont il est, on su prendre à l'Égypte ce qu'elle a de bon. (...) C'est la lettre d'un prêtre qui a vu un de ses jeunes amis partir pour l'université païenne et qui craint qu'il n'y perde la foi après tant d'autres' – 'pages écrites avec un cœur de père'.

Jerusalem, Origen is silent on his intellectual genealogy, with regard not only to the so-called 'Christian school of Alexandria' but more generally to the literary and doctrinal output of so many Christian teachers and writers before him. He certainly had some of these at the back of his mind when he wrote. He even quoted, though rather rarely, some of their works, especially when fighting, with apologetic or polemic aims, against heretics like Heracleon. However, despite the use of Philo and Clement and the recognition given to the Alexandrian tradition of allegorical interpretation, Origen never presents himself in a succession of teachers going back to the Apostles as Clement does in the first book of the *Stromata*.⁶⁶

Origen seems to stand in isolation and one feels that he would prefer to relate himself more or less immediately to the prophets and apostolic witnesses of the divine Word such as Jeremiah and Paul. In reality, prophets and apostles, though definitely informing his self-consciousness, are not the only figures whom Origen regards as his predecessors. We do not lack passages in which the Alexandrian appreciates tradition and has recourse to it showing his debt towards the 'ancients'. Among such 'traditions', the most notable have to do with a 'Jewish teacher', normally called 'the Jew' (ὁ Ἑβραῖος), with whom Origen must have been familiar in Alexandria. Quite significantly, he is first mentioned at the very beginning of Origen's literary activity, when after much hesitation he wrote the *Commentary on Psalms 1-25*,⁶⁷ but this man has left traces in many other places in Origen's works. In a passage of the *Twentieth Homily on Jeremiah* (if this refers to the same person), Origen even sketches a biographical notice of him. He recalls the conversion of this Jew to Christianity before he adopts his interpretation of God's 'deceit' with the prophet *Jeremiah*.⁶⁸ In his eyes, the Jew is an exegetical authority, who supports his own interpretation of prophetic texts, as we see again in the *Ninth Homily on Isaiah*.⁶⁹ The encounter with this teacher must have been very important for Origen's career as an exegete and his insistence on naming him as 'the Jew' and to qualify his traditions as 'Jewish' testifies to his acknowledgment of an exegesis different

⁶⁶ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* I 1, 11.

⁶⁷ See above n. 40.

⁶⁸ *Hier* XX 2: Καὶ πρῶτον χρῆσθαι παραδόσει Ἑβραϊκῇ, ἐληλυθυῖα εἰς ἡμᾶς διὰ τινος φυγόντος διὰ τὴν Χριστοῦ πίστιν καὶ διὰ τὸ ἐπαναβεβηκέναι ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ ἐληλυθότος ἐνθα διατρίβομεν. This passage raises doubts about the location of the 'Jew' in Alexandria or Caesarea. For P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 417 the Jewish teacher played a fundamental role in shaping Origen's exegesis and spirituality: 'On peut dire qu'Origène a eu deux maîtres de vie chrétienne: dans son enfance son père le martyr et à l'époque de sa conversion "l'Hébreu"'.
⁶⁹ See *HIs* IX 1. Further memories probably concerning the same Jew can be found in *HIs* XVI, 5: 'Quendam de senioribus magistris audivi dicentem'; and *HEx* XI 4: 'Ut a maioribus accepimus'. Yet Origen could refer to an exegetical tradition of a different origin, as in *H36Ps* II 6 with regard to *Ps.* 36(37):11: 'Didicimus a quodam presbytero proferre haec ad convincendos eos (scil. the Valentinians)'.

from what was normally practiced by the Christian interpreters and yet likely to be integrated in his own explanation of the Holy Scriptures.⁷⁰ Such appreciation, as it seems, has thus less to do with an apologetic purpose than with the expertise sought for by the biblical scholar.

As for the self-quotations, they supply the richest group of autobiographical elements in the writings of Origen and help us to better capture the image he cherished of himself as a writer and the manner in which he recommended it.⁷¹ As I tried to show in a previous contribution, the typology of self-quotations can assume different forms, going from simple, generic allusions to previous works, without even naming the title and the genre, to quotations coming quite near to what we would call today 'bibliographic entries'. Generic self-references appear either when the subject had been discussed by the Alexandrian on other occasions or when a specific treatment of the scriptural passage commented upon, in the form of a commentary or a homily, was still lacking.⁷² In fact, a second, much larger group of self-quotations is related to the interpretation of scriptural *loci* for which Origen has provided a specific contribution by commenting upon a given biblical book.⁷³ One wonders, both in the first and in the second case, how the readers could take advantage of such indications unless they were familiar with all the writings of the Alexandrian. Consequently, one might assume that the intended readership consisted mainly of Ambrosius, the disciples of Origen's school, and a few other followers and friends.

However, even generic self-quotations contribute to create a sense of continuity in the activity of the interpreter, both for the author himself and for his audience, as well as to enlarge the horizon of the latter by making it attentive to the ensemble of the *corpus* and to the availability of a more in-depth treatment elsewhere.⁷⁴ They also may stimulate recollection by the audience, fostering the model of a cooperative reader/listener, as when the preacher mentions recent explanations of given passages.⁷⁵ In addition to this, especially with

⁷⁰ CRm X 7: 'Ut autem adhuc quanta sit unanimitatis virtus et quanta gratia clarius fiat non puto absurdum videri si ea quae nobis etiam in Veteri Testamento a patribus rationabiliter tradita sunt, his scilicet qui ex Hebraeis ad Christi fidem venerunt, in medium proferamus.'

⁷¹ What follows is a summary of my article quoted above (n. 36).

⁷² See, for instance, the following formulations: ἐν ἑτέροις in *CIO* I 35, 255; ἐν ἄλλοις in *Orat.* XV 1; and *CC* VII 55.

⁷³ For example, the reference to *CGn* in *Orat.* XXIII 4: περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐπὶ πλεῖον διειλήφαμεν, ἐξετάζοντες τὰ εἰς τὴν Γένεσιν.

⁷⁴ This can occasionally imply a reference to another location (Jerusalem?), as witnessed by *HIOs* III 4: 'Scio me aliquando in quadam ecclesia disputantem de duabus meretricibus, de quibus scriptum est in tertio libro Regnorum, quae ad iudicium venerant Salomonis, quarum una vivum, alia mortuum habebat infantem, discussisse diligentius.'

⁷⁵ For instance in *HReG*, in connection with *Ps.* 21(22): καὶ κατελήλυθεν εἰς τὰ χωρία ἐκεῖνα οὐχ ὡς δοῦλος τῶν ἐκεῖ, ἀλλ' ὡς δεσπότης παλαισῶν, ὡς πρῶην ἐλέγομεν ἐξηγοῦμενοι τὸν κα' Ψαλμόν.

references made by simply mentioning the biblical book as object of a prior interpretation, such self-quotations enhance the status of the author as an overall interpreter of the Bible. It is not by chance that Origen often accompanies such mentions with a modesty clause in order to avoid the impression of an excessive self-confidence in the results of his own exegesis.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, he extends as far as he can the system of cross-references, by pointing not only to the individual *tomoi* but also to the homilies, at least when a commentary is not yet available (as we see most strikingly with the mention of the *Homilies on Luke* both in the *Commentary on John* and the *Commentary on Matthew*).⁷⁷ By so doing Origen shapes the image of his *œuvre* as a set of interrelated pieces, capable of supplementing each other within a larger corpus. Interestingly, his preference normally goes to the exegetic writings with very few exceptions for two lost treatises: *On the Resurrection* (written in Alexandria and quoted first in *De principiis* and then in the *Contra Celsum*) and the *Stromata* (also going back to the Alexandrian period and mentioned in Book XIII of the *Commentary on John*).⁷⁸

Somewhat surprisingly, there is no mention of *De principiis* in *De oratione*, although the latter treatise rewrites an important argument already dealt with in the previous work, a unique occurrence in our author.⁷⁹ More generally, nowhere else do we find a secure reference to his dogmatic masterpiece, apart from a dubious passage in Rufinus' translation of the *Commentary on Romans* referring to the 'Treatise on free will'.⁸⁰ It looks as if the Alexandrian would be uniquely interested in transmitting to his readership the image of an author who is *par excellence* a commentator of the Bible. We find the conclusive proof to this in the *Contra Celsum*. There, Origen indicated with more precision the titles of his earlier writings, but he referred almost exclusively to exegetical works.⁸¹ Especially when mentioning the important *Commentary on Genesis*, he emphasized for his Christian and pagan readers the fact that he had delivered

⁷⁶ See the reference to a commentary on *Ps. 2* belonging to the early Alexandrian period in *De Princ.* II 4, 4: *De quibus secundum parvitatem sensus nostri cum secundi psalmi exponeremus illum versiculum, in quo ait: Tunc loquetur ad eos in ira sua, et in furore suo conturbabit eos (Ps. 2:5), prout potuimus, qualiter hoc intellegi deberet, ostendimus.*

⁷⁷ *Clo* XXXII 2, 5; *CMT* XIII 29.

⁷⁸ *De princ.* II 10, 1: '*De quo et in aliis quidem libris, quos de resurrectione scripsimus, plenius disputavimus*'; *CC* V 20: συντέτακται γὰρ ἡμῖν περὶ ἀναστάσεως ἐν ἄλλοις, ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἐξετάσασσι τὰ κατὰ τὸν τόπον; *Clo* XIII 45, 298: ὥς καὶ ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ τῶν Στρωματέων παρεστήσαμεν.

⁷⁹ Compare *De princ.* III 1, 2.4 with *Orat.* VI 1.2. See my analysis in *La preghiera secondo Origene* (2011), 108-16.

⁸⁰ *CRm* VII 16: '*De quibus plenius quidem a nobis in eo libello ubi de arbitrii libertate disseruimus, pro viribus singula quaeque discussa sunt.*'

⁸¹ He mentions twice the *Commentary on Genesis* (*CC* VI 49, 51) and the *Commentary on Romans* (V 47; VIII 65), once the treatise *On Resurrection* (V 20), the *Commentary on the Psalms* (VII 31), and the *Commentary on First Thessalonians* (II 63).

there a detailed interpretation of the narrative about the creation and the origins of humankind. Yet he added that he had written this commentary long ago ‘to the best of his ability (ἐξῆς)’ at the time, admitting that a more in-depth explanation of the Mosaic cosmogony would now demand ‘entire treatises’.⁸² So, the retrospective projection of self-quotations reveals an author who wants to instil the sense of the time past but sees nevertheless his work as inserted in a dynamic sequence of endless interpretation and by the same token is always looking towards the future. Indeed, the self-announcements of further exegetical tasks that Origen plans to fulfil in the future abundantly corroborate this image, so that once more we are brought back to our initial point: autobiographical discourse finds a way in Origen as far as it supports his profile as a biblical scholar. Only in a rather limited number of cases we face what we would like to call, in Augustinian terms, a genre of ‘confessions’.

The ‘limits’ of autobiography: Origen in his own image

Autobiography creates an expectation for opening up a window into the life of a person from his/her own perspective, at least for certain moments of his/her existence, if not for a daily life revisited throughout a more extensive period. As we have seen, such expectations can be fulfilled only to a limited extent in Origen’s works. The Alexandrian is not likely to use an autobiographical register. He does it occasionally, and mostly under apologetic pressure, which orientates the self-communication in a particular direction. Although he then discloses some information about his teachers, studies, contacts, and even his daily *pensum* in a particular moment, a lot of details we would like to know on his way of life remain shrouded in mystery. Now, after research has been going on for centuries, is there still room for painting a more complete picture of Origen as far as our evidence allows? In a brilliant article on ‘Caesarea as Origen knew it’, John McGuckin imagined him walking in the evening on the seafront of the capital of Roman Palestine.⁸³ As we know from the *Letter to Fabian of Rome*, Origen merely complained not to have even the time to take a promenade after dinner...⁸⁴ I believe that McGuckin’s extrapolation is not so unfounded as it may seem, but perhaps it would be more rewarding to consider in autobiographical or biographical perspective other aspects of Origen’s life,

⁸² CC VI 51: ὅλων γὰρ ἡμῖν συντάξεων χρεια εἰς τὴν διήγησιν τῆς κατὰ Μωϋσέα κοσμοποιίας· ὅπερ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν ἡμῖν πρὸ πλείονος χρόνου τῆς ἐνεστηκυίας πρὸς τὸν Κέλσον συντάξεως πεποιήκαμεν, ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸ πλείονων ἐτῶν ἔξεως, ἧς ἐχωροῦμεν τότε, διαλαβόντες περὶ τῶν κατὰ Μωϋσέα ἐξ τῆς κοσμοποιίας ἡμερῶν.

⁸³ J. McGuckin, ‘Caesarea Maritima as Origen Knew It’ (1992), 4: ‘It would not be fanciful to imagine Origen taking his exercise here in the evenings in preference to the more strenuous and perhaps more dubious ambience of the civic Gymnasium’.

⁸⁴ See above n. 21.

which deserve more attention, for instance the similes preferred by the Alexandrian. In other words, we could ask whether these have any connection with his real *Lebenswelt*. It is tempting to think that the impressive metaphor of the acrobat who, after good training, succeeds in 'walking on a tight-rope stretched across the middle of a theatre in mid air and carrying heavy objects',⁸⁵ was not simply a rhetorical device of the *Contra Celsum* to support the idea that the path to virtue is always open to man, but may reflect an experience of the entertainments available in the urban milieu of Alexandria or Caesarea.⁸⁶

However, we should resist the wish of filling the holes of autobiography by means of the notorious inventiveness of biography. The access to the 'intimate' Origen is altogether less difficult than one would suppose by considering our relatively meagre results. He is not at all the sort of author as those praised by Mark Twain when speaking of the biblical books and who, in the words of the American novelist, were so well 'hidden from view'.⁸⁷ On the contrary, the Alexandrian never 'sinks himself entirely out of the side of the reader[s]', because he was always interested in creating a dynamic relation with them, likely to be developed with great profit on both sides.⁸⁸ Within this framework, as we noticed examining the statements about himself made by the exegete at work, Origen was eager to communicate again and again his own feelings and expectations and his subjective involvement reaches its peak in what we should regard as his proper 'confessions'. This term is not out of place here, since these expressions imply a self-revelatory movement, a self-scrutiny and revealing of the 'soul'. Indeed, the constancy of some emotional notes that accompany them invites us to see such self-disclosures not simply as a matter of self-fashioning or self-promotion, but rather as a more immediate reflection of a consolidated self-perception.

Without entering now into the always perilous realm of psychological analysis, let us simply review some of the occurrences more plainly describable as 'confessions'. One of their recurrent features points to a state of the soul which gives way to a passionate effusion. Origen does not conceal his propensity for such emotional involvement in a passage of the *Dialogue with Heraclides*. Discussing while in Arabia the problem of the condition of the soul after death

⁸⁵ CC III 69.

⁸⁶ For a thorough treatment of the theatrical metaphors in Origen see Leonardo Lugaesi, *Il teatro di Dio. Il problema degli spettacoli nel cristianesimo antico (II-IV secolo)* (Brescia, 2008), 509-33. For an interesting recourse to agonistic metaphors see e.g. H36Ps IV 2.

⁸⁷ Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, with an Introduction by Tom Quirk and notes by Guy Cardwell (New York, 2002), 367: 'Who taught those ancient writers their simplicity of language, their felicity of expression, their pathos, and above all, their faculty of sinking themselves entirely out of side of the reader and making the narrative stand out alone and seem to tell itself? Shakespeare is always present when one reads his book; Macaulay is present when we follow the march of his stately sentences; but the Old Testament writers are hidden from view'.

⁸⁸ See, for instance, *Hlos* VII 3: '*Volo ego ipse, qui doceo vos, vobiscum pariter discere.*'

with a second Heraclides and with another colleague called Celer (who thought the soul would remain with the body in the grave), he became so irritated and reacted in such a harsh manner that he wished to abandon the field; finally he accepted to resume the debate and reached an agreement.⁸⁹ It was not the only moment of high tension recorded in this writing, which is held to deliver the *ipsissima vox* of the Alexandrian, as we shall discover shortly. On another occasion, when commenting upon *Jer.* 20:9 ('I will make no mention of the name of the Lord. I will not speak in his name any more'), Origen identifies himself with the situation of the prophet: like Jeremiah, he often feels the temptation to abandon the scene, refraining from the task of teaching and withdrawing into solitude.⁹⁰ The feelings of distress, suffering and hostility that Origen reveals here mirror the criticism and disapproval that his innovative way of interpreting the Bible was bound to encounter. On one occasion, he also vented his bitter awareness of wasting his time with youths, who did not let themselves be persuaded to study the Scriptures, as he hopelessly argued with them so often.⁹¹

The Alexandrian is sometimes led to generalize his own sense of failure as a preacher in face of an audience who apparently proved less permeable to his teachings than he would have wished. In the *Third Homily on Psalm 36* he complained about the present time, regarding it as a period poor of 'arrows', that is preachers of the Word of God like the prophets and the apostles, and as such exposed to suffer hunger for it.⁹² In addition to this, the efforts of those few who were capable of burning the hearts of the hearers with their words, were neutralized through envy and hostility. It is impossible not to recognize the autobiographical connotation of this remark, inasmuch as it finds corroboration in so many other places in Origen's writings. The psychagogic ardour of the Alexandrian is a well-known aspect of his personality, already attested by the author of the *Discourse of Thanksgiving*.⁹³ No one will dispute Origen's efforts to involve his audience as far as he could, through his contagious fervour, after reading the passionate passage of the *Dialogue with Heraclides* in which he invites the Arabian public to undergo a spiritual 'transformation'.

⁸⁹ *Dial.* 10: Ἡλθέν μου εἰς τὰς ἀκοάς, καὶ πεπληροφορεμένος λέγω, ὅτι τινές τῶν ἐνταῦθα καὶ τῶν ἐν ἀστυγείτοσιν οἶονται μετὰ τὴν ἐντεῦθεν ἀπαλλαγὴν τὴν ψυχὴν μὴδὲν αἰσθάνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ εἶναι ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ, ἐν τῷ σώματι. Καὶ οἶδα περὶ τούτου τραχύτερον ἐνεχθεῖς πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον Ἡρακλείδαν καὶ Κέλερα τὸν πρὸ αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοσοῦτον τραχύτερον ὥστε καταλιπεῖν καὶ θελήσαι ἀπελθεῖν.

⁹⁰ *HIer* XX 8.

⁹¹ *HEz* XIII 3.

⁹² *H36Ps* III 3: 'Paucas video sagittas Dei, pauci sunt qui ita loquuntur ut inflamment cor auditoris et abstrahant eum a peccato et convertatur ad paenitentiam ... perpauci sunt tales, et ipsi, si qui sunt, pauci, per invidiam et livorem ita agitur ne omnino vel pauci sint, ne vel prodesse aliquibus possint; 10: Istae ergo sunt dies et istud est tempus famis, cum non sunt qui verbum Dei loquantur.'

⁹³ *PanOrat* 78: ἦν γάρ πως καὶ ἡδεῖα τινὶ χάριτι καὶ πειθοῖ καὶ τινὶ ἀνάγκῃ μεμιγμένος.

Here, insisting on the fact that his hearers had the power to perform such a transformation, he repeatedly indicated it as a necessary condition for avoiding a situation where he could have been reproached for 'giving what is holy to dogs' (*Matth.* 7:6).⁹⁴ It may be that this particular Arabian audience needed such a fiery entreaty, but one suspects things were not much different in Caesarea.

Origen was always concerned with the spiritual impact of the Holy Scriptures and not less anxious about the way he would succeed in bringing his audience to participate in it. To admit in advance his inadequacy, as he so frequently did (and not only in the homilies!), was not merely part of the rhetorical strategy of a preacher substantially sure of himself but looking for a sympathetic response from his audience. In fact, at times he proved personally involved in a way that was by far more invasive than his audience would probably have expected. If he mentioned in passing that his father had died as martyr, just to stress that such a title of glory was of no use without personal engagement for a living faith,⁹⁵ he was less anodyne when he proceeded to a self-scrutiny. In the *Twelfth Homily on Exodus* we find him not simply recommending a general moral paradigm, but also involved in what resembles closely to an honest self-avowal, since Origen accuses himself of being still dependent on the public appreciation and esteem.⁹⁶ He seems to have been less worried with other possible vices than with his yearning for public recognition and fame, an aspiration almost unavoidably bound with his activity as a biblical scholar. Origen did not forget what he had written in the treatise *On Prayer*, when he came to explain the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer: the interpreter of the Bible, too, should be aware of the 'temptation' hidden in his work and arm himself for the impending 'fight' (ἀγών).⁹⁷ This was indeed his life's challenge and its paradox: to put himself forth as man so as to become the voice

⁹⁴ *Dial.* 12: Παρακαλῶ οὖν τοὺς ἀκροατὰς προσέχειν ἑαυτοῖς, μὴ ποτε αἰτιοί μοι γίνωνται τοῦ ἐγκληθῆναι ὅτι τὰ ἅγια παραβάλλω κυσίν; 13: Δέομαι οὖν ὑμῶν, μεταμορφώθητε· θέλετε μαθεῖν ὅτι ἐν ὑμῖν ἔστιν τὸ μεταμορφωθῆναι; 14: παρακαλοῦμεν ὑμᾶς ἵνα μὴ ἐγκληθῶ δι' ὑμᾶς ... "Ἵνα μὴ ἐγκληθῶ, μεταμορφώθητε; 15: Ἀγωνιῶ καὶ εἰπεῖν, ἀγωνιῶ καὶ μὴ εἰπεῖν. Διὰ τοὺς ἀξίους θέλω εἰπεῖν, μὴ ἐγκληθῶ ὡς τῶν δυναμένων ἀκοῦειν ἀποστερήσας τὸν λόγον· διὰ τοὺς μὴ ἀξίους ὁκνῶ εἰπεῖν.

⁹⁵ *HEz* IV 8: 'Nihil mihi conducit martyr pater, si non bene vixero et ornavero nobilitatem generis mei, hoc est testimonium eius et confessionem qua illustratus est in Christo.'

⁹⁶ *HEx* XII 4: 'Ego me ipsum corripio, me ipsum iudico; ego meas culpas arguo; viderint qui audiunt, quid de semet ipsis sentiant. Ego interim dico quod, donec alicui horum deservio, non sum conversus ad Dominum ... Etiam si me amor pecuniae non superat, etiam si possessionum et divitiarum cura non stringit, laudis tamen cupidus sum et gloriam sector humanam, si de hominum vultibus et sermonibus pendeo, quid de me ille sentiat, quomodo me ille habeat, ne illi displiceam, si illi placeam, donec requiro ista, servus horum sum.'

⁹⁷ *Orat.* XXIX 10: τοῦτο παθὼν διὰ τὸ τὸν ἐν τῷ ἀναγινώσκειν τὰ ἅγια πειρασμὸν μὴ νενοηκέναι μηδὲ ὡς πρὸς ἀγῶνα καὶ τότε αὐτῷ ἐνεστηκότα ὀπλισάμενος καὶ στάς. See also *HEz* VII 3: 'Mihi ipsi qui in Ecclesia praedico, laqueos saepe tendit, ut totam Ecclesiam ex mea conversatione confundat ... Iste sermo de me est, qui bona doceo et contraria gero, et sum sedens super cathedram Moysi quasi scribe et Phariseus.'

of God for his own time. As stated so impressively in the *Second Homily on Ezechiel*, he acknowledged that to discover the 'mind of Christ' in the Scriptures was reserved to those who partook 'in the holy Spirit'. As a consequence, those who, like him, were supposed to act as teachers, should deliver their explanation in the form of 'a commentary written not by men but by the angels of God'.⁹⁸

The only way to stand firm in such a fundamentally paradoxical task and claim to be a teacher of the Word of God was to assume it throughout in an attitude of prayer. Just like Augustine, Origen's 'confessions' flow less unrestrictedly in the framework of prayer. It was not by chance that in his *Eleventh Homily on Numbers* the Alexandrian expressed the wish that the 'angel of the Church' would pick out in his interpretations some meanings worthy of Christ and present them to the High Priest for his celestial liturgy addressed to the Father. Though Origen hastened to add that he certainly could not hope for so much and would be happy simply with not being found guilty of erroneous speech,⁹⁹ he knew too well that to comment on the Holy Scriptures essentially meant standing before God and trying to listen to his words and enter into a dialogue with him. In the *First Homily on the Canticle*, the most famous of all his autobiographical confessions describes the coming and going of the Logos, who again and again escapes Origen's embrace.¹⁰⁰ Instead of suggesting a mystical experience in the most common sense, the Alexandrian himself gave the

⁹⁸ HEz II 2-3: 'Si itaque invenio in Moyse et in prophetis sensum Christi, non de corde proprio, sed de sancto Spiritu loquor; si autem nihil congruum inveniens, mihi ipse confingo, quae loquar, fluctuans in sermonibus qui sunt alieni a Deo, de mei potius corde quam de Dei sensibus loquor. Propheta, et dices prophetis qui prophetant, non ait simpliciter de corde, sed de corde suo. Et prophetabis et dices ad eos: Audite verbum Domini. Haec ad me, haec ad eum dicuntur qui doctorem se esse promittit, ut timor Dei in nobis maior oriatur, ut periclitemur quasi sub commentario scripto non ab hominibus, sed ab angelis Dei, sic proferre sermonem. Novi quippe quia, cum in iudicio ille ordo consederit, de quo prophetavit Daniel, et libri fuerint aperti, omnes mei conatus, omnes meae expositiones proferentur in medium, sive in iustificationem sive in condemnationem meam.'

⁹⁹ HNm XI 5: 'Et si mererer ego hodie magnum aliquem et summo pontifice dignum sensum proferre, ita ut ex his omnibus, quae loquimur et docemus, esset aliquid egregium, quod summo sacerdoti placere deberet, poterat fortasse fieri, ut angelus, qui praeest ecclesiae, ex omnibus dictis nostris eligeret aliquid et loco primitiarum Domino de agello mei cordis offerret. Sed ego me scio non mereri nec conscius mihi sum, quod talis aliquis sensus inveniatur in me, quem dignum iudicet angelus, qui nos excolit, offerre pro primitiis vel pro primogenitis Domino. Atque utinam tale sit, quod loquemur et docemus, ut non pro verbis nostris condemnari mereamur; sufficeret nobis haec gratia.'

¹⁰⁰ HCt I 7: 'Deinde conspicit sponsum, qui conspectus abscedit. Et frequenter hoc in toto carmine facit, quod, nisi quis ipse patiat, non potest intellegere. Saepe, Deus testis est, sponsum mihi adventare conspexi et mecum esse quam plurimum; quo subito recedente, invenire non potui quod quaerebam. Rursum igitur desidero eius adventum et nonnumquam iterum venit; et cum apparuerit meisque fuerit manibus comprehensus, rursus elabatur et, cum fuerit elapsus, a me rursus inquiritur et hoc crebro facit, donec illum vere teneam et adscendam innixa super fratruelem meum (Ct. 8:5).'

best explanation of this passage in the *Second Homily on the Canticle* when he said:

The soul of the Bride, you see, is so blessed and perfect, that she is quicker to see, quicker to contemplate the coming of the Word; perceiving also that it is to her own self that Wisdom and Love have come, she says to those who do not see: 'Behold, here He cometh!'

Pray that I too may be able to say: 'Behold, here He cometh!' For if I have the power to expound the Word of God, I also say 'Behold, here He cometh!' in a sense.¹⁰¹

Seen in this light, the activity of the exegete comes close to the spiritual condition of one who prays. In the end, it was precisely this situation which traced for Origen the limits within which autobiographical discourse could seem acceptable. Far from entertaining a self-centered interiority, recourse to autobiography was allowed as long as it helped Origen to see himself as a scholar, teacher, and preacher in the presence of God and to promote and defend this image in front of men.

¹⁰¹ HCt II 10: 'Intellege sponsae animam beatam atque perfectam, quae citius videat, citius sermonis contempletur adventum, quae sibi sapientiam, sibi venisse sentiat caritatem et dicat non videntibus: ecce hic venit (Ct. 2:8). Orate ut et ego possim dicere: ecce hic venit. Si enim potuero Dei disserere sermonem, quodammodo et ego dico: ecce hic venit' (Origen, *The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, trans. by R.P. Lawson [Washington, 1957], 299).

Is the Handmaid Stoic or Middle Platonic? Some Comments on Origen's Use of Logic

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ABSTRACT

According to the *communis opinio* Origen's ideas in the field of logic and dialectics come directly from the Stoic philosophy. My aim is to modify this theory worked out by Louis Roberts, John Rist, and Ronald Heine. I think that Origen used mixed material from Platonist, Stoic and Aristotelian logic incorporated mostly in the works and schoolbooks of Middle-Platonic authors. Naturally, indirectly Origen knows Stoic initiatives in the field of logic, but it is not necessary to count upon his being directly influenced by Stoic logical thinkers. I am here simply and purely destructive and I focus on criticism on papers claiming to prove the direct influence of Stoic logic.

The title of this essay is intended to be an allusion to Ronald Heine's paper, 'Stoic Logic as Handmaid to Exegesis and Theology in Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of John' which is the best and most comprehensive study on Origen's logic, although it focuses exclusively on the *Commentary of John*. In introducing the topic, Heine cites the words of Origen's letter to Gregory in which he writes about how Christians should handle Greek philosophy as the handmaid of Christianity in the same manner as general disciplines are handmaids of philosophy. Treating Origen as a pragmatic and eclectic thinker, Heine speaks as follows:

Origen's advice to Gregory shows that he took the study of philosophy seriously, both for himself and for his students. It also suggests that he was not committed to any one philosophical school, but ranged through them all looking for that which he could use as a Christian scholar. One of the philosophical schools in which Origen found much that was helpful, as a few modern studies have shown, was that of Stoicism.¹

This description presupposes an Origenian method according to which the Alexandrian master was looking for good weapons and tools for creating a theology and defending Christianity against his enemies, and he found the logical part of it in the teachers and works of the Stoa. This view was shared in two earlier papers – in the narrower meaning these are the 'few modern

¹ 'Stoic Logic as handmaid to Exegesis and Theology in Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of John', *JTS* n.s. 44 (1993), 90-117, 90.

studies' mentioned above by Heine – written by Louis Roberts² and John Rist³ who dealt with the question of the relationship between Greek logic and Origen. Roberts distinguishes Origen's Stoicism from the Middle Platonist's use of Stoic dialectics in the following manner:

... [H]is frequent use of classic schemes involving conditional propositions, disjunctions, conjunctions, and combinations of these argues a more than passing acquaintance with Stoic logic. In this Origen differs from his predecessor Clement and other Middle Platonists.⁴

John Rist, although criticizing some statements in Roberts' paper, similarly thinks that Origen had direct contact with Stoic philosophers or Stoic works.⁵ As he says:

Dealing with the famous passage, quoted by Eusebius, where Porphyry reviewed Origen's perverse amalgamation of a Greek education with a barbarian (*i.e.* Christian) life-style, scholars usually comment on the Platonic and Neopythagorean authors Origen is stated to have read: Numenius, Cronius, Moderatus and the rest. But it is less commonly noted that Porphyry also mentions the Stoic Apollophanes, Chaeremon and Cornutus, and it should not be assumed that it was only in regard to the methods of allegorical interpretation that he was indebted to them.⁶

And at the end of his paper Rist expresses himself in the following way:

I am inclined to think that this indicates that he had studied with Stoic teachers, and with Stoic teachers of a 'professional' caste of mind, during his youth at Alexandria.⁷

My aim is to modify this view and to prove that Origen used mixed material from Stoic and Aristotelian logic incorporated in the works and schoolbooks of Middle-Platonic authors. We have no hard and fast evidence that the Alexandrian thinker obtained his logical knowledge directly from Stoics. Naturally, indirectly Origen knows Stoic initiatives in the field of logic, but it is not

² Louis Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic', *TP* 101 (1970), 433-44.

³ John M. Rist, 'The importance of Stoic Logic in the *Contra Celsum*', in Henry J. Blumenthal and Robert A. Markus (eds), *Neoplatonism and Early Christian Thought. Essays in honour of A.H. Armstrong* (London, 1981), 64-78.

⁴ L. Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic' (1970), 442.

⁵ It is undisputed that Origen knew Chrysippus' works at first hand. J.M. Rist, 'The importance of Stoic Logic' (1981), 69, *Cels* I 40; I 64; II 12; IV 63; V 57; VIII 51. Henry Chadwick, the author of the first important study on the relation between Origen and the Stoa, clearly indicates that Origen knew Zeno and Chrysippus. 'Origen, Celsus, and the Stoa', *JTS* 48 (1947), 34-49, 34. The most elaborated paper on the Stoic authors cited by Origen is I.B.6. in Gilles Dorival's contribution at the *Colloquium Origenianum Quintum*, 'L'apport d'Origène pour la connaissance de la philosophie grecque', in Robert J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana Quinta* (Leuven, 1992), 189-216. He stresses that already Hans von Arnim thought that Origen, dealing with Stoic theories, quotes verbatim Chrysippus. Dorival rightly doubts this (*ibid.* 196.).

⁶ J.M. Rist, 'The importance of Stoic Logic' (1981), 64.

⁷ *Ibid.* 76.

necessary to count upon his being directly influenced by Stoic logical thinkers. My aim here is simply and purely destructive and I focus on criticism on papers claiming to prove the direct influence of Stoic logic.

1. The neutral status of the logic from the point of view of a religious world-view and its consequence

In the field of theology, numerous topics can be found which demonstrate the common scholarly starting points and methods used by Origen and pagan philosophers. Theology as science contains moments and topics which should be regarded as fundamental elements of scholarly practice, while at the same time they exert no direct consequences on questions of a religious *Weltanschauung*. This is why the adaptation of numerous elements of standard scholarly practice did not create ideological headaches for Origen. Logic has such neutral status,⁸ which offers another important characteristic, with its methodological repercussions. Although there were several debates on questions of logic, these discussions became more acute points of controversy between the philosophical schools if they were connected with metaphysical or ethical questions, as in the case of logical necessity and determinism. The greater part of the heritage of logical doctrines of Greek philosophers was a common basis for different scholars. As Jonathan Barnes writes: 'In antiquity, logic was not an esoteric discipline, reserved – like medicine or the higher mathematics – for a few specialists. Rather, it was a standard part of the school curriculum, the first subject to be tackled by a young man once he had escaped from the hands of the grammarian and the rhetorician.'⁹ If logic was a basic knowledge methodologically it is more difficult to prove the influence of a determined philosophical school and it is less plausible to think that Origen had to turn to Stoic philosophers or books for instruction as Ronald Heine and his predecessors suggest.

2. General Stoic logic concepts in Origen. Roberts' and Rist's interpretations

In his above-cited, very self-confident statement, where Roberts wants to secure acceptance of his theory of exclusively Stoic influence on Origen in the field of logic, the author provides no proof. His short study, which is limited to three areas of Origen's work influenced by Stoic logic, namely the doctrine of names, the question of the truth-value of propositions, and two argument-schemes, suffers from serious errors. In the first point Roberts misunderstands the Origenian

⁸ An exception is the theory of knowledge which – in Stoic systematization – is part of this field.

⁹ Jonathan Barnes, 'Argument in ancient philosophy', in David Sedley (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2003), 20-41, 22.

theory of proper names, identifies it with Stoic materialism and gives some false criticism on Chadwick's and Harl's translations¹⁰ because he erroneously thinks that the word *pragmata* in the cited texts functions in the strictly technical Stoic meaning.¹¹ It is most misleading to think, as Roberts does, that the Origenian special theory of magical names is identical with his general concept about the meanings of words. In the second point he wrongly finds a Stoic difference between 'true' and 'truth' in Origen.¹² The very essence of this Stoic distinction is that while 'true' is incorporeal and, strictly speaking not being, 'truth' is corporeal.¹³ Anyone who has read any Origen knows that for the Alexandrian master 'Truth' is Wisdom and its nature is intellectual and not corporeal. When Origen adopts the Stoic theory of the absoluteness of truth and falsity and negates the existence of the gradation of truth this procedure bears no relation to the question of Stoic difference between 'true' and 'Truth', as Roberts thinks.¹⁴ Roberts' above-mentioned statement according to which the 'frequent use of classic schemes involving conditional propositions, disjunctions, conjunctions, and combinations of these argues a more than passing acquaintance with Stoic logic' similarly goes too far. The use of syllogism or conditional propositions do not presuppose an attachment to the special logical teaching of any particular philosophical school.¹⁵

Only the third point of Roberts' paper is relevant with regard to the question of the supposed Stoic influence on Origen. This is a short review of two texts from *Contra Celsum*, which give the argument-schemes known as the 'Idle Argument' (II 20) and the 'Argument of two conditionals' (VII 15).¹⁶

2.1. *The Idle Argument (Contra Celsum II 20)*

Origen's use of the refutation of the Idle Argument relates to his answer to Celsus' statement. In Henry Chadwick's translation this passage of the

¹⁰ L. Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic' (1970), 434, 436. According to him Koetschau's German translation is erroneous as well.

¹¹ This failure has already been exposed by J.M. Rist, 'The importance of Stoic Logic' (1981), 67.

¹² L. Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic' (1970), 437.

¹³ ... οὐσία μὲν παρόσον ἢ μὲν ἀλήθεια σώμα ἐστι, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς ἀσώματον ὑπῆρχεν. Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* VII 38. The three aspects of difference between *alētheia* and *alēthes* mentioned by Sextus Empiricus do not occur in Origen's texts. In the same chapter of Sextus the Stoic view of the corporeality of the *hēgemonikon* is emphasized. Origen uses this term for the intellect but never takes it as corporeal being.

¹⁴ L. Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic' (1970), 438.

¹⁵ J. Barnes gives a good example. Based on Sextus Empiricus' *Adv. Math.* VII 213 one can surmise that Epicurus used the so-called Stoic 'second unproved'. But the philosopher of the garden '... did not need a course in logic to employ it.' J. Barnes, 'Argument in ancient philosophy' (2003), 36.

¹⁶ Naturally, Roberts strongly exaggerates when he thinks that the hitherto unknown Stoic type-theory to which Benson Mates alludes ('Origen and Stoic Logic' [1970], 444) can be found in Origen's texts.

philosopher reads as follows: 'If he foretold these events as being god (ταῦτα θεὸς ὧν προεῖπε) he says, then what he foretold must assuredly have come to pass (πάντως ἐχρήν γενέσθαι τὸ προειρημένον). A god, therefore led his own disciples and prophets with whom he used to eat and drink so far astray that they became impious and wicked.' After this, Origen interprets Celsus' wording in such a way that he gives a strong interpretation, according to which 'Celsus thinks that if something has been predicted by some sort of knowledge, then it takes place because it was predicted.' After that, the Alexandrian master gives an even stronger interpretation of Celsus' criticism, and identifies it with the Idle Argument:

The so-called 'idle' argument, which is a sophism, is as follows. It is addressed, let us suppose, to a sick man, and by sophistical reasoning dissuades him from having a physician to restore him to health. The argument runs like this. If it is fated that you recover from the illness, you will recover whether you call in a physician or not; moreover, if it is fated that you will not recover from the illness, you will not recover, whether you call in the physician or not; either it is fated that you recover from the illness, or it is fated that you will not do so; therefore it is futile to call in a physician. With this argument, however, some such argument as this may cleverly be compared. If it is fated that you beget a child, whether you have intercourse with a woman or not, you will not beget a child; either it is fated that you will beget a child, or that you will not do so; therefore it is futile to have intercourse with a woman. For just as, in this instance, it is not futile to have intercourse with a woman, since it is inconceivable and impossible for a man to have children if he has no such intercourse, so also if recovery from illness comes by medical treatment, it is necessary to employ a physician, and it is wrong to say 'it is futile for you to call in a physician'. We have set forth all these arguments on account of the opinion put forward by the most intelligent Celsus, who says: *He foretold these events as being a god, and what he foretold must assuredly have come to pass.* If by *assuredly* he means 'necessarily', we will not grant that to him; for it was also possible for it not to happen. But if by *assuredly* he means simply that 'it will come to pass' (and nothing prevents that from being true, even if it is possible for it not to happen), then my position is in no way affected. For it does not follow from the fact that Jesus correctly predicted the actions of the traitor and of the one who denied him, that he was responsible for their impiety and wicked conduct.¹⁷

It is important to distinguish three aspects of this argumentation. The first one is the question of *futurum contingens*: whether a true prediction is necessarily true or not necessarily true. This is a pure logical or modal logical problem. Origen here shares the view of Stoic Chrysippus against Diodorus Cronus that true prediction is not necessarily true. The second aspect of this argument is an intentional logical problem: whether divine foreknowledge constitutes the truth of the predicted event or not. The third aspect of the problem is the meta-physical question: is the fact of a person's foreknowledge the cause of a future event or not? Does it determinate the future or not, and how does it relate to

¹⁷ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, translated by H. Chadwick (Cambridge, 1953), 86-7.

free will? Naturally, these different aspects are connected to each other and also emerge in Origen's wording. I have cited only the main part of Origen's argument, but a detailed account of the Idle Argument in *Contra Celsum* requires much more thorough commentary to prove that this formulation of the argument presupposes Stoic patterns than is provided by Roberts' one and half pages or the three pages dedicated to the problem by Rist. The reader of these two studies will not find the above distinguished aspects and so will receive no clear picture of the situation. For this argument to be satisfactorily interpreted its possible source shown will require investigation of the context, *i.e.* Apollo's oracle and the killing of Laius, the citing of Euripides *Phoenissae* 18-20:

Beget no children against the will of the gods,
For if thou dost produce a child, thy offspring shall slay thee,
And thy whole house shall pass through bloodshed,
and the conditional character of the prophecy.

This task has been brilliantly accomplished in Susanne Bobzien's book *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy*. According to her conclusion¹⁸ the Origenian reply to the Idle Argument is different from the other, Chrysippian formulation of it in Cicero's *De fato* 30. The latter's refutation is based on a difference between simple and conjoined events and the concept of co-fatedness, while Origen used a parallel argument. Our evidence does not suffice to decide whether Origen takes the refutation of the Idle Argument directly from Chrysippus, or from a later Stoic philosopher or from a Middle Platonist. The similar formulation can be explained by the possibility that the Idle Argument was often discussed in debates between different schools of philosophers and that it was learned by heart. Both Middle Platonist sources discussed the Laius oracle, quoting the same Euripidean text we have in Origen's *Contra Celsum* II 20 immediately before the Idle Argument,¹⁹ and they regarded and similarly named the argument a sophism.²⁰ Therefore it is possible that Origen drew directly upon the Idle Argument and its refutation from a Middle Platonic author and there is no need to suppose direct Stoic influence, as Roberts and Rist did.

2.2. 'The Argument of two conditionals' (*Contra Celsum* VII 15)

The whole presentation of the Argument of two conditionals (*dia dyo tropikōn*) is known to us solely via *Contra Celsum* VII 15. Sextus Empiricus only mentioned it as an example that one cannot understand theoretical concepts purely by hearing some words,²¹ Galen attaches the Argument of two conditionals to

¹⁸ Susanne Bobzien, *Determinism and Freedom in Stoic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1998), 207-8.

¹⁹ Alcinous, *Didascalicus* 26, 2.

²⁰ Ps-Plutarch, *De fato* 11, 574 E.

²¹ Sextus Empiricus, *P.H.* II 3.

the Argument of three conditionals and to other logical forms, demonstrating their complexity and citing Antipatrus and Chrysippus.²² Therefore on this point Origen enriches our knowledge of Greek logic as well as enriching our knowledge of Stoic logic, for there is no question that the final source of the Argument of two conditionals is Stoic, and especially Chrysippian.

Origen here refutes Celsus' following statement: if death or passion are prophesied about a supreme God we should not believe these things because they are incompatible with the notion of a supreme God. Origen aims at the antecedent of the two premises, because death and passion concern Jesus Christ as human being.

We may reply that his assumption is mistaken and would make hypothetical premises that result in contradictory conclusions. This is shown as follows: (i) If the prophets of the supreme God were to say that God will serve as a slave or will be sick or even that He will die, these things will happen to God, since the prophets of the great God must necessarily speak the truth. (ii) On the other hand, if the true prophets of the supreme God say these same things, since things that are intrinsically impossible are not true, what the prophets say of God would not happen. But when two hypothetical premises result in contradictory conclusions by the syllogism known as the syllogism of two propositions, the antecedent of the two premises is denied, which in this instance it that 'the prophets foretell that the great God will serve as a slave or will be sick or will die'. The conclusion is therefore that the prophets did not foretell that the great God will serve as a slave or will be sick or will die. The argument runs like this: If *A* is true, *B* is true also; if *A* is true, *B* is not true; then *A* is not true.

Further on, Origen used an argument parallel to that of the case of the Idle Argument:

The Stoics give the following concrete illustration of this when they say: If you know that you are dead, you are dead; if you know that you are dead you are not dead; it follows that you do not know that you are dead. This is the way in which they make up the premises. If you know that you are dead, what you know is true; then it is true that you are dead. And on the other hand, if you know that you are dead, then it is also true that you know that you are dead. But since a dead man knows nothing, obviously if you know that you are dead, you are not dead. And as I said before, it follows from both premises that you do not know that you are dead.

Therefore Origen mentions the Stoics, and his final source is incontestably Stoic. That notwithstanding, I do not think that the Christian thinker drew directly from Stoic books or Stoic teachers. Arguments like the one of two conditionals were learned by heart by professional philosophers, and Origen had professional competence in the field of philosophy.²³ When Roberts says

²² Galenus, *De Hippocr. et Plat. plac.* II 3 (92) (SVF II, 248).

²³ It seems to be true also for the Origenian argumentation against Celsus. The precise and formal correctness of the Origenian argumentation shows his superiority to Celsus, although

'[t]he use of variables in this way is a sure sign of Stoic influence',²⁴ it should not be accepted as direct influence. The use of proposition variables, was a common heritage of later Greek philosophy, although using variables as numerals was regarded as an idiosyncrasy of Stoics.²⁵ Alcinous, the author of the best known Middle Platonic handbook, uses Stoic hypotheticals, *i.e.* Chrysippean indemonstrables, and named them 'mixed' syllogism. As in the case of an Aristotelian categorical syllogism, here too, he stresses Plato's priority in *Didascalicus*.²⁶ According to our sources there was no real active Stoic logical tradition during the first centuries after Christ. In these times Logic was developed and synthesized by Platonic and Peripatetic thinkers while Stoics focused on popular ethics.

3. Commentary on John. Heine's interpretation

Ronald Heine's paper deals with Stoic matters borrowed by Origen's *Commentary on John* with more caution, accuracy and detailed manner than did his predecessors, Roberts and Rist. I think that his overall picture is correct²⁷ but here I would like to contest some of his conclusions and to show that it is more plausible to think that Origen used a mixed Stoic-Aristotelian logic intermediated by Middle Platonism than direct Stoic sources.

3.1. Commentary on John I 90-2

From the logical point of view the first important text of Origen's *Commentary on John* is an interpretation of *John* 1:1-2. The Alexandrian master regards the statements of the passage as an argument:

Perhaps John, seeing some such order in the argument, did not place *the Word was God* before *the Word was with God*, so that we might not be hindered in seeing the individual meaning of each of the proposition [*axiōmatōn*] in the affirmations of the series.

according to Chadwick in the field of argumentation 'frequently Celsus appears the winner'. 'Origen, Celsus, and the Stoa' (1947), 46.

²⁴ L. Roberts, 'Origen and Stoic Logic' (1970), 441.

²⁵ Apuleius, *Peri hermeneias* 13, 279-80.

²⁶ 'Plato also makes use of mixed syllogisms. Of those which are constructive on the basis of (logical) consequence. There is the following example (*Parm.* 145a-b)...' Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism* 6, 7. Translated with an Introduction and Commentary by John Dillon (Oxford, 1993), 12. See also commentary 83.

²⁷ I think the culminating phrase of Heine's paper better shows the character of Origen's relation to Stoicism than the author's introductory notes on the handmaid. 'In his use of Stoic logic, Origen has employed some of the most sophisticated tools of his day for the analysis of thought. The unobtrusive way in which he uses it shows that he has internalized the subject so thoroughly that it shapes the way he thinks about texts and about the way others have interpreted those texts.' R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 117.

For the first proposition [*axiōma*] is this: *In the beginning was the Word*; and the second: *The Word was with God*; and the next: *And the Word was God*.²⁸

Origen does not say that this series of axioms constitute a syllogism, because this would be an error, but stresses the importance of the right order and the organic unity of the categorical propositions. A little later, he emphasizes the logical significance of the clause *he was in the beginning with God* when he names this statement as the fourth axiom:

After the evangelist has taught us the three orders through the three propositions [*protaseōn*] which were previously mentioned, he sums up the three under one head, saying: *This was in the beginning with God* ... It is as if ... he indicates the previously mentioned God the Word by the expression *this one*, and gathers the three ... into a forth proposition and says: *This one was in the beginning with God*.²⁹

According to the interpretation by Heine the notion *axiōma* used by Origen indicates Stoic influence. But in these texts the Alexandrian teacher identifies *expressis verbis* the meaning of the word *axiōma* and the *protasis* of its Aristotelian counterpart.³⁰ Similarly, the Platonic Apuleius speaks of the identical meaning of *axiōma* and *protasis* in his *Peri hermeneias* inspired by Aristotelian tradition,³¹ the other parallel being Plotinus' treatise V 5, where the Platonic philosopher describing the truth states the following: Εἰ δ' ἀνόητα καὶ ἄνευ ζωῆς, τί ὄντα; Οὐ γὰρ δὴ προτάσεις οὐδὲ ἀξιώματα οὐδὲ λεκτά.³² The Origenian notes on terminological questions merely show the existence of a Platonic-Aristotelian or school-independent attitude. Moreover, Heine admits that the commentary's more usual term is *protasis*.³³ Furthermore, I do not want to assert that propositional logic is exclusively Stoic and that term logic is Aristotelian. But here Origen's train of thought is connected to subject-predicate logic, and no Stoic scholar is known to us who created new theories in this field. The above cited texts are proof of an Origenian knowledge of logic and scientific methodological matters, but they do not show the influence of any special Stoic logical teachings. Therefore Origen uses logical terminology in order to highlight the importance of the collection of different notions into a single categorical proposition. According to the Alexandrian master this procedure

²⁸ *Comm. in Jo* II 11. All translation is of Heine (Sometimes I used Latin letters instead of Heine's Greek characters. See R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' [1993], 92.) Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John Books 1-10*. The Fathers of the Church Vol. 80 (Washington, D.C., 1989), Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel according to John Books 13-32*, trans. Ronald E. Heine, The Fathers of the Church Vol. 89 (Washington, D.C., 1993).

²⁹ *Comm. in Jo* II 34-5.

³⁰ Τέσσαρα γὰρ ἀξιώματα, ἅπερ παρά τισι προτάσεις καλοῦνται... *Comm. in Jo* II 65. R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 92-3.

³¹ Apuleius, *Peri hermeneias* I 265.

³² *Enn.* V 5, 1, 37-8.

³³ R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 93.

of the evangelist seems at first sight to be tautological practice, but the trained thinking understands its correctness. Origen stresses the import of the *akoluthia* (sequence, consistency) everywhere in the commentary, but it would be a mistake to identify simply *akoluthia* with logical consequence, because according to Origen's theory of explanation of the Scripture there are texts in the Scripture which are directly in opposition with the 'consistency of history', and this use of the word of *akoluthia* is very different from the concept of logical consequence.³⁴

When Heine connects the question of verbal ambiguity [*amphibolia*] to Stoicism³⁵ it is a similarly unfounded restriction of possible influence. Although the definition of the *amphibolia* can be found in Diogenes Laertius' record on Stoicism,³⁶ this has no parallel in Origen and the notion of the *amphibolia* was known to everyone who was dealing with rhetoric and logic. The sole unquestionable verbatim citation of Aristotle which offers Origen is purely the definition of the grounds and the cause of the *amphibolia*, namely the notion of *homonymia*: 'Ὁμώνυμα δέ ἐστιν, ὃν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὃ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ἕτερος.'³⁷ The roots of Stoic theory of ambiguity reach deeply into earlier philosophers, especially Aristotle, therefore if we find Aristotle quoted in Origen, the direct or indirect link is obviously Aristotelian or Middle Platonic and not Stoic.

Similar things can be said about Origenian use of the Stoic first and second non-demonstrable arguments, which are regarded by Heine as proofs of the influence of Stoic logic on Origen.³⁸ Just as Epicurus '... did not need a course in logic to employ it', neither did Origen.³⁹ The use of such arguments says almost nothing about their origin and less about direct sources.

3.2. Commentary on John XX

The main part of Book XX of the *Commentary on John* deals with the Gnostic theory of different natures that emerged in Heracleon's explanation criticized by Origen. For its refutation Origen uses logical weapons. Commenting on the verse of *John* 8:41a, *you do the works of your father*, he attaches to it two sentences of *1John* 3:8-9 which state *He who commits sin is of the devil* and

³⁴ *De princ.* IV 2, 9. *Nota bene* *akoluthia* is also a word used frequently by the Stoics.

³⁵ R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 93-4.

³⁶ 'Verbal ambiguity arises when a word properly, rightfully, and in accordance with fixed usage denotes two or more different things, so that at one and the same time we may take it in several distinct senses.' Diogenes Laertius VII 62. Translated by R.D. Hicks.

³⁷ *HomJer* 20,1, *Origenes Werke* III, ed. Erich Klostermann, GCS 6 (Leipzig, 1901), 177, 17-9. This passage is the quotation of the first sentence of the *Categories*. I do not think that the definition comes directly from this work. It is possible that some lexica offered it for Origen.

³⁸ R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 96.

³⁹ J. Barnes, 'Argument in ancient philosophy' (2003), 36.

everyone who has been born of God does not commit sin.⁴⁰ From the assertoric propositions he made conditionals: 'If one commits sin, he is of the devil; if one does not commit sin, he has been born of God'. In the previous example, when Origen used logic of terms, Heine does not stress the importance of distinguishing between Aristotelian term logic and Stoic propositional logic, but now he regards them as Stoic logical idiosyncrasies comprising conditional propositions.

In the second section of Book XX, which addresses the question of different natures, Heine thoroughly investigates the context of the following passage from John: *If God were your father, you would love me* and its Origenian explanation.⁴¹

If, then, the [conditional] proposition is true, *If God were your father, you would love me*, it is clear that the [conditional] contrary to this is also true: If you do not love me, God is not your Father. God is not the Father, therefore, of those who do not love Jesus. And there was a time when Paul did not love Jesus. There was a time, then, when God was not Paul's Father. Paul, therefore, was not a son of God by nature, but later became a son of God, since we would also consider true the consequent derived from the conditional proposition, namely 'but in fact, God is your Father, therefore you love Jesus'. But, in addition, since the [conditional], 'if God were your father, you would love me', was true prior to Paul's faith, it would be fitting to admit that Jesus said [then], as it were, 'but in truth, you do not love me, therefore God is not your Father, Paul.

It is true that in this part Origen uses such Stoic notions as 'conditional proposition' [*tou synēmmenon*], 'therefore' [*ara*] or 'consequent' [*to akolouthon*], but this fact does not prove that he directly followed Stoic patterns, because these terms were also continually used by contemporary Platonists (for example by Alcinous). At the same time, the question of the rule of contraposition which remained without analysis in Heine's study may be placed under scrutiny.⁴² Origen argues in the following way: We should start from the scriptural wording: *If God were your Father, you would love me*. If this is true, the contraposition of this proposition is true, also: If you do not love me, God would not be your Father. Because the rule of the contraposition is right, we can conclude from the latter proposition: God is not the Father of those who do not love Jesus. Origen takes the following premise: There was a time when Paul did not love Jesus, therefore according to the conclusion God was no father of Paul, that is, Paul cannot be regarded as pneumatic nature, which is a standard

⁴⁰ *Comm. in Jo* XX 107.

⁴¹ R. Heine, 'Stoic Logic as handmaid' (1993), 103-7, *Comm. in Jo* XX 135-40.

⁴² On this point Cécile Blanc is clearly wrong in her commentary notes when she identifies this contraposition with the Argument of two conditionals in *Contra Celsum* VII 15 and with the second Chrysippean unproved in Diogenes Laertius, VII 80. Origène, *Commentaire sur Saint Jean*. Tome IV, SC 290 (Paris, 1982), 383.

proposition of the Gnostic theory.⁴³ The rule of the contraposition originates in Aristotle's logic.⁴⁴ For the purpose of argumentation therefore Origen uses here the rule of the contraposition as his starting point and not the second Chrysippian unproved rule (*deuteros anapodeiktos tropos*).

3.3. Commentary on John XXXII. *The glorification of the Son and the Father*

The best argument of the Origenian use of Stoic logic offered by Heine is the text of XXXII 318-67 of the *Commentary on John*, in which the Christian thinker describes the glorification of the Son and the Father in the economy of suffering (*John* 13:31-2). Here the existence of the Stoic terminology is at its most transparent.

Now, for the sake of clarity, let us give careful attention to what is said in the first proposition: *Now is the Son of Man glorified*; and in the second: *And God is glorified in him*; and in the third, which is a conditional proposition [*synēmmenō*] as follows: *If God be glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself*; and in the fourth: *And he will glorify him immediately*. One might perhaps construe this latter proposition as a conjunctive proposition [*eis symplokēn*] which is the consequent [*tēn en tō lēgontī*] of the conditional proposition, so that the conditional [*to synēmmenon*] begins after the proposition, *God is glorified in him*, and concludes [*lēgē*] with the conjunctive proposition, *God will glorify him in himself; and he will glorify him immediately*.⁴⁵

Although this Origenian argument does not contain the Stoic term of *axiōma* and it cannot be regarded as an example of Stoic propositional logic because it shows an obvious subject-predicate structure, it contains more Stoic logical *termini technici* than the previously cited texts.⁴⁶ Without doubt, the Christian thinker uses in an unobtrusive way the elements of the Stoic logical doctrine in these sentences and in the ones which follow. But this passage and all of the Origenian phrasing show rather the influence of a common logical heredity in which it is very difficult to distinguish the Stoic, Aristotelian and Platonic elements. One cannot find the pure form of Stoic logic in Origen's texts, and there is no proof of direct influence of earlier or contemporary Stoic works upon Origen. For this reason there is no need to suppose a personal relation between Origen and Stoic Logicians.

⁴³ *Comm. in Jo* XX 135-9. Origen uses the rule of contraposition and the double negation in *Comm. in Jo* XIII 203.

⁴⁴ Εἰ γὰρ τοῦ Α ὄντος ἀνάγκη τὸ Β εἶναι, τοῦ Β μὴ ὄντος ἀνάγκη τὸ Α μὴ εἶναι. *Anal. pr.* II 2 (53b 12). This passage is one of the few where Aristotle works with propositions.

⁴⁵ *Comm. in Jo* XXXII 329-30.

⁴⁶ It should be noted that such terms as *to hēgoumenon* (antecedent) and *to lēgon* (consequent) which are part of the Stoic nomenclature were used by Platonic thinkers, for example Alcinous, *Didascalicus* 6,7,4. Τὸ δὲ ἡγούμενον· τὸ ἄρα λήρον.

Rethinking the Rationales for Origen's Use of Allegory

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ABSTRACT

The growing dissatisfaction of current scholars with the meagre results produced by the use of modern analytic categories to explain early Christian exegesis calls for developing alternate analyses. Recent studies in ancient philosophy indicate how Origen's practice of biblical interpretation can be understood to be an essential aspect of the mind's ascetical training. Rather than evaluating Origen's conclusions, we are better off situating his interpretive efforts within his overall style of inquiry and engaging with him in the intellectually demanding meditational practices he advocated. Faced with the mental, physical, and political impediments that constrain the human mind, Origen's exegetical enterprise was a daring form of reasoning about the nature of things. By using the words and images of scripture as a material path for its travels, Origen contended that the mind, through various practiced mental inquiries, could be led to what would otherwise be beyond its scope of vision. In this way, for Origen, scriptural interpretation is drawn into prayer's fundamental itinerary from the world's material surface, to matters of the soul, and eventually to the Spirit itself.

How best to understand Origen's use of allegory was one of the more controversial topics in twentieth century early Christian studies.¹ Perhaps this is not surprising since Origen's method of scriptural interpretation was disputed in his own lifetime and never ceased to contribute to his notoriety. Scholars have sought to determine allegory's provenance, the extent that it preserved or abrogated the historical sense of texts, and have speculated about its social function suggesting, among other things, that it was an ingenious tool to imbue authoritative texts with respectable meanings. I suspect that this discussion is much like other controversies about Origen that have erupted over the centuries. The terms of the debate continue largely to be set by later theological and

¹ See, among many others, Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et esprit: l'intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris, 1950) = *id.*, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture According to Origen*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco, 2007); Jean Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri: études sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Paris, 1950) = *id.*, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, trans. Wulstan Hibberd (Westminster, Md., 1960); R.P.C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (London, 1959); and Jean Pépin, *Mythe et allégorie: les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes*, Études augustiniennes (Paris, 1976).

philosophical concerns, which, in turn, are what distinguish those faulting Origen from those seeking to vindicate him.

Current scholars who study early Christian exegesis share a growing dissatisfaction with the modern analytic categories they have inherited. Especially when it comes to Origen, scholars increasingly feel the need to find new language and categories to explain his hermeneutical methods. Frances Young asserts in an influential monograph, 'that neither the self-conscious practice of detailed exegesis, nor its broader hermeneutical principles, are properly attended to by the standard analysis'.² O'Keefe and Reno state in the preface to their book that they decided to continue to use such terms as allegory and typology only because of the lack of any better terms.³ Traditional distinctions, such as that between allegory and typology, when they continue to be employed are either used uncomfortably or rejected altogether in favour of revised terminology such as 'figural reading' or 'noetic exegesis'.⁴ It has long been known that Origen's methods were largely shared with the Hellenistic grammatical and philosophical schools.⁵ Origen's debt to Greek non-Christian intellectuals has given rise to debates about the relative purity of his Christianity.⁶ Wherever one stands on that long debated issue, it is worth noticing that recent studies of ancient philosophy have clarified how allegorical reading could be construed in the Hellenistic world as a legitimate mode of philosophical inquiry, that is, how it was a form of reasoning about the nature of things.⁷ It is now possible

² Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Peabody, Mass., 2002), 201. Similarly, Elizabeth A. Clark states that 'the traditional distinction between "typology" and "allegory" held by an older generation of scholars, both Catholic and Protestant, is largely unprofitable' in constructing her account of the early Christian textual practices she terms 'ascetic exegesis', *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, N.J., 1999), 73.

³ John J. O'Keefe and R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore, 2005), xii.

⁴ Peter Martens calls for ridding ourselves of the distinction altogether, 'Revisiting the Allegory/typology Distinction: The Case of Origen', *JECS* 16 (2008), 283-317. See David Dawson's use of 'figural reading', in *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley, 1992) and *id.*, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (Berkeley, 2002). For 'noetic exegesis', see Eric Osborne, 'Philo and Clement: Quiet Conversion and Noetic Exegesis', *Studia Philonica* 10 (1998), 108-24 and Blossom Stefaniw, *Mind, Text, and Commentary: Noetic Exegesis in Origen of Alexandria, Didymus the Blind, and Evagrius Ponticus* (Frankfurt am Main, 2010).

⁵ A main theme in F. Young's *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (2002). For example, regarding Origen, she states that Origen's 'second-century situation has certainly been influenced subsequently by the practices and intentions of the literary élite' (133). See also Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 2 vols., Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 18, 1-2 (Basel, 1987).

⁶ For a prominent recent example of scholarship along these lines, see Mark Edwards, *Origen Against Plato* (Burlington, Vt., 2002).

⁷ See Gerald L. Bruns, 'The Problem of Figuration in Antiquity', in Gary Shapiro and Alan Sica (eds), *Hermeneutics: Questions and Prospects* (Amherst, 1984), 147-64; Blossom Stefaniw,

to see how Origen himself may have understood his own exegetical strategies to be part and parcel of his intellectual practice.

My argument here is that Origen's practice of biblical interpretation is better understood as a hermeneutical exercise fostering certain habits of mind than as a quest for fixed meanings outside of the self; or to put it in less scholarly terms, Origen's exegesis is better understood as a feature of his experience of deep prayer. We tend to read Origen's writings as if they were second order theological and philosophical reflections upon first order practices such as prayer. They, accordingly, appear to be – at times fanciful – legitimations, justifications, and explanations of prior Christian commitments and prejudices. Rather than simply being an interpretive method that is pressed into service by some external agenda, Origen's 'allegorizing' is an essential feature of his meditational practice of prayer. In the recent *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, Columba Stewart observes: 'Although ubiquitous in early Christian life, today the personal prayer of early Christians is one of the least-studied aspects of their experience'.⁸ May I suggest that this gap in the literature leads us to search for increasingly inventive explanations of Origen's allegorical method, when, in fact it may well arise from this overlooked – but familiar – Christian practice?

To see this, it is important first of all to underscore how much the shape of Origen's intellectual project was largely determined by his profound sense of human finitude, ignorance, and death. Because Origen's literary and philosophical achievements were so extensive, we too readily forget how precarious his circumstances were. His third-century Christianity was still a relatively minor religious sect that was subject to sporadic persecution.⁹ Origen spent time visiting Christian prisoners, counselling those subject to torture, and training for his own anticipated martyrdom. Nearly everything Origen wrote was deeply inflected by his opposition to the Roman Empire's violent disciplining of bodies and minds.¹⁰ Whatever judgments one makes about his philosophical influences, his social and political circumstances pressed upon him the conviction that the human mind reasons within a many-layered prison whose confines range from time and space, flesh and blood, ignorance and passion, to steel and death.

Origen could not be more blunt when he introduces his treatise *On Prayer* with the following gritty observation: 'There are realities that are so great that

'Reading Revelation: Allegorical Exegesis in Late Antique Alexandria', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 2 (2007), 231-51; Peter T. Struck, *Birth of the Symbol: Ancient Readers at the Limits of their Texts* (Princeton, N.J., 2004).

⁸ Columba Stewart, 'Prayer', in Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (New York, 2008), 744-63, 744.

⁹ For a useful reminder of the demographic realities, see Keith Hopkins, 'The Christian Number and its Implications', *JCS* 6 (1998), 185-226.

¹⁰ See my 'Torture and Origen's Hermeneutics of Nonviolence', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 76 (2008), 545-72.

they find a rank superior to humanity and our mortal nature; they are impossible for our rational and mortal race to understand'.¹¹ The most fundamental lesson that any reader of Origen's renowned *Peri Archon* must learn in order to reason with him is that although there are certain embodied created natures that are invisible to the human eye, 'the substance of the Trinity ... must not be believed either to be a body or to exist in a body, but to be wholly incorporeal' ('*ex toto incorporea*').¹² Everything else (including us) is mixed together into a more or less differentiated mass of material and immaterial bodies. To not recognize the fundamental difference between the corporeal and the Incorporeal, between the One and the many, to be unaware of the scandal that is human philosophy itself, is to understand nothing at all. Origen, therefore, stresses in the opening passage of *On Prayer*: '[T]he reasoning of mortals (λογισμοὶ θνητῶν) is worthless, and our designs are likely to fail, for a perishable body weighs down the soul, and this earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind'.¹³ Origen is exceedingly critical of the human body because it distorts our thinking insofar as it restricts our intellectual imagination, leads us fearfully to defend particular interests at the expense of more universal ones, and supplies the pretext for destructive efforts contrived to delay our own inevitable deaths.¹⁴ In many places Origen displays what appears to be a thoroughgoing Socratic scepticism about what human reason can know or act upon.

For all his appreciation of the limits and distortions imposed upon the mind by the body, Origen also believed that there was a certain kind of training that minds can only acquire in the first place through material embodiment. This is why God providentially let minds 'fall' in the first place. If for Origen, the human mind cannot of its own power find its way out of the forest of local particularities to the heights that yield a superhuman experience of global vision, it can choose the path to think with that it believes will lead it to the fullest apprehension of the truth. His understanding of the indeterminacy afflicting human knowledge of ultimate things led him to engage in daring modes of intellectual activity (such as allegory) that readers can find unsettling. According to Origen, in our embodied state, the preferred reparative activity is 'to pray without ceasing', but this does not mean that we do nothing but pray. As Origen

¹¹ Origen, *De oratione*, pref. 1 (GCS 3.297); trans. Rowan Greer, *Origen* (New York, 1979), 81-170, 81.

¹² Origen, *De princ.* IV 3.15 (Herwig Görgemanns and Heinrich Karpp, *Origenes Vier Bücher von den Prinzipien* [Darmstadt, 1976], 778-81); trans. G.W. Butterworth, *On First Principles* (Gloucester, Mass., 1973), 312. See also *De princ.* I preface. 8; Guy Stroumsa, 'Origen on God's Incorporeality: Context and Implications', *Religion* 13 (1983), 345-58; and Karen Jo Torjesen, 'The Enscripturation of Philosophy: The Incorporeality of God in Origen's Exegesis', in Christine Helmer (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation: History, Context, Reality*, Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 26 (Atlanta, 2005), 73-84.

¹³ Origen, *De orat.*, pref. 1 (GCS 3.297); trans. Greer, 81.

¹⁴ Origen, *De princ.* I 1.5. See also Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 2008), 160-77.

describes it, it means that all our other virtuous activities are caught up into our prayer.¹⁵

Exegesis was a form of inquiry into the nature of things that accorded with the limits of human knowing. Prayer finds in exegesis much needed material aid as the words of scripture form a path that the mind can travel when it would be otherwise stranded before the incomprehensibility of what lies beyond itself.¹⁶ The insistence that one's effort to understand scripture should become prayer is not for Origen merely a pious rhetorical convention. He returns to the subject repeatedly. For example, he instructs Gregory about how prayer promotes intellectual understanding,

As you apply yourself to divine reading, seek correctly and with unshakable faith in God the sense of the divine scriptures hidden from the many. Do not be content with knocking and seeking, for prayer is most necessary for understanding of divine matters. It was to exhort us to this very thing [intellectual prayer] that the Saviour did not only say: 'Knock, and it shall be opened to you' and 'seek, and you shall find,' but also, 'ask, and it shall be given to you' (*Matth. 7:7; Luke 11:9*).¹⁷

Origen described his own prayerful exegetical practice as meditation saying: "I meditate ('*meditor*') on the law of God day and night" (*Ps. 1:2*) and at no time at all do I desist inquiring, discussing, investigating, and certainly, what is greatest, praying God ('*orando Deum*') and asking for understanding ('*intellectum*') from him who "teaches knowledge" (*Ps. 93:10*).¹⁸ Elsewhere he states:

¹⁵ Origen, *De orat.* 12.2 (GCS 3.324-25); trans. Greer, 104: 'For the only way we can accept the command to "pray constantly" as referring to a real possibility is by saying that the entire life of the saint taken as a whole is a great single prayer. What is customarily called prayer is, then, a part of this prayer'.

¹⁶ An accurate understanding of prayer in Origen requires reading the single treatise, *De oratione*, in light of Origen's other writings, especially his homilies. As Dan Sheerin explains: 'Any treatment of Origen on prayer which focuses on the *De oratione* to the virtual exclusion of the homilies is bound to provide a point of view distorted in some respects.' Sheerin later shows how a more comprehensive reading of Origen's texts reveals the great extent that 'meditation on the Law of the Lord and prayer are inextricably linked' ('The Role of Prayer in Origen's Homilies', in Charles Kannengiesser and William L. Petersen [eds], *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity 1 [Notre Dame, Ind., 1988], 200-14, 201⁴ and 207).

¹⁷ Origen, *Ep. Greg.* 4, Henri Crouzel, *Remerciement à Origène, suivi de la lettre d'Origène à Grégoire*, SC 148 (Paris, 1969), 192-4; trans. Joseph Wilson Trigg, *Origen* (London, 1998), 212-3.

¹⁸ Origen, *Hom. Gen.* 11.3 (GCS 29, 105.21-4); trans. Ronald Heine, *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus* (Washington, D.C., 1982), 173-4. Compare Karen Jo Torjesen's similar analysis: 'Seen within this framework, exegesis becomes a praxis, a discipline, not unlike meditation, that involves the focusing of the mind, the quieting of the body and the opening of the spirit. It is not unlike the practice of reciting prayers, for power operates not through the content of the prayer but through the process of the recitation and the power operates directly on the individual. As in the formation of the ascetics so also in philosophical formation, what is being formed is the initiate's perception of him/her self as a knowing and feeling subject. The cultivation of an inner life, spiritual, emotional, and noetic, is the discipline forming a distinctive kind of selfhood', 'The Alexandrian Tradition of the Inspired Interpreter', in L. Perrone (ed.), *Origeniana Octava* (Leuven,

I too meditate ('*meditor*') on the words of the Lord and repeatedly train ('*exerceo*') myself in them, but I do not know if I am the kind of person in the course of whose meditation ('*meditatione*') fire comes forth from each and every word of God and sets my heart ('*cor*') ablaze and inflames my soul ('*animam*') to keep those things upon which I am meditating.¹⁹

From his other writings, it is well known how Origen famously described scripture as existing within a threefold progressive structure mirroring the human being. Much as one must begin with sense perception to reason at all, the reader of scripture first becomes familiar with the scriptural 'body' or narrative.²⁰ As with other forms of understanding, bodily familiarity discloses knowledge of the soul which, in turn, for those who are capable of it, leads to apprehensions of the spirit.²¹ The threefold structure of scripture establishes the preconditions for a meditational practice aiming to loosen the human mind's captivity to the changing body and its own intellectual constructions by linking it to the primary goods of the Spirit. In *Contra Celsum*, Origen explicitly states that words used 'allegorically' (τροπικῶς) are solely 'meant to show the nature of the intelligible world by terms usually applied to corporeal things'.²² Allegory then is a form of reasoning from one thing to another in a connected whole. Origen uses the term to explain the itinerary of the mind's path to ever more stable forms of perception.

What is less often noticed is how this progressive structure reflects exactly his description of prayer's fundamental itinerary. In his treatise *On Prayer*, Origen explains:

For the eyes of the mind are lifted up from their preoccupation with earthly things and from their being filled with the impression of material things. And they are so exalted that they peer beyond the created order and arrive at the sheer contemplation of God and at conversing with him reverently and suitably as he listens ... And the soul is lifted

2003), 287-99, 289. Robert M. Berchman also suggests that 'it is probable that Origen conceived of exegesis as an extended thought-experiment or philosophical meditation', 'Self-Knowledge and Subjectivity in Origen of Alexandria', in *ibid.* (Leuven, 2003), 437-50, 439.

¹⁹ Origen, *Hom. Ps.* 38/1.7, Henri Crouzel et Luc Brésard, *Homélies sur les psaumes 36 à 38*, SC 411 (Paris, 1995), 348; trans. Michael Heintz, *The Pedagogy of the Soul: Origen's Homilies on the Psalms*, Ph.D. Dissertation (University of Notre Dame, 2008), 275.

²⁰ Origen, *Cels.* 7.37, ed. M. Marcovich, *Contra Celsum: Libri VIII* (Boston, 2001), 490; trans. Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge, 1980), 425: 'People in this life have to begin from the senses and from sensible things when they intend to ascend to the nature of intelligible things, yet they must on no account remain content with sensible things'.

²¹ Origen, *De princ.* IV 2.4. For careful elucidations of these three levels of meaning and the scholarly disagreements about them, see Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis*, Patristische Texte und Studien 28 (Berlin, 1985) and Elizabeth Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Boston, 2005).

²² Origen, *C. Cels.* 6.70 (Marcovich, 447); trans. Chadwick, 384.

up and following the Spirit is separated from the body. Not only does it follow the Spirit, it even comes to be in Him.²³

Reproducing deep prayer's essential path, Origen advocated a reading of scripture that had a progressive quality where one begins with the biblical surface (or narrative meaning) only to delve more deeply into matters of the soul and eventually into the Spirit itself. The scriptures were 'the most basic elements (στοιχεῖα) and very brief introductions (εἰσαγωγὰς) to all knowledge'.²⁴ Readers find in them 'traces' (ἵχνη) of the divine nature that become 'starting-points' for 'theologizing' (θεολογεῖν).²⁵ Origen believed, therefore, that the training in interpreting images supplied by scripture led skilled readers through moral conversion to the limits of human knowledge only finally to peer beyond the created realm as the mind's love pushed it to long to contemplate the incorporeal God. For this reason, Origen suggests that in prayer we cultivate 'spiritual senses' in conjunction with the physical senses.²⁶ Such a practiced interpreter will experience 'the lighting up of every obscure meaning' as the very 'kiss of the Word of God' narrated in the *Song of Songs*.²⁷

When attending to Origen's instruction to his own congregation in Caesarea, prayer and the interpretation of scripture so blur together that sometimes it is hard to distinguish which exactly he is addressing. For example, he exhorts in his *Homilies on Numbers*:

So ascend, O hearer, if you can, and rise up from earthly thoughts by the contemplation of your mind and by the clear perception of your heart. Forget earthly things for a little while; move beyond the clouds and beyond heaven itself by going there with your mind. Seek there the tabernacle of God where 'Jesus our forerunner entered for us' (*Heb.* 6:20), and 'is now present before the face of God interceding for us' (*Heb.* 7:25).²⁸

²³ Origen, *De orat.* 9.2 (GCS 3.318-9); trans. Greer, 99.

²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jn.* 13.30.37 (GCS 10.230-1).

²⁵ Origen, *C. Cels.* 2.71 (Marcovich, 142); trans. (altered) Chadwick, 121.

²⁶ See the classic essay by Karl Rahner, 'Le début d'une doctrine des cinq sens spirituels chez Origène', *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 13 (1932), 113-45 and Mark J. McNroy, 'Origen of Alexandria', in Paul Gavriluk and Sarah Coakley (eds), *The Spiritual Senses: Perceiving God in Western Christianity* (Cambridge, 2012), 20-35.

²⁷ Origen, *Comm. Cant.* I 1.12, Luc Brésard and Henri Crouzel, *Commentaire sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, SC 375 (Paris, 1991), 184; trans. R.P. Lawson, *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies* (Westminster, Md., 1957), 61.

²⁸ Origen, *Hom. Num.* 3.3 (GCS 30.16); trans. Thomas P. Scheck, *Homilies on Numbers* (Downers Grove, Ill., 2009), 11. See also *Hom. Num.* 11.9 (GCS 30.92-3); trans. Scheck, 62: 'For the angels of God ... assist now and search to see if there is in any of us a mind of this sort, so solicitous, so attentive, which has received the word of God as divine seed, with all eagerness. They search to see if it shows fruit at once, when we rise for prayer, that is, if we collect and gather our thoughts in order to pray to God, if the mind does not wander and its thoughts fly about. Otherwise our mind would indeed be bent over with the body in prayer, but it would be running in different directions in its thoughts'.

The overriding emphasis in his treatise *On Prayer* is that prayer is not so much about saying the right words. It is rather fundamentally a practice of cultivating the right ‘disposition’ or ‘character’ (κατάστασις). It involves ‘stretching’ out the soul (ψυχήν), ‘straining’ the mind (νοῦν) toward God, and ‘raising the governing reason (ἡγεμονικόν) from the ground and standing it before the Lord’.²⁹ For as spiritual and ethereal as Origen is sometimes thought to be, he forthrightly describes in detail exact bodily positions in which the very effort of directing the body into position is the material accompaniment of the rightly directed mind:

And although there are a great many different positions for the body, he should not doubt that the position with the hands outstretched and the eyes lifted up is to be preferred before all others, because it bears in prayer the image of characteristics befitting the soul and applies it to the body.³⁰

The human body in prayer and the ‘bodily’ meaning of scripture are both necessary material conditions for the sort of practiced ongoing mental inquiry that leads beyond them both to what is beyond what we can ask for or readily imagine.³¹

To understand Origen’s allegorical interpretation, we may be better off retracing the process of meditation rather than cataloguing his results. Because scriptural interpretation was an aspect of the mind’s ascetical training, simply listing the conclusions Origen came to apart from their context within his overall style of inquiry in all likelihood makes them something they never were. There is a deep longing in Origen’s thinking for a stability that transcends the inconstancy that afflicts our mental, physical, and political lives. Words are a function of our finitude. In this way they are much like bodies. They save us from falling into infinite flux, but they also hold us in one place thereby limiting our perception. Origen leaves us with word exercises but knows that these are a poor substitute for the sort of vision that God has. Our ‘knowledge’ therefore is only approximate and our words about that knowledge are necessary but always provisional. In his outstanding new Origen book, Ronald Heine states: ‘Even using the hermeneutic he has described, Origen believes that there

²⁹ Origen, *De orat.* 31.2 (trans. Greer, 164).

³⁰ Origen, *De orat.* 31.2 (trans. Greer, 164-5). In his homilies Origen also commends praying with bodily arms extended (*Hom. Ex.* 3.3, 11.4) or with the body bowed (*Hom. Num.* 11.9.3).

³¹ Origen, *Hom. Num.* 9.8 (GCS 30.65-6); trans. (slightly altered) Scheck, 43: ‘See, then, how great and of what nature are the things which not only no one can see or hear, but which cannot even “ascend into the heart”, that is, into human thinking ... So move beyond all these things and transcend everything that you see, that you hear, even that you can think of, and know that what is laid up for “those who love God” is what could not even ascend into the thinking of your heart. I think that this is why, in promises of this kind, physical things (*rebus corporalibus*) should not be thought of. For the rational definition of physical matter has not wholly escaped the comprehension of human thought. But these are things that cannot “ascend into the heart” of anyone, into the mind of anyone, things which are contained only in the wisdom of God’.

is a depth of mystery in Scripture that the human mind will never decipher. The person who has progressed the furthest in comprehending the meaning of Scripture will always see the road of understanding stretching out before him to an ever-receding horizon'.³²

Origen employed allegory because he believed that exegesis at its prayerful best was about a certain kind of theological and philosophical reasoning. The hermeneutical task required reason to become more spacious and look not only beyond itself and its impressive achievements, but also beyond the needs and fears of human cities or empires.³³ Allegorization led outward to a kind of mental vision that contemplates what transcends the human mind while rescinding from the presumption to capture or grasp what one is looking for. Scriptural interpretation was a feature of an intellectually demanding meditational practice where the mind was perfected by the searching but freely-given love Origen found at the heart of the Bible and celebrated in the *Song of Songs*.

³² Ronald Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (Oxford, 2010), 136.

³³ R.M. Berchman, 'Self-Knowledge and Subjectivity' (2003), 449: 'One of the strongest motivations that Origen has for approaching subjectivity by means of exegetical thought-experiments is to point out the limitations of the subjective. In the end, every cognizably fact about the knower's identity as subject is converted to the status of an external condition in Logos which allows a larger selfhood of soul to emerge from the veil of the subjective domain'.

Origen's Spiritual Exegesis as a Defense of the Literal Sense

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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that, in Origen's exegetical strategy, the literal sense is integral to the revelation of God's wisdom. I analyze *De principiis* IV in conjunction with his interpretation of the Samaritan woman at the well (*Commentary on John* XIII), which is an allegory for allegorical exegesis. Throughout *De princ.* IV Origen characterizes divine Wisdom by its condescension: the saving power of God's Wisdom is concealed in the weakness of the scriptural form in order to be made available. Thus the pneumatic sense is revealed only in and through its hiddenness in the letter. Strategies of exegesis which dislocate the letter from its divine intention therefore foreclose the wisdom it reveals. Origen's allegory for the woman at the well illustrates his strategy and develops the significance of the literal sense for it. Through the images of the well and the woman's husbands, Origen identifies a principle of gnostic exegesis which divorces the literal sense from the search for wisdom. This principle is the source of her constant thirst. In the woman's encounter with Christ at the well, she learns the humility in which God seeks the lost. Allegorically, the exegete learns how the humble form of Scripture actually communicates divine Wisdom. Moreover, the exegete's willingness to struggle with the literal sense is an expression of her need for God's gifts. Thus the letter functions to provoke the exegete to ask for divine Wisdom.

Modern readers of Origen worry that his spiritual exegesis has no intrinsic relation to Scripture's letter. This critique is most familiar from scholars such as Eugène de Faye and Richard Hanson. Whether he admits it or not, Origen's allegory lacks any kind of control that preserves its relation to the historical narrative, and any claim to an organization of senses only compounds the subjectivity. His interpretations are simply too arbitrary to be considered exegesis as such; nor is the text's historical narrative a source of Origen's spiritualizing thought. The tenor of this critique persists, even if tempered, among Origen's more sympathetic interpreters who suppose that he amplifies Scripture's mysterious nature to the detriment of its literal and historical character.¹

¹ Mark Sheridan, *e.g.*, has recently written: 'A result of this conception of the text [Scripture's divine authorship] is the devaluation of the historical or narrative character of the text', 'Scripture', in John A. McGuckin (ed.), *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Louisville, 2004), 199. The statement seems to me to relay H. Crouzel's critique of Origen's inadequate notion of inspiration. See his *Origen*, trans. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco, 1989), 71-2.

The response from Origen's proponents insists that he, always and in some way, grounds the spiritual sense in the literal. Perhaps de Lubac states this most poignantly, claiming that Origen's allegorism 'justifies' and 'redeems' the literal narrative. By this, he means that the spirit allows the letter to be read in a manner worthy of God: *i.e.* in a way that presupposes divine intentionality and refuses to admit a text, however illogical or banal, lacks it.² And similar arguments can be traced in other main authors. However, this conception of saving the scriptural text stands to be broadened. Ultimately, the question is whether, and how, we can identify the principles of criticism intrinsic to Origen's spiritual exegesis, so that it may be read precisely as exegesis.

This article claims that Origen's spiritual exegesis in fact defends the scriptural letter. My hope is to show that, for Origen, the letter constitutes divine revelation along with the higher senses. More precisely, his exegesis, as a strategy for defending the literal sense, insists that there can be no perception of divine Wisdom apart from how the letter reveals it. From this perspective, his allegorism emerges, not so much as a device for ascending to spiritual truths, but a manner of reading the Word's condescension, of witnessing (and giving witness to) the inexpressible Wisdom of God revealed precisely in the letter's fragility. I begin by suggesting *De principiis* IV may be read as Origen's outline for this strategy, before turning to his exegesis of the Samaritan woman at the well as an illustration of that strategy.

Outlining the defense in *De principiis* IV

As Origen states it in *De prin.* IV 2, the hermeneutical failure common to Jewish, heretical (both Marcionite and gnostic), and overly simple Christian readings of Scripture is the restriction of the literal sense to itself – the presupposition that the letter is self-contained and incapable of pointing beyond itself.

Now the reason why all these ... hold false opinions and make impious or ignorant assertions about God appears to be nothing else but this: that Scripture is not understood pneumatically, but is interpreted according to the bare letter.³

² Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit: the Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco, 2007), 121-8, see *ibid.* 121: 'This reasoning, in substance, goes as follows: If there had not been, beneath the letter, a hidden intention of the Holy Spirit that goes beyond what it says, this letter itself would often be unbelievable, whether because what it offers is sometimes shocking or because of its apparent contradictions or lack of logic, or, finally, because of its very banality... But – and this is the second point of reasoning which more than one has failed to note – the spiritual sense, which gives the text its true value, justifies the letter of it in its very literalness. Moreover it saves the letter'; *ibid.* 126: 'This exegesis is not at all the negation of the literal which has often been claimed. It is, on the contrary, although in an indirect way, its justification.'

³ *De princ.* IV 2.2: ὥς πρὸς τὸ ψιλὸν γράμμα ἐξελημμένη. The text is H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti, *Origène: Traité des Principes*, SC 268 (Paris, 1980). Translations are my own.

As a result, the material element of Scripture is incapacitated and becomes lifeless matter for the exegete. The Second Chapter of Book IV thus outlines a program of Christian exegesis in direct opposition to exegetical strategies that isolate the literal sense.⁴

The sequestering of the letter is particularly indicative of gnostic exegesis, which sees nothing beyond the text's unworthiness of divinity, and so rejects much of Scripture *en bloc* and the God it reveals. Moreover, saving gnosis allows the gnostic to sublimate biblical revelation into an alternative history of salvation or a philosophic reduction.⁵ To counter this isolation, Origen proposes an exegetical strategy that locates the literal narrative within God's revelatory activity. It is necessary to explain that the Scriptures 'are not the works of human beings', but the composition of the Trinity.⁶ He roots this point in Paul's juxtaposition of human and divine wisdom. Scriptural interpretation requires that 'we have the mind of Christ, so that we may know the things that were freely given to us by God; things we also speak, *not with words taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit*.'⁷ By applying this quote (a favorite of his) to the task of exegesis, Origen is less concerned to justify the practice of spiritual exegesis as such than to describe its conformation to the pattern of divine revelation. In the mind of Christ, and under the Spirit's instruction, the exegete comes to know how and why Scripture's outward form conceals its inner and divine meaning. Origen thus delineates a dilemma for the literalism of his time: to isolate Scripture's letter is simultaneously to preclude or distort its divine origin, especially because it fails to see how divine Wisdom is hidden.

This particular emphasis on seeing Scripture's divinity recapitulates his arguments from *De prin.* IV 1, where Origen hangs scriptural inspiration on the person of Christ. On a superficial level he seems to argue that if Scripture prophesies Christ, and Christ is divine, then Scripture must be divinely inspired and hence Christianity's universal spread. It is instructive, however, to notice how Origen characterizes God's Wisdom as it is manifested in the divine power that persuades so many to cling to 'the religion announced by Jesus'.⁸ Chapter

⁴ I follow E. Dively Lauro's distinction of 'literal' and 'somatic' senses; see *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Boston, 2005), 52-8: while every passage has a literal sense, not each has a somatic sense, *i.e.* a literally edifying meaning. Here, I use the 'literal sense' to mean the straightforward reading of the text, as opposed to that text's figurative, non-literal meaning.

⁵ See especially Origen's summary of Heracleon's interpretation of *John* 4 at *CJn* XIII 10.57-11.74. For an alternative history of salvation see, *e.g.*, XIII 19.114-8 ('salvation has come from the Jews since he considers them to be images of those in the Pleroma'); for philosophic reduction see, *e.g.*, XIII 11.72 ('he takes the six husbands to mean all material evil').

⁶ *De princ.* IV 2.2.

⁷ *De princ.* IV 2.3; see *1Cor.* 2:16, 12, my emphasis. Here he compares the seemingly straightforward narrative of the Gospel with its hidden meaning, and the necessity of the mind of Christ to discern their coherence. Elsewhere Origen employs the quote to the same effect in *CSong* I 5; *CJn* I 4.24; *CJn* XIII 6.35.

⁸ *De princ.* IV 1.2.

one does not simply offer empirical evidence for the Gospel's success. Origen rather amplifies the disparity between the content of the Gospel message and the manner of its revelation. At the persecution and death of Christians, Greek and barbarian alike convert to the law of Moses as disciples of Christ. Jesus only taught for a year and few months, yet 'the world has been filled with his teaching'.⁹ Israel's demise and the expansion of the covenant prove that God has made his own a foolish nation. All of this indicates that 'it is truly God who was made man and delivered saving teachings to humanity'.¹⁰ The Gospel spreads with a persuasion revealed preeminently in the Incarnation: namely, that the power of God became weak in order to save, and so proves itself all the more powerful by liberality.

Already in books I-II Origen had amplified the same paradox forcefully in his Christology. On the one hand, Christ is the power of God, through whom the Father created and preserves all things.¹¹ On the other hand, it is most marvelous that

this mighty power of divine majesty, the very Word of the Father and the very Wisdom of God ... can be believed to have existed within the compass of that man who appeared in Judea; indeed, that the Wisdom of God could have entered a woman's womb and been born a child uttering noises like crying children.¹²

The true character of divine power is perceived only in its willing assumption of human frailty. For Origen, this movement of condescension is how the Son makes divinity visible: by emptying himself, 'his desire was to display to us the fullness of the Godhead'.¹³ The power of his divinity cannot be seen apart from the mystery of its hiddenness in his weak form.¹⁴

Now this manner of the Word's imaging of divine power bears directly on Origen's exegetical program. It is no wonder if Scripture conceals its 'more than human element' in 'poor and contemptible speech', because "we have a treasure in earthen vessels, so that the excessiveness (ἡ ὑπερβολή) of the power of God may shine through" and may not be reckoned to be "from us" who are but human.¹⁵ If the divinity of Christ proves Scripture's divine inspiration, then the mode of perceiving Scripture's divine character also, and necessarily, coincides with the mode of perceiving Christ's. In the fragility of its outward form, Scripture is the image of the excess – the liberality – of God's

⁹ *De princ.* IV 1.5.

¹⁰ *De princ.* IV 1.2.

¹¹ See *De princ.* I 2.9.

¹² *De princ.* II 6.2.

¹³ *De princ.* I 2.8: 'Per ipsam sui exinanitionem studet nobis deitatis plenitudinem demonstrare.'

¹⁴ See *Contra Celsum* II 67: 'For he was sent not only that he might be known, but also that he might be concealed', etc.

¹⁵ *De princ.* IV 1.7; see 2*Cor.* 4:7: Ἔχομεν γὰρ θησαυρὸν ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα λάμπῃ ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ μὴ νομισθῇ εἶναι ἐξ ἡμῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

power made available. And, at the end of IV 1, Origen intimates that the exegete must adapt to Scripture's mode of revelation in order to perceive God's Wisdom in it. When the Christian is perfected, and has the capacity to hear the Wisdom spoken to the perfect, God's Wisdom is 'distinctly imprinted within us "*according to the revelation of the mystery.*"'¹⁶ Thus, we can say that for Origen spiritual exegesis is a conformation to God's liberality on display in the literal narrative. Here the critique of gnostic isolation is at its most precise. By shrugging off the letter as below God, the gnostic proves himself above the Wisdom which God would freely give. In turn, the mystery which God would inscribe on the exegete's soul remains undisclosed.

When we return to IV 2, Origen's descriptions of the Spirit's intentions for composing Scripture make this incarnational hermeneutic more explicit. The Spirit's primary purpose is to communicate the 'unspeakable mysteries' of human salvation, chiefly the Incarnation. Through these truths about God, souls are perfected.¹⁷ The second intention is to conceal these truths in the scriptural narrative. Accordingly, it is a wonder that the Spirit desires to seek out diligent students and make them 'fellow-communicants' in the Spirit's counsel.

Yet it is most astounding that through a written system of law, the laws of truth are prophesied, since all these things were recorded in a sequence with a power truly befitting God's Wisdom. For the purpose was to render even the garment of spiritual things, I mean the somatic part of the writings, in many respects not unbeneficial but capable of improving the many insofar as they receive it.¹⁸

Once again, the power that befits divine Wisdom is the liberality by which 'the many' may receive it. As a literal narrative the Old Testament history of creation, weddings, births, wars, and cult communicates salvific teachings and edifies the body of simple believers unto their perfection. It is important to note, then, that Origen does not classify the Spirit's two intentions as separate doctrines: a sophisticated teaching for the perfect and an immature narrative for the many, which the perfect could do without once spiritual truth has been extracted. If at the Spirit's prompting the exegete ascends to perceive mysteries, he is nevertheless thrust back down to behold those mysteries as concealed. It is noteworthy that in both descriptions of the pneumatic sense, Origen defines the wisdom which the perfect attain in Paul's words as 'a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to nothing; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that has been hidden, which God foreordained before the world for our glory ... which none of the rulers of this world knew.'¹⁹ Origen most prominently

¹⁶ *De princ.* IV 1.7; see *Rom.* 16:25-7, italics mine: αὕτη δὲ ἡ σοφία ἡμῖν ἐντυπωθήσεται τρανῶς κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν μυστηρίου.

¹⁷ *De princ.* IV 2.7.

¹⁸ *De princ.* IV 2.8.

¹⁹ *De princ.* IV 2.4, 6; see *1Cor.* 2:6-8.

characterizes pneumatic wisdom by its hiddenness, that it appears veiled in humility. Thus his anthropological configuration of Scripture compels the exegete to see the unity of the distinct senses, precisely in the condescension of divine Wisdom.

From this perspective, the occasional absence of somatic meaning becomes a significant indicator of God's Wisdom revealed. Origen is clear that it is the somatic meaning itself which directly benefits, but that does not preclude the literal sense's revelatory function *ad litteram*. When he goes on to describe the lowliness of Scripture's outward form – the σκάνδαλα of its inconsistencies and banality – he locates it within the overall character of divine revelation. Without absurdities, Scripture would appear to be a text of merely human wisdom. Rather than a pretext for dispensing with the letter, these literal weaknesses indicate the humble form in which divine Wisdom appears. Stumbling-blocks are thus intentionally part of the revelation of who God is. They force the exegete to seek out higher meaning, but precisely in relation to the literal text. They inform how the spiritual sense is to be sought because they are the form of the spiritual sense. For the exegete in particular, they mark the locus of participation in God's Wisdom, whereby perceptible weakness discloses hidden power. The marvel is not simply that Scripture communicates divine Wisdom, but that Wisdom allows herself to be borne in such a vulnerable form in order to accommodate the many.

Conversely, although IV 3 is largely a performative exercise in the need for spiritual exegesis, Origen is careful to insist that somatic meaning entails its own risk of literal isolation. Particularly where the literal sense does edify, the task for the diligent student is, 'while not rejecting the commandment in its literal sense, to preserve each of the meanings according to the "depths of the wisdom of God"'.²⁰ Far from reflecting Origen's penchant for allegory, this statement arises from his insistence that the whole of Scripture is continuous with the pattern of divine revelation. When he punctuates his spiritual interpretation of salvation history by stating that 'the aim of the divine power which gave us the holy Scriptures is that we should not accept what is expressed in the letter alone',²¹ he reiterates that the exegete's refusal to seek a spiritual meaning on the basis of the plain sense effectively severs the letter from its divine character.²²

²⁰ *De princ.* IV 3.4: εἰ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς φιλοτιμοτέροις δύναται σώζειν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν, μετὰ τοῦ μὴ ἀθετεῖσθαι τὴν κατὰ τὸ ρητὸν ἐντολήν, βάθι σοφίας θεοῦ.

²¹ *De princ.* IV 3.4: οὐχὶ τὰ ὑπὸ τῆς λέξεως παριστάμενα μόνα ἐκλαμβάνειν.

²² Of course, Origen occasionally considers allegorical inquiry unnecessary; this can take a rhetorical form in homilies (E.g. *HNum* 11.1: 'What need is there to seek allegory in these passages when the letter is also so edifying?' *HNum* 22.2: 'Here the meaning of the historical narrative is so complete and perfect that it does not seem necessary to ask anything further'). In *De princ.* IV 3.4, however, he is warning against the danger of assuming that the presence of a somatic sense precludes the presence of spiritual meaning.

In short, Scripture's literal sense poses a twofold risk of isolation. On the one hand, the text is fraught with too many literal and narrative defects to be thought capable of communicating divine Wisdom. On the other hand, where the text does cohere, there seems nothing left to investigate. Both of these dangers emerge out of a presumption about Scripture's meaning on the basis of its outward form. This, ultimately, is the vulnerability of the Word incorporated into Scripture. The hiddenness of God's Wisdom is not simply that it is withheld from human apprehension, save for the efforts of the perfect. Whether the text is banally coherent or logically broken, the letter frustrates the attempt to reduce its meaning to a comprehensive idea. It exercises the interpreter's understanding of what the capacity for Wisdom is by displaying the character of Wisdom revealed. The exegete learns that the full wonder of human salvation, of the Incarnation, is hidden because there are no words adequate to it. The revelation of who God is cannot be made more obvious by distilling a saving gnosis out of the narrative. Rather, just as the knowledge of Christ's person is inextricable from his utterly real and vulnerable humanity, so pneumatic mystery is revealed only in and through its hiddenness in the letter. To illustrate this, and to ask why Origen considers the fragility of the letter significant, we turn to Book 13 of his *Commentary on John* and his interpretation of the woman at the well.

The Samaritan woman and the revelatory function of the literal sense

Origen's treatment of this episode is essentially an allegory for allegorical exegesis.²³ We should therefore expect that, within the allegory, the literal sense's revelatory function should emerge. In this respect, Origen describes the Samaritan woman with precision: she is an 'image of the opinion of the heterodox', who, although busying herself in Scripture, is 'neither refreshed nor relieved of thirst, although she drank from the well that she supposed to be deep.'²⁴ The fact that she is a Samaritan signals to Origen that she represents the heterodox, who separate from the orthodox on the basis of faulty scriptural interpretation, particularly the failure to integrate the literal and spiritual senses. She thus personifies the gnostic approach to Scripture, a fundamental sensibility vis-à-vis Scripture and a disposition of the soul in need of conversion.

²³ I use the translation of R. Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John Books 13-32*, FOTC 89 (Washington, D.C., 1993). The interpretation of *John* 4 picks up in *medias res* (at 4:13); Origen begins book XIII by apologizing for ending book XII without having finished his treatment of the episode. In addition to a discussion of the Samaritan as an image of the heterodox (see *CJn* XIII 1.6), Origen may well have treated her understanding of Jacob's well; who Jacob, his sons, and his livestock are; Jesus' tiring journey to Samaria, and his thirst.

²⁴ *CJn* XIII 1.6-7: ἡ Σαμαρεῖτις ... εἰκὼν ... τυγχάνουσα γνώμης ἑτεροδοξούντων περὶ τὰς θείας ἀσχολουμένων γραφάς. See also XIII 17.101.

A superficial reading of Origen's text could supply evidence against my thesis. We could cull quotes which seem to instruct the mature exegete to dispense with the biblical narrative. For instance: 'The Scriptures are introductions, called the fountain of Jacob. Once they have been accurately understood we must go up from them to Jesus, that he may freely give us the fountain of water that leaps into eternal life.'²⁵ Or, shortly thereafter: having asked for some of Jesus' water, the woman 'could now, apart from Jacob's water, contemplate the truth in an angelic and more than human way.'²⁶

At the beginning of Book 13, Origen prefaces his allegory with two theological principles which shape his interpretation. First, remarking on the woman's petition, 'give me this water,' he suggests: 'It may, perhaps, be a dogma of some kind that no one receives a divine gift who does not request it.'²⁷ Not only does Jesus command his disciples, 'ask and it will be given to you,' but the Father even urges the Son through the Psalm, 'ask and I will give you the Gentiles as your inheritance' (*Ps.* 2:7-8). At root, this 'dogma' articulates Origen's explicitly anti-gnostic thought. God's gifts of Wisdom and eternal life neither are imposed on creation, nor are there any of a superior nature who could lay hold of these gifts by right.²⁸ Rather God's desire is to benefit those who, of a profoundly free nature, freely desire what only God can give. The mystery of this divine deference to the soul extends even to the Word Incarnate who is one with the Father.

His second principle, more subtly expressed, concerns the possibility that the Samaritan woman could ask for water from Jesus. Origen characterizes Christ's approach to her as a sort of provocation. When he compares the two waters, it is 'as if to urge her to ask for the living water'; and after hearing the comparison, 'she is persuaded to ask Jesus for water.'²⁹ If the first principle seeks to preserve the absolute freedom of the created soul, the second indicates God's solicitude in the Word Incarnate. God arouses the soul's freedom to ask for divine gifts by sending the Word. Quite simply, Jesus induces the woman's petition, 'give me this water', when he first approaches her with his own request, 'give me a drink'. Once again, Origen depicts this elicitation between the Father and Son in reference to the *Psalm* 2 quoted above; the Father 'urges' (προτρέπει) Jesus to ask for the ends of the earth. As Origen will later take pains to show, the Son begins to do the Father's will, not by obediently carrying out extrinsic deeds, but when he unites his own will to the Father's and so becomes his perfect image.³⁰

²⁵ *CJn* XIII 6.37.

²⁶ *CJn* XIII 7.41: χωρίς τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ Ἰακώβ.

²⁷ *CJn* XIII 2.5.

²⁸ Throughout book XIII, Origen is critical of Heracleon's praises of the Samaritan woman for responding to Jesus in a manner 'appropriate to her nature' (e.g., XIII 10.62, 15.92, etc.).

²⁹ *CJn* XIII 1.3: ὡς προτρέπων αὐτήν; XIII 1.6: Πείθεται μέντοι γε...

³⁰ See *CJn* XIII 33.203-49, on the meat Jesus has to eat and the Father's will. XIII 36.230: 'The complete will of the Father is done by the Son when the willing of God that occurs in the Son does that which the will of God wishes.'

Origen then discusses two meanings of hungering and thirsting in the somatic sense (κατὰ τὸ σωματικόν) that inform his allegorical transposition.³¹ In the first instance, sound bodies in need of sustenance hunger and thirst. Origen cites as an example the hungering and thirsting of the Israelites in the desert, for which God provides manna and sweetened water. The second instance he says is an experience of the poor who, even after eating to the full, continue to be hungry. Here he cites Paul's travails: 'Even to this hour we hunger, thirst, and are naked' (1Cor. 4:11), and notes that this experience, 'befalls those who have suffered.' Now when Origen transitions to his allegory, he does not continue to distinguish between these two kinds of thirsting. Rather they each illustrate how God exercises created freedom through physical need. Origen evokes both the Israelites and Paul as images of hunger and thirst elicited by God's election: the former as they are formed into the people of God and the latter in imitation of Christ as a 'steward of the mysteries of God' (1Cor. 4:1). The revelation of God's Wisdom is a matter both of the soul's basic need and the fulfillment of that need as the soul participates of it. These two examples thus converge to specify how the meeting of created freedom and divine solicitude is revealed allegorically in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman. Through the task of exegesis the woman freely acknowledges her deficiency as she subjects herself to a thirst for Jesus' water. Yet that submission to divine elicitation is not without the promise of fulfillment, and Origen's description of it is remarkable. The exegete who imbibes Jesus' teaching will receive a fountain that leaps into eternal life, just as the bridegroom comes 'leaping upon the mountains.' Origen implies that Christ the bridegroom is both the fountain, inscribed in the exegete's soul, and the life to which it carries her, namely the Word in his divinity. He continues: 'And after eternal life, perhaps it will also leap into the Father who is beyond eternal life. For Christ is life; but he who is greater than Christ is greater than life.' Spiritual interpretation of the literal sense is intended to draw the exegete into the life of the Trinity.

Two elements of the interpretation that follows demonstrate how the literal sense functions as the locus of this meeting and ascent: the well and the woman's husbands. Origen first corrects our understanding of the so-called 'well' of Scripture, noting that Christ himself does not refer to a well but its 'water', that is the teaching contained in the Old Testament Scriptures. Unlike the Samaritan woman, Origen prefers to refer to the 'fountain of Jacob', because 'if indeed there were not something useful that resulted from drinking from the fountain, Jesus would not have sat upon the fountain, nor would he have said to the Samaritan woman, "Give me a drink".'³² The point is not trivial. Her failure to discover a satisfying meaning results directly from her assumption of Scripture's human construction, a judgment based on its outward form concealing its source. The well is deep, to

³¹ *CJn* XIII 2.8-4.25.

³² *CJn* XIII 4.23-4, 5.26.

be sure, but she considers it only a well and not a fountain that provides some lasting benefit. By presupposing that she already understands Scripture's value from a surface reading, she forecloses any nourishment it could truly give. Origen notes that Jacob, his sons, and his livestock ('the sheep of Christ') drank from the fountain in a manner superior to the Samaritan – that is, in more complete knowledge of Scripture's meaning and benefit.³³ Moreover, her presupposition is indicative of a refusal to be persuaded by God's elicitation precisely where God extends it. It is significant, then, that Jesus sits on the fountain and asks her for a drink: 'One must observe, therefore, that the water was promised to the Samaritan woman when she asked, as if Jesus would supply it from no other source than the fountain.'³⁴ It is not possible for the exegete to receive the water that the Word gives if she has not been diligently returning to draw from Jacob's fountain 'because of thirst.'³⁵ The two waters are indeed qualitatively different. However, the water that the Word gives cannot be attained apart from how Scripture mediates it. It is necessary, Origen explains, to create hungering and thirsting in order to be filled; thus it is good to drink continually from Jacob's fountain 'in order that we may thirst.'³⁶ The struggle with the literal text creates the desire for God's Word, who provokes us to ask for his water in our need. Only at Jacob's fountain does the Word satisfy the exegete by inscribing within her a fountain of living water, which will not fail her. And when she becomes an apostle to the Samaritans with whom Jesus remains for two days, Origen notes that 'so far as the spiritual meaning is concerned, the whole dispensation of benefit to the Samaritans occurred beside Jacob's fountain.'³⁷ The scriptural letter is the site of the heretic's conversion and her apostolic mission once the Word shows how it bears divine Wisdom.

Further on Origen explains that the woman's false husband is a law that rules her soul, a governing principle and doctrine to which the soul subjects itself. In a brilliant, condensed exposition of *Romans 7*, Origen summarizes the task of spiritual exegesis as culminating in the union with Christ the bridegroom. He quotes Paul that, 'the law has dominion over a man so long as he lives.' On Origen's reading, Paul says that it is the law who lives, and once it dies, it no longer rules over a man.³⁸ Thus, a woman is not an adulteress if she lives with

³³ *CJn* XIII 6.38-9.

³⁴ *CJn* XIII 4.25.

³⁵ *CJn* XIII 7.42.

³⁶ *CJn* XIII 4.22-3.

³⁷ *CJn* XIII 30.186: ὅσον γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ νοητῷ πᾶσα ἡ οἰκονομία τῆς ὠφελείας τοῖς Σαμαρεῦσιν παρὰ τῇ πηγῇ γεγένηται τοῦ Ἰακώβ.

³⁸ *CJn* XIII 8.43-4: «ὁ νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῇ;» τίς δὲ ζῇ; ἀπὸ κοινοῦ λαμβανόντων ἡμῶν τὸν νόμον, ὁ νόμος. Εἴτ' εὐθέως φησὶν· «Ἦ γὰρ ὕπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδεται νόμος», ὡς εἰ ἔλεγεν «ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ, ὅστις ἀνὴρ νόμος ἐστίν.» "The law has dominion over a man so long as he lives". Who, in fact, lives? The law, if we take the use of the term "law" in this clause in common with its use in the following clause. Accordingly, he immediately says: "For the married woman is bound to the law, her husband, while he lives", as if "her husband who lives" meant, "whoever is a husband is a law".

another man after her husband, the law, has died. Allegorically, the Samaritan woman has subordinated herself to some principle of exegesis by which each of the heterodox lives based on misguided doctrines.³⁹

Origen does not specify what the illegitimate law is, although he is clear that it arises from an isolation of the literal sense. Every soul learning the Christian faith, he explains, begins with Scripture's 'somatic things', to which the five senses pertain, each of them a true husband.

But after the soul has consorted with the matters perceived by the senses and later wishes to rise above them, urged on by things perceived by the spirit, she may then encounter unsound teaching based on allegorical and spiritual meanings. She then approaches another husband ... having given a bill of divorce to the former five, as it were, and having decided to live with this sixth.⁴⁰

The former five husbands thus signify the discovery of meaning and benefit at the somatic level. 'Urged on by things perceived by the spirit,' that is having identified the literal sense's limitations, the exegete rejects these aspects of the somatic sense outright. Instead of integrating them into her search for a higher meaning, she assents to the doctrine that they must be divorced from the search for Wisdom. God must be revealed, and so worshipped, otherwise.⁴¹

Moreover, this false doctrine underwrites a reading of the Law according to the letter. Drawing on *Romans* as he does, Origen can conflate the 'law' of gnostic exegesis and the isolated Old Testament Law. Or more precisely, he associates gnostic and Jewish literalism. The gnostic rejection of the Law on the basis of the literal sense alone is in turn an admission that it must be interpreted according to the letter, and so not the distancing from Judaism it claims to be. For all her speculation on the new economy of salvation, the Samaritan's gnosticizing exegesis only veils its spiritual meaning from her. The illegitimate husband thus binds her in the Law. Rather than freeing her from it as she supposed, she remains 'enslaved to the letter that kills.'⁴²

And we will stay with that husband until Jesus comes and makes us aware of the character of such a husband. But after the Word of the Lord has come and conversed with

³⁹ *CJn* XIII 8.48.

⁴⁰ *CJn* XIII 9.51.

⁴¹ See *CJn* XIII 12.75-25.153, a long discussion on true worship. Origen carefully draws out the implications of exegesis for worship and conceptions of salvation. He pointedly states that the perfect, although they worship in spirit and truth, nevertheless 'accommodate themselves to those in Jerusalem [the Church] by becoming Jews to the Jews that they might gain the Jews' who worship in types (XIII 16.98-18.109, 111). True knowledge of the Father does not permit the disparagement of the simple or those in error. Origen notes, moreover, that the Samaritan's false exegesis reinforces false worship. 'Now the person who is enslaved to the letter that kills and ... who does not follow the spiritual meanings of the law would be the one who is not a true worshipper and does not worship the Father in spirit. Whenever this person thinks he has completely attained his goal, because he belongs totally to the typological and literal level ... he then worships God in type and not in truth' (*CJn* XIII 18.110).

⁴² *CJn* XIII 18.110.

us, we deny that husband ... At this time the Lord also commends us and says: 'Well did you say, I have no husband.'⁴³

Only once the exegete denies, at Christ's prompting,⁴⁴ the principle by which she denigrated Scripture's outward form does Christ begin to reveal himself to her through the spiritual sense. 'Now the law according to the letter has died, and the soul is not an adulteress when she is with another husband, [viz.] the law according to the Spirit.'⁴⁵ Christ's exercising of the exegete's freedom through interpretation results in her own transformation, her own death in Christ to the law so that she might belong to another, 'to the Word who will be raised from the dead, who is not overthrown ... but remains forever and rules and subordinates all his enemies.'⁴⁶ Origen is quick to emphasize that Christ displays this power by which he overcomes his enemies in Scripture's literal sense. 'What more fitting place', he remarks, 'for the supposed husband of the Samaritan woman to be exposed by Jesus as not her husband than at the fountain of Jacob, if the woman had not on her own denied her husband?'⁴⁷

In this regard we must not bypass Origen's sudden and powerful turn to the literal sense after this allegorical exposition. The basic details of the Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus are not lost in the allegory. Rather, the allegorical meaning may be discovered in the literal encounter in which Jesus reveals himself as the Christ to her. 'At this level we learn that he is meek and lowly in heart, and does not disdain to speak of such great matters with a woman carrying water who goes out of the city because of her great poverty and labors to draw water for herself.'⁴⁸ Origen directly specifies the spiritual failure that would prevent us from this understanding. While the disciples are amazed to find Jesus conversing with this woman,

We, however, carried away by pride and arrogance, despise those below us, and forget that the words, 'let us make man according to our image and according to our likeness', apply to each person. And when we fail to remember the one who formed man in the womb, and formed all men's hearts individually, and understands all their works, we do not perceive that God is a helper of those who are lowly and inferior, a protector of the weak, a shelterer of those who have been given up in despair, and Savior of those who have been given up as hopeless.⁴⁹

⁴³ *CJn* XIII 9.52.

⁴⁴ *CJn* XIII 8.50: 'And because she already had, as it were, something of the water that leaps into eternal life since she had said, "give me this water", ... the woman answered, "'I have no husband", having condemned herself on the basis of her association with such a husband.'

⁴⁵ *CJn* XIII 8.47.

⁴⁶ *CJn* XIII 8.48.

⁴⁷ *CJn* XIII 8.49.

⁴⁸ *CJn* XIII 28.166.

⁴⁹ *CJn* XIII 28.167-8.

It would be wrong to suppose that this turn to the literal meaning contrasts with Origen's broader allegorical inquiry. Because his hermeneutical theory rests on the meekness of Christ he can amplify the consonance between the literal encounter and its spiritual meaning. That the gnostic exegete is unable to perceive the humility of the Word of God results from an exegetical strategy that neither admits its own need for God's Wisdom nor allows to any the hope that God could solicit the desire to partake of divine Wisdom. The irony is that the gnostic does not see how he is represented by the Samaritan woman in her poverty, who knows her need for God's help at the most basic level, and that 'the Father also seeks such to worship him' through his Son who seeks the lost.⁵⁰

Conclusion

According to this analysis, the literal sense is not only taken up into God's revelation, it images divine Wisdom and so mediates the participation of it. By the christological determination of his exegesis, Origen aims to defend the revelatory function of the literal sense in relation to the spiritual senses. The literal sense veils divine Wisdom in inadequacy so as to make it available, and the exegete's refusal to approach the letter as if it were from God represents a denial of her basic need for God's help. It is the vulnerability of the Word Incarnate, his hiddenness in a fragile form, which provokes our freedom to ask for God's gifts. Therefore the turn to the letter to search for Wisdom signifies the soul's admission of its need for God. This is, of course, the basic structure of Origen's interpretation of the woman at the well. If the gnostic spiritualizing extraction suffices, then any desire to experience God's Wisdom is shrugged off. But by concealing divine Wisdom in vulnerability, the Spirit ensures that it is attained only by the worthy, those whose desire for God's Wisdom is the free expression of their need for it. In turn, Christ frees the exegete from the slavery of the letter, and precisely thus inscribes within her, renewed, the Wisdom it contains.

⁵⁰ See *CJn* XIII 20.119: 'If the Father seeks those whom he prepares to be true worshippers by purifying them and instructing them in the word and in sound teachings, he seeks them through the Son who came to seek and save the lost.'

Equivocality of Biblical Language in Origen

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ABSTRACT

In his biblical hermeneutics, Origen emphasizes the polysemic character of the biblical word. To explain this phenomenon in an analytic way he appeals to the concept of *homonymia*. This term, deriving from philosophical tradition, is substantially re-conceptualized by Origen, in a way that corresponds to the constitution of his biblical hermeneutics. His use does not coincide either with the logical understanding of homonymy by Aristotle or with Plato's idea of the homonymous nomination of a physical phenomenon and its metaphysical idea. *Homonymia* in Origen's theory of biblical interpretation denotes the paradoxical relation that a linguistic designator of sensible matter has with its spiritual content; this relation is to be considered from the angle of dialectical ontology. The explicative and epistemological function of equivocation in Origen's hermeneutics involves the thought shifting between the poles of difference and similarity. Another special characteristic of Origen's use of homonymy is that it designates only one of the members of the homonymous pair, with the other one – usually radically different from it – only implied. In this case the homonymy of biblical articulation appears in the form of a mystical metaphor. On the linguistic level the homonymy of biblical language reflects the Apostle Paul's dichotomic division of the outer and inner man, which is the anthropological basis of Origen's hermeneutics.

I. Equivocality as paradoxical polysemy

Origen frequently expressed his position on the narrative and linguistic aspects of the Bible, with the Apostle Paul's words from *2Cor.* (4:7): 'But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.' This hermeneutical expression may be loosely considered to be a basic principle in Origen's exegetical theory. In accordance with St. Paul's words he finds an apparent diversity in the Bible between a linguistic designator and the sense implied by it. The founder of the theory of biblical hermeneutics considers this ambiguity of the Biblical language to be deliberate, in order to hide the real content of the inspired text. As M. Harl has remarked, Origen considers two kinds of ἀσάφεια lying in the biblical text: on one hand, the vague vocabulary (the equivocal character of biblical words and figurative expressions) and lack of coherent sequence in narration, on the other.¹ In that

¹ See Marguerite Harl, 'Origène et la sémantique du langage biblique', in Marguerite Harl, *Le Déchiffrement du Sens. Études sur l'herméneutique chrétienne d'Origène à Grégoire de*

excellent research, M. Harl's goal is more to provide an outline of Origen's hermeneutical project as a whole than to provide detailed analysis of its constitutive elements. This contribution here will focus on the theological function of the first kind of biblical ἀσάφεια, that is, the apparent contradiction between a linguistic utterance and the unexpected content present in it, which appears in Origen's hermeneutics as the term *homonyma* and related words.

In the introduction to the commentary on the *Epistle to Romans*, Origen states that the difficulty of comprehending this Epistle is largely due to the fact that the Apostle puts different meanings into identical words.² According to Origen, St Paul moves from one meaning of a word to another, without any explanation.³ By way of illustration, he brings forth a group of words (law, Israel, circumcision, man *etc.*), which denote various concepts, sometimes radically opposed ones, within one linguistic utterance. This paradoxical polysemy is due to there being two semantic levels in inspired Scripture: *secundum litteram* and *secundum spiritum*, which are equivocal to each other. If we do not take this fact into consideration, says Origen, we could think that the Apostle Paul contradicts himself.

II. The function of homonymy within the dichotomic ontological structure

The *locus classicus* explaining the phenomenon of equivocality is given in Aristotle's *Categories*. The definition reads: 'Things are equivocally named, when they have the name only in common, the definition corresponding with the name being different.' For instance, a man and a portrait can both properly be named 'animals' equivocally.⁴ Origen cites this definition almost verbatim in his *Commentary on Jeremiah*.⁵ The above textual evidence is of special interest in so far as Origen does not strictly trace the notion of equivocality represented in the Aristotelian definition.

The definition of equivocality in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* follows a discussion of the most significant hermeneutic issue: how the anthropomorphisms of God may be understood in Holy Scripture. Origen's response to that

Nysse, Collection des Études Augustiniennes. Serie Antiquité 135 (Paris, 1993), 61-88, especially, 71-9.

² *Comm. in Rom.* 70,6 (*Commentarii in Epistulam ad Romanos*, ed. Theresia Heither, Fontes Christiani 2/1 [Freiburg, 1990]).

³ *Ibid.* 214,16 (Bd. 2).

⁴ Aristoteles, *Cat.* 1,1a (*Aristotelis Categoriae et Liber de interpretatione*, ed. L. Minio-Paluello [Oxonii, 1956]): ὁμώνυμα λέγεται ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὃ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα λόγος τῆς οὐσίας ἕτερος, οἷον ζῶον ὃ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ τὸ γεγραμμένον. See Plat. *Soph.* 218 c (*Platonis opera*, rec. Ioannes Burnet, t. 1 [Oxonii, s.a.]) which contains the same sense as this definition.

⁵ *In Ier.* 20,1 (177,17): ὁμώνυμα δὲ ἐστὶν, ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὃ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ἕτερος (*Origenes Werke III. Jeremiahomilien*, ed. Erich Klostermann, GCS 6 [Leipzig, 1901]).

metaphysical question is given in the light of the Judaic Hellenistic exegesis: we have to think about God in a manner that is appropriate to the goodness of the Divine being. This suggests a comprehension of God's 'dispositions' and 'actions' spiritually, viz. bearing in mind that these peculiarities are only equivocally expressed of God and have really no affinity with him.⁶

This means, however, that here we have to deal with a 'vertical' notion of homonymy, one which relates the sensible to the intelligible, and therefore, tends more towards Platonic ontological dialectics than to Aristotle's logical discursive understanding of the term.⁷

Plato uses the concept of equivocality in only a few passages, those which describe the relation between ideas and their sensible images and mean, in general, a difference in essence but a similarity in sense.⁸ Alcinoos used the term in the context of the dialectical division of the Platonic idea⁹ and later it appears frequently in Plotinus. After Plato and the Middle Platonic school tradition, the author of the *Enneades* appeals to the term to indicate the basic difference between the eternal entities and their alterable objects, and, at the same time, to point out some similarities between them; this relationship is consequently characterized as ἀναλογία καὶ ὁμωνυμία / κατ' ἀναλογίαν καὶ ὁμωνύμως.¹⁰

In spite of evident Platonic implications, neither the equivocal designation of the Metaphysical and the Physical, nor the dialectical division of idea can fully explain the peculiarity of Origen's homonymy, which is primarily to be considered from the angle of ontological relation.

III. Homonymy as reflective of Paul's anthropological model on the linguistic level

The Alexandrian master's treatise *Dialogue with Heraclitus* supports the notion of a Christian anthropology as an immediate source for Origen's equivocal allegory. His intention here is to interpret the biblical message of the double creation of man.¹¹ Being a defender of the homogeneity of the Biblical text, he tries to

⁶ *Aporia* and the answer to it is first discussed by Aristobulos, representative of Judaic Alexandrian allegorical exegesis.

⁷ In Aristotle 'equivocality' and 'analogy' are mental and linguistic terms.

⁸ See *Parm.* 133d (I. Burnet, t. 2), *Tim.* 52a (I. Burnet, t. 3), *Phaed.* 78c-e (Burnet, t. 1). Plato uses the word ὁμώνυμα very seldom. One can say that in fact it does not function in Plato as a technical term.

⁹ Alcinoos, *Didask.* 30 (183,17) (*Alcinoos, Enseignement des doctrines de Platon*, ed. John Whittaker et traduit par Pierre Louis [Paris, 1990]).

¹⁰ *Enn.* VI 3.1.6; VI 3.5.3 (*Plotini Enneades*, rec. Hermannus Fridericus Mueller [Berolini, 1878]) but this discourse does not stress the aspect of similarity in homonymy.

¹¹ *Gen.* 1:26; 2:7.

reconcile the two messages on the basis of Paul's *dichotomic* division of the outer and the inner man. In accordance with this division, the two biblical messages are found to reflect a spiritual and a corporeal creation. In *Genesis*,

incorporeal is called by the same name (ὁμωνύμως) as corporeal; hereby the corporeal corresponds to the outer man, whereas the equivocal (ὁμώνυμα) to the corporeal thing corresponds to the inner man.¹²

Origen puts even more emphasis on the similarity in homonymy in his extensive *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. The linguistic body and the real sense, implied in it, illustrate opposite semantic poles: sensible love and spiritual love; equivocality as a property of language is responsible for overcoming this divergence. Already in the prologue to the treatise, Origen appeals to Paul's division of ἕξω and ἔσω ἄνθρωπος. He remarks that the idea of the double nature of a man was initially included in the account of the double creation in Moses' book, and later expressed more explicitly by St Paul.¹³ The discourse is followed by a descriptive definition of homonymy:

... in the Divine Scriptures through homonyms, that is through similar words, precisely through identical terms are designated the limbs of the outer man and parts and emotions of the inner man; and not only are they compared with the same words, but the things themselves are compared with one another.

'... scripturis divinis per homonymas, id est per similes appellationes, immo per eadem vocabula et exterioris hominis membra ei illius interioris partes affectusque nominantur eaque non solum vocabulis, sed et rebus ipsis invicem comparantur.'¹⁴

This descriptive definition differs essentially from the Aristotelian one in the *Categories*. In the words '... sed et rebus ipsis invicem comparantur' the principle of similarity occurs instead of that of diversity (λόγος τῆς οὐσίας ἕτερος). Thinking about the conceptual premises of this phrase one can appeal to the fact that the vertical notion of equivocality, already present in Platonism, implies a relativity of difference between equivocal metaphysical and physical phenomena. Besides, although the notions 'outer' and 'inner man' are antithetical,¹⁵ Origen believes that they are ontologically connected to each other.

In the *Commentary on Luke*, when discussing the metaphor 'the light of the body is the eye' (Luke 11:34)¹⁶ Origen instructs his listener/reader on how to

¹² *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide et les évêques ses collègues, sur le Père, le Fils et l'âme*, ed. J. Scherer, SC 67 (Paris 1960), 78-80.

¹³ *Comm. in Cant.* 63,29-64, 16 (*Origenes Werke VIII. Kommentar zum Hohenlied in Rufins und Hieronymus' Übersetzung*, ed. W.A. Baehrens, GCS 33 [Leipzig, 1925]).

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 64,17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 64,2: '... though our outer man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day'; see 2Cor. 4:16.

¹⁶ *Hom. in Luc.*, Frg. 78 (468,19-474,5) (*In Lucam homiliae*, ed. Hermann-Josef Sieben, Fontes Christiani 4/2 [Freiburg, 1992]).

penetrate these words and grasp their content, namely that ‘the light of soul is the mind’. The discourse resembles an example of the homonymy based on analogy from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle links the term equivocality with analogy: many things are called ‘goodness’ equivocally; for example as the eye is a goodness for the body, in the same way the mind is a ‘goodness’ for the soul.¹⁷ But to the Alexandrian theologian, as opposed to Aristotle, the relation between the parts of an analogy is not a logical one. As Origen argues, one must not be surprised at the analogy he draws between the soul and the body, because either the ‘simplicity’ (ἀπλότης) or the ‘evil’ (πονηρία) of our intellect influences our body while moving and using it as an instrument: ‘We take body in a figurative way (τροπολογικῶς) for soul, even though the latter by its essence is invisible and incorporeal – and is indeed created according to the image of the invisible God – for we find that in figurative interpretations (τροπολογικῶς) the powers of the soul are equivocally (ὁμωνύμως) called members of the body, not being bodies as such.’ In Origen’s hermeneutical insight the equivocal links between the spiritual and somatic aspects in man correlates with the same relation between man and God, as evident from the Divine anthropomorphisms, both belonging to the anagogic structure of his exegesis.

This hermeneutic discourse from the *Commentary on Luke* is a vivid example of how Origen replaces the principle of diversity in essence of the traditional definition of homonyms with the principle of ontological affinity. Due to the innovative concluding words of the definition of homonyms from the *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (*sed et rebus ipsis invicem comparantur*), the Alexandrian master’s understanding of homonyms stands in a sort of relation with the Aristotelian notion of synonymy.¹⁸

Origen does not appear to have been particularly concerned about his definition differing from that of Aristotle. He writes a commentary on the *Song of Songs* – acknowledged as one of the most mystical books of the Bible with a long Judaic exegetical tradition. In doing so, he finds himself preeminently in that conceptual framework. According to the Judaic allegorical interpretation the setting of the main event in Salomon’s is the *sancta sanctorum*, that is in the ‘place’ where the elected people of Israel come into mystical union with their God.¹⁹ For the Alexandrian theologian too the *epoptic* drama develops in the *sancta sanctorum*, that is beyond the heavenly Jerusalem, where, as he

¹⁷ *Eth. Nic.* 1,6,1096b29 (Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics* with an English translation by H. Rackam [Cambridge, 2003]). It is worth mentioning that the conception of equivocality based on analogy occurs in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* while criticizing Plato’s metaphysics. The example evidently stems from the Academy, see *Plat. Rp.* 508b-509a (Burnet, t. 4).

¹⁸ Arist., *Cat.* 1a6 (L. Minio-Paluello, 1956): συνώνυμα δὲ λέγεται ὅν τό τε ὄνομα κοινὸν καὶ ὁ κατὰ τοῦνομα λόγος τῆς οὐσίας ὁ αὐτός, οἷον ζῶον ὃ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ βοῦς.

¹⁹ Origenes. *Homélies sur le Cantique des cantiques*, ed. Olivier Rousseau, SC 37^{bis} (Paris, 1966, 2^e éd.), 12-3.

assumes, the human soul joins the Word of God to become *unus spiritus* with him.²⁰ If we return to Judaic Hellenistic exegesis, we come across a similar notion in such an authority as Philo, whose point was evidently well known to the Christian commentator: According to Philo, none of the messages originated from the Biblical authors themselves; they only gave phonetic shape to those messages, that were bestowed on them by the in-dwelling Spirit.²¹ The interpretation of the Biblical language as being a result of inspiration is found extensively in Origen; this is especially the case in his commentary on the *Song of Songs*. As Origen says, in the book of Solomon the Word of God and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit sound in all their might instructing mankind in the sublime truth.²² In this extreme form of allegorical paradox Origen finds a vivid union between the human and the Divine Word.²³

All this discourse *per se* stresses the essential similarity between the human soul and God.²⁴ One can clearly trace how the Alexandrian theologian in the *Commentary on the Song of Songs* deliberately avoids introducing his sceptical view of the linguistic faculty of giving knowledge of God, which he elucidates in the 4th book of *De principiis*. Nevertheless, it would be unjust to accuse him of inconsistency. The notion of equivocality is a mobile one for shifting thought dialectically between the poles of difference and similarity.²⁵ Ambivalent as it is, its structure enables one to reconcile linguistic scepticism with the Judaic notion of the sacred character of Biblical language.

IV. Homonymy as metaphor

Another special characteristic of Origen's use of *homonymy* is that the word in his biblical hermeneutics does not designate equally the pairs compared in equivocal analogy. This means that Origen sees in the Biblical text only one of the members of this homonymous pair, whereas the other one – usually radically

²⁰ *Comm. in Cant.* 85,17-25 (W.A. Baehrens, GCS 33, 1925); *Hom. in Cant.* 1, 66,2 (O. Rousseau, SC 37, 1966).

²¹ See, for example, *Spec. leg.* IV 49 (*Philo* with an English translation by F.H. Colson, v. VIII [Cambridge, 1960]); *Quis rer. Div. her.* 259 (F.H. Colson, v. IV [1958]); *Mos.* I 277 (F.H. Colson, v. VI [1959]).

²² See, for example, *Comm. in Cant.* 63,29; 159,13; 208,1 (W.A. Baehrens).

²³ Origen prefers to speak about Holy Scripture as the body of the *Logos*, where He reveals His truth and makes mankind to participate in His mystery. This Judaic Hellenistic *Logos* theology is, nonetheless, intimately linked to Origen's Christology and ecclesiology. See Henri de Lubac, *Geist aus der Geschichte. Das Schriftverständnis des Origenes*, übers. und eingel. von Hans Urs von Balthasar (Einsiedeln, 1968), 424-36; Henri Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance mystique* (Paris, 1961), 73f.

²⁴ See Philo, who thought that the human soul, who is in-dwelted by the Spirit, can be named God, *Quis rer. Div. her.* 84 (F.H. Colson, v. IV); *Spec. leg.* I 37 (F.H. Colson, v. VII).

²⁵ Also Aristotle's notion of *homonymy*, as given in the definition of the *Categories*, is ambivalent in itself, for it presents both similarity and difference.

different from it – is only implied. In this case, the homonymy of biblical articulation appears in the form of a mystical metaphor. The Alexandrian theologian is keen to utilize the concept of equivocality in this very function, although the term and its derivatives frequently occur in their common meaning of merely linguistic identity.²⁶ As we have seen,²⁷ figure and equivocality are related concepts in Origen's hermeneutics; they appear together in each case where the idea of a human word is at work as an adequate designation of its spiritual meaning.

With such an understanding of equivocality, Origen comes close to the point of Atticos. That Platonic philosopher argued, on one hand, that equivocality based on analogy and equivocality based on metaphor belong to one and the same figure, and, on the other hand, he reckoned the latter to be equivocality based on analogy. An intense philosophical debate went on within the Platonic school on this matter, as we can infer from the late Neo-Platonic commentaries on the *Categories* of Aristotle.²⁸ Atticos' view was strongly criticized by Platonists,

²⁶ He was indeed also well acquainted with the classification of homonymy, elaborated in the schools of Late Antiquity; see Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* VIII 8 (PG 9, 592B); Porph., *In Cat.* 65,19-66,21 (*Porphirii Isagoge et in Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, ed. Adolfus Busse, CAG IV [Berolini, 1887], 1); see Amm., *In Cat.* 21,16-22,10 (*Ammonii in Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, ed. Adolfus Busse, CAG IV [Berolini, 1895], 4); Phil., *In Cat.* 16,22-17,19; 21,16-22,14 (Philoponi [olim Ammonii] in *Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, ed. Adolfus Busse, CAG, XIII [Berolini, 1898], 1); Simpl., *In Cat.* 31,23-19 (*Simplicii in Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, ed. Carolus Kalbfleisch, CAG VIII [Berolini, 1907]); Olymp., *In Cat.* 34,7-35,14 (*Olympiodori Prolegomena et in Categorias commentarium*, ed. Adolfus Busse, CAG XII [Berolini, 1902], 1); Elias, *In Cat.* 139,30-140,25 (*Elae in Porphyrii Isagogen et Aristotelis Categorias commentaria*, ed. Adolfus Busse, CAG XVIII [Berolini, 1900], 1).

²⁷ See above *Hom. in Luc.*, *Frg.* 78 (468,19-474,5) (H.-J. Sieben).

²⁸ Porph., *In Cat.* 66,29-67,32 (Ad. Busse [1887], 1); Simpl., *In Cat.* 32,19-33,21 (C. Kalbfleisch [1907]); without mentioning Atticos: Amm., *In Cat.* 20,1-10 (Ad. Busse [1898], 1); Philop., *In Cat.* 20,22-21,13 (Ad. Busse [1898], 1); Olymp., *In Cat.* 36,8-37,14 (Ad. Busse [1902], 1); Elias, *In Cat.* 135,24-136,20 (Ad. Busse [1900], 1). Atticos and before him Nikostratos (2nd c. AD) being opponents of Aristotle's *Categories* denied the existence of homonymy as an independent logical/linguistic phenomenon. According to them, it was dialectically justified to consider homonymy as a kind of synonymy. As we learn from Simplicios (*ibid.* 30,16-31,21), Nikostratos was the first to raise an *aporia* that *homonyma* do not exist, which, afterwards has been refined by Atticos. Their argument against the existence of homonymy was rather casuistic: alongside a common name all homonyms have a common definition of homonymy (Simpl., *ibid.* 26,21; 30,27). The opponents of Atticos, however, believed that there are logical links between homonyms and synonyms. Olympiodoros paid attention and tried to explain, why Aristotle adduced the same example of 'man' when explaining *homonyma* (ζῶον ὃ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ τὸ γεγραμμένον) and *synonyma* (ζῶον ὃ τε ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ βοῦς). As he argues, with these examples Aristotle intends to show affinity between them: man towards its portrait is equivocal, but towards a bull, as an animal, he is synonym (Olymp., *ibid.* 35,15-36,7). In fact, the problem of the interrelation of homonymy and synonymy was important, as far as it characterized the relation between ὄν, γέννη, εἶδη and αἰσθητά. Such a crucial philosophical problem as: whether ὄν belongs to genus or not, was also linked with the understanding of homonyms and synonyms (Simpl., *ibid.* 21,26-22,1).

who strove to preserve *homonyma* as a logical-discursive term. They accused Atticos and others of this trend of a wrong judgment. As Porphyry, and after him Simplicios, argue something can be named metaphorically when it has a proper name, but it loosely expresses some other name not proper to it. In this case no equivocality can be assumed because only those things which have a similar name can be called equivocal; nor is it possible to speak here about equivocality based on similarity (καθ' ὁμοίωσιν ὁμώνυμα) for no similarity exists in metaphor. Therefore, as they insist, something expressed tropologically cannot be equivocal to a thing which is named in the proper sense.²⁹ This viewpoint on equivocality, analogy and metaphor was not in consonance with the main intention of Origen's Biblical hermeneutics, which understands the Biblical text as a metaphor and applies the notion of equivocality as a tool for disclosing the Divine mystery.

Indeed it was not Origen who introduced the term *homonyma* into Biblical exegesis for the first time. At least two antecedents can be found in the same intellectual setting of Alexandria – Philo and Clement. As faithful adepts of the philosophical mentality, they preserved some interesting examples of the technical use of the term in its traditional philosophical understanding. Therefore, it appears to have been the great Alexandrian's drastic innovation to accept from the Academy the idea of ontological similarity implied in *homonyma* and to use it in a mystical sense for his anagogical exegesis. In so doing, he reconceptualized the conception of equivocality, remodeling it according to the Apostle Paul's doctrine of the outer and inner man; the term *homonyma* comes to the fore as a reflection of that anthropological division on the linguistic level, attesting itself as an essential part of Origen's hermeneutic theory. His task, to explain the vertical structure of Biblical language through the term *homonyma* resulted in a profound synthesis of various concepts. However, the idea rests on two main pillars: St Paul's anthropological doctrine and Platonic philosophy in its multiple manifestations.

²⁹ Porph., *In Cat.* 66,29-67,32 (Ad. Busse [1887]); Simpl., *In Cat.* 32,19-33,21 (C. Kalbfleisch [1907]). In the school classification of homonyms Aristotle's example from *Categories* – man alive and man depicted both are animals – is identified as equivocality based on similarity.

Origen and the Exegetical Tradition of the Sarah-Hagar Motif in Alexandria

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ABSTRACT

Philo, Clement and Origen used the Sarah-Hagar motif found in *Genesis* 16 for their allegorical interpretation. The Sarah-Hagar motif seems to be one of the most important themes in Alexandrian exegetical tradition, because it offered not only the clue to approaching stumbling block passages within the Biblical texts through allegorical interpretation, but also the notion that philosophy should serve as the handmaid of theology (*'philosophia theologiae ancilla'*) to the Middle Ages. In tracing the Alexandrian exegetical tradition of the Sarah-Hagar motif represented by Philo, Clement and Origen, I recognize that they tackled this theme through biblical exegesis in their own concrete situation, and in this process, gradually the distinction between them developed with reference to their hermeneutical method. Philo and Clement used the Sarah-Hagar motif of *Genesis* 16 from their philosophical and spiritual interests to show how to treat secular preliminary education in order to prevent the separation of belief and reason and encourage to seek virtues and wisdom. They often confronted their opponents within their community who rejected secular education through allegorical interpretations of the Biblical texts. But when we turn to Origen, we recognize the distinctive feature of the use of *allegoria* fundamentally different from these two Alexandrian predecessors. Origen opens a new stage when he uses the Sarah-Hagar motif mainly from the interpretation of Paul's letter (*Galatians* 4:21-7) and contributes to the formation of exegetical method in the Middle Ages. In this contribution, I would like to show how Origen uses allegorical interpretation based on the Pauline exegetical method, and to outline how the Pauline letters were accepted and used in the context of the hermeneutical method, taking new perspective in Pauline scholarship into consideration.

The Sara-Hagar motif from *Genesis* 16:1-2 is one of the famous biblical passages whose exegetical interpretations by Alexandrian theologians had a great impact on the following church history, especially on the formation of the handmaid formula (*philosophia theologiae ancilla*) in the Middle Ages.¹ This *Genesis* text (LXX) reads as follows:

¹ See F.J. Clemens, *De scholasticorum sententia philosophiam esse theologiae ancillam commentatio* (Münster, 1856); Albert Henrichs, 'Philosophy, the Handmaiden of Theology', *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9 (1968), 437-50.

Sarah, Abraham's wife, did not bring forth any children for him. But she had an Egyptian handmaid whose name was Hagar. So Sarah said to Abraham: Behold, the Lord closed my womb so that I cannot bring forth children. Therefore go to this handmaiden of mine in order to beget children by her.

In this study, I would like to focus on their method of allegorical interpretation especially that of Philo, Clement and Origen, and consider how they allegorically treat the relationship among various educational stages carried out at that time (secular education, philosophy and theology). Who are their supposed audiences or opponents? What is the intellectual heritage of Alexandrian exegetes for the following centuries of church history? My contention is that Origen opens a new stage when he uses the Sarah-Hagar motif based on the allegorical interpretation of Paul's letter (*Galatians* 4:21-7).

Albert Henrichs dealt with the successive exegetical tradition of *Gen.* 16 from Philo to Clement, Origen and Didymus the Blind, and rightly concluded that the allegorical interpretation concerning the relationship between philosophy and theology in terms of servant and mistress (*Philosophia theologiae ancilla*) originated in the 'Alexandrian school of theology'.² Although his study is still suggestive and accepted by recent scholars to describe the cultural heritage of Alexandrian theologians,³ it needs more detailed considerations as significant progress has been made in the field of Alexandrian exegetical tradition.

My first point is that Henrichs presupposes a sort of institutional school system by saying that 'they constitute a uniform and continuous tradition of biblical exegesis' and called these theologians 'the four leading teachers of this school'. He seems to accept Eusebius' picture of a church history of Alexandria, which traced school succession 'under the auspices of the bishop of the city with a unified history and succession of teachers'. But recent Alexandrian study tends to suspect whether Eusebius' picture of a Christian school in Alexandria reflected the real situation in Alexandrian theology.⁴

My second point is that, in tracing the Alexandrian exegetical tradition of the Sarah-Hagar motif represented by Philo, Clement and Origen, I recognize that they tackled this theme through biblical exegesis in their own concrete situation, and in this process, gradually the distinction between them developed with reference to their hermeneutical method.

² A. Henrichs, 'Philosophy, the Handmaiden of Theology' (1968), 437.

³ See Alain de Libera, *La Philosophie médiévale* (Paris, 1989), 283-4; David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen and Minneapolis, 1993), 86, 139 *passim*.

⁴ Ronald E. Heine, *Origen – Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (Oxford, 2010), 49. According to Heine, 'it appears almost certainly to be his own creation'. Runia treats Eusebius' description as 'a speculative deduction from a passage in a letter of Alexander', see D.T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature* (1993), 157.

1. Philo and the Sarah-Hagar motif in *De congressu*

Philo interprets this story allegorically in his *Allegorical Commentary, De congressu* (*On Mating with the Preliminary Studies*; Περί τῆς πρὸς τὰ προπαιδεύματα συνόδου), and finds behind the Biblical text a learning process of one's soul which is represented by Abraham. Two women signify each step which he takes according to progress: one is a preliminary study represented by the handmaid Hagar, and another is Virtue or Wisdom represented by Sarah. *De congressu* 79 reads as follows:

And indeed just as the preliminary educations contribute to the acquirement of philosophy, so does philosophy to the getting of wisdom. For philosophy is the practice or study of wisdom, and wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes. And therefore just as the preliminary culture the servant of philosophy, so must philosophy be the handmaiden of wisdom (ὥσπερ ἡ ἐγκύκλιος μουσικὴ φιλοσοφίας, οὕτω καὶ φιλοσοφία δούλη σοφίας).⁵

In this passage Philo confronts a difficulty in understanding this story literally as a Jew living in a Hellenistic city because of the problem of polygamy.⁶ Therefore he shifts this Biblical text from an ancestral history to the discussion about the role and value of the different Greek subjects to attain the perfection in faith.⁷ Philo begins by pointing out that while Virtue or Wisdom represented by Sarah is never barren, she is at this stage incapable of begetting by her. Therefore the immature soul must resort to the handmaid, the preliminary education. She is an Egyptian, of the body that is, and the preliminary education depend on the senses in a way her name Hagar means a sojourner, and the relation of the sojourner to the full citizen expresses that of the preliminary education to philosophy. In this text, Philo presupposed an allegorical interpretation by a Stoic philosopher Ariston, who compared the suitors of Penelope in the *Odyssey* to the pursuers of the preliminary disciplines, in order to warn his audience not to waste their effort with the preliminary disciplines nor neglect philosophy.⁸ And Philo also introduced the Platonic definition of wisdom (wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes) from Plato's *Republic* 485a10-b3.⁹

⁵ Philo, *De congr.* 79, English translation by F.H. Colson and G.H. Whitaker, *LCL* (1985), 496-7; see also the 'Analytical Introduction', *ibid.* 451-7.

⁶ See *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome* 4 (Oxford, 2010), 350-8 (marriage and divorce).

⁷ See A. Henrichs, 'Philosophy, the Handmaiden of Theology' (1968), 437-50; Alan Mendelson, *Secular Education in Philo of Alexandria* (Cincinnati, 1982); H.-I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (London, 1982), 406-8.

⁸ A. Henrichs, 'Philosophy, the Handmaiden of Theology' (1968), 444.

⁹ Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria* (Cambridge, 2011), 173¹⁴.

When we consider Philo's sophisticated allegorical interpretation, Maren Niehoff gives us a new perspective to consider Philo's Biblical exegesis in the context of Alexandrian philological scholarship. In his recent book *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, Niehoff suggests that Alexandrian Jews responded in a great variety of ways to the Homeric scholarship developed at the Museum.¹⁰ Philo's attitude towards Homeric scholarship is considered along with his different exegetical series; the *Allegorical Commentary*, the *Q & A*, and the *Exposition*. In the *Allegorical Commentary* Philo responds to highly critical Jewish colleagues in Alexandria and develops his own, more conservative approach, which combines literal scholarship with extended allegory. Philo's quarrelsome colleagues were engaged in text-critical studies in the style of Aristarchus, and when unable either to offer a proper literal explanation or to have recourse to allegory, they rejected certain biblical verses and resorted to textual emendation.¹¹ So, addressing an audience used to critical scholarship on the literal level, Philo must seriously seek allegorical meaning in defense of the Biblical texts.¹²

2. Clement and the Sarah-Hagar motif in *Stromateis* I 30,1

Next we will look at Clement. According to the exhaustive research of Van den Hoek, an important problem that Clement confronted in the first book of the *Stromateis* was to define the role that philosophy and Greek culture could play in faith.¹³ Behind his apologetic discussion for philosophy, there seems to be some Christians who 'think that philosophy was introduced into life by the force of evil to ruin people'.¹⁴ He deals with the allegorical interpretation of the Sarah-Hagar motif in *Stromateis* I 30,1 as follows:

But as the cycle of studies contributes to philosophy, their mistress, so also philosophy itself co-operates for the acquisition of wisdom. For philosophy is the study <of wisdom> and wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human and their causes. Wisdom is therefore the mistress of philosophy, as philosophy is of preparatory education.¹⁵

As far as *Gen.* 16 is concerned, Van den Hoek points out the literal dependency between Philo and Clement in their allegorical interpretation of the Sarah-Hagar motif in *Stromateis* I 30,1. Clement is the first Christian author to make

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 9-16, 133ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 128.

¹² *Ibid.* 133.

¹³ I use the English text from Annewies van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and his Use of Philo* (Leiden a.o., 1988), 23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 24.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 31.

explicit mention of Philo and he does so four times.¹⁶ We can recognize that Clement uses Philo polemically to answer his fellow Christians who reject Greek culture and philosophy. Philo shows him the way to defend the value and justify the attraction of Greek culture against the suspicions of his colleagues, because Philo had linked an allegorical interpretation of a biblical passage to a philosophic scheme.¹⁷ But of course his concept of wisdom is profoundly altered by Clement in his Christian context, for he no longer linked wisdom to the Law, as in Philo, but to Christ.

3. Origen and the Sarah-Hagar motif in *P. Arch.* IV 2,6

Concerning the relation between Clement and Origen, Van Den Hoek indicates that although Origen was acquainted with Clement's works, it is very difficult to find any textual connection.¹⁸ Actually in the case of Origen, Henrichs refers only to a fragmental testimony and a passage from Origen's letter to his former pupil Gregory the Wonder-Worker to confirm their connection.¹⁹ I shall indicate another textual evidence where Origen uses the Sarah-Hagar motif mainly from his allegorical interpretation based on Paul's letter to the *Galatians* 4:21-7 in *P. Arch.* IV 2,6 and *C. Cels.* IV 44.

Among Paul's passages, *Gal.* 4:21-4 is the most important textual evidences for Origen's exegetical method of spiritual explanation, because it serves as a model for his allegorical interpretations. We can find Origen's basic understanding of his 'allegory' based on the Pauline term ἀλληγορούμενα in *P. Arch.* IV 2,6, where he unfolds his exegetical method in detail as follows:

And when writing to the Galatians and reproaching some who believe they are reading the law and yet do not understand it, because they are unaware that there are allegories in these writings, he addresses them in a tone of rebuke: 'Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid and one by the free woman. He who was born of the handmaid was born according to the flesh, but he of the free woman was born according to promise. Which things contain an allegory. For these are the two covenants.'²⁰

¹⁶ D.T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature* (1993), 132, 135.

¹⁷ A. van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and his Use of Philo* (1988), 217.

¹⁸ A. van den Hoek, 'Origen and the Intellectual Heritage of Alexandria: Continuity or Discontinuity?', in R.J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana Quinta* (Leuven, 1992), 40-50. She shows that 'Origen's reference to Clement would not easily have been identified' (*ibid.* 45).

¹⁹ A. Henrichs, 'Philosophy, the Handmaiden of Theology' (1968), 445-6.

²⁰ Miyako Demura, 'Origen as Biblical Scholar in his Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew XII,29', *Scrinium 4: Patrologia Pacifica* (2008), 23-31; *id.*, 'The Reception of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Canonical Principle in Origen of Alexandria', *Scrinium 6: Patrologia Pacifica Secunda* (2010), 75-84.

It is important to note that Origen already adopted the Homeric philological method (Homer should be interpreted from Homer) when he undertook the *Hexapla* in Alexandria, and he developed the allegorical interpretation based on the Alexandrian philological method (Scripture should be interpreted from Scripture) to make refutation against allegories of Greek philosophers and Gnostics of his time which had been developed as a philosophical interpretative method of ancient myth.²¹ Steven Di Mattei suggests a new approach to clarify Paul's usage of ἀλληγορούμενα in *Gal.* 4:24 from an Alexandrian philological method, and refers to two Alexandrian grammarians of about the late first century AD.²² Tryphon says: 'Allegoria is an enunciation which while signifying one thing literally, brings forth the thought of something else' (*De tropis* 1.1), and Heraclitus says: 'The trope that says one thing but signifies something other than what is said is called by the name allegoria' (*Homeric Allegories* 5.2). Mattei argues that according to their definitions, allegory works as a rhetorical trope as opposed to the apologetic aims of its usage as we saw in the case of Philo or Clement.

In *C. Cels.* IV 44, we can recognize some reflection of their definitions, because when Origen uses the Sarah-Hagar-two covenants motif from *Galatians* 4:21-7, he replaces the word 'allegoria (ἀλληγορούμενα)' in *Gal.* 4:24 with the term 'tropologia' as follows:

It is not we who teach that brides and handmaids are to be interpreted as tropologia, but we have received this from wise men before us. One of them said these words in order to arouse the hearer to the tropologia: 'Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid and one by the free woman.

It is very likely that Origen would read and understand the meaning of the allegoria (ἀλληγορούμενα) in *Gal.* 4:24 in terms of rhetorical trope of Alexandrian philological method above mentioned. When Origen attributed this philological method to 'wise men before us', it is worth noticing that Paul was mentioned first among them.

Origen seemed to understand the contention of Paul's *Letter to the Galatians* how to understand the Mosaic Law in his own Christian context. According to a New Testament scholar James Dunn,²³ what Paul denies is that God's justification depends on 'covenantal nomism', that God's grace extends only to those who wear the badge of the covenant; to observe circumcision, food

²¹ Miyako Demura, 'Origen's allegorical interpretation and the Philological tradition of Alexandria', in G. Heidl and R. Somos (eds), *Origeniana Nona* (Leuven, 2009), 149-58.

²² Steven Di Mattei, 'Paul's Allegory of the Two Covenants (Gal 4.21-31) in Light of First-Century Hellenistic Rhetoric and Jewish Hermeneutics', in *New Testament Studies* 52 (2006), 102-22 (see 105-6).

²³ James D.G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul: Collected Essays* (Tübingen, 2005).

laws and Sabbath.²⁴ We know a similar situation when Origen criticized the Jewish custom of circumcision and fasting,²⁵ and stated that there were some Christians in Egypt who haunted synagogues and churches.²⁶ And after his settling in Caesarea where Origen was confronted with the vigorous rabbinic community, the importance of Paul's epistles increased more and more for his exegetical activities. I shall give two textual evidences, first *P. Arch* IV 3,8:

Now that we have learned from him (Paul), therefore, that there is one Israel according to the flesh and another according to the spirit, then when the Saviour says, 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (*Matth.* 15:24), we do not take these words in the same sense as do they who 'mind earthly things', that is, the Ebionites, who even by their very name are called poor – for in Hebrew the word *ebion* means poor, but we understand that it is a race of souls which is called Israel, as the meaning of the word itself indicates; for Israel means 'the mind seeing God' or 'man seeing God'.²⁷

And in *Contra Celsum* II,1, where Origen replies to his opponent philosopher Celsus who regarded Jewish Christians as 'deluded by Jesus, they have left the law of their fathers'. Origen points out his misunderstanding and turns to a new understanding of the Mosaic Law in the Christian context as follows:

For they live according to it and are named from the poverty of their interpretation of the law (ἐπὶ νόμῳ τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἐκδοχὴν πτωχείας τοῦ νόμου γεγεννημένοι). The Jews call a poor man Ebion, and those Jews who have accepted Jesus as the Christ are called Ebionites.

Then Origen referred to Peter's vision written in *Acts* 10:9-15, and said that 'he seems to have kept the customs of the Mosaic law for a long time, as he had not yet learned from Jesus to ascend from the letter of the law to its spiritual interpretation'.

From these texts, we can see that Origen criticizes the literal interpretation or the literal observance of particular regulations of the Mosaic Law among his contemporary Jewish Christians and seeks to reach the spiritual meaning of the Bible through the Alexandrian allegorical method based on the Pauline exegeses.

4. Legacy of Alexandrian exegeses for the following church history

My last point is to ask their legacy for the following church history. When Philo and Clement sought to define the role that philosophy and Greek culture

²⁴ J.D.G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul* (2005), 101.

²⁵ Origen, *Com. John* 114; *Hom. Lev.* 10.2.

²⁶ Origen, *Hom. Lev.* 5.8.

²⁷ Origène, *Traité des Principes IV, Commentaire et Fragments*, par H. Crouzel et M. Simonetti, SC 269 (Paris, 1980). I use the English version Origen, *On the First Principles*, by G.W. Butterworth (New York, 1966).

can play in faith, they had a good reason to secure secular disciplines for their intellectual audience. But at the same time they realized the limitations of secular education and gave it an allegorical foundation by the creation and use of the handmaid formula (*philosophia theologiae ancilla*) which we know of even from the Middle Ages.

However Origen treated the problem otherwise, because his allegorical method was different from his Alexandrian predecessors. Although we recognize his sufficient philosophical knowledge in his polemical works, and that he encouraged his pupils like Gregory the Wonderworker to learn philosophy, from his later works we know that Origen and his audience were, without relying on philosophical notions, devoted to the study of Scriptures based on exegetical principles; Scripture should be interpreted from Scripture.

From the preface of his *Commentary on Song of Songs*, we see how Origen evaluated the study of Scriptures in contrast to traditional Greek education:

And let us first investigate the reason why, when the churches of God have adopted three books attributed to Solomon, the *Book of Proverbs* has been put first, that which is called *Ecclesiastes* second, while the *Song of Songs* is found in the third place. The following are the suggestion that occur to us here. The branch of learning by means of which men generally attain to knowledge of things are the three which the Greeks called Ethics, Physics and Enoptics ... It seems to me, then that all the sages of the Greeks borrowed these ideas from Solomon, who had learnt them by the Spirit of God at an age and time long before their own.²⁸

Origen asks the reason why the churches of God have adopted three books of Solomon, and then he confronts them with three general disciplines (*generales disciplinae*) Ethics, Physics and Enoptics as Greek educational counterparts. Origen called these books of Solomon 'true philosophy', and insisted on Solomon's superiority over Greek disciplines by means of a plagiarism theory.²⁹ From this text, I deduce his intention of replacing traditional Greek education with the study of the Scriptures for his Christian community.

We have every reason to believe that after him having settled in Caesarea, there was no need for Origen and his audience to take into consideration a close relation between preliminary discipline, philosophy and theology by reading the Sarah-Hagar motif. In the Caesarean church he concentrated on Biblical exegesis in face of the vigorous rabbinic community. Ronald E. Heine suggests: 'When Origen's situation in Caesarea is understood, then the importance of his approach to the Law become more understandable. It may be that he had

²⁸ Origène, *Commentaire sur Le Cantique des Cantiques I*, ed. Luc Bresard and H. Crouzel, SC 375 (Paris, 1991); I use the English version Origen, *The Song of Songs Commentary and Homilies*, trans. and an. by R.P. Lawson (London, 1957).

²⁹ Mark Julian Edwards, *Origen against Plato* (Farnham, 2002), 139-43.

to defend the use of the Law in the Church as well as show how Christians read it differently from the Jew'.³⁰

As a result, if Philo and Clement had a great impact on the formation of the handmaid formula (*philosophia theologiae ancilla*) of the Middle Ages, Origen seems to have provided the theological foundation for the formation of a 'textual community',³¹ concentrated on the study of Scriptures for the later Christian era.

³⁰ R.E. Heine, *Origen* (2010), 176.

³¹ Garth Fowden, 'Religious Communities', in G. Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (eds), *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Postclassical World* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), 82-106; H. Gregory Snyder, *Teacher and Texts in the Ancient World* (London and New York, 2000); R.E. Heine, *Origen* (2010), 50-1.

The Eschatological Significance of Scripture According to Origen

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the notion that for Origen the pneumatic, or spiritual meanings of Scripture endure eternally. By treating the passages in which Origen relates Eucharist and Passover to Scripture, we find that he perceives an encounter with the Word of God in Eucharist and in Scripture. Passover is reenacted in both Eucharist and Scripture, thereby helping to point to an encounter with the Word of God in each. The corporeal realities in these mediums point ultimately to a spiritual encounter with Christ. The spiritual reality of Christ in Scripture resides in its mysteries, or deeper truths found in the pneumatic meanings of the text. These meanings embody the truths of God's self-revelation. They are the food which the believers, or Church, consume not only in this life, but also will consume in eternity as the activity of heaven. These pneumatic truths will endure eternally as the very mind of Christ, such that consumption of them will be equivalent to eternal discourse with Christ. Significantly, then, the preacher or teacher of Scripture, by the very nature of his task, leads his audience in this life to an encounter with Christ that amounts to a mystical moment in which they can experience the activity of heaven to an extent now.

Introduction

In recent decades, scholars have shown that Origen's exegesis rests on the notion that Scripture is Christ.¹ This paper considers how this notion influences his view of the believer's interaction with Scripture, both now and in eternity. Analyzing his comments about Scripture in his discussions concerning Eucharist and Passover, this contribution finds that Origen perceives this life's encounter with Christ in Scripture to epitomize the dialogue with the Word of God that will constitute the heavenly feast. He understands interaction with Scripture, at its higher, pneumatic, or spiritual level of meaning, to constitute

¹ Less than 30 years ago, Karen Jo Torjesen brought to the scholarly mainstream the recognition that for Origen the content and teacher of Scripture is Christ Himself. This insight immediately resonates with the student of Origen, and, at the same time, it compels one to search for its deeper implications. See Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis* (Berlin and New York, 1986), 108-47.

the activity of heaven.² This is because Scripture's pneumatic meanings – as God's self-revelations – endure in heaven, no longer veiled in mystery but as pure food sustaining the soul eternally.

I. Consumption of Christ in Scripture Now

Origen uses consumption of Christ in Eucharist as a basis for discussing consumption of Christ in Scripture.³ While Origen recognizes the bodily presence of Christ in both mediums, the encounter with the Logos, or a spiritual presence of Christ, preoccupies him.

A. Presence of Christ in Eucharist

With regard to the bodily presence of Christ in Eucharist, he clearly states that the consecrated bread and wine change into the body and blood of Christ.⁴

² In other published works, the author of this article has shown that the spiritual, pneumatic sense in Origen's works is defined as follows: 'The pneumatic sense is a separate nonliteral sense [separate from the other nonliteral, psychic sense] that enlightens the reader concerning God's plan of salvation through Christ and, more specifically, his Incarnation, the Church's emerging role from it, and his culminating power at the Eschaton.' Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis*, *The Bible in Ancient Christianity* 3 (Boston and Leiden, 2005), 2.

³ In another, ongoing work, the author of this article explores Origen's comparison of Scripture to both baptism and Eucharist, finding that interaction with Scripture has the same benefits on the hearer as do baptism and Eucharist on the recipient. For example, as the waters of baptism wash clean the soul, redeeming and regenerating the sinner, and Eucharist draws the now worthy soul into an ever-deepening union with Christ, so does Scripture also fulfill these respective functions. In the same ongoing work, the author establishes that, like baptism and Eucharist, Origen views Scripture to be a σύμβολον ('symbolon') or *sacramentum*, something that identifies the two parties to an agreement or commitment. It marks the believer as belonging willingly to Christ and seeking union with God as the *telos* that will make him complete. Its good effects are dependent upon the right disposition of the recipient, because both parties to a σύμβολον must be willing participants for it to remain effective. The ongoing work finds that, for Origen, the baptismal functions of Scripture tend to play out through the psychic reading of a text while the eucharistic functions of Scripture tend to play out through the pneumatic readings of the text (For a nuance on this idea, see *Comm. Jn.* 1, wherein Origen suggests that the bread of Eucharist can represent Scripture's psychic sense and the wine the pneumatic sense). For an example of Origen's use of σύμβολον ('symbolon') in relation to Eucharist, see *Hom. Jer.* XIX 13.4. For the fuller passage and an analysis of it, see n. 7 and n. 35 below.

⁴ Crouzel points out that Origen 'affirm[s] clearly the real presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements', explaining that, for Origen, 'the sacramental Eucharist is only such because it renders the very Person of Jesus present in perceptible form, God and man.' Henri Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian*, Tr. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco,

In *Contra Celsum*, he states that ‘we give thanks to the Creator of the universe and eat the loaves that are presented with thanksgiving and prayer over the gifts, so that by the prayer they become a certain *holy body* which sanctifies those who partake of it with a pure intention.’⁵ In *Hom. Jer. XIX*, Origen explains that when those cleansed from sin celebrate the Passover (in the Eucharist), Jesus’ words⁶ over the bread and wine make them ‘a gift of his

1989), 226-9. Crouzel explains that a physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist and a spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist are not in conflict but are ‘mutually enriching’, since, logically, ‘[t]he relationship between the bread-body of Christ and the Logos-Word is the same as that between the flesh of Christ and his divinity.’ (*Ibid.*). This makes sense since the two are harmoniously united in the Son of God. Charles Bigg gave a contrasting opinion in the 1886 Bampton Lectures, in which he argued that Origen recognizes a ‘real’ presence of Christ in the consecrated eucharistic elements, but only a spiritual presence, not a material presence. He argued that ‘[t]he Bread and Wine are an allegory, symbol.’ He based this on a surface reading of *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85, which this article treats below. See Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Being the Bampton Lectures of the Year 1886) second edition (Eugene, Oregon, 2001), 264-7, esp. 266. Jean Daniélou’s statement on Origen’s view of the real presence in Eucharist acknowledges that while some readers of Origen (especially Protestants) have argued that he holds only a ‘symbolical theory of the Eucharist’ based on some passages, others (namely Catholics) have referred to different passages within Origen’s works to argue for a real, or material, presence of Christ in the consecrated elements. Daniélou warns that it ‘do[es] violence to Origen’s ideas’ not to read all of his passages together as a harmonious whole, and he suggests that Origen recognizes a real, or material, presence while at the same time giving greater significance to the spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist. See Jean Daniélou, *Origen*, Tr. Walter Mitchell (London and New York, 1955), 61-8. For a similar position and in-depth analysis of Origen’s view on the real presence of Christ in Eucharist, see Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*, Tr. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco, 2007), 406-26, esp. 409-15. For a contrasting view, more in line with Bigg’s, though more in-depth, see R.P.C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen’s Interpretation of Scripture* (Louisville and London, 2002), 323-9. This article provides analysis of all the relevant passages and concludes that Origen recognizes the material presence of Christ in Eucharist and views it as significant to the extent that it points the reader ultimately to the spiritual presence of Christ therein. For further commentary on Origen’s view of the rite of Eucharist, see Fred Ledegang, ‘Eucharist’, in *The Westminster Handbook to Origen*, Ed. John Anthony McGuckin (Louisville and London, 2004), 96-9.

⁵ *C. Cels.* 8.33. For the English text: *Origen: Contra Celsum*, Tr. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge, 1980), 476. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘Celsus, as one who is ignorant of God, may render the offerings of thanksgiving to daemons. But we give thanks to the Creator of the universe and eat the loaves that are presented with thanksgiving and prayer over the gifts, so that by the prayer they become a certain holy body which sanctifies those who partake of it with a pure intention’ (Κέλσος μὲν ὡς ἀγνοῶν θεὸν τὰ χαριστήρια δαίμοσιν ἀποδίδωτο, ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ τοῦ παντός δημιουργῷ εὐχαριστοῦντες καὶ τοὺς μετ’ εὐχαριστίας καὶ εὐχῆς τῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς δοθείσι προσαγομένου ἄρτους ἐσθίομεν, σῶμα γενομένου διὰ τὴν εὐχὴν ἁγίον τι καὶ ἁγιάζον τοὺς μετὰ ὑγιῶς προθέσεως αὐτῷ χρωμένους), *Origène: Contre Celse, Tome IV*, SC 150, Fr. tr. and ed. Marcel Borret (Paris, 1969), 246.

⁶ Here Origen refers to Jesus’ words at the Last Supper as relayed in *Matthew* and *Mark*.

*Body and his Blood.*⁷ In *Comm. Jn. XXXII*, he points out that this gift brings ‘salvation’ to the recipient.⁸

⁷ *Hom. Jer. XIX 13.4*, referring to *Matth. 26:17* and *Mk. 14:12-5* and *Lk. 22:8-12*, and *1Cor. 10:16*. For the English text: *Origen: Homilies on Jeremiah; Homily on 1 Kings 28*, Tr. John Clark Smith, Fathers of the Church 97 (Washington, D.C., 1998), 212. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘[N]o one who enacts the Passover as Jesus wishes is in a room below. But if someone celebrates with Jesus, he is in a great room above, in a furnished room made clean, in a furnished room adorned and prepared. But if you go up with him in order to celebrate the Passover, he gives to you the *Cup of the New Covenant*, he gives to you the *Bread of blessing*, he makes a gift of his *Body and his Blood*’ (Οὐδεις οὖν πάσχα ποιῶν ὡς Ἰησοῦς βούλεται, κάτω ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀναγαίου, ἀλλὰ εἴ τις ἐορτάζει μετὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἄνω ἐστὶν ἐν ἀναγαίῳ μεγάλῳ, ἐν ἀναγαίῳ σεσαρωμένῳ, ἐν ἀναφαίῳ κεκοσμημένῳ καὶ ἐτοίμῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀναβῇ μετ’ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ἐορτάσῃς τὸ πάσχα, δίδωσί σοι τὸ ποτήριον τῆς διαθήκης τῆς καινῆς, δίδωσί σοι καὶ τὸν ἄρτον τῆς εὐλογίας, τὸ σῶμα ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τὸ αἷμα ἑαυτοῦ χαρίζεται), *Origène: Homélie sur Jérémie, Tome II*, SC 238, Fr. tr. and ed. Pierre Nautin (Paris, 1977), 228, 230.

Moreover, in several homilies, Origen admonishes his audience to approach the Eucharistic rite with awe. For example, see *Hom. Ex. 13*. Ledegang points out that in a plethora of other passages as well Origen stresses that the eucharistic offering is to be approached with a sense of awe. See F. Ledegang, ‘Eucharist,’ *The Westminster Handbook* (2004), 96-7, citing *Hom. Lv. XIII 5.52-65*; *Hom. Ps. 37 II 6.37-51*; *Hom. Jer. XIX 13.46-61*; *Comm. Ezek. 7.22*; *Frg. 1Cor. 34*; *Comm. Mtt. 10:25*; and *Hom. Ex. XIII 3.68-72*.

⁸ In *Comm. Jn. XXXII*, Origen explains the benefits of the rite, stating that the one who ‘unworthily eats and drinks’ will receive ‘judgment’, but the one who is worthy due to a ‘better ... disposition’ will receive from the rite ‘what is better’, that is, ‘salvation’. *Comm. Jn. XXXII 307-9*, referring to *Jn. 13:26-7*, *1Cor. 11:27-9* and *Matth. 26:26*. For the English text: *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John Books 13-32*, Fathers of the Church 89, Tr. Ronald E. Heine (Washington, D.C., 1993), 399-400 (... ὥσπερ ὁ ἀναξίως ἐσθίων τὸν ἄρτον τοῦ κυρίου ἢ πίνων αὐτοῦ τὸ ποτήριον εἰς κρίμα ἐσθίει καὶ πίνει, τῆς μιᾶς ἐν τῷ ἄρτῳ κρείττονος δυνάμεως καὶ ἐν τῷ ποτηρίῳ ὑποκειμένη μὲν διαθήσει κρείττονι ἐνεργαζομένης τὸ βέλτιον, χεῖρονι δὲ ἐμποιοῦσης τὸ κρίμα ...), *Origène: Commentaire sur Saint Jean, Tome V*, SC 385, Fr. tr. and ed. Cécile Blanc (Paris, 1992), 318-20.

Similarly, in *Comm. Mtt. XI 14*, Origen stresses that the words said over the bread and the wine instill in them life-giving power for those cleansed from sin but worsens the conditions of those not in a right disposition with God. He warns his audience to come to the body and blood of Christ, not with ‘wickedness and sins’, but with ‘righteousness and right actions’. *Comm. Mtt. XI 14*, referring to *1Cor. 11:30*, *1Cor. 8:8*, *Matth. 15:17*, *Jn. 1:14* and *Jn. 6:51*. For the English text: *Origen’s Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, Tr. John Patrick, ANF 9 (Peabody, Mass., 1994), 443 (Τὸ γὰρ αἷτιον τῆς ὑστερήσεως ἡ κακία ἐστὶ καὶ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, καὶ τὸ αἷτιον τῆς περισσεύσεως ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἐστὶ καὶ τὰ κατορθώματα), *Origène: Commentaire sur L’Évangile selon Matthieu, Tome I*, SC 162, Fr. tr. and ed. Robert Girod (Paris, 1970), 344, 346.

See also *Comm. Mtt. X 25* (referring to *Matth. 14:15* and *1Cor. 11:28*; ANF 9, 431; SC 162, 262, 264), for the idea that anyone who partakes of the Eucharistic bread and wine improperly ‘becomes weak and sickly’ (ἀσθενῆς ἢ ἄρρωστος γίνεται ἢ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ).

Note that Origen speculates that there may be occasions when the person unworthy of the Lord cannot even receive the consecrated bread and wine. See *Comm. Mtt. X 25* and *Comm. Jn. XXXII 300-12*.

Finally, Origen warns his audience that even the spiritually advanced do not in this life outgrow the need for the beneficial rite of Eucharist. Ledegang points out that Origen defends the rites of baptism and Eucharist against certain persons in his day who had discarded them because of their

This consecration of the eucharistic bread and wine makes possible an encounter with ‘the Word’ of God – the Logos. In *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85, Origen explains:

For God the Word was not saying that the visible bread which He was holding in His hands was His body, but rather the *word* [*verbum*], in whose mystery the bread was to be broken. He was not saying that the visible drink was His blood, but the *word* [*verbum*], in whose mystery the drink was to be poured out. For what else could the body and the blood of God the Word be except the *word* which nourishes and the *word* which ‘makes glad the heart.’⁹

Rather than denying the bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist, Origen here underlines Jesus’ desire to stress the greater significance of an encounter with the Logos in the consecrated bread and wine.¹⁰ Eucharist’s corporeal presence points to a spiritual presence: an encounter with the ‘Word’ of God that nourishes the soul and gladdens the heart.

B. Presence of Christ in Scripture

For Origen, the one who probes Scripture also finds an encounter with the Word of God.

1. In Relation to Eucharist

In *Hom. Ex.* XIII he exhorts his audience to revere and handle the words of Scripture with at least as much care as they have been instructed to do with

advancement in spiritual growth. He writes that ‘Origen is aware of Christians who seem to have abolished the practice of baptism and Eucharist, because they feel they have transcended all sensory perception. He emphatically rejects their views as erroneous and pernicious.’ See F. Ledegang, ‘Eucharist’, *The Westminster Handbook* (2004), 97, referring to *Peri Euch.* 5.1,

⁹ *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85, citing *Ps.* 103:15. For the English text: Daniel Sheerin, *The Eucharist*, Message of the Fathers of the Church 7 (Wilmington, Delaware, 1986), 188. Emphasis added. (‘[N]on enim panem illum visibilem quem tenebat in manibus corpus suum dicebat deus verbum, sed verbum in cuius mysterio fuerat panis ille frangendus. [N]ec potum illum visibilem sanguinem suum dicebat, sed verbum in cuius mysterio potus ille fuerat effundendus. [N]am corpus dei verbi aut sanguis quid aliud potest esse, nisi verbum quod nutrit, et verbum quod ‘laetificat cor’?’) (GCS Origenes XI 196-7).

¹⁰ As discussed in n. 4 above, based on a reading of this same passage from *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85, Charles Bigg also argues that Origen is pointing here to the spiritual presence of the Logos in the Eucharist, but, because he reads this passage in isolation, without addressing also the above analyzed texts, he argues, based on this passage alone, that Origen denies any physical or material presence of Christ in the consecrated eucharistic elements. See C. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (2001), 264-7, esp. 266. This article’s analysis shows that when Origen’s passages are taken in the aggregate, Origen believes in the physical or material presence of Christ, or the Logos, in the Eucharist, but here in *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85, he stresses the greater significance of the spiritual presence of the Logos, to which the physical or material presence therein directs the recipient of the Eucharist.

the eucharistic bread.¹¹ In *Hom. Nm. XVI* he analyzes Jesus' words at the Last Supper:¹²

[T]he true people of Israel ... the Christian people ... know how to eat the flesh of the Word of God and to drink the blood of the Word of God ... [for they] follow Him who says: 'Unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you will not have life in you. For my flesh is truly food, and my blood is truly drink'... [W]e are said to 'drink the blood' of Christ, not only in the rite of the mysteries [*sacramentorum ritu*] [Eucharist], but also when we receive His words [*sermones*] in which life consists, just as He says: 'The words which I have spoken are spirit and life.' And so... we receive the words of his teaching [*doctrinae eius verba*].¹³

¹¹ *Hom. Ex. XIII 3*. For the English text: *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, Fathers of the Church 71, Tr. Ronald E. Heine (Washington, D.C., 1982), 380-1: 'I wish to admonish you with examples from your religious practices. You who are accustomed to take part in divine mysteries know, when you receive the body of the Lord, how you protect it with all caution and veneration lest any small part fall from it, lest anything of the consecrated gift be lost. For you believe, and correctly, that you are answerable if anything falls from there by neglect. But if you are so careful to preserve his body, and rightly so, how do you think that there is less guilt to have neglected God's word than to have neglected his body?' (*Volo uos admonere religionis exemplis; nostis, qui diuinis mysteriis interesse consuestis, quomodo, cum suscipitis corpus Domini, cum omni cautela et ueneratione seruatis, ne ex eo parum quid decadat, ne consecrati muneris aliquid dilabatur. Reos enim uos creditis, et recte creditis, si quid inde per negligentiam decadat. Quod si circa corpus eius conseruandum tanta utimini cautela, et merito utimini, quomodo putatis minoris esse piaculi uerbum Dei neglexisse quam corpus?*'), *Origène: Homélie sur L'Exode*, SC 321, Fr. tr. and ed. Marcel Borret (Paris, 1985), 386. In this homily, Origen treats the Lord's command in *Ex. 35:4-9* to place offerings of gold, silver and bronze, among other things, in the tabernacle. Origen explains that each soul is to offer to God as gold his understanding, as silver his word, and as bronze his strength and endurance. Origen urges his audience to obey this command by treating Scripture with as much reverence as they are to treat the consecrated host in Eucharist.

¹² This time Origen treats Jesus' words at the Last Supper from *John*.

¹³ *Hom. Nm. XVI 9*, referring to *Nm. 23:24* and *Isa. 53:5* and quoting *Jn. 6:54*, *56* and *Jn. 6:63*. *The Eucharist*, 180-1. Emphasis added. The 'Christian people' are the 'true Israel' because they recognize Christ as Savior and therefore the reality of Christ in the Eucharist as well as the reality of Christ's life-giving words in Scripture. (*Tu ergo es verus populus Istrahel, qui ... nosti carnem Verbi Dei comedere et 'sanguinem' verbi Dei 'bibere'... Sed populus Christianus, populus fidelis audit haec et amplectitur et sequitur eum, qui dicit: 'nisi manducaveritis carnem meam, et biberitis sanguinem meum, non habebitis vitam in vobis ipsis; quia caro mea vere cibus est, et sanguis meus vere potus est'... 'Bibere' autem dicimur 'sanguinem Christi' non solum sacramentorum ritu, sed et cum sermones eius recipimus, in quibus vita consistit, sicut et ipse dicit: 'verba quae ego locutus sum, spiritus et vita est.' Est ergo... doctrinae eius verba suscipimus.*) (GCS *Origenes VII* 151-2, Tr. W.A. Baehrens [Leipzig, 1921]).

In this homily, Origen offers an allegorical reading of the statement in the second vision of Balaam [at *Nm. 23:18-24*]: 'Behold, the people will rise up like a lion cub, and prance like a lion. It will not sleep until it eats its prey, and drinks the blood of the wounded.' *Nm. 23:24*. Origen finds the literal reading of *Nm. 23:24* 'revolt[ing],' and asks his audience to 'flee' with him 'to the sweetness of allegory.' 'The wounded' represents Christ, who, at the Last Supper, said: 'Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you will not have life in you.' *Hom. Nm. XVI 9*, quoting *Jn. 6:54*. *The Eucharist*, 180 (GCS *Origenes VII* 151-2).

While in the earlier passage from *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85,¹⁴ Origen uses 'word' to refer to God the Word, here in *Hom. Nm.* XVI he speaks of the 'words' or 'teachings' spoken by God the Word. True followers of Christ receive Him as true food and drink not only when they encounter the Word of God in Eucharist but also when they receive 'the words of his teaching' which are found in Scripture. To solidify this point, in *Hom. Lv.* VII, Origen states that 'from the flesh and blood of his [Jesus'] word, as from pure food and drink, he gives drink and refreshment to every kind of person.'¹⁵ God's word refers to the

¹⁴ See n. 9 above for analysis and text of *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 85.

¹⁵ *Hom. Lv.* VII 5.3, referring to *Jn.* 6:53, 55. For the English text: *Origen: Homilies on Leviticus 1-16*, Fathers of the Church 83, Tr. Gary Wayne Barkley (Washington, D.C., 1990) 146. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: '[S]ince Jesus is totally clean, all his 'flesh is food' and all his 'blood is a drink' because his every deed is holy and his every word is true. For this reason, therefore, his 'flesh is true food' and his 'blood is true drink'. For from the flesh and blood of his word, as from pure food and drink, he gives drink and refreshment to every kind of person' (*'Jesus ergo quia totus ex toto mundus est, tota eius caro cibus est et totus sanguis eius potus est, quia omne opus eius sanctum est et omnis sermo eius verus est. Propterea ergo et caro eius verus est cibus et sanguis eius verus est potus. Carnibus enim et sanguine verbi sui tamquam mundo cibo ac potu potat et reficit omne hominum genus'*), Origène: *Homélies sur Le Lévitique Tome I*, SC 286, Fr. tr. and ed. Marcel Borret (Paris, 1981), 336, 338.

In *Comm. Jn.* XXXII and *Hom. Lv.* XIII as well, Origen suggests that the presence of Christ in Eucharist points to the presence of Christ in the words of Scripture. Note that these passages also stress that the words of Scripture can do the unfit hearer harm, just as the passages reviewed in n. 8 above suggest that those who are unworthy of receiving the consecrated bread and wine of Eucharist do so at their peril.

In *Comm. Jn.* XXXII 310-1, Origen states: 'Let the simple understand the bread and the cup according to the more common interpretation concerning the Eucharist, but let those who have learned to hear in a deeper way understand them in accordance with the promise that is more excellent and concerns the nourishing word of truth [Scripture] ... [T]he bread that is most nourishing in the physical sense will increase the underlying fever, but on the other hand, it restores one to health and vigor. Wherefore, frequently, when the true word [Scripture] is given to a soul that is sick and is not in need of such food, it afflicts that soul, and causes its condition to worsen.' FOTC 89, 400. (Νοείσθω δὲ ὁ ἄρτος καὶ τὸ ποτήριον τοῖς μὲν ἀπλουστέροις κατὰ τὴν κοινοτέραν περὶ τῆς εὐχαριστίας ἐκδοχὴν, τοῖς δὲ βαθύτερον ἀκούειν μεμαθηκόσιν κατὰ τὴν θειοτέραν καὶ περὶ τοῦ τροφίμου τῆς ἀληθείας λόγου ἐπαγγελίαν· ὥς εἰ ἐν παραδείγματι ἔλεγον ὅτι καὶ ὁ κατὰ τὸ σωματικὸν τροφιμώτατος ἄρτος πυρετὸν μὲν ὑποκείμενον αὔξει, εἰς ὑγίειαν δὲ καὶ εὐεξίαν ἀνάγει. Διὸ πολλάκις λόγος ἀληθοῦς ψυχῇ νοσοῦσῃ οὐ δεομένη τοιαύτης τροφῆς διδόμενος ἐπιτρίβει αὐτὴν καὶ πρόφασιν αὐτῇ χειρόνων γίνεταί...), SC 385, 320.

In *Hom. Lv.* XIII, Origen again stresses the presence of Christ in Scripture as in Eucharist. He explains that if the nourishment of Christ's body and blood in Eucharist presupposes the recipient's cleanliness from sin, '[h]ow much more ... we say this rightly and suitably about the word of God.' Because it is Christ that the soul is consuming, he must be clean from sin. The recipient of the Eucharist is to make himself 'a holy place', 'ha[ving] purified himself from every filth of the flesh and bad habits', and the one who takes them when 'contaminated and polluted by sins ... will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord', that is, of crucifying the Lord again. Likewise, regarding the consumption of Christ in Scripture, Origen warns: 'This word is not for all ... [I]t is only for the saints who are purified in mind ... 'pure in heart' ... 'simple in soul' ... blameless in life, [and] free in conscience.' Only these can truly 'hear the mystery of this word'. '[T]hese

Logos, Jesus Christ, in all its manifestations, while Jesus' word, or the word – logos – of the Logos, refers specifically to Scripture.

2. In Relation to Passover

Origen's discussions concerning Passover point even more explicitly to this encounter with God's Word, or Christ, in the words of Scripture. In *Peri Pascha*, he first explains that the Passover is a 'type of Christ himself sacrificed for us',¹⁶

mysteries can be explained to them', that is, 'the eternal law ... everything that is mystical.' A cleansed soul is necessary for receiving Christ in Scripture. Indeed, unless purified, the soul should not receive the mysteries, or mystical teachings, of Scripture and surely cannot understand them. *Hom. Lv. XIII 5.4-6.2*, exegeting *Lv. 24:8-9*, and referring to *1Pt. 2:9*, *1Pt. 2:25*, *Eph. 4:27*, *Jm. 4:7*, *Matth. 12:43-4*, *Jn. 6:41*, *1Cor. 11:27*, *Lv. 24:9*, *Matth. 5:8*, and *Gen. 20:6*. See FOTC 83, 243-4. ('Testamentum inquit aeternum erit Aaron et filiis eius, et manducabunt ea in loco sancto. Aaron et filii eius genus est electum, genus sacerdotale, quibus haec portio sanctorum donator a Deo, quod sumus omnes, qui credimus in Christo. Locum autem sanctum ego in terris non requiro positum, sed in corde. Locus enim dicitur sanctus rationabilis anima, propter quod et Apostolus dicit: Nolite locum dare diabolo. Anima ergo mea locus est, si male ago, diaboli, si bene, Dei ... Locus ergo sanctus anima est pura. In quo loco edere nobis mandatur cibum verbi Dei. Neque enim convenit, ut sancta verba anima non sancta suscipiat, sed cum purificaverit se ab omni inquinamento carnis et morum, tunc locus sanctus effecta cibum capiat panis illius, qui de caelo descendit. Nonne melius sic intelligitur locus sanctus quam si putemus structuram lapidum insensibilibus locum sanctum nominari? Unde simili modo etiam tibi lex ista proponitur, ut, cum accipis panem mysticum, in loco mundo manduces eum, hoc est ne in anima contaminata et peccatis polluta dominici corporis sacramenta percipias: Quicumque enim manducaverit inquit panem et biberit calicem Domini indigne, reus erit corporis et sanguinis Domini. Probet autem se unusquisque, et tunc de pane manducet et de calice bibat. Sancta enim sanctorum sunt. Vides quomodo non dixit sancta tantummodo, sed sancta sanctorum, ut si diceret: cibus iste sanctus non est communis omnium nec cuiuscumque indigni, sed sanctorum est. Quanto magis hoc et de verbo Dei recte meritoque dicemus: hic sermo non est omnium; non quilibet verbi huius potest audire mysterium, sed sanctorum est tantummodo qui purificati sunt mente, qui mundi sunt corde, qui simplices animo, qui vita irreprehensibiles, qui conscientia liberi, ipsorum est de hoc audire sermonem, ipsis possunt explanari ista mysteria ... Legitimum aeternale hoc erit. Legitimum namque aeternum est omne quod mysticum est'), SC 287, 220, 222, 224.

¹⁶ Origen argues that the Passover is not a type of Christ's Passion event but a type of Christ Himself. *Peri Pascha* 13-4. For the English text: Origen: *Treatise on the Passover and Dialogue of Origen with Heraclides*, ACW 54, Tr. Robert J. Daly (New York, 1992), 34-6. For the Greek text: Origène: *Sur la Pâque*, Christianisme antique 2, Fr. trs. and eds. O. Guéraud and Pierre Nautin (Paris, 1979), 178, 180. Origen explains that Jesus 'likened his passion to the serpent hung on wood,' leaving Christ Himself to be the reality toward which Passover points. *Peri Pascha* 15, quoting *Jn. 3:14* which in turn cites *Nm. 21:8-9* and *Deut. 21:22-31*. ACW 54, 35-6 (ἐπειδὴ <δὲ> τὸ πάθος ὁμοίωσεν αὐτοῦ τῷ χρ[ε]μα[σθε]ντι ἐπὶ ξύλου ὀφει...), CA 2, 182. In this treatise, Origen stresses that the Greek word 'passover (*pascha*)' does not derive from the Greek word *pathos* which means 'passion' but from the Hebrew word *fas* which means 'passage' and in the Greek is διάβασις. *Peri Pascha* 1.1-2.3. ACW 54, 27-8. CA 2, 154, 156. Origen explains that when Christ came to earth, 'he showed us what the true passover is, the true 'passage' (διάβασις) out of Egypt.' *Peri Pascha* 4.15-20. ACW 54, 29 (ἔδειξεν ἡμῖν τι [τὸ ἀληθινὸν] πᾶσχα, ἡ διάβασις] ἡ ἀληθινὴ ἢ [ἐξ Αἰγύπτου,...), CA 2, 160. The believer receives pass-over when he embraces Christ who 'passed beyond the limits fixed by God because of the disobedience of Adam ... [and] blunted the sting of death and ... provided ... a means of ascent into

because ‘the true Lamb [is] Christ.’¹⁷ Next, he relates this Lamb to Scripture, stating: ‘If the lamb is Christ and Christ is the Logos, what is the *flesh* of the divine words if not the divine Scriptures?’¹⁸

When they take in Scripture, believers act as ‘priests’ who sacrifice and consume Christ, the Lamb. Origen states that ‘it is necessary for [them] to sacrifice the true lamb’ by ‘cook[ing] and eat[ing] its flesh.’¹⁹ They eat the flesh of the Lamb when they ‘partake of the flesh of Christ, that is, of the divine Scriptures,’ because, ‘the lamb of our passover is Christ ... [and] his flesh and blood ... are the divine Scriptures, eating which, we have Christ...’²⁰ When the

heaven, by means of His own ascent, after opening the gates and portals by means of His own entrance.’ *Peri Pascha* 47.35-48.11, referring to 1Cor. 15:55 and Ps. 24[23]:7, 9. ACW 54, 55 (‘Ο γὰρ ὑπερβὰς τοὺς ὅρους τοὺς θεῖους διὰ τὴν ἐν Ἀδὰμ παρακοήν, οὗτός ἐστιν κ(ύριος)ς ὁ τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κέντρον ἀμβλύνας ..., ἄλλως δὲ καὶ ἄνοδον πορείας εἰς οὐ(ρα)νὸν παρασχόμενος διὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀνόδου, θυρῶν καὶ πυλῶν ἐπαιρομένων διὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ εἴσοδον’), CA 2, 246, 248. Spiritually, Passover is the passage from sin and death to life in heaven, and Christ, the Passover Lamb, has paved the way. The Passover of the Israelites cannot represent the passion of Christ, because in the former the blameless priests of the people, ‘saints’, as Origen calls them, slaughtered the lamb, marked the doorposts with its blood to protect those within and then sacrificed the lamb to God and ritualistically cooked and ate it, but in the latter ‘criminals and sinners’ ‘sacrificed ... the Savior.’ See *Peri Pascha* 12.25-13.1. ACW 54, 34 (πρόβα[τ]ον ὑπ[ὸ] ἀγίων ἢ [Να]ζιραίων θύ[εται], ὁ δὲ σ(ω)τήρ ὑπὸ ἀνόμων [καὶ ἁ]μαρτωλῶν θύεται’), CA 2, 176. Origen stresses that ‘the passover is indeed a type of Christ but not of his passion.’ *Peri Pascha* 13.1-5. ACW 54, 34 (καὶ τύπος μὲν Χ(ριστο)ῦ ἐστιν τὸ πάσχα, οὐ μέντοι γε τοῦ πάθους αὐτοῦ.), CA 2, 178.

¹⁷ *Peri Pascha* 18.1-2. ACW 54, 37 (τὸ ἀληθινὸν πρόβατον ... τοῦτ’ ἐστι Χ(ριστό)ν), CA 2, 188.

¹⁸ *Peri Pascha* 26.5-10. ACW 54, 41. Emphasis added: (Εἰ δὲ τὸ πρόβατον ὁ Χ(ριστ)ός ἐστιν, ‘καὶ ὁ Χ(ριστ)ός ὁ λόγος ἐστίν,’ τίνες τῶν θεῶν λόγων αἱ σάρκες εἰ μὴ αἱ θεῖαι γραφαί;), CA 2, 204.

¹⁹ *Peri Pascha* 13.5-11. ACW 54, 34. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘It is necessary for us to sacrifice the true lamb – if we have been ordained priests, or like priests have offered sacrifice – and it is necessary for us to cook and eat its flesh’ (Ἡμεῖς γὰρ δεῖ θῦσαι τὸ ἀ[λη]θές πρόβατον, ἐὰν ἱερῶ[θῶ]μεν ἢ ἰδοῦ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν [προσ]ενέγκωμεν, καὶ ἡμᾶς ὅπ[τ]ησαι καὶ ἡμᾶς φαγεῖν [τὰς] σ[άρ]κας αὐτοῦ), CA 2, 178.

²⁰ *Peri Pascha* 33.1-2 and 33.19-35, referring to 1Cor. 5:7, 1Cor. 13:12, 1Cor. 11:25 and Lk. 22:20. ACW 54, 45. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘[W]e partake of the flesh of Christ, that is, of the divine Scriptures ... of the true Lamb, for the Apostle professes that the lamb of our passover is Christ ... [and] his flesh and blood ... are the divine Scriptures, eating which, we have Christ; the words becoming his bones, the flesh becoming the meaning of the text, following which meaning, as it were we see in a mirror dimly the things which are to come, and the *blood* being faith in the gospel of the *new covenant* ...’ (μεταλαμβάνομεν τῶν σαρκῶν τοῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ, τοῦτ’ ἐστι [τῶν] [θεῖων γραφῶν].[...] τοῦ προβάτου τοῦ ἀλ[η]θινοῦ] ἐρευνήσωμεν, ὁμο[λογοῦν]τος τοῦ ἀποστόλου τὸ [πρό]βατον τοῦ ἡμετέρου [πάσχα] Χ(ριστ)ὸν εἶναι λέγοντος[·] «Καὶ γὰρ] τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐνύ[θη] Χ(ριστό)ς», οὗ] σάρκες καὶ ὁστέα καὶ αἱ[μά], ὡς προαπεδείχθη, αἱ [θεῖαι] εἰσὶν γραφαί, ἅς ἐ <α> ν τ[ρώ]γωμεν, Χ(ριστ)ὸν ἔχομεν, τῶν [μὲν γέ]ξεων τῶν ὁστῶν αὐτοῦ γι[νο]μένων, τῶν δὲ σ[αρ]κῶν] τῶν ἐκ τῆς λέξεως νο[η]μάτων, οἷσιν ὡς εἰκὸς [ἐπι]βαίνοντες ἐν αἰνίγμα[τι] καὶ δι’ ἐσόπτρου βλέπο[μεν] τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα, αἵμα[τος] δὲ] τῆς πίστεως τοῦ εὐα[γγ]ελίου τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης), CA 2, 218.

hearer takes in the words of Scripture, he consumes Christ's bones.²¹ When he takes in the meaning behind the words, he consumes Christ's flesh.²² By believing in the good news of Scripture, he drinks Christ's blood.²³ As the believer is called to consume *all* of Jesus in the consecrated bread and wine,²⁴ so he consumes the whole Passover Lamb in Scripture.²⁵

By consuming *all* of Christ in Scripture, indeed, all of Scripture, the believer-priest will encounter the life-giving Word of God first in the letter (Christ's material presence in Scripture) and then, ultimately, in Scripture's spiritual, or pneumatic sense (Christ's spiritual presence in Scripture).²⁶ Origen stresses moving beyond the letter. In *Peri Pascha*, he warns: 'Should ... some cling just to the words themselves' – take in only its 'letter' – 'they would eat the flesh of the Savior *raw* ... after the manner of beasts ... and ... merit death and not

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Also in *Hom. Lv. VII*, as here, Origen stresses that the believer is to consume *all* of Jesus in the consecrated bread and wine of Eucharist, because Jesus is present in all of it and all of Jesus is nourishing and life-giving since 'his every deed is holy and his every word is true.' See n. 15 above for the fuller English and Latin texts. *Hom. Lv. VII* 5.3, quoting *Jn. 6:53, 55*. FOTC 83, 145-6. SC 286, 336, 338.

²⁵ See *Hom. Lv. I* in which Origen similarly relates the whole burnt offering of an unblemished male lamb (in *Lv. 1*) to Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Arguably, if Christ sacrificed his whole self on the Cross, then the believer is to consume the whole of him in Scripture. Also, in *Comm. Jn. X* 106-7, Origen stresses that the believer is to eat all of Christ in the mysterious truths of Scripture.

²⁶ Origen explains in *Peri Pascha* 24.4-8, that the bread of Christ presents itself in Scripture differently to hearers based on their ability or lack of ability to yet grasp deeper meanings. He states: '[T]he Savior feeds his followers not with the same but with different bread. Because for some he breaks five loaves of wheat, and for others seven loaves of barley, so that those who cannot partake of Christ as purest *bread* of wheat because they are of beastly nature and do not yet live spiritually (λογικῶς) will partake of him as barley bread.' ACW 54, 40. (ὁ (σ)ωτὴρ τοὺς ἀκολουθοῦντας αὐτῷ χορτάζει οὐκ ἐξ ἄρτων ὁμοίων ἀλλὰ διαφόρων· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν σιτίνοις κατακλᾷ πέντε, τοῖς δὲ κριθίνους ἑπτὰ, ἵνα ὅσοι οὐ δύνανται ὡς ἄρτου καθαρωτέρου καὶ σιτίνου μεταλαβεῖν τοῦ Χ(ριστοῦ) διὰ τὸ κτηνωδῶς καὶ μήπω λογικῶς ἀναστρέφεσθαι μεταλάβωσιν ὡς κριθίνου), CA 2:198, 200. In other words, hearers must be open to the deep truths of Scripture, because 'unless the perfect, true light rises over us and we see how it perfectly illumines our guiding intellect, we will not be able to sacrifice and eat the true Lamb.' *Peri Pascha* 21.4-7, referring to *Jn. 1.9*. ACW 54, 38 (Καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ εἰ μὴ τέλειον τὸ φῶς ἡμῖν τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἀνατείλει καὶ ἴδωμεν ὡς πεφώτισται ἡμῶν τελείως τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, οὐ δυναμέθα τὸ ἀληθινὸν πρόβατον θῆσαι καὶ φαγεῖν), CA 2, 194. Origen suggests, by these passages, that while there is a material presence of Christ in Scripture to be accessed by the less advanced, those who are more advanced, that is, ready and open to receiving the truths of God, can take in the deeper meanings of Scripture, or consume the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture. Note that for 'spiritual' meaning in Scripture the Greek text here employs λογικός while in *Comm. Jn. X* 103-5 (treated in n. 31 below) the Greek text employs πνευματικός, yet in both cases Origen is stressing that the hearer encounters the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture in the spiritual, or pneumatic, meaning of the text.

See n. 2 above for a definition of the pneumatic sense within Origen's exegetical practice.

life.’²⁷ Therefore, ‘[t]his flesh of Christ, I mean the divine Scriptures’, is to be ‘roasted with fire’.²⁸ This ‘divine fire’ is the Holy Spirit, who changes ‘the letter that kills’ into ‘life’,²⁹ so that the ‘words’ of Scripture become ‘nourishing’.³⁰ In *Comm. Jn.* X, Origen clarifies that when the believer-priest cooks ‘the flesh of the lamb’, or the letter of Scripture, with the fire of the Holy Spirit, he distills for consumption ‘the spiritual aspects [*pneumatika*] of the word’,³¹ which give ‘life’ and ‘nourish’ the soul.

²⁷ *Peri Pascha* 26.6 to -16, referring to *Ex.* 12:8-9 and *2Cor.* 3:6. ACW 54, 41. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘Should, therefore, some cling just to the words themselves, they would eat the flesh of the Savior raw, and in partaking of this raw flesh would merit death and not life – it is after the manner of beasts and not humans that they are eating his flesh – since the Apostle teaches us that *the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life*’ (Εἴ τινες οὖν αὐταῖς λέξεσι ψυλαῖς χρῶνται, οὗτοι ἂν τὰς σάρκας τοῦ σ(ωτῆ)ρ(ο)ς τρώγοιεν ὠμάς, καὶ μεταλαμβάνοντες ὁμῶν τῶν σαρκῶν αὐτοῦ θάνατον καὶ οὐ ζῶν αὐτοῖς περιποιήσονται θηριωδῶς καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνως ἐσθίοντες αὐτοῦ/[τ]ᾶς <σ>άρ[κας], ἐπεὶ τὸ γράμμα ἀπο]-[κ]τέννει[ν, τὸ δὲ πν(εῦ)μα ζωοποιεῖν] διδάσκ[ει] ἡμᾶς ὁ ἀπόστολος), CA 2, 204. Just as we saw in n. 8 above that Origen warns that the consecrated bread and wine will do harm to the wicked, or those not in a right disposition with God, here we see Origen similarly warning that Scripture, even at the literal level, will harm those not yet cleansed from sin and in a right disposition with God. For this idea, see also *Comm. Jn.* XXXII and *Hom. Lv.* XIII, with full text and an analysis in n. 15 above.

²⁸ *Peri Pascha* 26.-10-29.1, referring to *Ex.* 12:8-9, *Dt.* 4:24 and *Heb.* 12:29. ACW 54, 41-2. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: ‘If the Spirit is given us from God and *God is a devouring fire*, the Spirit is also fire ... Therefore, the Spirit is rightly called *fire*, which it is necessary for us to receive in order to have converse with the *flesh* of Christ, I mean the divine Scriptures, so that, when we have roasted them with this divine *fire*, we may eat them roasted with fire. For the words are changed by such fire, and we will see that they are sweet and nourishing ... [Likewise,] [w]e are commanded not to *cook* the flesh of the Savior, that is, the word of Scripture, with *water*, and not to mix with the words of Scripture another material which could water it down in the cooking, but to partake of it by cooking it with *fire* alone, that is, with the divine Spirit, and *not* eat it *raw* or *cooked with water*. For Jews partake of them raw when they rely on just the letter of the Scriptures’ (Εἰ δὲ τὸ πν(εῦ)μα ἀπὸ τοῦ θε(ο)ῦ [δίδο]ται ἡμῖν, ὁ δὲ θε(ο)ς] πῦρ κα[τα]να[λ]ί[σκει]ον ἐ[στι]ν, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ πν(εῦ)μα πῦρ] ἐστιν, ὅπερ ὁ ἀπόστολος ἐπιστάμενος προτρέπει τῶν πν(εῦ)ματι ζέοντα. Καλῶς οὖν λέγεται πῦρ τὸ ἅγιον πν(εῦ)μα, <δ> ἀναλαβόντας ἡμᾶς δεῖ προσομιλῆσαι ταῖς σαρκὶν τοῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ, λέγω δὲ ταῖς θεαῖς γραφαῖς, ἵνα διὰ τοῦτου τοῦ πν(ευμα)τικοῦ πυρὸς ὀπτήσαντες αὐτάς φάγωμεν ὅπτάς πυρὶ ἀλλοιωθήσεται γὰρ διὰ τοῦ τοιοῦτου πυρὸς τὰ ῥήτά, καὶ τὸ ἥδὺ καὶ τρόφιμον αὐτῶν ὀψόμεθα ... Τοιοῦ[τ]ω οὖν ὕδατι κελευ[όμε]θ[α] μὴ συνέμειν τὰς τοῦ σ(ωτῆ)ρ(ο)ς σάρ[κας], λέγω δὲ τὰς λέξεις] τῶν γραφῶν, μηδὲ ἐπιμίσειν] το[ῖς] ῥ[ή]τοισι ἐτέραν ὕλην ἐξυδαροῦν δυναμένην διὰ τῆς συνεψήσεως αὐτά, ἀλλὰ μόνω τῷ πυρὶ, τοῦτ’ ἐστιν τῷ θεῷ πν(εῦ)ματι], ἐψωντας μεταλαμβάνειν αὐτῶν, μήτε ὠμάς αὐτάς <τρώγοντας> μήτε ὕδατι ἡψημένας. Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν γὰρ ὁμῶν μεταλαμβάνουσιν αὐτῶν, μόναις ταῖς λέξεσιν ἐπερε-ιδόμενοι τῶν γραφῶν), CA 2, 204, 206, 208, 210.

²⁹ *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

³⁰ *Ibid.* In *Peri Pascha*, Origen also stresses that each person consumes Christ through Scripture according to his own capacity. See *Peri Pascha* 23.5 to -8 and 30.-6 to -4; ACW 54, 39-40, 43; CA 2, 198, 212.

³¹ *Comm. Jn.* X 103-5, referring to *Jer.* 5:14, *2Cor.* 13:3 and *Lk.* 24:32. Here, Origen explains that the Word, Christ, is the Passover Lamb and is to be eaten by taking in the deeper meanings

These *pneumatika*, or spiritual – pneumatic – meanings, are nourishing because they are the mysteries in Scripture which contain Christ's, or the Logos', teachings. Origen instructs preachers to 'roast the meat of the lamb [in Scripture] so that' their audiences may 'say ... "Our heart was burning in the way as he [Christ] opened the Scriptures to us"'.³² Origen warns preachers to 'approach *all* the Scripture as one body', and present *all* of it for roasting and consumption if they are to get to 'the most important and principal teachings [ἀρχικῶν δογμάτων] about heavenly things' which are the 'teaching [λόγος] ... stored up in the mysteries of Scripture [τοῖς μυστηρίοις τῆς γραφῆς]'.³³ For,

of Scripture. For the English text: *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John Books 1-10*, FOTC 80, Tr. Ronald E. Heine (Washington, D.C., 1989), 277-8. The fuller English text reads as follows: 'One must not ... eat the flesh of the lamb raw, as the slaves of the letter do in the manner of animals which are irrational and quite savage. In relation to men who are truly rational through their desire to understand the spiritual aspects of the word [πνευματικὰ λόγου], the former share the company of wild beasts. We must strive ... in transforming the rawness of Scripture into boiled food ... [to reach] the anagogical meanings ... But let us, by means of the boiling spirit and the fiery words given by God ... roast the meat of the lamb so that those who partake of it say, as Christ speaks in us, "Our heart was burning in the way as he opened the Scriptures to us"' (Οὐκ ὀμῖν οὖν βρωτέον τὴν σάρκα τοῦ ἀμνοῦ, ὥσπερ ποιοῦσιν οἱ τῆς λέξεως δοῦλοι τρόπον ἀλόγων ζῶων καὶ ἀποτεθριωμένων, πρὸς τοὺς ἀληθῶς λογικοὺς διὰ τοῦ συνιέναι βούλεσθαι τὰ πνευματικὰ λόγου, μεταλαμβάνοντες θηρίων ἀπηγριωμένων. Φιλοτιμητέον δὲ τῷ εἰς ἔψην μεταλαμβάνοντι τὸ ὁμὸν τῆς γραφῆς ... τὰς ... ἀναγωγάς. Ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ ζέοντι πνεύματι καὶ τοῖς διδομένοις ὑπὸ θεοῦ διαπύροις λόγοις ... ὅπῃ ποιήσωμεν τὰ κρέα τοῦ ἀμνοῦ, ὥστε τοὺς μεταλαμβάνοντας αὐτῶν λέγειν, Χριστοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν λαλοῦντος, ὅτι «Ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν καιομένη ἦν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὡς διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς»), *Origène: Commentaire sur Saint Jean, Tome II*, SC 157, Fr. ed. and tr. Cécile Blanc (Paris, 1970), 444. Note that for 'spiritual' meaning in Scripture the Greek text here employs πνευματικός while in *Peri Pascha* 24 (treated in n. 26 above), the Greek text employs λογικός, yet in both cases Origen is stressing that the hearer encounters the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture in the spiritual, or pneumatic, meaning of the text.

For further support of Origen's conviction that the spiritual meanings in Scripture give life, see *Hom. Lv.* VII 5.5.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ See *Comm. Jn.* X 106-7. FOTC 80, 278. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: 'We must begin eating from the head, that is from the most important and principal teachings [ἀρχικῶν δογμάτων] about heavenly things, and we must end at the feet, that is the final elements of the lessons [τῶν μαθημάτων] which investigate the uttermost nature in the things which exist, either that of material things, or things under the earth, or evil spirits and unclean demons. For the teaching [λόγος] concerning them, being different than themselves, can, since it is stored up in the mysteries of Scripture [τοῖς μυστηρίοις τῆς γραφῆς], be named figuratively 'feet' of the lamb. We must also not abstain from the entrails and the inner and hidden parts. We must, however, approach *all* the Scripture as one body, and not break or cut through the most vigorous and firm bonds in the harmony of its total composition. This is what they have done who have, so far as it is in their power, broken the unity of the Spirit in all the Scriptures' (Ἀρκτέον δὲ ἐν τῷ ἐσθίειν ἀπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς, τουτέστιν τῶν κορυφαιοτάτων καὶ ἀρχικῶν δογμάτων περὶ τῶν ἐπουρανίων, καὶ καταληκτέον ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας, τὰ ἐσχατά τῶν μαθημάτων τὰ ζητοῦντα περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν φύσεως, ἥτοι τῶν ὀλικωτέρων ἢ τῶν καταχθονίων ἢ τῶν πονηρῶν πνευμάτων καὶ ἀκαθάρτων δαιμονίων. Ὁ γὰρ περὶ αὐτῶν λόγος, ἕτερος ὢν αὐτῶν, ἐναποκείμενος τοῖς μυστηρίοις τῆς γραφῆς δύναται

as Origen states in *Hom. Lv. IX*: '[H]e who is inspired by the mysteries knows both the flesh and the blood of the Word of God.'³⁴ The believer encounters the nourishing spiritual presence of the Word of God in the *pneumatika*, or spiritual meanings, of Scripture.

II. Eternal Consumption of Christ in Scripture

This encounter with the Word of God in Scripture's *pneumatika* is not only for this life but also continues in the *eternal* Eucharist or Passover feast.

A. The Eternal Eucharist or Passover Feast

While Eucharist, as an enactment of the Passover, occurs at successive times in this life, it will constitute one continuous action or encounter with the Word of God in heaven.³⁵ In *Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86*, Origen explains that the bread at the Last Supper, which is Jesus' 'body, ... is the *word* which is needful for us', and this word nourishes the believer 'both now [in Eucharist], *and* when it will have been completed [*inpletum*] in the Kingdom of God [at the heavenly banquet].'³⁶ Here, to say that this word will be 'completed' is not to say that it

τροπικώτερον «πόδες» ὀνομάσθαι τοῦ ἁμνοῦ. Καὶ τῶν ἐνδοσθίων δὲ καὶ ἐσωτερικῶν καὶ ἀποκεκρυμμένων οὐκ ἀφεκτέον. 'Ὡς ἐνὶ δὲ σώματι τῇ ἀπάσῃ προσελθετέον γραφῇ, καὶ τὰς ἐν τῇ ἁρμονίᾳ τῆς πάσης συνθέσεως αὐτῆς εὐτονωτάτας καὶ στερροτάτας συνοχὰς οὐ συντριπτέον οὐδὲ διακοπτέον, ὅπερ πεποιήκασιν οἱ τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς πνεύματος τὸ ὅσον ἐπ' αὐτοῖς συντρίβοντες), SC 157, 446.

³⁴ *Hom. Lv. IX 10.1*. The Holy Spirit brings fire from the words of Scripture so as to illuminate the 'mysteries' in the text which are 'the flesh and the blood of the Word of God...' ('Do you want me to show you how the fire goes out from the words of the Holy Spirit and ignites the hearts of believers?... Learn ... the blood of the Word and hear him saying to you: 'This is my blood which will be poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.' He who is inspired by the mysteries knows both the flesh and the blood of the Word of God'). See both *Hom. Lv. IX 9.7* and *IX 10.1*, quoting *Matth. 26:28*. FOTC 83, 198 and 199 ('*Vis tibi ostendam, quomodo de verbis Spiritus sancti ignis exeat et accendat corda credentium? ... [D]isce potius sanguinem Verbi et audi ipsum tibi dicentem quia: Hic sanguis meus est, qui pro vobis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Novit, qui mysteriis imbutus est, et carnem et sanguinem Verbi Dei*'), SC 287, 118, 122.

³⁵ In *Hom. Jer. XIX 13.4*, Origen explains that Passover is the historical event or 'symbol we enact' in the Last Supper or Eucharist. FOTC 97, 212 (τὸ σύμβολον ποιούμεν), SC 238, 228. Indeed, it is enacted in Eucharist today and will be enacted at the Eschaton as the heavenly feast. For the fuller passage from *Hom. Jer. XIX 13.4* and analysis of it, see n. 7 above.

³⁶ *Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86*, referring to *Jn. 6:32*, *Matth. 5:17* and *1Cor. 13:12*, 10. *The Eucharist*, 190. Emphasis added. The fuller English text reads as follows: 'And Jesus always taking bread from the Father for those who keep the festival along with Him, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to His disciples according as each of them is capable of receiving, and He gives it to them saying 'take and eat', and He shows, when He feeds them with this bread, that it is His body, since He Himself is the word which is needful for us, both now, and when it will have been completed

will end, but, rather, the feast begun in this life will reach its 'fullness' in heaven, with continued eating and drinking that 'satisfies' and 'fills up' the soul, making him 'fulfilled' and 'content'.³⁷ Origen declares: '[W]e will eat and drink in the Kingdom of God ... [when] this passover will be completed, and Jesus will eat it and drink with His disciples.'³⁸ We will, Origen states,

receive the *full passover* which He came to complete, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill; to complete it now 'through a glass, in a riddle' of completion; to complete it 'then, however, face to face'.³⁹

The believer will be 'face to face' with Christ, feasting upon the 'word' that is Christ, the 'spiritual food and drink' foreshadowed in the 'Law'.⁴⁰ The Law will be fulfilled by the Word of God, so that the Passover feast, finally 'full', will present *all* of Christ to the believer for his eternal consumption. Origen states:

[I]n a spiritual way ... 'the Kingdom of God' *is* ... 'food and drink' ... to those who have shown themselves worthy of the heavenly bread and bread of angels ... [W]e shall eat *true* food and drink *true* drink in the Kingdom of God, using them to build up and strengthen that most *true* life.⁴¹

in the Kingdom of God. But now, indeed, it is not yet completed, but it will be completed then, when we too will have been readied to receive the full passover which He came to complete, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill; to complete it now 'through a glass, in a riddle' of completion; to complete it 'then, however, face to face, when that which is complete has come' ('[E]t semper Iesus <edentibus> his, qui secum pariter agunt festivitatem, accipiens panem a patre gratias agit, et frangit, et dat discipulis suis secundum quod unusquisque eorum capit accipere, et dat dicens: accipite et manducate, et ostendit, quando eos hoc pane nutrit, proprium esse corpus, cum sit ipse verbum, quod et nunc necessarium habemus et cum fuerit <in regno dei> inpletum. [S]ed nunc quidem nondum inpletum, tunc autem inpletum, cum et nos praeparati fuerimus ad capiendum pascha plenum, quod venit ut inpleat, qui non venit <solvere legem sed adimplere>, et nunc quidem implere <quasi per speculum in aenigmate> inpletionis: <tunc autem facie in faciem> implere, <cum venerit quod perfectum est>'), GCS Origenes XI 198-9.

³⁷ Impleo (*implere* or *inplere*) means to 'make full', 'fill up' or 'to complete', and can also mean 'to fulfill, satisfy, or make content'.

³⁸ Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86, referring to Lk. 14:15. *The Eucharist*, 189 ('<[I]n regno dei> manducabimus et bibemus ... ergo inplebitur <in regno dei> hoc pascha et manducabit eum Iesus cum discipulis suis et bibet'), GCS Origenes XI 198. For analysis of the idea that Christ consumes himself with believers in eternity, see n. 60 below.

³⁹ Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86, referring to Matth. 5:17 and 1Cor. 13:12, 10. *The Eucharist*, 190. Emphasis added. GCS Origenes XI 199. For fuller English text and Latin text see n. 36 above.

⁴⁰ Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86, referring to Col. 2:16, 17. *The Eucharist*, 189 ('... revelationem habet ad futura mysteria de escis et potibus spiritalibus, quorum umbra fuerunt quae de escis et potibus in lege fuerant scripta'), GCS Origenes XI 198.

⁴¹ Ser. Comm. Mtt. 86, referring to Rom. 14:17. *The Eucharist*, 189. Emphasis added ('[S]piritaliter ... 'regnum dei' ... est ... 'esca et potus' ... his, qui exhibuerunt se dignos pane caelesti et pane angelorum ... [V]eram escam et verum potum manducabimus et bibemus <in regno dei>, aedificantes per ea et confortantes verissimam illam vitam'), GCS Origenes XI 197-8.

Origen envisions a feast in heaven, a eucharistic or Passover meal without end, which will be a consumption of the ‘word which nourishes’.⁴²

B. *The Enduring Nature of the Pneumatic Sense*

Scripture’s *pneumatika*, or pneumatic meanings, are the food and drink that will be consumed at this heavenly Eucharist or Passover. In *Hom. Lv. XIII*, Origen speaks of the enduring nature of Scripture’s *pneumatika*. He states:

[T]hese things present and visible here and there are temporary and come to an end quickly ... If the appearance ‘of this world passes away’, without a doubt that of the letter also passes away, and those things which are eternal, which contain spiritual meanings [*sensus spiritalis*], remain.⁴³

Scripture’s letter will pass away, but the ‘things’, indeed, truths, ‘contain[ing] spiritual meanings’, will remain in eternity as the ‘true’ food and drink of the heavenly feast.

In *Comm. Jn. X*, Origen illustrates the transition from veiled mystery in this life to ‘true’ food in the next. Here he treats the Passover Lamb as bread.⁴⁴ He explains that in ‘the night of darkness of *this* life’ ‘we eat ... bread ... which

⁴² *Ser. Comm. Mtt. 85. The Eucharist*, 188 (‘*verbum quod nutrit*’), GCS *Origenes* XI 197. In *An Exhortation to Martyrdom* as well, Origen mentions that in heaven the believer will enjoy Christ and continue to be ‘nourished’ by him: ‘Let our purpose be to enjoy with Christ Jesus the rest proper to blessedness, contemplating Him, the Word, wholly living. By Him we shall be nourished; in Him we shall receive the manifold wisdom and be modeled by the Truth Himself. By the true and unceasing Light of knowledge our minds will be enlightened to gaze upon what is by nature to be seen in that Light with eyes illuminated by the Lord’s commandment.’ *Exhortation to Martyrdom* 47, referring to *Ps. 19:8* and *Eph. 1:18*, in Greer, 76 (ἵνα σὺν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τὴν οἰκεῖαν τῇ μακαριότητι ἀνάπαυσιν ἀναπαυσώμεθα. Τὸν αὐτὸν ὅλον δι’ ὅλων ἔμψυχον λόγον θεωροῦντες καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ τρεφόμενοι καὶ τὴν <ἐν> αὐτῷ ποικιλωτάτην σοφίαν καταλαμβάνοντες καὶ τυπούμενοι ὑπὸ τῆς αὐτοαληθείας καὶ ἐν φωτὶ τῷ ἀληθινῷ καὶ ἀλήκτῳ τῆς γνώσεως τὸν νοῦν καταλαμβάνομενοι πρὸς τὴν θέαν τῶν δι’ ἐκείνου τοῦ φωτὸς θεωρεῖσθαι πεφυκότων ὑπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν φωτιζομένων ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἐντολῆς), GCS *Origenes* II 2-47.

⁴³ *Hom. Lv. XIII* 6.2, exegeting *Lv. 24:8-9* and referring to *1Cor. 7:31*. FOTC 83, 244 (‘*Nam praesentia haec et passim visibilia temporalia sunt et finem cito accipiunt ... Quod si huius mundi praeterit, sint dubio et litterae habitus praeterit et manent illa, quae aeterna sunt, quae sensus continet spiritalis*’), SC 287, 224.

⁴⁴ *Comm. Jn. X* 100, 99, referring to *Jn. 6:51*, *Jn. 1:14*, *Jn. 6:53-6*, *Jn. 6:48* and *Jn. 6:50*. Origen makes lamb and bread synonymous, explaining, ‘all food is loosely said to be bread’, and ‘the Word of God is not only flesh’ but also is ‘the bread of life ... which comes down from heaven that one may eat of it and not die.’ FOTC 80, 276-7 (Οὐκ ἀγνοητέον μέντοι γε ὅτι πᾶσα τροφή καταχρηστικώτερον ἄρτος λέγεται ... ὁ γὰρ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος οὐ μόνον ἐστὶ σὰρξ· φησὶ γοῦν· «Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς» καὶ «Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων, ἵνα τις ἐξ αὐτοῦ φάγῃ καὶ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ. Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς· ἐάν τις φάγῃ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου ζήσκει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.»), SC 157, 442.

is older and leavened from below.⁴⁵ However, when ‘the day ... which follow[s] this life ... has come, we shall eat unleavened bread.’⁴⁶ Indeed, we will ‘celebrate[] the *feast of unleavened bread* after having come out of Egypt.’⁴⁷ This will be the heavenly Passover feast, when the leavening of mystery will be removed from the bread of Christ’s word in Scripture. What will remain is the spiritual meanings, or *pneumatika*, of Scripture unleavened, with the veil of mystery removed so that they can become for the believer ‘manna’, or ‘the food of angels’,⁴⁸ the pure food of life in the form that the angels have always received it.

C. The Intellectual Nature of Heaven’s Activity

The food of the heavenly Eucharist or Passover feast will be Scripture’s *pneumatika*, or pneumatic meanings, precisely because heaven’s activity will be ‘intellectual’,⁴⁹ as it will be a dialogue with Christ’s own mind.

In *Comm. Jn.* X, Origen explains that ‘corporeal things are types [τύπος–*typos*] of spiritual things, and historical of intellectual.’⁵⁰ The corporeal will give way to the spiritual and the historical to the intellectual. Origen has presented the bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist as a corporeal reality (or *typos*) pointing toward the spiritual presence of Christ in Eucharist, as well as, pointing, along with Scripture’s letter, to the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture both now and in eternity. He has presented Passover as an historical event (or *typos*) pointing toward consumption of Christ’s own mind in Eucharist and in Scripture both now and in eternity.⁵¹ Origen has presented the *pneumatika*

⁴⁵ *Comm. Jn.* X 108-9. FOTC 80, 278. Emphasis added (Αὕτη μέντοι γε ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁμνοῦ προειρημένη προφητεία τὴν νύκτα μόνην ἡμᾶς τρεφέτω τοῦ ἐν τῷ βίῳ σκότους. Ἔως γὰρ τῆς ἀνατολῆς τῆς ἡμέρας τῶν μετὰ τὸν βίον τοῦτον οὐδὲν καταλειπτέον ἔσται ἡμῖν τῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος μόνου χρησίμου ἡμῖν οὕτω τροφῆς. Παρελθούσης γὰρ τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἐπελθούσης τῆς μετὰ ταῦτα ἡμέρας, τὸν μηδαμῶς ἀπὸ τῶν παλαιότερων καὶ κάτωθεν ζυμούντων ἄζυμον ἔχοντες ἄρτον φαγόμεθα), SC 157, 446.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Peri Pascha* 13.21-4, referring to *Ex.* 12:17. ACW 54, 35. Emphasis added (καὶ τότε ἄζυμα εὐορτάζει ἡ]δη τ[ῆ]ν [Αἰ]γυπτ[ον ἐξελη]λυθώς), CA 2, 178.

⁴⁸ *Comm. Jn.* X 109, referring to *Ps.* 77:25. FOTC 80, 279: ‘This unleavened bread will be useful to us until the manna, which follows the unleavened bread, be given. This is the food of angels...’ (χρήσιμον ἡμῖν ἐσόμενον, ἕως δοθῇ τὸ μετὰ τὸν ἄζυμον μάννα, ἡ ἀγγελικὴ ... τροφή), SC 157, 446, 448.

⁴⁹ Indeed, though, this heavenly activity of consumption or communication will be cloaked in love – ἀγάπη, *agape*.

⁵⁰ *Comm. Jn.* X 110. FOTC 80, 279: ‘For we must not suppose that historical things are types of historical things, and corporeal of corporeal. Quite the contrary: corporeal things are types of spiritual things, and historical of intellectual’ (Οὐ γὰρ νομιστέον τὰ ἱστορικὰ ἱστορικῶν εἶναι τύπους καὶ τὰ σωματικὰ σωματικῶν, ἀλλὰ τὰ σωματικὰ πνευματικῶν καὶ τὰ ἱστορικὰ νοητῶν), SC 157, 448.

⁵¹ Typically, in the works of early church theologians, of which Origen is no exception, a tripartite view of salvation history is assumed: (1) the age of the chosen people, the Israelites, in which God provides first a natural law (or conscience) along with free will and reason and later

as the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture. The spiritual presence of Christ in Eucharist, which enacts Passover, endures as the *structure* of the heavenly feast, but the spiritual presence of Christ in Scripture's *pneumatika* endures as the *content* of the heavenly feast.⁵²

The pneumatic meanings endure because they are the self-revelations of God which will feed the believer in eternity. Let us consider three examples of pneumatic readings from Origen's texts: First, Christ is the whole burnt offering on the Cross, sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins (*Hom. Lv. I*).⁵³ Second, Noah's ark is the Church that safely houses the saved until they reach the Eschaton (*Hom. Gen. II*).⁵⁴ Third, Christ is the Bridegroom who receives his Bride, both the Church and the individual soul, at the eternal wedding feast (*Comm. Cant. I*).⁵⁵ In heaven the believer will feed upon the understanding that God made His Son the whole burnt offering for sins, built the Church to house believers now and transport them safely to heaven, and that His Son, Christ the

a written law as a means for the people to confirm their commitment to God; (2) the age of the Church after Jesus' redemptive act on the Cross has enabled God's people to approach God despite their negligence with regard to the prior tools; and, finally, (3) the Eschaton, the end of time, when Jesus will subdue death and Satan and bring the kingdom of God to completion. Allegorical interpretation of Scripture allows for the unearthing of predictions of the second stage in the first as well as the third stage in the first and second. Typology, as a more specific form of allegorical interpretation, relies on the historical veracity of the event or person that predicts a future event or person within the context of salvation history. Here, we see Origen presenting the historical event of the Passover in the land of Egypt (in the first stage of salvation history) as a prediction of the actual Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples (which ushers in the second stage of salvation history) as well as the eucharistic reenactments of this Last Supper (in the second stage of salvation history). Ultimately, it predicts the eternal feast that is the activity of heaven (in the third stage of salvation history). Origen suggests that, beginning with the Passover event in Egypt, both the material and spiritual presence of Christ in the later events of the Last Supper, Eucharist and the heavenly feast are predicted, and, in addition, the material presence of each event points respectively to the spiritual presence of Christ in that same event and later events. All point ultimately to the spiritual presence of Christ at the heavenly feast. What is interesting here is the idea that these various activities in salvation history also point to Christ's material and spiritual presence in Scripture and that Christ's presence in Scripture – as *pneumatika* – crosses over from the second stage into the third stage of salvation history to endure eternally.

It may be fruitful to review de Lubac's analysis of levels of reality in Eucharist and Scripture within Origen's works. See *History and Spirit* (2007), 406-26, in which de Lubac stresses that for Origen the spiritual presence of Christ is, in a sense, the same in both Eucharist and Scripture, and that this spiritual presence will build up the Church always.

⁵² A suggested further course of study would be to consider how and to what extent Christ's bodily presence continues into eternity in relation to the spiritual presence of Christ discussed herein. Exploring Origen's Christology and words on resurrection could be fruitful avenues.

⁵³ See Origen, *Hom. Lv. I*, referring to *Lv. 1:1-9*. See a full analysis of Origen's exegesis of the whole burnt offering at E. Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture* (2005), 163-75.

⁵⁴ See Origen, *Hom. Gen. II*, referring to *Gen. 6:13-16, 22*. See a full analysis of Origen's exegesis of the ark at E. Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture* (2005), 132-47.

⁵⁵ See Origen, *Comm. Cant. I*. See a full analysis of Origen's exegesis within *Comm. Cant. I*, at E. Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture* (2005), 195-237.

Bridegroom, meets the faithful as His beloved Bride for eternity. These pneumatic truths about God have been given to believers by God so that they may grow to understand and love God more and thereby draw nearer to God to an extent now *and* in a complete and fulfilled – though, indeed, ever-deepening – way in eternity.⁵⁶

Consumption of these truths about God is the same as a ‘spiritual’ and ‘intellectual’ dialogue with Christ’s mind.⁵⁷ In *Comm. Cant.* I, Origen explains that the believer – ‘Church’ collectively or ‘soul’ individually – will come to ‘Christ’s chamber’ or ‘the storehouse of the Word of God’, in either case, to the chamber of the Bridegroom which is

Christ’s own secret and mysterious mind[.]’ Of this Paul also said: *We have the mind of Christ, that we may know the things that are given us from God.* These things are those ... *things God has prepared for them that love Him.* So, when Christ leads a soul to understand His mind, she is said to be brought into the King’s chamber, *in which are hid the treasures of His wisdom and knowledge.*⁵⁸

In heaven, Christ, the ‘Bridegroom’, will bring his ‘Bride’⁵⁹ into His own mind wherein they will feast together on the ‘wisdom and knowledge’ of God.⁶⁰ The

⁵⁶ For the notion in Origen’s thought of an eternal ascent toward God, see *Hom. Nm.* XXVII and analysis of it in n. 60 below.

⁵⁷ See *Comm. Jn.* X 110 in n. 50 above.

⁵⁸ *Comm. Cant.* I 5, quoting 1Cor. 2:16, 2:12, 2:9; alluding to Is. 64:4; referring to *Cant.* 1:4; and quoting Col. 2:3. For the English text: Origen: *The Song of Songs Commentary and Homilies*, ACW 26 (New York, 1956), 84–5. For the Latin text: *Origène: Commentaire sur le Cantique des Cantiques Tome I*, SC 375 (Paris, 1991), 242, 244 (*‘Sed quoniam, cui res agitur, ecclesia est ad Christum veniens vel anima Verbo Dei adhaerens, quod aliud cubiculum Christi et promptuarium Verbi Dei credendum est, in quo vel ecclesiam suam vel animam cohaerentem sibi introducat, nisi ipse Christi arcanus et reconditus sensus? De quo et Paulus dicebat: Nos autem sensum Christi habemus, ut sciamus quae a Deo donata sunt nobis. Haec illa sunt quae oculus non vidit nec auris audivit nec in cor hominis adscendit, quae praeparavit Deus his qui diligunt eum. Cum igitur animam Christus in intelligentiam sui sensus inducit, in cubiculum regis introducta dicitur, in quo sunt thesauri sapientiae ac scientiae eius absconditi’*).

⁵⁹ For these two terms, see *Comm. Cant.* I 5 generally, ACW 26, 84–90 (*‘sponsa’* and *‘sponsus’*), SC 375, 242–56.

⁶⁰ In the passage here in *Comm. Cant.* I 5, along with *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 86 (*The Eucharist*, 189; GCS *Origenes* XI 198), Origen draws a picture of Christ, the Bridegroom, feasting, along with his Bride, the believers, upon his own spiritual presence in that eternal Passover or wedding feast at the end of time. We understand from this article’s insights that this spiritual presence manifests itself in Scripture’s pneumatic sense. Therefore, Bridegroom and Bride will feast upon Christ’s spiritual presence in Scripture, that is, on the pneumatic sense, or deepest mysteries of Scripture, for eternity. See n. 38 above.

For Christ’s fellow consumption of himself at the eternal feast, Origen draws on *Matth.* 26:29 (*‘I shall drink ... the fruit of this vine ... new with you in the kingdom of my father’*). In *Ser. Comm. Mtt.* 86, Origen points out that *‘He is the bread, and He eats the bread with us; ... He is the drink of the fruit of the vine, and He drinks with us’*, and then explains that *‘alone, and without Him, we are able neither to eat of that bread nor to drink of the fruit of that True Vine’* (*The Eucharist*, 191; GCS *Origenes* XI 199). Christ is both the food and a fellow consumer. As the believer is priest, so

believer's encounter with the Logos, or Christ, in the Eucharist and in the word of Scripture in this life will reach its fullness in heaven as an eternal dialogue with Christ's mind that feeds on truths about God revealed in Scripture's *pneumatika*, propelling the believer into an ever-deeper understanding of and love for God.⁶¹

Conclusion

By correlating Scripture with Eucharist and Passover, Origen presents Scripture as transcendent. Scripture's *pneumatika*, or pneumatic meanings, which are

Christ, the Passover Lamb, is the 'high priest' who sacrifices and consumes himself with souls in eternity, making possible their own consumption of Him, the eternal 'manna.' (For the notion of Jesus as 'high priest', see *Hom. Lv.* IX 10.1; FOTC 83, 199; SC 287, 120, 122. For the notion of the eternal food as 'manna', see *Comm. Jn.* X 109; FOTC 80, 279; SC 157, 446, 448.)

Perhaps Christ's communion with those who consume Him through Scripture's deeper meanings is necessary because Origen recognizes that the human soul needs the guidance of Christ to understand fully each pneumatic meaning and even to grasp it initially. In *Hom. Nm.* XXVII, Origen suggests that one's grasp of pneumatic meanings is ever-deepening for eternity, so that arguably Christ joins in with the eternal consumption so as to help the believer continue to grasp it more and more deeply and more and more fully. In *Hom. Nm.* XXVII, Origen sets forth a twofold journey of the human soul toward eternal union with God, one in this life that increases the virtues, and one after this life that builds up the believer's understanding of spiritual things, see *Hom. Nm.* XXVII 7; Greer, 253; GCS 30, 265. The pneumatic meaning of Scripture, then, continues to unfold for the believer, as he enters deeper within the Bridegroom's chamber, which is the mind of Christ. Consistent with this idea that the believer moves eternally closer to a fuller grasp of pneumatic meaning, indeed, God's truth, Origen seems to admit in this homily that he does not yet recognize all pneumatic meanings in Scripture and does not grasp fully some which he has glimpsed, see *Hom. Nm.* XXVII 4; Greer, 251; GCS 30, 261-2. Also, for analysis, see E. Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture* (2005), 189-91. This underscores the idea that for Origen the pneumatic meaning continues to unfold as the intellectual activity of heaven. Abiding in Christ's mind, then, is a progressive, ever-enriching experience, not static. It is never finished. While the believer finds himself fulfilled in having reached *his telos*, the state of being that completes him, it is an experience of fulfillment without finality. To abide in Christ's mind is to enjoy its riches in an ever-deepening way for eternity. Christ unites with believers in the eternal consumption of himself, making possible the soul's continuous and deepening reception of the pneumatic meaning's life-giving powers.

In addition to the notion in Origen that Christ will consume himself in heaven along with the believers, or Church, it is worth exploring in Origen's works the implications that, if the Church is the body of Christ (see H. Crouzel, *Origen* [2007], 229), then arguably, both Christ and believer engage in self-consumption at the eternal wedding feast. This may simply underscore the notion that all things will come to a fullness or unity at the end of time, as Paul mentions in *1Cor.* 15:24-8 that God will be 'all in all'. See n. 61 below.

⁶¹ Indeed, in eternity, Christ, the Word of God, will bring all believers to himself, that is, into his own mind, which, in turn, is the mind of God, and so, at the end, as Paul declares in *1Cor.* 15:24-8, God will be 'all in all'. For an interesting analysis of Origen's ontological and epistemological conception of Christ, the Logos, in relation to the Father and how this completion of all things is to occur, see Robert M. Berchman, *From Philo to Origen: Middle Platonism in Transition*, Brown Judaic Studies 69 (Chico, California, 1984), 113-64.

Christ, the Passover Lamb, will continue into eternity as the food of heaven.⁶² Origen presents the vision of an eternal wedding banquet wherein Bride and Bridegroom intellectually feast upon the life-giving manna of Scripture's pneumatic meaning, as the content of Christ's own mind.⁶³ By implication, each time the believer in this life meets with a pneumatic meaning in Scripture – whether he hears it preached, finds it in the study of Scripture, or touches upon it during *lectio divina* – he transcends time to experience the eternal activity of heaven. He enters the mind of Christ for a time. It is a mystical moment of union with Christ now, an ecstatic moment, the beatific vision. For Origen, to preach and teach Scripture is a sacred task, because the teacher leads his audience to interact with Scripture's pneumatic sense and thus to catch a glimpse of heaven now.⁶⁴

⁶² When the believer interacts with Scripture, he reenacts Passover. By 'having believed in Christ', the believer 'anoint[s]' his 'doorposts' or 'house ... which is to say, [his] bod[y] ... with blood' from the Passover Lamb. Then he 'move[s] on to the eating of Christ', the lamb, 'and after eating it *leaves nothing until the morning*, and then celebrates the *feast of unleavened bread* after having come out of Egypt.' '[W]hoever eats of the true lamb escapes the *destroyer*', Satan, and thus death (*Peri Pascha* 25, 13-4, 34, all referring to *Ex.* 12:6-7, 9-10, 17, 23, 33 and *Heb.* 11:28; ACW 54, 40-1, 34-5, 45; CA 2, 202, 178, 180, 220. See also *Comm. Jn.* X 99; FOTC 80, 276; SC 157, 440, 442.) By his belief, then, the faithful one marks himself with the blood of Christ, the Lamb, and escapes Egypt, or this life, joining in Christ's victory over Satan and death. This victory manifests itself in eternity as the 'feast of unleavened bread', or the heavenly Passover, in which believers perpetually consume Christ in the deeper, eternal spiritual truths of Scripture.

⁶³ For the idea of Christ consuming his own presence with believers at the eternal wedding feast, see n. 60 above.

⁶⁴ Because Passover and Eucharist point toward Scripture's eternal character, Scripture spans the stages of salvation history and leads teacher and student alike through the pre-incarnational age of God's chosen people, into Christ's sacrifice and death, through the age of the Church, and finally into the eschatological union of the Church within the mind of Christ. See n. 51 above for an explanation of the concepts of salvation history and typology.

Rediscovering Origen Today: First Impressions of the New Collection of Homilies on the *Psalms* in the *Codex monacensis Graecus* 314*

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ABSTRACT

A preliminary examination of the 29 new homilies on the *Psalms*, discovered by Marina Molin Pradel in the Greek Ms. 314, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, leads to support the attribution to Origen. As a consequence, one has to stress the importance of this unique discovery in more than 70 years for the study of Origen as exegete, preacher and commentator of the *Psalms*. Apart from a few fragments figuring in *catenae*, the new homilies provide an authentic origenian flavour and important materials for comparison. It is already possible to point to significant parallels in other Origen's writings with regard, for instance, to the philological approach to the biblical text in the wake of the Alexandrian philology, among other things with the frequent recourse to hexaplaric materials. In addition, several features typical of Origen's rhetorics as preacher are well attested in the new homilies. The historical and doctrinal aspects also confirm that we have to do with the milieu familiar to the great Alexandrian author, as shown particularly by the challenge of Marcionites and Gnostics. The new corpus will now allow also a reexamination of the Latin translation of the *Homilies on Psalm* 36 (I-IV) made by Rufinus and of their manipulation by Jerome in the *Tractatus in Psalmos*.

The discovery of the manuscript

At the beginning of the spring I came across a website announcing the publication of an Italian novel entitled *La lettera perduta di Origene* ('Origen's Lost Letter').¹ The author of the book was unknown to me and from the short announcement I could only guess that it had presumably been written in the fashion of *The Da Vinci Code*. Nevertheless, I was rather curious and impatient to receive the book around Easter, just to find out how Origen could have provided

* Lecture at the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (July 9, 2012). I thank Aryeh Kofsky for the careful revision of my English text. For the abbreviations of the writings of Origen, I shall follow Adele Monaci Castagno (ed.), *Origene. Dizionario* (Roma, 2000), xiii-xv.

¹ Florio Lami, *La lettera perduta di Origene* (Firenze, 2011).

inspiration for a thriller. I could never imagine that at the same time, precisely on Holy Thursday (5th April), a really lost Origen unexpectedly came to light in Munich, thanks to the discovery by an Italian paleographer, Marina Molin Pradel, entrusted with the preparation of the new catalogue of the Greek manuscripts in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Marina Molin Pradel carefully checked the list of the anonymous collection of homilies on the Psalms transmitted by Cod. Mon. Gr. 314 and compared it with catalogues of similar patristic texts. Of course she was shocked, when she noticed, shortly before closure, that the beginnings and the ends of four homilies on *Psalm* 36 contained the original Greek text of Rufinus' Latin translations of the same sermons. Since the library was closed for the Easter holiday she had to wait in a state of excitement and anxiety until the following Tuesday to verify her first impressions. She could then confirm them and address the issue of the attribution to Origen of the *corpus* as a whole. In fact, the manuscript, probably from the beginning of the 12th century – as we shall see later – has preserved a series of homilies which to a large extent corresponds to Jerome's list of the homilies of Origen on the *Psalms* included in his *Letter* 33 to Paula. Marina Molin Pradel went farther and was able to observe some excerpts from the homilies in the *catenae*, that is the exegetical commentaries in form of anthologies, under the name of Origen. Though this external criterion is not undisputable of itself (because attributions are often mistaken), now it received a different weight in light of the corresponding passages in the new homilies.

At that point I was asked for my opinion on the manuscript by Anna Pontani, a specialist of Byzantine Studies at Padua University, who invested me with the task of official advisor, in the name of Marina Molin Pradel and the Munich Library. It was the 21st of May, a day after the first earthquake in our region and it goes without saying that a second quake immediately shook my mind. Since that moment, also because the Staatsbibliothek wished to make the discovery known worldwide as soon as possible, I never ceased looking at the manuscript – that incredibly was accessible online! – and transcribing its text. At first the external circumstances were not at all favourable. How often I wished for myself in the midst of an undescribable euphoria that at least the earth remain still. I saw later on, as a 'prophetic' response to such concerns, a passage in which Origen comments upon earthquakes. In the *1st Homily on Psalm 77*, referring to the ending of the *Gospel of John* (*John* 21:25: 'Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written'), he assumes that, had all the words by Jesus to his disciples been recorded, the world certainly would have collapsed, inasmuch as God's words are so mighty that they shake earth and heaven. It is revealing to see how Origen supports this view by recalling on the one hand the last words of Jesus on the cross – to be understood as a powerful prayer to the Father – and on the other hand both the earthquake and the solar eclipse following

them (*Matth.* 27:51; *Luke* 23:44-5).² This passage is the first piece of evidence to authenticate the attribution to Origen to which I would like to draw our attention.

To stress the exceptional character of the discovery, there is no need now to recall the long and painful history of Origen's reception in connection with his writings, read more often in a Latin translation than in the original Greek, at least in the western world from Late Antiquity to the early Renaissance. Suffice it to say that the new finding does not come from papyri as was the case more than 70 years ago with the Tura papyri, when some unknown writings such as the *Dialogue with Heraclides* or the *Treatise on Easter* emerged in Egypt. Here we have to do with a forgotten manuscript of presumably Constantinopolitan origins, that according to Marina Molin Pradel should have arrived in Venice during the 15th or 16th centuries. After reaching the florid book market of the city, it was purchased by a German bibliophile, Johann Jakob Fugger (1516-1575), a member of the rich bankers' family of Augsburg, together with other older manuscripts and several modern copies of still unpublished Greek texts, which he used to collect in Venice for a decade (1548-1558). Finally, in 1571 this important collection of Greek manuscripts came into the possession of Albert the Fifth, the Duke of Bavaria (1528-1579). The manuscript went almost unnoticed in the course of the following centuries, due also to a misprint by Ignaz Hardt, the author of the last catalogue of Greek manuscripts in Munich (published between 1806 and 1812): he erroneously indicated four homilies 'on *Psalm* 31' instead of *Psalm* 36, thus misleading the users who wished to check eventual contacts with the known homilies of Origen.³

The 'format' of the manuscript still awaits deeper investigation, especially in relation to the Byzantine cultural background that fostered its transcription in the 12th century. The history of transmission of Origen's writings in Byzantium has not yet received much attention and, at least to my knowledge, we are better informed about an earlier period, of which Photius remains our main witness.⁴ The attribution of the collection to Michael Psellus by a later hand

² *H77Ps* I (ff. 225v l. 21 - 226r l. 10): φέρε γὰρ καθ' ὑπόθεσιν ὅσα ἐλάλει περὶ θεοῦ ὁ Σωτὴρ τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἰς ἀναγραφὴν ἔρχεσθαι, οὐκ ἦνεγκεν ἄν ὁ κόσμος, ἀλλὰ σεισμόν ἂν τινα πεπόνθει καὶ ταραχὴν. λέγεται γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν θείων λόγων σείσεσθαι τὴν γῆν καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν ξερίζεσθαι. καὶ εἰ χρὴ τὴν αἰτίαν εἰπεῖν τοῦ σεισμοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐν τῷ πάθει τοῦ Σωτῆρος καὶ τῆς ἐκλείψεως τῆς ἡλιακῆς, ἐροῦμεν ὅτι ἐπεὶ τὸ μέγεθος τῆς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα εὐχῆς παράδοξον ἦν, ἐκίνησε καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ τὸν κόσμον. Origen deals in several writings with the cosmic repercussions of the death on the cross. See my article 'La morte in croce di Gesù epifania divina del mistero del Logos fatto carne (Origene, *Commentariorum Series in Matthaeum*, 138-140)', *Adamantius* 16 (2010), 286-307, especially 301-4.

³ For the history of the manuscript and its description see Marina Molin Pradel, 'Novità origeniane dalla Staatsbibliothek di Monaco', *Adamantius* 18 (2012), 16-40.

⁴ Éric Junod, 'Origène et la tradition alexandrine vus par Photius dans sa *Bibliothèque*', in Lorenzo Perrone (ed.), *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition* (Leuven, 2003), 1089-1102.

added to the last folio of the manuscript probably in the 15th century (f. 371r), though misguided – because the homilies have nothing to do with the Byzantine author or with the verse commentary on the *Psalms* put under his name – perhaps points to a religious and cultural milieu which was still capable of appreciating texts of this kind, even if preserving them in an anonymous way (or perhaps presenting them under the fictitious cover of a famous humanist like Psellus). Apart from the closest setting of the manuscript, we have to ask ourselves according to what criteria a collection of this sort has been assembled. Let us have a look at the catalogue of its pieces and at the correspondences with Jerome and Rufinus (the analogies are highlighted in bold).

Cod. Mon. Gr. 314	Jerome, <i>Ep.</i> 33⁵	Rufinus
1) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 15</i> (ff. 1r-16r) 2) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 15</i> (ff. 16v-30r)	<i>In XV^o homeliae III</i>	
3) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 36</i> (ff. 30r-42r) 4) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 36</i> (ff. 42r-51v) 5) <i>Hom. III in Ps. 36</i> (ff. 51v-68v) 6) <i>Hom. IV in Ps. 36</i> (ff. 68v-83r)	<i>In XXXVI^o homeliae V</i>	<i>Hom. I-V in Ps. 36</i>
7) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 67</i> (ff. 83r-98v) 8) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 67</i> (ff. 98v-115v)	<i>In LXVII^o homeliae VII</i>	<i>Hom. I-II in Ps. 37</i> <i>Hom. I-II in Ps. 38</i>
9) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 73</i> (ff. 115v-128v) 10) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 73</i> (ff. 129r-139r) 11) <i>Hom. III in Ps. 73</i> (ff. 139r-154r)	<i>In LXXIII^o homeliae III</i>	
12) <i>Hom. in Ps. 74</i> (ff. 154v-162r)	<i>In LXXIII^o homelia I</i>	
13) <i>Hom. in Ps. 75</i> (ff. 162r-170v)	<i>In LXXV^o homelia I</i>	
14) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 76</i> (ff. 170v-183v) 15) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 76</i> (ff. 183v-193v) 16) <i>Hom. III in Ps. 76</i> (ff. 193v-204r) 17) <i>Hom. IV in Ps. 76</i> (ff. 204v-213v)	<i>In LXXVI^o homeliae III</i>	
18) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 214r-228r) 19) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 228v-242v) 20) <i>Hom. III in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 242v-248v) 21) <i>Hom. IV in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 248v-263v) 22) <i>Hom. V in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 263v-273v) 23) <i>Hom. VI in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 273v-283r)	<i>In LXXVII^o homeliae VIII</i>	

⁵ The list is given according to Pierre Nautin, *Origène. Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1977), 229, 258.

24) <i>Hom. VII in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 283r-299r)	
25) <i>Hom. VIII in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 299r-315r)	
26) <i>Hom. IX in Ps. 77</i> (ff. 315r-329r)	
27) <i>Hom. I in Ps. 80</i> (ff. 329r-344v)	<i>In LXXX° homeliae II</i>
28) <i>Hom. II in Ps. 80</i> (ff. 344v-359v)	
29) <i>Hom. in Ps. 81</i> (ff. 359v-371r)	<i>In LXXXI° homelia I</i>

As evidenced from the synopsis, the number of homilies on *Pss.* 73 (3), 74 (1), 75 (1), 77 (9), 80 (2) and 81 (1) conforms exactly Jerome's list, taken from the catalogue of Origen's writings included by Eusebius in his *Life of Pamphilus*. As for the four homilies on *Psalms* 36, instead of the five in Jerome's list and Rufinus' translation, interestingly also the *catenae* have no Greek fragments from the fifth homily. Our collection thus gives evidence of the fact that its text must have gone lost some time earlier. To what extent the actual series of Origen's homilies on the *Psalms* simply depends upon the casualties of the text transmission or rather goes back to a selection of pieces responding to distinct criteria or interests will be one of the tasks of future research. The moment has not yet come for this kind of consideration, though the assembling of these particular pieces among the 120 homilies on the *Psalms* known to us from the list of Jerome obviously demands an explanation.

In order to provide it, one should also take into account what place Origen accorded precisely to these *Psalms* in the whole *corpus* of his writings. But this task is far from easy, due to the huge amount of quotations from the *Psalms* in the works of the Alexandrian. Moreover, if we check the repertory of *Biblia Patristica*, a considerable lot of these quotations goes back to *catenae* fragments of disputed authenticity. Yet, at least in one case, we are already allowed to deliver a preliminary answer. The largest group of sermons is the one dealing with *Psalms* 77. The nine homilies indeed comment upon a rather lengthy *Psalms*, but there was probably a more cogent reason for devoting so much time and space to it. Namely Origen appears to have been interested in the heresiological implications of *Psalms* 77 with regard to the 'sons of Ephraim' (*Ps.* 77:9). Now, Jerome has an interesting remark in the preface to his *Commentary on Hosea*, where he remembers that Origen wrote not only a special work on 'the name of Ephraim in Hosea' (*Περὶ τοῦ πῶς ὀνομάσθη ἐν τῷ Ὠσηὲ Ἐφραΐμ*) but also another writing (*uolumen*) on the same topic, though only partially known to Jerome, that is without beginning and end, probably the lost commentary of the Alexandrian on the prophet.⁶ Bearing this remark in mind, we

⁶ *S. Hieronymi presbyteri, Commentarii in prophetas minores*, ed. Marcus Adriaen, CChr.SL 76 (Turnhout, 1969), 4,119-25: *Origenes paruum de hoc propheta scripsit libellum cui hunc titulum posuit: Περὶ τοῦ πῶς ὀνομάσθη ἐν τῷ Ὠσηὲ Ἐφραΐμ; hoc est: Quare appellatur in Osee Ephraim, uolentes ostendere quaecumque contra eum dicuntur, ad haeticorum referenda*

cannot but underline the fact that precisely the same approach is claimed for in the 2nd *Homily on Psalm 77*.

Καὶ οὐ χεῖρον ὀλίγων ὑπομνησθῆναι
ὑπὸ τοῦ Ὡσηῆ προφητειῶν ὀνομαζου-
σῶν τὴν Ἐφραΐμ, ἵν' ἴδωμεν ἐκεῖ
μάλιστα ἐπὶ τίνος λαμβάνεται τὸ ὄνομα
τοῦ Ἐφραΐμ (*H77Ps* II, f. 231r l. 23-231v
l. 3).

'And it is not bad to remember some of
Hosea's prophecies which mention Ephraim,
in order to see more specifically to whom
the name of Ephraim is applied'.

The external witness of the *catenae*

To support the attribution to Origen of some of the new homilies we can partially rely on the external witness of the *catenae*. As I remarked above, the exegetical excerpts appearing there under the name of Origen generally demand a careful examination to establish their authenticity. Often enough the name of the author has been confused or the piece is assigned to more than one name. These complicated materials have gone through several investigations and attempts for establishing some precision and order in the course of the 19th and the 20th centuries. Nowadays their critical assessment is the task of colleagues working in Berlin on the new critical edition of Origen's commentaries on the *Psalms*. In a conference that I organised in Bologna last February to encourage this project – resulting in a good omen for the discovery of the new homilies – we came to realize even more sharply how challenging it is first to sort out the authentic materials and second to distinguish them according to the different exegetical genres of Origen's *œuvre* as interpreter of the Bible, *i.e.* commentaries, *scholia* and homilies.⁷ Thanks to the new evidence we can better appreciate the value of the sources provided long ago in two well-known collections of fragments on the *Psalms*: that of Andrea Gallandi in the 17th volume of the *Patrologia Graeca* and the *Analecta Sacra* of Jean-Baptiste Pitra. Especially the second collection has preserved important pieces of a commentary on *Psalm 77* that largely correspond to the text of some of the new homilies.⁸ Further

personam. Et aliud uolumen, quod et capite careat et fine. Cf. Maria Cristina Pennacchio, 'Mysteria sunt cuncta quae scripta sunt. Una ricostruzione dell'esegesi origeniana di Osea', *Adamantius* 6 (2000), 26-50, 26; *Ead.*, *Propheta insaniens. L'esegesi patristica di Osea tra profezia e storia* (Roma, 2002), 39. COs is mentioned at the end of the series on *Ps. 77* (f. 326r).

⁷ For a preliminary assessment of the results of the conference see Gilles Dorival, 'XII Convegno del Gruppo Italiano di Ricerca su Origene e la Tradizione Alessandrina: *I commenti di Origene ai Salmi: contributi critici e prospettive d'edizione* (Bologna, 10-11 febbraio 2012): Bilan, problèmes, tâches', *Adamantius* 18 (2012), 364-6.

⁸ Already Pitra was confident to reconstitute almost the whole commentary on *Ps. 77* thanks to the *catenae*: 'Praeter majorem psalmum CXVIII, nullus alius est quam abundantiori Origenis

excerpts on *Psalms* 67, 80 and 81 can be added to our external evidence, contributing in turn to support the attribution. Working comparatively with sources of this kind is indeed one of the most fascinating aspects in the history of interpretation of the Bible in Christian antiquity. Yet for reasons of time I shall provide only one test case that should hopefully be paradigmatic enough to illustrate in what way the *catenae* have made their extrapolations from the text of our homilies. It is a commentary on *Ps.* 77:18 ('And they tempted God in their hearts, in asking meat for the desire of their souls') taken from the *5th Homily on Psalm 77*, which has moreover a significant parallel in Origen's *Treatise on Prayer (Orat. XXIX 14)*, as we shall be able to appreciate in a further step.

Cod. Mon. Gr. 314	Gallandi, PG 17	Pitra, <i>Analecta Sacra</i> III
<i>Hom. V in Ps. 77</i> πάντων γὰρ κόρος ἐστίν· οὐχ ὕπνου μόνον,⁹ ἀλλὰ καὶ βρωμάτων κόρος ἐστίν. ὄρα οὖν τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκονομίαν· ὀρῶν λαὸν ἐπιθυμητήν, καθάραι ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας βουλόμενος αὐτόν, ἐώρα ὅτι λόγῳ διδασκαλικῷ οὐ καθαίρεται, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ γινομένη προσκορεῖ καθαίρεται, ἔπεμψεν τὸ ἐπιθυμούμενον. ἦδει ὅτι μίας ἡμέρας τυχόντες τοῦ ἐπιθυμουμένου, ἔτι ἐπιθυμήσουσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύο ἡμερῶν πάλιν ἐπορεύονται, καὶ ἐπὶ πλείονας δὲ ἡμέρας μεταλάβωσι τοῦ ἐπιθυμουμένου, ὥστε ἀποστραφῆναι αὐτοὺς τὸ ἐπιθυμούμενον, ἐπέχουσι τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τριάκοντα ἡμέρας πολλὰ τὰ ἐπιθυμούμενα.	[In vv. 30-1, col. 140 C9-D6] ὀρῶν λαὸν ἐπιθυμητὴν καὶ καθάραι αὐτόν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας βουλόμενος, ἐώρα ὅτι λόγῳ διδασκαλικῷ οὐ καθαίρεται, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ γινομένη προσκορεῖ. πάντων γὰρ κόρος ἐστίν· οὐχ ὕπνου μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ βρωμάτων, διὸ ἔπεμψεν αὐτοῖς ὀρτυγομέτρην ἐπὶ τριάκοντα ἡμέρας.	[In v. 18, col. 114] ὄρα δὲ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκονομίαν· ὀρῶν λαὸν ἐπιθυμητόν, καὶ καθάραι αὐτόν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας βουλόμενος, ἐώρα ὅτι λόγῳ διδασκαλικῷ οὐ καθαίρεται, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ γινομένη προσκορεῖ. πάντων γὰρ κόρος ἐστίν· οὐχ ὕπνου μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ βρωμάτων, διὸ ἔπεμψεν αὐτοῖς ὀρτυγομέτρην ἐπὶ τριάκοντα ἡμέρας.

commentario auctum reperimus, non solummodo in Vaticanis codd., quorum plerique parciore sunt, sed maxime in optimis codd. Laurentianis, inscriptis sub Plut. v, 14 et Plut. vi, 8, quos locuplete symbolo confirmant codd. Veneti apud Gallandium. Quibus si instituto nostro licet addere, quantumvis exilia, novem et decem scholiola a Maurinis collecta, et fusiore Gallandii, integer fere commentarius restitueretur (Jean-Baptiste Pitra, *Analecta Sacra* [Parisii, 1888], III 110 n.). For a critical appreciation of the evidence from the *catenae* see Robert Devreesse, *Les anciens commentateurs grecs des Psaumes* (Città del Vaticano, 1970).

⁹ A clear allusion to Homer, *Il.* 13, 636: πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστί, καὶ ὕπνου... (I thank Filippomaria Pontani for discovering it).

ἔφαγον ἐπιθυμοῦντες, ἐκορέσθησαν. ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον γὰρ ἔφαγον διὰ τὸ ἄπληστον τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, ὥστε γενέσθαι αὐτοῖς εἰς χολέραν (<i>Num.</i> 11:19-20). ὅτε γέγονεν αὐτοῖς τοῦτο, ἐτελεύτησαν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν αὐτῶν ἡ ψυχὴ καθαρὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, τοῦτο πραγματευομένου τοῦ θεοῦ, διὰ τοῦ δυνατοῦ τρόπου τῆς καθάρσεως, καθάραι αὐτοῦς, ἀλλὰ γενόμενος κατὰ τὸν τόπον καὶ συγκρίνων πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς (<i>1Cor.</i> 2:13) εὕρισκον τὸν λαὸν δις φαγόντα ὀρτυγομήτραν, ἅπαξ μὲν ἡνίκα εὐθέως ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, τὸ δεύτερον, ὡς ἐν τοῖς <i>Ἀριθμοῖς</i> ἀναγράφεται, ἡνίκα κακῶς εἶπον τὸν θεοῦ καὶ διάκονον αὐτὸν ὠνόμασαν (<i>Num.</i> 21:5). τί δήποτε οὖν ἐπὶ μὲν τῷ προτέρῳ φαγεῖν αὐτοὺς τῆς ὀρτυγομήτρας οὐδεμία <i>ὀργὴ ἀνέβη ἐπ' αὐτούς</i> (<i>Ps.</i> 77:31a), ἐπὶ δε τῷ δευτέρῳ τὸ τοιοῦτο γεγένηται; ζητῶν γε κατ' ἐμαυτὸν καὶ θέλων ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐρεῖν καὶ λαβεῖν, τοιαυτά τινα ἐνενοῦον (ff. 264r l. 15 - 265r l. 9).	οἱ δὲ τῇ ἀπληστίᾳ χρησάμενοι, χολερικῶ πάθει διεφθείροντο. οἱ δὲ εὕρισκω τὸν λαὸν φαγόντα ὀρτυγομήτραν, ἅπαξ μὲν ἡνίκα εὐθέως ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου· τὸ δεύτερον, ὡς ἐν τοῖς <i>Ἀριθμοῖς</i> ἀναγράφεται, ἡνίκα κακῶς εἶπον τὸν ἄρτον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διάκονον αὐτὸν ὠνόμασαν (<i>Num.</i> 21:5), ὅτε καὶ <i>ὀργὴ ἀνέβη ἐπ' αὐτούς</i> (<i>Ps.</i> 77:31a), ὡς τάχα κάτω που οὔσα πρὶν ἢ ἁμάρτωσιν.	οἱ δὲ τῇ ἀπληστίᾳ χρησάμενοι, χολερικῶ πάθει διεφθείροντο. οἱ δὲ εὕρισκω τὸν λαὸν φαγόντα ὀρτυγομήτραν, ἅπαξ μὲν ἡνίκα εὐθέως ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου· τὸ δεύτερον, ὡς ἐν τοῖς <i>Ἀριθμοῖς</i> ἀναγράφεται, ἡνίκα κακῶς εἶπε τὸν ἄρτον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διάκονον αὐτὸν ὠνόμασεν (<i>Num.</i> 21:5), ὅτε καὶ <i>ὀργὴ ἀνέβη ἐπ' αὐτούς</i> (<i>Ps.</i> 77:31a), τάχα ὡς κάτω που οὔσα πρὶν ἢ ἁμάρτωσιν.
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Orat. XXIX 14

[ed. Paul Koetschau, GCS, 389,1-15]

καὶ φανερόν ὅτι ὅσον οὐκ εἶχον τὰ ἐπιθυμούμενα, κόρον οὐκ ἠδύναντο αὐτῶν λαβεῖν οὐδὲ παύσασθαι τοῦ πάθους· ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ φιλόανθρωπος καὶ ἀγαθὸς θεός, διδούς αὐτοῖς τὸ ἐπιθυμούμενον, οὐχ οὕτως ἐβούλετο διδόναι, ὥστε καταλιπέσθαι ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπιθυμίαν. διόπερ φησὶ **μὴ μίαν ἡμέραν** φάγεσθαι αὐτοὺς τὰ κρέα (ἔμενε γὰρ ἂν τὸ πάθος αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ πεπυρωμένη καὶ φλεγόμενη ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, εἰ ἐπ' ὀλίγον τῶν κρεῶν μετειλίφεσαν), ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐπὶ δύο δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς τὸ ἐπιθυμούμενον ἡμέρας· βουλόμενος δὲ αὐτὸ προσκορῆς αὐτοῖς ποιῆσαι, οἶονεῖ οὐκ ἐπαγγέλλεται ἀλλὰ τῷ συνίναμι δυναμένῳ ἀπειλεῖ δι' ὧν χαρίζεσθαι αὐτοῖς ἐδόκει, λέγων· οὐδὲ πέντε μόνος ποιήσετε **ἡμέρας** ἐσθίοντες τὰ κρέα οὐδὲ τὰς τούτων διπλασίους οὐδὲ ἔτι τὰς ἐκείνων διπλασίους, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον φάγεσθε, ἐφ' ὅλον κρεωφαγοῦντες μῆνα, *ἕως ἐξέλθῃ ἐκ τῶν μυκτήρων* μετὰ χολερικοῦ πάθους τὸ νενομισμένον ὑμῖν καλὸν καὶ ἡ περὶ αὐτὸ ψεκτικὴ καὶ αἰσχροὶ ἐπιθυμία (*Num.* 11:19-20).

The synopsis shows how the excerptors have worked (columns 2 and 3, in bold), by reducing and simplifying the arguments of the longer elaboration in the homily. The preacher comments on *Numbers* 11, a famous biblical story that Origen likes to exploit as a paradigm of God's providence, usually naming his activity for the salvation of men by the term οἰκονομία, 'design', that we

find also here. It is part of such providential strategy to apparently let the desire of man be satisfied even to the utmost excess, so that he might be filled with 'repletion' and 'disgust', κόρος (again an important term in Origen's vocabulary, especially in relation to the precosmic fall of the intellects), and thus be freed from his desire. For this reason, God sends to the Israelites in the desert flesh as food for a whole month (*Num.* 11:20). Now, the *catenae* move the initial sentence with the clear allusion to Homer (πάντων γὰρ κόρος ἐστίν, 'in all there is repletion') to another place, so that in the excerpts it functions not as a premise but as a corollary to the assertion of God's pedagogical device with regard to human desire, instead of having recourse to 'instruction' (λόγῳ διδασκαλικῷ): not words but experience itself will help to purify man from the excess of desire.

The *catenae* also omit the short preamble to the formulation of a *quaestio* on the biblical passage commented upon.¹⁰ It is the reference to *1Cor.* 2:13 (πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνοντες, 'to compare spiritual things with spiritual things'), a crucial passage for Origen's pneumatic exegesis of the Scriptures conceived by him, so to say, as an intertextual orchestration of similar passages.¹¹ But a typical trait of the exegetical technicalities is also lost in the *catenae*: 'Now that I have come to this passage...' (γενόμενος κατὰ τὸν τόπον) – a formula introducing the following question (ἀπορία): why, in view of the two pericopes in which the Bible speaks of the quails as the food given by God to the Israelites (*Ex.* 16:13 and *Num.* 11:19-20), only with regard to the second it is said that 'the wrath of God rose up against them' (*Ps.* 77:31a)? The *catenae* eliminate the introduction of the *quaestio* but maintain its content, though omitting again an interesting detail of the exegetical method adopted by the Alexandrian. Before answering the problem, Origen declares that he has tried to find himself a solution, while wishing to receive it from God (ζητῶν γε κατ' ἑμαυτὸν καὶ θέλων ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ εὑρεῖν καὶ λαβεῖν, τοιαῦτά τινα ἐνενόουν), a synergy between the initiative of the interpreter and the divine help, which is once again very typical of Origen.

Apart from the external confirmation of the *catenae*, our passage from the 5th Homily on Psalm 77 finds an eloquent parallel in the explanation devoted by Origen to the sixth demand of the *Our Father* in the *Perì euchês* (*Orat.* XXIX 13-4). Here he has recourse to *Num.* 11 to support the idea of the providential nature of temptation, endowed as such with both a diagnostic value and a

¹⁰ For Origen's recourse to the (Aristotelic) and Alexandrian method of *quaestio et responsio* see my contributions: 'La parrhêsia di Mosè. L'argomentazione di Origene nel Trattato sul libero arbitrio e il metodo delle *quaestiones et responsiones*', in Lorenzo Perrone (ed.), *Il cuore indurito del Faraone. Origene e il problema del libero arbitrio* (Genova, 1992), 31-64; '*Quaestiones et responsiones* in Origene: Prospettive di un'analisi formale dell'argomentazione esegetico-teologica', *Cristianesimo nella storia* 15 (1994), 1-50.

¹¹ See Francesca Cocchini, *Il Paolo di Origene. Contributo alla storia della recezione delle epistole paoline nel III secolo* (Roma, 1992), 118-23.

therapeutic effect. By adopting medicinal notions, as often in his writings, Origen warns against a too quick recovery from illness, because this can easily lead one to be imprudent and fall ill again. Only a prolonged exposition to illness, producing a deep awareness of the danger and evil inherent in it, can truly liberate from the disease. The scriptural argument is taken once more from *Num.* 11, whereas the *Treatise on Prayer* comments upon the dynamics of desire and purification from it in a more thorough approach.

Even in the absence of this fundamental parallel, the short piece taken from the 5th *Homily on Psalm 77* has such an open Origenian *Kolorit*, thanks to its stylistic features and exegetical technicalities that I am led to confirm the indication of the *catenae* and to attribute the whole homily to Origen. Taking now the lead precisely from the assumption that the Alexandrian teacher is characterised by his own recognisable style as interpreter of the Bible, I shall try to detect in the homilies the inner criteria for vindicating their Origenian authenticity. By proceeding in this way I shall mostly rely on some lines of investigation that I have tried to develop in some recent contributions. They will provide us, in my opinion, with useful keys to approach Origen's texts and through these to catch a glimpse of his own personality.

The subjectivity of the interpreter and his historical and doctrinal context

It is almost a common opinion to assert that Origen did not like to speak about himself. Yet for a preacher like him, who was also constitutively a teacher, it was almost impossible not to put his own subjectivity at stake, first and foremost with the intent of establishing an active relation with his audience. This is generally the case with the Alexandrian, both as teacher and as preacher, and we do not lack instances for that also in the new homilies. Our first example is from the 2nd *Homily on Psalm 77*, in which Origen introduces a personal reminiscence allowing us by the way to catch a glimpse of his historical context and, I would venture, also of his own personal awareness.

καὶ τοῦτο τῇ πείρᾳ ἴσμεν· ἐν γὰρ τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμῶν ἡλικίᾳ πάνυ ἦνθουν αἱ αἱρέσεις καὶ ἐδόκουν πολλοὶ εἶναι οἱ ἐν αὐταῖς συναγόμενοι. ὅσοι γὰρ ἦσαν λίχνοι περὶ τὰ μαθήματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ εὐποροῦντες ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ διδασκάλων ἱκανῶν διὰ λιμὸν μιμούμενοι τοὺς ἐν λιμῷ ἐσθιοντας κρέα ἀνθρώπινα, ἀφιστάμενοι τοῦ ὑγιоῦς λόγου, προσεῖχον λόγοις ὁποιοισδήποτε καὶ ἦν συγκροτούμενα αὐτῶν τὰ διδασκαλεῖα. ὅτε δὲ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπέλαμψε διδασκαλίαν πλείονα, ὁσημέραι

'We know this by experience: in our early age the heresies were flourishing and many seemed to be those who assembled around them. All those who were eager for the teachings of Christ, lacking clever teachers in the church, because of such famine imitated those who in a famine eat human flesh. They separated thus from the healthy doctrine and attached themselves to every possible teaching and united themselves in schools. Yet, when the grace of God radiated a more abundant teaching, day after day the heresies

αἱ αἱρέσεις κατελύοντο καὶ τὰ δοκοῦντα αὐτῶν ἀπόρρητα παραδειγματίζεται καὶ δείκνυται βλασφημία ὄντα καὶ λόγοι ἀσεβεῖς καὶ ἄθεοι (*H77Ps* II, f. 233r ll. 5-23).

broke up and their supposed secret doctrines were brought to light and denounced as being blasphemies and impious and godless words'.

Given the large heresiological development on the 'sons of Ephraim' (*Ps.* 77:9-10) in this homily, the preacher is led to introduce a retrospective view of his life. In his youth heresies were still 'flourishing' and their adepts assembled in 'schools' (διδασκαλεῖα), apparently in contradistinction to the 'church' (ἐκκλησία), which in its turn seems to be almost depicted as still being in a minority situation. How to avoid here thinking of the Alexandrian background between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries, and the much disputed question about the 'heterodox' origins of its Christianity? Whatever historical milieu the preacher may have had in mind, he clearly denounces a cultural gap that especially the teachers of the Alexandrian school were able to overcome: at the time there were not enough 'clever teachers' (διδασκάλων ἱκανῶν) in the church, that is people capable of responding to the challenge of masters like Marcion, Valentinus and Basilides, to mention only the conventional triad of the best known heresiarchs of the 2nd century. Not incidentally this same triad comes up in the 5th *Homily on Psalm 77* and elsewhere, out of concern against those who by opposing Law and Gospel, Old and New Testament 'misunderstand the Scriptures and mislead the simple'¹².

Going back to our passage from the 2nd *Homily on Psalm 77*, I cannot resist the temptation to find in it a further personal echo going deeper than the mere recollection of the past. The more abundant 'teaching' (διδασκαλία) opposed to the 'famine' (λιμός) of the beginnings is in my eyes a clear hint not only to the ecclesiastical teachers of the Alexandrian school who preceded Origen, like Pantaeus and Clement, but also to himself and his fruitful activity as teacher, first in Alexandria and then in Caesarea. As we know, Origen converted to ecclesiastical Christianity his sponsor Ambrosius, previously a follower of Valentinian Gnosticism, and successfully engaged himself in public debates with heretics as well as Jewish teachers. If the heresiological background of our homilies mainly points to the fight against Marcionites and Gnostics, we have some evidence of public occasions of dispute with these adversaries. The 1st *Homily on Psalm 77* mentions a debate with some Marcionites in which Origen was led to invoke the testimony of the universe itself as an argument on behalf of God as its creator, in response to their criticisms against the Scriptures of the Old Testament.¹³

¹² *H77Ps* V (f. 271r ll. 12-7): οὕτως γὰρ Μαρκίωνες, οὕτως Οὐαλεντῖνοι, οὕτως Βασιλεῖδαι, καὶ ὅσοι ἄλλων εἰσάγουσι θεὸν παρὰ τὸν τοῦ νόμου παρεκδεχόμενοι ἀπατῶσι τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀκάκων.

¹³ *H77Ps* I (ff. 216r l. 24 - 216v l. 5): οἷς ἀπὸ Μαρκίωνος διαλεγόμενος, εἰρηκέναι δύο προκειμένων πιστεύειν τῇ γραφῇ, ὥς ὑμεῖς λέγετε πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα, ἢ πιστεύειν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ τῇ τάξει πρὸς τὸν δημιουργόν.

The subjectivity of the interpreter presents itself in a more direct form, every time the preacher tries to stimulate his audience. For those who are acquainted with Origen's way of writing and his 'gymnastic' method, our homilies provide many interesting passages. Among them, a characteristic feature consists in formulations that Origen presents as 'audacious', since they go against the tide of common opinions or accompany the effort of the preacher to distill a more impressive sentence, not seldom by way of approximation or a paradoxical statement.¹⁴ The 4th Homily on Psalm 77 witnesses the concern of the preacher, who still hesitates vis-à-vis his public whether or not he should further enlarge the perspective on spiritual food, a theme of primary importance for Origen's thought. Commenting upon Ps. 77:23-4 ('Yet he commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of heaven, and rained upon them manna to eat, and gave them the bread of heaven'), he elaborates on the necessity of spiritual food not only for men and angels, but also for Christ himself, adding an avowal which has some analogies with a similar passage in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*. In both cases, after avowing first his embarrassment, Origen goes on with his argument, by appealing – as he does in the 4th Homily on Psalm 77 – to a hearer being 'wise' (συνετός).¹⁵

καὶ τολμᾷ τι ὁ λόγος διὰ τὰς τροφὰς εἰπεῖν, εἶγε ἀκαίρως τολμήσει ἐπὶ τοῦ τοιούτου εὐκροατηρίου τοιαῦτα εἰπεῖν· τολμησάτω δὲ καὶ μὴ τολμησάτω, καὶ λεγέτω καὶ κρινέτω... (H77Ps IV, f. 253v ll. 11-6).	'My speech dares to say something because of this same food, even if it will not be out of place to dare before such an audience and say such things. It should dare and should not, it should say and evaluate...'
Ἀγωνιῶ καὶ εἰπεῖν, ἀγωνιῶ καὶ μὴ εἰπεῖν. Διὰ τοὺς ἀξίους θέλω εἰπεῖν, μὴ ἐγκληθῶ ὡς τῶν δυναμένων ἀκοῦειν ἀποστερήσας τὸν λόγον· διὰ τοὺς μὴ ἀξίους ὁκνῶ εἰπεῖν, διὰ τὰ προειρημένα, μὴ ποτε ῥίψω τὰ ἅγια κυσὶν καὶ βαλῶ τοὺς μαργαρίτας τοῖς χοίροις (Orig., <i>Dial</i> 15,7-11 Scherer).	'To speak makes me embarrassed, and not to speak makes me embarrassed. Because of those who are worthy I would speak, lest I be accused of depriving of the word those able to understand it. Because of the unworthy I shrink from speaking for the reasons I have given, lest I should be flinging holy things to dogs and casting pearls before swine'.

¹⁴ See, for instance, the singular expression 'the intestine of the soul' in H77Ps IV (ff. 250r l. 24 - 250v l. 4): οὐ γὰρ δυνάμεθα ἔξιν ἔχειν ἀγγελικὴν καὶ χωρεῖν ὅσα χωροῦσιν ἄγγελοι μαθήματα, ἀλλ' εἰ δεῖ οὕτως ὀνομάσαι, τὸ ἔγκατον τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν ὀλίγα χωρεῖ καὶ βραχεία δέχεται. I have dealt with these linguistic and stylistic aspects in 'Approximations origéniennes: notes pour une enquête lexicale', in Mireille Loubet and Didier Pralon (eds), *EUKARPA. Études sur la Bible et ses exégètes, en hommage à Gilles Dorival* (Paris, 2011), 365-72.

¹⁵ H77Ps IV (f. 255r ll. 2-6): ἀρκεῖ μοι μέχρι τούτων φθάσαντι καταλιπεῖν τῷ ἀκροατῇ, ἐὰν ᾗ συνετός, λόγον σοφὸν ἀκούσαντι αὐτὸν καὶ ἐπαινέσαντι αὐτόν, προσθεῖναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. Now and then Origen has recourse to the model of the curious hearer, as in H67Ps I (ff. 94v l. 23 - 95r l. 1): ἀλλὰ νοῆσαι θέλω, φησί μοι ὁ ἀκροατής, πῶς ἡ μέλισσα ποιεῖ μέλι καὶ παρακολουθεῖ κηρίου γένεσις. On Origen's view of the reader/hearer see my contribution 'Le commentaire biblique d'Origène entre philologie, herméneutique et réception', in Christian Jacob (ed.), *Des Alexandries II: Les métamorphoses du lecteur* (Paris, 2003), 271-84.

Philology at the service of exegesis

The rediscovery of the ‘grammarian’ (γραμματικός) in the exegete is among the most important results of Origen’s studies in the last decades.¹⁶ His adherence to the practice of Alexandrian philology – illustrated best by the great enterprise of the *Hexapla*, the synoptic edition of the Septuagint translation with the Hebrew text and other Greek versions – is confirmed by our homilies, although the sermons were of themselves not so apt for textual criticism as the commentaries or other more technical writings. Yet Origen is always concerned with the reliability of the biblical text he is commenting upon, in as much as to prevent attacks by his adversaries (first of all the Marcionites). In the *First Homily on Psalm 77* Origen rectifies an ‘error of writing’ (γραφικὸν σφάλμα) in his copy of the *Gospel of Matthew*, conforming to the well known textual criticism he adopts elsewhere in his writings. A misguided copist, as he observes, reading the passage in which the evangelist quotes *Ps. 77:2* (*Matth. 13:35*) as a prophecy of Asaph, erroneously substituted this name with the more familiar name of prophet Isaiah. Origen thus sees himself entitled to proceed here to the necessary διόρθωσις and so reconstitute the original name.¹⁷ He then takes the opportunity of recalling the principles of biblical textual criticism by confronting the Septuagint translation with the other versions or ‘editions’ (ἐκδόσεις) and checking the Greek with the Hebrew text. Contrary to the arbitrary way Marcion had adopted for eliminating any connection with the Jewish Bible in his text of the Gospel,¹⁸ Origen recommends this approach as the correct method, also to prevent any ‘disharmony’ (διαφωνία) in the Scriptures. He applies it again in the *5th Homily on Psalm 77*, with regard to the Septuagint text of v. 31a, where he found the variant ἐν πλείοσιν instead of ἐν πίσσιν, to be regarded as the correct reading (ἀπέκτεινε ἐν τοῖς πίσσιν αὐτῶν, ‘and slew the fattest of them’), inasmuch as this conformed both with

¹⁶ After the classic study of Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Basel, 1987), see lately Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture. The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford, 2011), 25-40.

¹⁷ *H77Ps I* (f. 214v ll. 1-15): Παραφράσαντος (ms. παραφράσαντες) τὸ ρητὸν τοιαύταις λέξεσιν οὕτως ἐνθάδε εἰρημένον τοῦ Ματθαίου, γέγονε δὲ περὶ τὰ ἀντίγραφα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου σφάλμα γραφικόν· ἵνα γάρ, φησι, πληρωθῇ τὸ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ Ἡσαίου (*Matth. 13:35*) ‘ἀνοίξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὸ στόμα μου’ (*Ps. 77:2*). Εἰκὸς γάρ ἕνα τινὰ τῶν ἀρχῆθεν γραφόντων μὴ ἐπιστήσαντα μὲν ὅτι ἐστὶν ὁ Ἀσάφ προφήτης, εὐρόντα δὲ τὸ ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ Ἀσάφ ὑπειληφέναι ὅτι ἀμάρτημά ἐστι καὶ τετολμηκέναι διὰ τὸν ξενισμὸν τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ προφήτου ποιῆσαι ἀντὶ τοῦ Ἀσάφ Ἡσαίου.

¹⁸ The criticism to Marcion’s textual criticism is rather detailed. See *H77Ps I* (f. 215v ll. 8-20): ἐπιβουλεύει τοίνυν καὶ ταῖς γραφαῖς ὁ διάβολος, ἀλλὰ οὐ διὰ τοῦτο ἡμᾶς χρῆ τολμᾶν καὶ προπετῶς ἥκειν ἐπὶ τὴν διόρθωσιν. τοιοῦτον γάρ τι παθὼν καὶ ὁ Μαρκίων καὶ ὑπολαβὼν ἡμαρτῆσθαι τὰς γραφὰς καὶ τοῦ διαβόλου γεγονέναι παρεγγραφάς, ἐπέτρεψεν ἑαυτῷ διορθοῦν τὴν γραφὴν. καὶ ἐπιτρέψας, ἤρεν ἐκ βάθρων τὰ ἀναγκαῖα τῶν εὐαγγελίων, τὴν γένεσιν τοῦ σωτήρος, καὶ ἄλλα μυρία καὶ ὀπτασίαις καὶ προφητεῖαις καὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου.

another Greek version (ἐν τοῖς λιπαρωτέροις αὐτῶν) and with the Hebrew text (בְּשִׁמְרֵי מִצְוָה).¹⁹

Apart from these cases of textual criticism, the competence of the grammarian appears at its best in the 1st Homily on Psalm 67, finding a precise parallel in Origen's commentary on the *Our Father* which is part of the *Peri euchês*, the *Treatise on Prayer* (Orat. XXIV 5). Before commenting upon the initial verses of the Psalm (Ps. 67:2-4), the preacher observes that it is the 'custom' (ἔθος) of Scripture to make use of expressions in the imperative mood, instead of the optative, when addressing 'prayers of demand' (εὐκτικά) to God. The Alexandrian exemplifies such custom with the first three demands of the *Our Father* and rewrites them from the aorist imperative in the optative mood (doing the same also for the verses of the *Psalm*). This form should be expected as the proper one both from a grammatical and a theological point of view.

Cod. Mon. Gr. 314	<i>Peri euchês</i> XXIV, 5
πρῶτον εἶδέναι χρή ὅτι ἔθος ἐστὶ τῇ γραφῇ πολλαχοῦ τοῖς προστακτικοῖς ἀντι εὐκτικῶν χρησθαι καὶ εὐρήσεται μὲν τούτο πολλαχοῦ. ἀρκεῖ δὲ νῦν παραθέσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὅτι διδάσκων ἡμᾶς ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν εὐχεσθαι, οὐ διδάσκει ἵνα προστάσσωμεν τῷ θεῷ, ἀλλ' ἵνα προστακτικαῖς φωναῖς εἰπώμεν τὰ εὐκτικά· λέγεται γάρ, φησι, <i>Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου</i> (Matth. 6:9-10), ἀντὶ τοῦ 'ἁγιασθεῖν τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐλθοι ἡ βασιλεία σου, γένοιτο τὸ θέλημά σου'. ἐὰν οὖν λέγεται καὶ ταῦτα προστακτικαῖς φωναῖς, ἀκούωμεν ἀντὶ εὐκτικῶν. οὐδεὶς γὰρ προστάσσει τῷ θεῷ, οὐδὲ λέγει περὶ αὐτοῦ τὸ <i>ἀναστήτω ὁ θεός</i> (Ps. 67:2a), ἀλλ' εὐχεται καὶ φησιν· 'ἀνασταίη ὁ θεός καὶ διασκορπισθεῖεν οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ φύγοιεν οἱ μισοῦντες αὐτὸν ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ, ὥς ἐκλείπει καπνός, ἐκλείπειεν· ὥς τήκεται κηρὸς ἀπὸ προσώπου πυρός, οὕτως ἀπόλονται' (Ps. 67:2-3).	ἔτι περὶ τοῦ <i>ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου</i> (Matth. 6:9) καὶ τῶν ἐξῆς προστακτικῶν χαρακτηριστικῶν εἰρημένων λεκτέον ὅτι συνεχῶς προστακτικοὶς ἀντὶ εὐκτικῶν ἐχρήσαντο καὶ οἱ ἐρμηνεύσαντες, ὥς ἐν τοῖς ψαλμοῖς· <i>ἄλαλα γενηθήτω τὰ χεῖλη τὰ δόλια, τὰ λαλοῦντα κατὰ τοῦ δικαίου ἀνομίαν</i> (Ps. 30:18), ἀντὶ τοῦ 'γενηθεῖν' καὶ <i>ἐξερευνησάτω δανειστῆς πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῶ· μὴ ὑπαρξάτω αὐτῶ ἀντιλήπτωρ</i> (Ps. 108:11-2) ἐν τῷ ἑκατοστῷ ὀγδόῳ περὶ Ἰούδα· ὅλος γὰρ ὁ ψαλμὸς αἰτησίς ἐστι περὶ Ἰούδα, ἵνα τάδε τινὰ αὐτῷ συμβῇ. μὴ συνιδὼν δὲ ὁ Τατιανὸς τὸ <i>γενηθήτω</i> οὐ πάντοτε σημαίνειν τὸ εὐκτικὸν ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὅπου καὶ προστακτικόν, ἀσεβέστατα ὑπείληφε περὶ τοῦ εἰπόντος <i>γενηθήτω φῶς</i> (Gen. 1:3) θεοῦ, ὥς εὐξαμένου μᾶλλον ἢ περ προστάξαντος γενηθῆναι τὸ φῶς· 'ἐπεὶ', ὥς φησιν ἐκεῖνος ἀθέως νοῶν, 'ἐν σκότῳ ἦν ὁ θεός'. πρὸς δὲν λεκτέον, πῶς ἐκλήψεται καὶ τὸ <i>βλαστησάτω ἡ γῆ βοτάνην χόρτον</i> (Gen. 1:11) καὶ <i>συναχθήτω τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ὑποκάτω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ</i> (Gen. 1:9) καὶ <i>ἐξαγαγέτω τὰ</i>

¹⁹ H77Ps V (f. 266r l. 23 - 266v l. 6): πρῶτον δὲ θέλομεν πείσαι τὸν ἀκροατὴν, ὅτι ἡμάρτηται τὸ λέγον ἀντίγραφον· ἀπέκτεινεν ἐν τοῖς πλείοσιν αὐτῶν. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἔχουσιν αἱ λοιπαὶ ἐκδόσεις τὸ ἀνάλογον τοῖς πλείοσιν ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς λιπαρωτέροις αὐτῶν. καὶ αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ 'Εβραϊκὸν οὕτως ἔχει. The most important passages on textual criticism can be found in CMt XV 14 and Clo VI 41, 208ff. On Origen's recourse to the *Hexapla*, see Olivier Munnich, 'Les *Hexaples* d'Origène à la lumière de la tradition manuscrite de la Bible grecque', in Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec (eds), *Origeniana Sexta* (Leuven, 1995), 167-85.

ἐχρήσατο δὲ νῦν τῷ εὐκτικῷ ἥδη γυμνῶς καὶ σαφῶς· οὕτως γοῦν ἀπόλοιτό, φησιν, οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ. καὶ οἱ δίκαιοι εὐφρανθήτωσαν ἀντὶ τοῦ 'εὐφρανθείησαν', ἀγαλλιάσθωσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀντὶ τοῦ 'ἀγαλλιάσαιντο', τερφθήτωσαν ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ (Ps. 67:3b-4) ἀντὶ τοῦ 'τερφθείησαν' (H67Ps I, ff. 85r l. 1 - 85v l. 8).

ὕδατα ἐρπετὰ ψυχῶν ζωσῶν (Gen. 1:20) καὶ ἐξαγαγέτω ἡ γῆ ψυχὴν ζῶσαν (Gen. 1:24). ἄρα γὰρ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐπὶ ἐδραίου στήναι εὐχεται συναχθῆναι τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ ὑποκάτω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ εἰς συναγωγὴν μίαν (Gen. 1:9), ἢ ὑπὲρ τοῦ μεταλαβεῖν τῶν βλαστησάντων ἀπὸ γῆς εὐχεται τὸ βλαστησάτω ἡ γῆ (Gen. 1:11); ποίαν δὲ χρεῖαν ὁμοίαν ἔχει τῷ χρήζειν φωτός τῶν ἐνύδρων καὶ πτηνῶν ἢ χερσαίων, ἵνα καὶ περὶ τούτων εὐχεται; εἰ δὲ καὶ κατ' αὐτὸν ἄτοπον τὸ περὶ τούτων εὐχεσθαι, προστακτικαῖς ὀνομασίαις εἰρημένων, πῶς οὐ τὸ ὅμοιον λεκτέον καὶ περὶ τοῦ γενηθήτω φῶς (Gen. 1:3), ὥς μὴ εὐκτικῶς ἀλλὰ προστακτικῶς εἰρημένου; ἀναγκαίως δέ μοι ἔδοξεν, ἐν ταῖς προστακτικαῖς φωναῖς εἰρημένης εὐχῆς, ὑπομνησθῆναι τῶν παρεκδοχῶν αὐτοῦ διὰ τοὺς ἡπατημένους καὶ παραδεξαμένους τὴν ἄσεβῃ διδασκαλίαν αὐτοῦ, ὧν καὶ ἡμεῖς ποτε πεπειράμεθα (355,22-356,25 Koetschau).

As a matter of fact, grammatical concerns are connected to exegetical and doctrinal interests. In the case of *Peri euchês*, the recognition of the peculiar use of the imperative mood in the Greek Bible is accompanied by a polemic with Tatian, who by generalizing this grammatical feature thought that also God's command in *Gen. 1:3* (γενηθήτω φῶς, 'let there be light') should be seen once more as an expression equivalent to the optative mood; consequently, according to Origen's rebuttal, Tatian impiously regarded God's words in the creation narrative as a prayer and not as an order. In our homily, the preacher subsequently relativizes in a sense his grammatical distinction and puts forth the idea that also man can 'command' God, though attributing it to a hypothetical suggestion of someone 'more audacious' than him (εἵποι δ' ἂν τις ἐμοῦ τολμηρότερος). To sum up this surprising development, Origen sees it as a consequence of the 'freedom of speech' (παρρησία) accorded to the righteous who, as sons of God, enjoy their 'adoptive sonship': 'Is there anything paradoxical – as the Alexandrian asks himself – if a son, endowed with freedom of speech towards his father and without making ashamed the spirit of adoptive sonship, receiving an order from his father, commands him in his turn, asking him what he wants?'²⁰

²⁰ H67Ps I (ff. 87r l. 21 - 87v l. 7): καὶ ἀκόλουθον δὲ ἐστὶ τὸ πνεύματι τῆς νιοθεσίας (Rm. 8:15) καὶ οὐκέτι εἰ δοῦλος, ἀλλὰ νίος (Gal. 4:1)· καὶ ὁ πατὴρ σου ἐστὶν ὁ θεός καὶ ἀδελφός σου ὁ κύριος, ὁ λέγων· δηγήσομαι τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς σου, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε (Ps. 21:23). τί παράδοξον υἱὸν παρρησίαν ἔχοντα πρὸς

The rhetorics of the preacher

To enter into the details of the exegesis of the *Psalms* provided by the new homilies would demand too much time, especially with regard to some noteworthy passages of historical interest. Yet, I cannot avoid quoting the long explanation of the name ‘Sion’ as the place of God’s dwelling in the *First Homily on Psalm 73*. Commenting upon *Ps. 73:2* (‘this mount Sion wherein thou hast dwelt’) the preacher first introduces a triple etymological interpretation, according to which Sion has to be regarded as ‘the place of oracles, the place of visions and the place of observation’ (τὸ ... χρηματιστήριον καὶ τὸ δραματιστήριον καὶ τὸ σκοπευτήριον), by the way creating apparently once more a new word (δραματιστήριον); then he criticizes the Jews for believing that God still dwells in Sion, ‘where quadrupeds and gentiles dwell’, instead of interpreting spiritually this place as the soul ‘endowed with intellect and vision’.²¹ Archaeologists and historians will certainly be eager to exploit this remark. I can only add for the moment that it presumably betrays a direct inspection of Mount Sion, when Origen came to Jerusalem and preached there upon the invitation of bishop Alexander.²²

Among the many other aspects that deserve to be mentioned, I shall limit myself to point first of all to some fascinating traces of Origen’s acquaintance with ancient sciences, about which we possess remarkable evidence in many of his writings.²³ We find, for instance, astronomic observations in the *Second Homily on Psalm 77*, with regard to the movements of the sun and the moon or the constellations of stars.²⁴ It is part of the ‘technical wisdom’ (τεχνικόν) of an ancient commentator to exploit eventually a knowledge of musical harmony and instruments, as we see from the very detailed treatment in the *Second Homily on Psalm 67*. Here Origen, reflecting on the distinction between ‘singing’ (ᾄδειν) and ‘singing with musical accompaniment’ (ψάλλειν), not only displays

τὸν πατέρα, οὐ καταισχύνοντα τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς υἰοθεσίας, προστασσόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός, ἀντιπροστάζει τῷ πατρί, ἀξιούντα περὶ ὧν βούλεται;

²¹ *H73Ps I* (f. 122v ll. 15-24): Ἰουδαῖοι χαμαὶ βλέπουσι τὴν γραφὴν καὶ ἔλκουσιν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, οἰόμενοι τοῦτο Σιών εἶναι, ὅπου ὁ κτίσας θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν κατεσκήνωσε. καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ ὄρει κατεσκήνωσεν ὁ θεὸς κατ’ ἐκείνους, ὅπου κατασκηνοῦσι τετράποδα καὶ ἐθνικοί. ἀλλ’ ἡμεῖς ὁρος Σιών, ὅπου κατεσκήνωσεν ὁ θεός, λέγομεν εἶναι τὴν μεγαλοφυῆ ψυχὴν, τὴν διανοητικὴν, τὴν διορατικὴν.

²² See my article ‘Origene e la Terra Santa’, in Osvalda Andrei (ed.), *Caesarea Maritima e la scuola origeniana: multiculturalità, forme di competizione culturale e identità cristiana*. XI Convegno del Gruppo Italiano di Ricerca su Origene e la Tradizione Alessandrina, Arezzo 22-23 settembre 2011 (forthcoming).

²³ See lately Gilles Dorival, ‘Origène, la création du monde et les savoirs antiques’, in Anne Balansard, Gilles Dorival, Mireille Loubet (eds.), *Prolongements et renouvellements de la tradition classique* (Aix-en-Provence, 2011), 295-307.

²⁴ One should note also the mention of the ἀντίχθων γῆ in *H36Ps II* (f. 46v, ll. 20-2): ἔστιν τις ἄλλη γῆ, ἣ λέγεται παρὰ τισιν ἀντίχθων. See Alan Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars. A History of an Idea* (Oxford, 1991).

his familiarity with musical theory and performance, but he even seems, by way of a rhetorical redundancy, to have created a new word (φωναλειπτική) for the ‘technique of training the voice’ (τέχνη φωναστική καὶ φωναλειπτική), to be added to his creative series of *hapax legomena*.²⁵

By appealing to this kind of notions Origen develops his doctrinal arguments or contributes to nourish his preaching rhetorics. That the Alexandrian was able to exploit some rhetorical devices is once again to be reckoned among the most interesting results of recent research. In the context of the interpretation of the *Psalms*, one should especially remember the technique of ‘personification’ (προσωποποιία) and with it the universal recourse, among patristic commentators of the *Psalms*, to the ‘prosopological exegesis’, that is the identification of the ‘person speaking’ (τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ λέγον) in the *Psalm*, as attested especially in the new corpus by the *1st Homily on Psalm 77*.²⁶ Yet in the tradition of homiletic rhetorics a recurrent aspect is given by the use of *exempla*. Origen also likes to weave his discourse with extensive paradigms, whose selection is not at all devoid of interest for us, inasmuch as these *exempla* often betray a keen attention for some realms of a real or mental world. I shall try to show it with two passages taken from different homilies, both pointing to Origen’s fundamentally ‘agonistic’ conception of the spiritual existence.

The first passage figures in the *Fourth Homily on Psalm 77*, in the context of the above mentioned discourse on spiritual food. If the condition of a Christian can be compared, for the Alexandrian, to that of an athlete, he must follow an apt and rigorous diet, analogously to what happens with those who participate in the ‘olympic games’ (τῶν ὀνομαζομένων μεγάλων γυμνικῶν). These athletes are submitted to strong controls by the ‘chief judges’ and by their instructors. The preacher probably depends upon a literary source or tradition (as shown by the introductory formula ἱστορεῖται), that I was not yet able to check, and yet he provides an extremely vivid description of the training of the athletes that goes far beyond a topic treatment.²⁷ We understand now much better the

²⁵ H67Ps II (f. 99v, ll. 10-8): ζητῶ οὖν εἰ τοῦτο προσέταξεν ὁ τῶν ὅλων θεὸς ἢ ὁ Χριστὸς ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἵνα μηδὲν ἄλλο νοῆται κατὰ τὸ ἅσατε τῷ θεῷ (Sal 67:5) ἢ ἐκκλησις τῆς φωνῆς, ἢν ἡμῶν μᾶλλον δύνανται ποιεῖν οἱ μουσικοὶ καὶ ὅσοι μεμελετήκασιν ἀσκεῖν αὐτῶν τὴν φωνὴν καὶ μεγαλύνειν καὶ μεγεθύνειν διὰ τινος τέχνης φωναστικῆς καὶ φωναλειπτικῆς. The reading of the ms. is φωναλιπτικῆς. I thank my colleague Antonio Cacciari for helping me to explain this *hapax* (φωναλειπτικός < φωνή + ἀλειπτικός). On *hapax legomena* in Origen see my article ‘Approximations origénienes’ (2011).

²⁶ H77Ps I (f. 217r l. 5-8): ὡς ἔθος ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τῶν ψαλμῶν καὶ τῶν προφητειῶν ζητεῖν τί τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ λέγον, οὕτως καὶ ἐνθάδε ζητητέον τίς ὁ λέγων. On prosopological exegesis, see Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques du Psautier (III^e-V^e siècles)*, II: *Exégèse prosopologique et théologie* (Roma, 1985). For its connections with ‘personification’, see Andrea Villani, ‘Origenes als Schriftsteller: ein Beitrag zu seiner Verwendung von Prosopopoiie, mit einigen Beobachtungen über die prosopologische Exegese’, *Adamantius* 14 (2008), 130-50.

²⁷ H77Ps IV (ff. 251v l. 12 - 252r l. 3): ἢ οὐχ ὅρῳ τί ἱστορεῖται περὶ τῶν ἀγόνων τούτων τῶν ὀνομαζομένων μεγάλων γυμνικῶν; οἱ πάρεσι πεμπόμενοι ὑπὸ τῶν Ἑλληνοδίκων, οἱ

fact that in the *First Homily on Psalm 38*, preserved only in the Latin translation of Rufinus, Origen praised as the ‘greatest ability’ (*summa uirtus*) of those who fight in wrestling the standing up to the knocking of the rivals without showing any sign of suffering.²⁸ In this same homily we find a hint to the musical and poetic ‘competitions’ of the Greeks matched by the similitude of the ‘theatrical competitions’ (θυμελικοί ἀγῶνες) in the *Homily on Psalm 81*²⁹.

This homily provides us with the second passage, while bringing to the fore Origen’s well known propensity for the use of theatrical metaphors.³⁰ The explanation of *Ps.* 81:2b (πρόσωπα ἁμαρτωλῶν λαμβάνετε, ‘you accept the persons of sinners’) lent itself to go back to the motif of man as an actor assuming different masks / roles / faces on the ‘scene’ (θυμέλη) of the world. On the one hand, Origen exploits the negative implications of the verse (meaning to ‘accept’ or ‘making distinctions’ for the persons of the sinners); on the other hand, he employs the comparison of theatre as an unavoidable element for all those engaged in the ‘competition’ (ἀγών) of the world, from men to angels. To assume a ‘role’ can thus be seen at a double level: positively, when man assumes the face of the angels or even of God; negatively, when he takes on that of the Antichrist or of the devil. We cannot exclude even here Origen’s dependence upon a literary topos, but once again the way he treats it by applying the theatrical image to all the orders of the spiritual creatures appears quite typical of him, especially when we compare our homily with the corresponding passages on man within the cosmic theatre in the *Treatise on Prayer*. Also with regard to this peculiar treatment of the spiritual fight in the face of God, of the angels and the demons, it is possible to argue that Jerome’s *Tractatus in Ps. 81* is dependent on Origen’s homily. In fact Jerome introduces the explanation with a sentence clearly deriving from the initial statement in the homily (ἀνακεχωρηκότα τοιοῦτον λόγον = *alia interpretatio sacratio*),³¹ whereas

ἐπιτηροῦντες τὸν ἀθλητὴν πῶς ἐσθίει· καὶ ὥσπερ τοῖς γυμνασίοις παρατυγχάνουσι καὶ ἐπιτηροῦσιν, εἰ κατὰ νόμον γίνεται καὶ κατὰ λόγον τὰ γυμνάσια, οὕτω παρατυγχάνουσι τοῖς ἀθληταῖς καὶ τρεφομένοις καὶ ὑποφωνοῦσι τρεφομένοις ὡς ἀγωνιζομένοις καὶ παρ’ αὐτὸν τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ τρέφεσθαι φασίν· καλῶς ἐσθίεις, γενναίως ἐσθίεις, ἐλπίδας ἔχεις ἀγαθᾶς.

²⁸ *H38Ps* I, 5 (336-8 Prinzivalli): ‘*Hi qui in agonis certamine mutuis inter se uerberibus agunt, in his semper praeperare conantur, ut illata sibi ab aduersariis uerba fortiter ferant nec sensum doloris accipiant et est eis summa uirtus: lacertorum ictus uel calcium absque dolore suscipere. In quibus ille est perfectior, qui ad ictum uulneris nullum recipit stimulum doloris.*’ For the use of athletic metaphors in Origen see Pietro Rosa, ‘Giobbe ἀθλητής nei Padri della Chiesa: fortuna di un’immagine,’ *Adamantius* 13 (2007), 152-73.

²⁹ Compare *H81Ps* (f. 364r, ll. 23-4): ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ἐν τοῖς θυμελικοῖς ἀγῶσι πρόσωπα) with *H38Ps* I, 2 (Prinzivalli, 326): ‘*Apud Graecos quicumque carmina uel sonos musicos conscribebant, quibus eis uisum fuisset in agone ea canenda praestabant: et fiebat ut alius quidem coronaretur in agone, alius autem uictori conscriberet carmen.*’

³⁰ See *Orat* XX 2 and XXVIII 3 and the fine analysis provided on these *loci* by Leonardo Lugaesi, *Il teatro di Dio. Il problema degli spettacoli nel cristianesimo antico (II-IV secolo)* (Brescia, 2008), 514-22.

³¹ Origen rather means a rarer or singular explanation, as we see from *Clo* XIX 15, 93: ἐπὶ τὸν δὲ ἴδωμεν ἐκ τῆς παραθέσεως τῶν ῥητῶν ἐκεῖνα, τότε ζητήσομεν εἰ καὶ τοῦτο ὑπ’ αὐτῶν

he adapts and simplifies the *exemplum* by applying it to the monastic discourse on the passions.

Cod. Mon. Gr. 314	Jerome, <i>Tract. in Ps. 81</i>
ἔστιν χωρὶς τῶν εἰρημένων εἰπεῖν καὶ εἰς τὸ πρόσωπα ἁμαρτωλῶν λαμβάνετε (Ps. 81:2b), ἀνακεχωρηκότα τοιοῦτον λόγον· ὥσπερ οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς πρὸς τὰ δράματα, ἂν μεμελετήκασιν, πρόσωπα λαμβάνουσι νῦν μὲν βασιλέως, νῦν δὲ οἰκέτου, νῦν δὲ γυναικός, νῦν δὲ οἰουδήποτε, καὶ ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ἐν τοῖς θυμελικοῖς ἀγῶσι πρόσωπα λαμβάνοντας τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους. τοιοῦτόν τι μοι νόει καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου θυμέλης γίνεσθαι. πάντες γὰρ οἱ ἀγωνιζόμενοι αἱ πρόσωπα λαμβάνομεν· ἔαν μὲν μακάριοι ὦμεν οἰονεῖ πρόσωπον λαμβάνομεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ λέγομεν· <i>υἱὸς ἐγέννησα καὶ ὕψωσα, αὐτοὶ δέ με ἠθέτεσαν</i> (Isa. 1:2). πάλιν, ἔαν δίκαιοι ὦμεν, πρόσωπον λαμβάνομεν Χριστοῦ καὶ ἄνθρωποι ὄντες λέγομεν· <i>πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ, οὗ ἔνεκεν ἔχρισέν με, εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς ἀπέσταλκέν με</i> (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18). οὕτω δὲ καὶ πρόσωπον ἄδικον δίκαιος λαμβάνει, κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον καθὼς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον λέγει· <i>σήμηρον ἔαν σκληρόνητε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν</i> (Ps. 94:7-8). λαμβάνει δὲ καὶ πρόσωπον ἀγγέλου ἁγίου ὁ ἐνθουσιῶν ἀπὸ ἀγγελικῆς δυνάμεως, ὥσπερ ὁ λέγων· ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ λαλοῦντος ἐν ἐμοί. ταῦτα μὲν περὶ τῆς χώρας τῆς κρείττονος. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὰ ἐναντία ἰδεῖν ὃν μὲν τινα λαμβάνοντα πρόσωπον τοῦ διαβόλου, ὃν δὲ πρόσωπον τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, ἄλλον πρόσωπον λαμβάνοντα δαιμονίου (H81Ps, ff. 364r l. 12 - 365r l. 5).	<i>Ceterum est alia interpretatio sacratio. Solet in theatris unus homo frequenter diuersas habere personas. Nunc ingreditur in mulierem, nunc in uirum, nunc in regem; et qui in rege processerat, rursum in seruum procedit. Dixi exemplum ut de carnali uenire possimus ad spiritale. Et nos diuersas personas accipimus. Quando enim irascor, personam leonis adsumo; quando res alienas rapio, lupi personam adsumo; quando vero crudelis sum et interficio, adsumo personam crudelis. Sed quomodo qui sunt peccatores, in peccatis habent diuersas personas, sic e contrario qui sancti sunt, habent et ipsi diversas personas, sed in bono. Quando elemosynam facio, habeo personam quasi clementis; quando uero bene iudico, habeo personam boni iudicis; quando uero iniuriam patior et humilis sum, habeo personam humilis. Infelix est, qui plures in malo habet personas; felix, qui diuersas personas habet in bono</i> (Jerome, <i>Tract. in Ps. LXXXI</i>, CChr.SL, Morin, 85, 75-90).

Conclusion: a familiar voice

I doubt having succeeded in presenting an orderly picture of the several arguments that led me to corroborate the attribution to Origen of the new homilies. Being obliged to make a selection of cases, I hope nevertheless that it appears

περὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος λέγεται βαθύτερόν τι βλέπόντων. ὅτι δε κατὰ ἀνακεχωρηκότας λόγους καὶ μὴ κατημαξευμένους ἔφασκον.

persuasive enough. Rediscovering today the author to whom I dedicated more than two decades of my scholarly life could not but bring me to a state of mind in which one expects to hear a voice that has become familiar. Perhaps I did not completely resist this temptation, but I should also add that Origen always imposes himself with a peculiar discourse reflecting his world, his doctrines and personality. Though he never repeats himself schematically (we have extremely few cases of mere rewriting), he is clearly recognisable from the way of speaking and dealing with the contents he addresses, always with the accompaniment of some characteristic motifs and accents. Occasionally he could also have recourse to the mood of the ‘confession’, revealing a sharp awareness of the many challenges for a preacher facing an audience eager of listening to an exceptional man, as we see from the remarkable introduction to the *First Homily on Psalm 67*. Responding here to the praise of the ‘pope’ (πάπα as the name of the bishop, like in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*), who apparently had introduced him with many compliments and words of great expectation for the speech the preacher was going to deliver, Origen replies by inviting the community to pray God together with him so that he may receive inspiration for his discourse. The audience should then come to recognise the presence of such an inspiration in his own words.³²

Let me conclude in turn in a mood of ‘confession’, while expressing to the Institute of Advanced Studies Jerusalem all my sentiments of sincere thanks. During my first stay at the Institute in spring 1993, as a guest of Yoram Tsafrir’s group on Roman and Byzantine archeology in Palestine, I wrote my first long essay on Origen, devoted to his method of ‘questions and answers’.³³

Almost twenty years later, in June 2010, at the end of an unforgettable sabbatical spent with the colleagues of our research group on ‘Personal and Institutional Religion’, I finished my book on *Prayer according to Origen*.³⁴ Two years later, commenting now in this familiar and amicable atmosphere on a discovery that archaeologists are certainly able to appreciate but that I would never have imagined myself, I should say with the subtitle of my book that truly ‘the impossible has been made possible’.

³² *H67Ps* I (f. 83v ll. 7-23): ἐγὼ δὲ ἤκουσα τῶν εἰρημένων οὐχ ὥς ἤδη ὄντων, ἀλλ’ ὥς ἤκουσαν οἱ πατέρες· ὁ μὲν Ἰακώβ τῆς εὐλογίας τοῦ Ἰσαάκ, οἱ δὲ δώδεκα πατριάρχαι τῶν εὐλογιῶν τοῦ Ἰακώβ. ἐκεῖναι γάρ αἱ εὐλογίαι οὐπω μὲν ἦσαν περὶ τοὺς πατέρας, προεφητεύοντο δὲ ἐσόμεναι. οὕτω δὲ εὐχομένων ὑμῶν ἐπιδιδόναί ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ προφητεία ἔσται τὰ εἰρημένα ὑπὸ τοῦ πάπα περὶ ἡμῶν, προφητεία μᾶλλον εἴπερ ὥς ἤδη προσόντα ἡμῖν. οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐπω ἐστὶν γεγενημένα. ἐπεὶ δὲ πείθομαι πάντα λόγον χωρὶς παρουσίας Χριστοῦ τῆς ἐν τῷ λέγοντι κενὸν καὶ ἀπὸ γῆς εἶναι, εἶναι δὲ ἀδύνατον λόγον οὐράνιον ἐπιδημεῖν χωρὶς τοῦ πέμποντος αὐτὸν Πατρὸς Θεοῦ.

³³ ‘*Quaestiones et responsiones* in Origene: Prospettive di un’analisi formale dell’argomentazione esegetico-teologica’ (1994).

³⁴ *La preghiera secondo Origene: l'impossibilità donata* (Brescia, 2011).

Origen and his Opponents on *Matthew* 19:12

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ABSTRACT

Eusebius' story about Origen's self-castration in literal obedience to *Matthew* 19:12 is usually accepted as a standard assumption in relating the story of Origen's life. Little attention has been given, however, to what Origen himself says of this text in his *Commentary on Matthew* where Origen investigates the issue of self-castration. This paper argues that Origen applies the technical skills of ancient rhetoric to argue that (1) Jesus never intended this text to be understood literally, and (2) anyone who so understands it misrepresents the intention of Jesus and brings disgrace on the faith.

Eusebius made Jesus' statement about eunuchs in *Matthew* 19:12 one of the best known statements in the Bible in relation to Origen when he said that he had applied it literally to himself as a young man.¹ This paper does not enter the controversy over the trustworthiness of Eusebius' statement, except by implication.² It looks carefully, instead, at how Origen argues in his discussion of this verse in Book 15 of his *Commentary on Matthew*, and argues that

¹ *Hist. eccl.* VI 8. 1. Jerome's remark about Origen's castration is almost certainly dependent on Eusebius (*Ep.* 84.8). Epiphanius, who writes even later than Eusebius, reports three stories he knows about Origen's well-known celibate life: (1) he severed a nerve so he wasn't tempted sexually, (2) he applied a drug to his genitals which dried them up, and (3) he had discovered a memory enhancing plant. The third report doesn't say anything specifically about sexual matters. After he relates this Epiphanius then remarks that he is reporting gossip and doesn't himself trust the accuracy of the exaggerated things said about Origen (*Pan.* LXIV 3.11-2).

² For arguments in support of the accuracy of Eusebius' story see Walter Bauer, 'Matth. 19,12 und die alten Christen,' in *Neutestamentliche Studien Georg Heinrichs zu seinem 70. Geburtstag* (Leipzig, 1914), 235-44; R.P.C. Hanson, 'A Note on Origen's Self-Mutilation', *VC* 20 (1966), 81-2; Pierre Nautin, *Lettres et écrivains chrétiens des II^e et III^e siècles*, Patristica II (Paris, 1961), 121-6; G.E. Caspary, *Politics and Exegesis: Origen and the Two Swords* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1979), 55-81. Caspary straddles the fence arguing both pro and con, and concluding that the answer will probably never be known. For arguments doubting Eusebius' story see Henry Chadwick, *Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1966), 67-8; Robert M. Grant, 'Eusebius and His Lives of Origen,' in *Forma Futuri: Studi in Onore del Cardinale Michele Pellegrino* (Turin, 1975), 635-49; see also *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Eugene, OR, 2006; 1st published Oxford, 1980), 77-83. The arguments presented by C. Marksches, in 'Kastration und Magenprobleme? Einige neue Blicke auf das asketische Leben des Origenes', in G. Heidl and R. Somos (eds), *Origeniana Nona. Origen and the Religious Practice of His Time. Papers of the 9th International Origen Congress, Pec, Hungary, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 228 (Leuven, Paris, Walpole, 2009), 255-71 do not favor the acceptance of Eusebius' story.

his presentation draws on arguments and ways of arguing learned from the rhetoricians.

The views of the opponents

Origen identifies three groups who had understood the eunuch saying incorrectly. First, there were literalists who insisted that because the first two references to eunuchs must be understood in a physical sense, the third must be also. These had actually, he says, 'had the audacity to submit to physical castration', bringing reproach and shame on themselves (*ComMt* 15.1). A second, larger group read the first two eunuch sayings as physical, but understood the third in a figurative way to refer to the cutting off of physical desires 'by means of the Word'. Origen recognizes that the first group, the literalists, have the logic right rather than this group, for if the first two eunuch sayings are to be read as referring to a physical state, then so must the third. Their error, he says, is that 'they have looked at the beginning of the sayings in the passage incorrectly' (*ComMt* 15.1). Finally, he mentions the Marcionites who argued that no Scripture is to be interpreted allegorically. Therefore, the eunuch saying presents the believer with the option of either submitting to such an audacious action which brings disrepute on the word of God, or of applying good reason and rejecting the saying as spurious. The Marcionites chose to be reasonable and reject the saying as a genuine saying of Jesus (*ComMt* 15.3).

The Marcionite position is a kind of tack-on reference. Origen mentions their view, dismisses it, and moves on. Those who allegorize the third group of eunuchs but understand the first two to be physical are also passed over rather quickly. Their error is that of inconsistency in their exegetical method. There are only two consistent ways of reading *Matthew* 19:12. Either all three eunuch sayings must be understood literally or they must all three be understood to be figurative. Origen argues that all three eunuch sayings were *intended* by Jesus to be understood tropologically.

He defines a eunuch as the man who is sexually inactive and moral. The saying about the person born a eunuch is said to refer to men who are such 'by their constitution'. Those made eunuchs by men are said to be those who practice abstinence in their obedience to the teachings of Greek philosophers or heretics, such as those mentioned in *1Timothy* (4:3), who 'forbid marriage'. In other words, they are following the teachings of men and not of God. The man who makes himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven is the man who takes 'the sword of the Spirit' and cuts off 'the passionate faculty of the soul without touching his body' (*ComMt* 15.4). Origen does not just present an allegorical reading and dismiss the literalist. He argues intensely against the literalist reading. The bulk of the five chapters devoted to the eunuch sayings in the *Commentary on Matthew* is an argument against the literalist reading of these sayings.

How does he argue?

Origen sets up his argument as a rhetorician, probably as the result of his early Greek education in Alexandria. He says at the beginning of his argument that the goal before him is to ‘grasp the true intention (τὸ ἀληθὲς βούλημα) of the words in the passage’ (*ComMt* 15.1). His argument is focused on those interpreters who read all three eunuch sayings literally, and therefore, consistently. One of the rhetorical topics used in deciding legal interpretations involved what the rhetoricians called ‘the letter and the intent’ of a written document. Quintillian says that this was a very frequent topic in legal disputes, many of which turned on this issue. Consequently, he adds, it was a regular point of discussion in the schools.³ The ‘intent of the author [*voluntas scriptoris*],’ as Cicero puts it, ‘is shown to be opposed to the letter of the law, so that the question is raised whether words [*verba*] or meaning [*sententiae*] should prevail.’⁴ In this scenario the ‘verbal instrument is interpreted according to its spirit’ as opposed to its letter.⁵ Origen is not a lawyer, of course, but a priest and scholar of the Bible.⁶ I think he is using, however, a version of this rhetorical argument in his attack on the literal way of understanding Jesus’ sayings about the eunuchs.

At the head of his argument he introduces the letter-spirit contrast by citing Paul’s words from *2Corinthians* 3:6: ‘Since, then’, he says, ‘it is fitting to say in the case of some other words not only in the Old Testament but also in the New, “The letter kills, but the spirit gives life”, one must affirm this also in the case of the words in the passage before us’ (*ComMt* 15.1). This, of course, is one of Origen’s most frequently cited texts, but it seems to me that he uses it very specifically here to set up a letter versus intent argument. The noun βούλημα (intention) appears four times in the five chapters of Origen’s argument, and the verb βούλεσθαι (to intend/mean) appears twice.

The first step in Origen’s argument is to provide three examples of sayings of Jesus, in addition to the eunuch saying, which are clear examples of statements whose spirit is to be understood rather than their letter. The first of these examples whose ‘letter’ kills is that about selling one’s garment in order to buy a sword if one does not have a sword (*Luke* 22:35-6). ‘If someone’, Origen

³ *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintillian*, trans. H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, London, 1953/1921), VII 6.1; vol. III 135.

⁴ *Topica* 25.96 in Cicero, *De inventione, De optimo genere oratorum, Topica*, trans. H.M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library 383 (Cambridge, MA, London, 1993/1949), 457; see also *De inventione* II 40.116; II 42.122-48.143; [*Cicero*] *ad C. Herennium; de Ratione Dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library 403 (Cambridge, MA, London, 1968), I 11.19; II 9.13-10.14; *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintillian*, VII 6.6-8.7.

⁵ Malcom Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues* (Oxford, 1995), 255.

⁶ Origen had been ordained by bishop Theoctistus of Caesarea prior to his move there. The *Commentary on Matthew* was written late in Origen’s life at Caesarea, at approximately the same time he was writing the *Contra Celsum*, which appears to have been his last work. See H.J. Vogt, *Origenes als Exeget* (Paderborn, München, Wien, Zürich, 1999), 65-7.

says, 'on the basis of Jesus' words here, does not perceive the intention (τὸ βούλημα) of these words to sell his material garment and buy a murderous sword, he will perish, and he may even perish "by the sword", because he has taken such a "sword" and has acted contrary to the intention of Jesus (παρὰ τὸ βούλημα), and has misinterpreted his word' (*ComMt* 15.2). The second example is Jesus' command to his disciples 'to greet no one on the road' (*Luke* 10:4). 'If one has not examined what Jesus intended (τί βουλόμενος) when he gave this command' Jesus will appear rude and foolish. One keeping this saying in accordance with the 'letter' will be killed by the 'letter' (*ComMt* 15.2). Finally, he refers to the sayings about cutting out an eye to avoid seeing wicked things, or cutting off a hand or foot to avoid wicked activities (*Matth.* 5:29-30). Such people would also be killed 'because of the letter' because they focused on the 'letter' when they should 'ascend to the spirit of what is said' (*ComMt* 15.2).

These examples serve in Origen's argument to establish that it is often the intention and not the letter of what is written that must be understood in reading Scripture. He then takes up statements of Sextus and Philo, two respected earlier exegetes. He assumes that Sextus was a Christian, for he refers to his *Sentences* as 'a book that circulates among many people as an approved book'. Both Sextus and Philo made statements that approved of physical castration. Their statements are not to be believed 'because they have not understood the intention (τὸ βούλημα) of the sacred writings on these matters' (*ComMt* 15.3).

Origen does not refer to misunderstanding the intention of Jesus in this context, because neither Sextus nor Philo have any reference to Jesus' words in *Matthew* 19. He broadens the written text whose intention is not understood here to refer to 'the sacred writings' in general. He then provides a series of short arguments drawn from Scripture, popular viewpoints, and medical literature to support his argument against those Biblical interpreters who have encouraged physical castration.

First, he argues that because abstinence is one of the fruits of the Spirit in *Galatians* 5:22-3 it must be achieved as a spiritual fruit in a body that is preserved as male in the way God made it. Origen makes a lot out of his second argument, which relates to facial hair. The one who does not preserve his male body ventures 'some other thing' with the result that he transgresses *Leviticus* 19:27 which says: 'You shall not destroy the appearance of your beard.' Origen suggests that young men should be taught to observe this statement literally. The eunuch's lack of facial hair was a common joke among the populace. In his little treatise on *The Eunuch*, the satirist Lucian says that a eunuch who had been put forward as a candidate for a chair of philosophy in Athens around AD 180 was 'ridiculed especially for his beardlessness'. Origen's reference to a eunuch being 'some other thing' than male also reflects the popular viewpoint. Lucian says that one of the objections raised against appointing the eunuch to the chair of philosophy was that 'a eunuch was neither man nor

woman but something composite, hybrid, and monstrous, alien to human nature.⁷ Origen also cites what the physicians say about the movement of sperm in relation to the growth of facial hair, and his citation is very close to what the physician Hippocrates had said.⁸ Further, Origen notes that eunuchs may be afflicted with headaches, something which the second century physician Galen suggests.⁹

He draws two further arguments from Scripture. The first is based on the statement in *Deuteronomy* 25:11-2 that if two brothers fight and the wife of one grabs the testicles of the other, the woman's hand is to be cut off with no pity shown. If this is to be done for seizing a man's genitals, Origen asks, 'what is to happen to the man who has handed himself over to such a misfortune because he is ignorant of the way which leads to continence' (*ComMt* 15.3)? His last argument is the reproach that will be heaped on the eunuch by those who will quote *Deuteronomy* 23:1 against him: 'A castrated male and one who has made himself a eunuch shall not enter the assembly of the Lord' (*ComMt* 15.3).

This series of arguments refutes the arguments of Sextus and Philo who suggested physical castration as a way of maintaining morality. He states explicitly at the beginning of chapter 3 that he is extending his argument for the refutation (ἀνατροπή) of the viewpoint expressed by Sextus and Philo. The rhetoricians spoke of exercises in proof (κατασκευή) and refutation (ἀνασκευή) as a basic part of rhetorical education.¹⁰ Hermogenes uses ἀνατροπή, the word which Origen uses, to define ἀνασκευή in his section treating refutation and confirmation. At the end of his argument Origen recognizes 'that there are several plausible arguments to prove (εἰς κατασκευήν, the technical rhetorical term for proof) that the three castrations are physical which the person might discover who wants to prove this by reason'. He says he did not present these arguments for proving the point because in the process of presenting 'arguments and their refutations', someone might find an occasion for embracing the eunuch saying in a way Jesus did not *intend* (μὴ ... βούλεται), and he did not want to be responsible for anyone drawing the wrong conclusion (*ComMt* 15.5). He is thinking as one educated in the rhetorical school exercises of arguing for and against a point.

Origen has argued forcefully against understanding Jesus' saying about eunuchs in a physical way. He applied the skills of his rhetorical education

⁷ Lucian, *The Eunuch*, trans. A.M. Harmon, *Lucian* 5, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, London, 1936), 9 (p. 341) and 6 (p. 337).

⁸ *On the Nature of the Child*, ch. 20; On attitudes towards castration in the ancient medical literature in general, see C. Marksches, 'Kastration und Magenprobleme?' (2009), 255-71.

⁹ Peter Brown, *The Body and Society* (London, Boston, 1988), 20 citing Galen, *de locis affectis* 6.5, in C.G. Kühn, ed. *Galen Opera* VIII 417-20.

¹⁰ See, for example, [*Cicero*] *Ad C. Herennium* III 4.8; Cicero, *De inventione* I 42.78-51.96; Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 5.

to prove his view. I do not think he could argue the way he did if Eusebius' statement was true that he had applied the eunuch saying physically to himself as a young man.

Interior Landscape: Origen's Homily 21 on *Luke*

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ABSTRACT

In his *Homily 21 on Luke*, Origen examined the text 'Prepare a way for the Lord' and maintained that this 'way' was to be built within the human heart. But can mind and memory be large enough that God can enter them? Origen asserted that the landscape of the heart is indeed vast, and to demonstrate this maintained that we contain in our memory whatever cities we have visited, and we encompass the sea. This paper examines ways in which such an 'interior landscape' might make sense within Origen's cosmology and hermeneutics. The chief points of comparison are his treatises *On Prayer* and *On First Principles*.

In these treatises Origen described physical reality as a *shadow* of spiritual realities, and things held in the mind as *images* of spiritual realities. Both are formed by spiritual beings and events, but the 'images' of the mind can be closer than the 'shadows' of the world to the true things of the spirit. The Bible provides a link connecting selected 'shadows' from the world of objects in motion to 'images' within the mind through which we can perceive spiritual reality.

In his homilies, Origen developed this structure. He treated the events, persons and places of the Biblical narrative as a selected group close enough in form to spiritual truth that they can serve as clues leading our minds to deeper reality. I suggest that in *Homily 21 on Luke* Origen presumed that *all* memory shares in the character of 'image,' and that for this reason he could find in memory enough significance to argue that we contain the world we have experienced. However, apart from the images to which Scripture guides us, the interior landscape of memory needs to be cleansed by the Scripture. Only then will it form a true enough 'image' of spiritual reality to contain the coming of the Lord.

In his *21st Homily on Luke* Origen wrote: 'Whatever cities we have passed through, we have them in the soul; and their qualities and the arrangement of streets and walls and buildings are present in our heart. The street by which we entered, we retain in the picture and description of memory; the sea which we sailed, we encompass in silent thought. The human heart, which can encompass such things, is not small.'¹ He described memory as an interior landscape.

¹ Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 21.7, ed. Max Rauer, GCS 9 (Leipzig, 1930), 141,28-142,3. The homilies have been translated from Jerome's version by Joseph T. Lienhard, *Origen: Homilies on Luke* (Washington, D.C., 1996).

I will ask: in what sense did Origen maintain that this landscape enclosed the world as we experience it?

The setting of this description is the coming of John the Baptist, and the call 'Prepare the way of the Lord.' If, as Origen maintained, the 'way' by which God comes is in the human heart,² and not a procession across Judean hills, then it is necessary that the human heart – in these paragraphs, connected with soul, thought, knowledge, and memory – have enough capacity that such a highway can be built within it. Can memory be a place in which so grand a thing as the Way of the Lord can be contained?³

The goal of his argument is to show the possibility of human transformation through the Word of God. In consequence, his description of memory as an interior landscape which encompasses the whole of our world needs to be more than an extravagant metaphor. I will maintain that in the interior landscape of memory Origen saw a world whose cities and ways were more substantial than the streets of Alexandria or Caesarea. He argued that the world as we experience it in memory is indeed a reality, into which God may enter with transforming power. I hope to show that the language of 'interior landscape' finds a place in Origen's cosmology and in his interpretative theory of the three senses of Scripture, as these are described in his treatises *On First Principles*⁴ and *On Prayer*.⁵

Origen understood our experience to be organized around three sorts of existence. We might think of them as three interpenetrating universes sharing a common structure, or in Origen's terms as shadow, image, and reality.⁶ The physical world was, in his view, the shadow.⁷ It is made up of things that are material and perishable;⁸ movement in this world is either a mechanical consequence of other movement, or in the case of animals, the working of instinct.⁹ Like billiard balls rolling on a table, the universe of objects in motion plays out the consequences of motion already present; the billiard balls have no volition. The physics which explains their motion is not contingent on the movement of the balls; quite the reverse. Of greater interest to Origen would be the

² *Ibid.* 21.5 (GCS 9, 141,13).

³ By contrast, Plotinus in *Enneads* IV 3.25-IV 4.11 described memory as a temporal and therefore inferior mode of knowing; the actual presence of a vision of the divine would render memory superfluous.

⁴ Origen, *De principiis (Peri Archon)* I i.7, ed. Paul Koetschau, GCS 5 (Leipzig, 1913), 23,15-29; *ibid.* III i.2-5 (GCS 5, 196,3-201,23); IV ii.6-9 (GCS 5, 315,4-321,36); IV iii.8-9 (GCS 5, 333,29-337,11).

⁵ Origen, *Prayer (Peri Euches)* 16.2-17.1, ed. Paul Koetschau, GCS 2 (Leipzig, 1899), 336,21-339,5.

⁶ Jean Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, trans. John Austin Baker (Philadelphia, 1973), 288; Bertrand de Margerie, *The Greek Fathers*, trans. Leonard Maluf (Petersham, Mass., 1993), 97.

⁷ Origen, *Prayer (Peri Euches)* 17.1 (GCS 2, 338,6-339,5).

⁸ *Ibid.* 23.3 (GCS 2, 351,4-7).

⁹ *Ibid.* 6.1 (GCS 2, 311,16-312,10); Origen, *De principiis* III i.2 (GCS 5, 196,3-197,23).

person with the pool cue. Thinking beings bring to the universe of objects a volition and choice which cannot be explained within the parameters of physical consequence.¹⁰ Events within the universe of the mind and in the memory can cause events within the world of objects in motion which would not otherwise be possible. A thinking observer can turn attention to corporeal objects and see them; the object has no choice in this.¹¹

As thinking beings stand to the universe of moving objects, so spiritual reality stands to the world of memory and choice;¹² the mind of a thinking being has a certain affinity with spiritual realities,¹³ but it does not cause nor control them. The center of spiritual reality is Christ; Origen understood the crucifixion and resurrection, while enacted in time and space, to be *also* the pivot-point of all spiritual reality.¹⁴ Next in order of reality would be the universe of thinking beings, their understandings and emotions, attitudes and longings. Third comes what happens when physical objects move; the universe of seas and cities, beasts and seasons, exodus and exile. The cross of Jesus slashes like a spike through all the levels of being; this is the heart of spiritual reality, and it happened on a Friday within time just outside the city of Jerusalem.¹⁵ In this framework, the universe of objects in motion is a less active reality than the universe of thinking beings, which is itself formed by the universe of spiritual reality and can potentially perceive it.¹⁶

In his treatise *On Prayer*¹⁷ Origen developed the metaphor of shadow and object as a way to think about God's answer to prayer. A prayer for 'daily' bread,¹⁸ for example, would always be granted; but God's primary gift would be spiritual nourishment which might or might not be accompanied by the physical object, 'bread.'¹⁹ Origen noted that even within our ordinary experience a loaf of bread might have a larger or smaller shadow, or even none at all,

¹⁰ Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 11.1 (GCS 9, 77,10-5); Origen, *De principiis* I i.7 (GCS 5, 23,15-29), III i.3-5 (GCS 5, 196,11-201,23).

¹¹ Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 3.1 (GCS 9, 20,8-22).

¹² *Ibid.* 3.1-3 (GCS 9, 20,8-22,21).

¹³ Origen, *De principiis* I i.7 (GCS 5, 23,15-29).

¹⁴ Origen, *In Iesu Nave homilia* 7.3, ed. W.A. Baehrens, GCS 7 (Leipzig, 1921), 330,10-23, 8.3 (GCS 7, 338,7-18), 8.6 (GCS 7, 342,10-9). Origen understood *Colossians* 2:15 to refer to crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension in the phrase 'the Cross' – 'triumphing over them in it'; see Origen, *Commentary on John* VI iv-lvii (37), ed. Paul Koetschau, GCS 4 (Leipzig, 1903), 164,12-165,30. A similar use can be found in Epiphanius *Panarion* III v.73,5-6, tr. Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III* (Leiden, 1994), 292-3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 2.1 (GCS 7, 296,12-5); see also Allan E. Johnson, 'In the Name of Jesus: Consequences of Preaching in Origen's Homilies on Joshua', *SP* 46 (2010), 223-4, and Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Boston, 2005), 70-1.

¹⁶ Origen, *De principiis* I i.7 (GCS 5, 23,15-29), *id.*, *In Lucam homilia* 3.1-3 (GCS 9, 20,8-22,21).

¹⁷ Origen, *Prayer* 16.2-17.2 (GCS 2, 336,21-340,2).

¹⁸ Origen, like Jerome in the Vulgate of *Matthew*, understood *epiousion* to mean 'super-substantial' rather than 'daily.' See *Prayer* 27.1-13 (GCS 2, 363,23-375,19).

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 17.1-2 (GCS 2, 338,6-340,2).

depending on the angle of the sun.²⁰ The value of the bread is not changed by the size of the shadow; and neither is the shadow an independent thing which could be separated from the bread. To give the bread is also to give whatever shadow may be incidental to it.²¹

So the universe of objects in motion shares a common structure with the universe of thinking beings and the universe of spiritual reality. They are not independent variables. Origen made this explicit in an earlier paragraph of *Homily 21 on Luke*, quoting the book of *Wisdom*: 'He gave me true knowledge of those things that are: to know the reason for the world, and the powers of the elements, the beginning and end and middle of times ... the course of the year, the positions of the stars, the natures of animals, passions of beasts, the power of the winds and the thoughts of men...' ²² Objects move as they must; the reasons why they move may be perceived within the universe of thought. A thinking being, capable of choice, can introduce events into the world of objects which could not happen within a merely mechanical universe. And likewise, the universe of spiritual reality can introduce possibilities into the universe of thinking beings which would not otherwise be present.

The levels of reality are not disconnected from each other; neither are they so much connected that spiritual truth can be rashly read off from the world we see. On the one hand, in Origen's schema, even the physical world has knowable reasons for the way it works. There are cycles and patterns and powers which can be understood. Yet on the other hand, the universe of objects is a world of flux and dissolution, far more fragile than the reasons with which God moves in it; earth, history, and bodies are at best the shadows of a stronger thing.

Much of this visualization would be familiar from Plato.²³ Origen, however, introduced a new element in his understanding of the Bible as something like a mathematical 'mapping function' establishing relationships of structure which persist across the three categories of reality with which he's working. The universe of objects in motion is shaped by intelligible patterns perceptible in the universe of thinking beings, and by the volition of such beings; and that universe in turn is shaped by spiritual realities. Under most circumstances, by the time the reality of objects in motion is reached, the underlying patterns are too blurred to see; is the shadow on the wall that of a hand or of a deformed rabbit? However, Origen found in Hebrews a description of the Law as the 'image and shadow' of heavenly things.²⁴ In Origen's vocabulary 'image' and

²⁰ *Ibid.* 17.1 (GCS 2, 338,8-12).

²¹ *Ibid.* 16.2 (GCS 2, 337,1-5).

²² Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 21.6 (GCS 9, 141,15-26), quoting *Wisdom* 7:17-20.

²³ See Plato's allegory of the cave, in *Politeia* VII. Plotinus directly referred to this passage in *Enneads* IV 8.1, and alluded to it elsewhere; *ibid.* IV 3.10, IV 8.4, VI 2.7. Philo developed similar language of the physical world as a shadow of the divine; see *Legum allegoriarum* 3.xxxii (97-99), *ibid.* 3.xxxiii (100-103).

²⁴ *Hebrews* 8:5; see Origen, *De principiis* IV ii.6 (GCS 5, 315,4-317,27).

'shadow' are quite distinct. The Bible is an *image*, within the universe perceptible to thinking beings, of spiritual reality.²⁵ The narrative of the Bible, chosen from events within the world of objects in motion, has selected events in which the *shadows* of history are still clear enough to point the mind toward the work of God.²⁶ Both shadow and image are shaped by the structure of spiritual reality; the Bible identifies elements of that structure which thinking beings are able to perceive. Events of the universe of bodies which Scripture records construct a vocabulary in which the true connections between spiritual reality, the truths known in the mind, and the movement of bodies can be identified.

With this in mind, we return to the 'cities' with which Origen has populated the interior landscape of memory. Origen interpreted the cities of the Biblical narrative as exemplars of spiritual forces.²⁷ That is, they exist in the intelligible realm, and cast shadows in history which we know as Babylon and Zion. To perceive the 'true knowledge of those things that are' and the 'reason' for Babylon and Zion is to explore within the universe of memory a city whose significance outlasts ruined stone or mud brick walls and whose inhabitants are thinking beings making choices.

I suggest that Origen would have understood the cities Alexandria and Caesarea as qualitatively like the cities interpreted by Scripture; their earthly existence is a shadow of something more permanent. The difference is that in this case Scripture provides no guide to the meaning of the shadows. Nevertheless, the image and picture of these cities preserved in memory, existing as it does within the universe of thinking beings, would have a significance of its own. It would be at least a groping toward some spiritual structure and community of volition, of which Alexandria would be a blurred shadow.

So the landscape of memory is, for Origen, a real landscape, and represents something authentic in the structure of reality. What, then, is implied by Origen's assertion that this interior landscape is a large enough world that the Way of the Lord can be built in it? He offered one further proviso.

'If the human heart is pure, it is great and broad and spacious.'²⁸ The interior landscape of memory is significant only to the degree that it is a true image of the structures of spiritual reality. Memories and intellectual structures built up on illusion, even though they subsist within the universe of thinking beings, would be images of shadows, built up wrong way round. They are

²⁵ Philo proposed a similar tripartite relationship among God, God's Word, and the physical universe, in *Legum allegoriarum* 3.xxxi (95-96). However, in Philo's terminology the Word of God was God's "shadow," and the archetype and pattern after which other things were made.

²⁶ Origen, *De principiis* IV ii.9 (GCS 5, 321,11-5, 32-6).

²⁷ *Ibid.* IV iii.8-9 (GCS 5, 333,29-337,11) and Origen, *In Iesu Nave homilia* 15.3 (GCS 7, 386,12-387,9); see also Allan E. Johnson, 'In the Name of Jesus' (2010), 227.

²⁸ Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 21.6 (GCS 9, 141,15-6).

structures of deceit which ought to be torn down, so that the Way of the Lord can be prepared.²⁹

It was Origen's conviction that in the midst of faithful, careful study of the Scripture³⁰ the power of the Lord would descend³¹ into the cities of memory. Spiritual reality would always be more powerful than structures in the mind, of more significance than objects and their shadows. He understood the Cross of Christ to be the central spiritual event piercing all levels of reality and defining them; it was the heart of what is truly spiritual, the key to unlock the secrets of the mind, and also an event driven by the will of God within the world of objects. As mind and heart and choices are reconstructed around the Cross, God's power purifies the universe of thought, and the landscape of memory can become a world re-made.

²⁹ Origen, *In Iesu Nave homilia* 13.4 (GCS 7, 374,13-5), 18.3 (GCS 7, 409,1-3); see also Allan E. Johnson, 'In the Name of Jesus' (2010), 225-6.

³⁰ See A.D. Lauro, *Soul and Spirit of Scripture* (2005), 76-8, and Rowan A. Greer, *Early Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia, 1986), 180.

³¹ Origen, *In Lucam homilia* 21.4 (GCS 9, 139,13-8).

The 'Two Ways' Tradition in Origen's *Commentary on Romans*

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ABSTRACT

Scattered references to the 'two ways' teaching in Origen's *Commentary on Romans* offer clues to his unique appropriation of this tradition. Origen inherits familiar 'two ways' themes from the second century (baptismal catechesis, angels and demons, virtue and vice lists), but situates them firmly within his trichotomous anthropology. This gives him the structure to show the soul's choice in adjudicating between spirit and flesh. This emphasis on the freedom of the will is in response to his Gnostic opponents and their doctrine of fixed natures. Origen's approach therefore allows the 'two ways' teaching to have a proper theological basis while still retaining its basic characteristics. This paper isolates two salient and several ancillary texts where Origen consistently uses this tradition to bolster his doctrine of free will.

Drawing from the Old and New Testaments as well as extra-biblical sources, Christians in the early church often framed the ethical life in categories or *ways* opposed to one another. This 'two ways' teaching showed a measure of elasticity in meeting the needs of different communities. For instance, this form of exhortation is utilized by the editor of the *Didache* to articulate a Christian ethic within a baptismal catechesis.¹ The 'two ways' tradition in the *Epistle of Barnabas*, according to James Carleton Paget, has the threefold purpose of facilitating the correct interpretation of the law, acting as a homiletical exhortation to strengthen covenantal identity, and correcting possible anti-nomian tendencies within his community.² By the third century Origen takes the 'two ways' tradition in yet another direction. His lifelong polemic against various shades of determinism found its greatest expression in his *Commentary on Romans*, a work he admits is composed to counter the Gnostic doctrine of natures espoused

¹ Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, 1998), 30-41, 59-124; Jonathan Draper, 'Barnabas and the Riddle of the Didache Revisited', *JSNT* 58 (1995), 89-113, 96.

² James Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background*, WUNT 64 (Tübingen, 1994), 62f. Jonathan Draper sees the 'two ways' in *Barnabas* as the exemplification of an emerging ascetic program, that is, 'advanced "gnosis" for secondary socialization', 'Barnabas' (1995), 97. Ronald Heine has outlined Origen's relationship to the *Epistle of Barnabas* in *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (Oxford, 2010), 34-42.

by the trio of Basilides, Valentinus, and Marcion.³ In this commentary the 'two ways' ethic emerges as a way to articulate his doctrine of free will over against Gnostic determinism. He understands Paul's moral exhortations to imply that the soul must adjudicate between opposing moral paths, and these paths are often understood through our own tripartite makeup, that is, the soul chooses between flesh and spirit. Through the exhortations and the tripartite anthropology the 'two ways' tradition now has both the impetus and functional apparatus appropriate to such an ethic. Below I would like to examine two key passages and a few ancillary texts where Origen uses the 'two ways' to advance his doctrine of free will.

The first salient reference to the 'two ways' occurs early in the commentary through his exegesis of *Romans* 1:24, where God is said to have 'handed them over to the desires of their hearts to impurity, to the mutual degrading of their bodies.' This language of God's judgment recalls for Origen the profound differences between Gnostic and Christian conceptions of God. Marcion's failure to acknowledge the goodness of God through his judgment is for Origen the manifestation of a deficient anthropology. Origen's answer is to explain that every individual is made up of spirit, soul, and flesh,⁴ and this anthropological structure gives the 'two ways' a tangible, if still tendential, mode of expression.

[A]s we find in many scriptural passages, there are angels who are patrons and helpers for both sides, or rather for the two ways ('*utriusque uiae*'). For the devil and his angels and all the evil spirits in the heavenly regions together with all the principalities and powers and rulers of the infernal parts of this world against whom human beings must do battle support the flesh in its lust against the spirit. But on the other hand, all the good angels support the spirit as it struggles against the flesh and attempt to summon the human soul, which is intermediate, to itself.⁵

³ Henri Crouzel rightly questions the extent to which Origen had first-hand knowledge of these three 'Gnostics', *Origen*, trans. A.S. Worrall (Edinburgh, 1989), 153f. For Marcion as a proponent of the Gnostic doctrine of natures see *Comm. in Rom.* II 10.2 (2.7 Hammond Bammel). For the Gnostic doctrine of natures elsewhere see *De princ.* II 9.5 and III 1.8.

⁴ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.5. For studies on Origen's tripartite anthropology see Henri Crouzel, *Théologie de l'image de Dieu chez Origène* (Paris, 1956); *Origen* (1989), 87-98; 'L'anthropologie d'Origène: de l'arche au telos', in Ugo Bianchi (ed.), *Arche e Telos: l'antropologia di Origene e di Gregorio di Nissa* (Milan, 1981), 36-57; Henri de Lubac, *Theology in History*, trans. Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco, 1996), 136-44; and Jacques Dupuis, *L'Esprit de l'homme: Étude sur l'anthropologie religieuse d'Origène* (Bruges, 1967), 62-89. Origen rules out the Platonic tripartite structure in *De princ.* III 4.1. For a construal of Origen's tripartite structure in his other works see, e.g., *In Jo.* I 229; *De princ.* II 8.4; III 4.1; IV 2.4.

⁵ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.6. The critical edition is *Der Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes: Kritische Ausgabe der Übersetzung Rufins, Buch 1-3, 4-6, 7-10*, AGLB 16, 33, 34, ed. Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, H.J. Frede and H. Stanjek (Freiberg im Breisgau, 1990-98); ET: *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 1-5, 6-10*, trans. Thomas P. Scheck, FOTC 103, 104 (Washington, D.C., 2001-2); (1.21 Hammond Bammel). All translations Scheck unless otherwise noted.

By arguing that the soul has morally opposing *ways* to follow spirit or flesh,⁶ Origen places the onus on the individual instead of God. Whereas Marcion locates evil in the deity, Origen locates it in the free choices of a soul. Here the dynamic quality of Origen's anthropology comes to the forefront because the soul is always measured exclusively through its moral action.⁷ Since this anthropology values choice and action, the 'two ways' ethic marks out clearly delineated courses for action as we can see from his use of Scripture. He cites *Deuteronomy* 30:15: 'See, I have set before you life and death' and *Sirach* 15:16: '[He has placed] fire and water [before you]', to buttress his argument that the soul is always presented with clearly defined options or ways, and is free and expected to respond to one of them.⁸ What remains central is the soul's freedom of choice (*'libertas arbitrii'*) and the 'two ways' ethic simply functions as the necessary outcropping of such an anthropology.⁹

The second conspicuous 'two ways' text is found in Book Six of the commentary and follows another protracted explication of his tripartite anthropology that seeks to counter these deterministic schemes.¹⁰ Paul's dichotomy in *Romans* 6:19, where the Apostolic exhortation takes the form of transitioning from 'slaves to impurity' into 'slaves of righteousness', affords Origen the opportunity to incorporate an apparent baptismal catechesis of unknown provenance. Thus the Pauline dichotomy is for Origen the occasion for exploiting the 'two ways' tradition for its latent exhortative power. For example Origen's form of this catechesis begins:

A little while ago your feet were running off to the temples of demons; now let them run to the Church of God. Previously they were running off to shed blood; now let them run out to save it. Earlier your hands were stretched forth to plunder the property of others; now stretch them forth to lavish your own goods upon others. Previously your eyes were looking around for a woman or some property to lust after; now let them look around for the poor, the weak, the needy, in order to show them mercy. Your ears

⁶ *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.6 (1.21 Hammond Bammel).

⁷ See H. Crouzel, *Origène* (1989), 88, where he is careful to note that Origen's tripartite anthropology retains its ontological basis. See also J. Dupuis, *L'Esprit de l'homme* (1967), 62; Theresia Heither, *Translatio Religionis: Die Paulusdeutung des Origenes in seinem Kommentar zum Römerbrief*, Bonner Beiträge zur Kirchengeschichte 16 (Cologne, 1990), 198.

⁸ *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.7 (1.21 Hammond Bammel). For the use of *Deut.* 30:15 to promote free will see Philo, *Quod Deus* 50, Clement, *Prot.* 10, Origen, *De princ.* III 1.6 and *Dial.* 27.9-15: 'Let us therefore take up eternal life. Let us take up that which depends upon our decision. God does not give it to us. He sets it before us. "Behold, I have set life before thy face." It is in our power to stretch out our hand, to do good works, and to lay hold on life and deposit it in our soul', *Dialogue with Heraclides*, trans. Henry Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, LCC (Louisville, 1977). Sebastian Brock argues that the 'two ways' tradition has its roots in Jewish reflection on *Deut.* 30:15, 19, 'The Two Ways and the Palestinian Targum', in P.R. Davies and J.L. White (eds), *A Tribute to Geza Vermes: Essays in Jewish and Christian Literature and History*, JSOTSup 100 (Sheffield, 1990), 139-52. *Sir.* 15:16 appears only here in Origen's corpus.

⁹ *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.7-9 (1.21 Hammond Bammel).

¹⁰ See *ibid.* VI 1.5; VI 3.5 (6.1; 6.3 Hammond Bammel).

were formerly thrilled by listening to worthless talk and derogatory remarks about good men; let them now be converted to hearing the word of God, to the explanation of the law, and to receiving wisdom's instruction. Let the tongue, which was accustomed to abuse, cursing, and obscene speech, now be converted to blessing the Lord at all times. Let it bring forth wholesome and sincere speech so that it might give grace to the hearers and speak truth with its neighbor.¹¹

This passage is noteworthy for its strong conversion language, and this language alerts the reader to how the 'two ways' ethic becomes a demonstrable defense of his anthropology.¹² Having already situated his tripartite anthropology (VI 1.5) he now offers the reason for the inclusion of this 'two ways' catechesis.

Moreover, observe how everywhere through these matters he [Paul] notes the freedom of the will ('*arbitrii libertatem*') and shows that everyone has it within his own power ('*in sua potestate*') that the services he was previously paying out to iniquity for iniquity should be paid out to righteousness and sanctification, once one's purpose has been converted to better things. This could not be done at all if one's nature were fighting against this, as some think, or if the course of the stars opposed it.¹³

Both here and his earlier reflections on this matter in Book Six show a dual concern for a close reading of Paul and a lack of compulsion through nature or astrological determinism.¹⁴ This ongoing polemic continually frustrates Origen insofar as his Gnostic opponents fail to deduce free will from Scripture's abundant exhortative language.¹⁵

These two examples show Origen's familiarity with and exploitation of an abiding 'two ways' tradition. He has of course already utilized this tradition in his Alexandrian work *On First Principles* as well as his more recent *Homilies on Numbers*.¹⁶ These two works show a greater emphasis on the role of good

¹¹ *Ibid.* VI 4.2 (6.4 Hammond Bammel).

¹² See *ibid.* IV 12.1 (4.12 Hammond Bammel) where Origen argues that the Gnostics have no theology of reconciliation and therefore fail to account for Paul's teaching in *Rom.* 5:10.

¹³ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* VI 4.2 (6.4 Hammond Bammel). For the philosophical and theological background of stars in Origen's thought see Alan Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars: A History of an Idea* (Oxford, 1994). See also *Hom. 1-14 in Ezech.* I 10.2.

¹⁴ 'Therefore it is established from these words in which Paul says, "to whom you present yourselves for obedience as slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin or of righteousness," that we present ourselves by our own accord, with no one forcing us either to serve sin or righteousness, through our obedience. Therefore we ought always to remember these things and not bring forth worthless complaints as an excuse for sin: "I sinned because the devil made me do it!" or, "under the compulsion of nature!" or, "my fated condition!" or, "[I sinned due to] the course of the stars!" Rather, listen to the frank opinion of Paul in which he says, "to whom you present yourselves for obedience as slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin or of righteousness"', *Comm. in Rom.* VI 3.5 (6.3 Hammond Bammel).

¹⁵ See also *ibid.* VI 3.3 (6.3 Hammond Bammel).

¹⁶ Pierre Nautin dates the *Homilies on Numbers* between 238-244, *Origène: Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1977), 405. For a brief overview of the 'two ways' tradition in early Christianity see, William S. Babcock, 'Sin', in Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York, 1999), 1059-60.

and bad angels acting to advise and 'provoke' (*provocent*) the soul.¹⁷ Though we have seen that Origen mentions angelic activity in our first text, he finds little use for it in the commentary.¹⁸ Instead, he is more inclined to *interiorize* these advisors insofar as the *body* and *spirit* act as the soul's counselors (*'consiliariis'*).¹⁹ Since body and spirit serve as useful images of vice and virtue, every articulation of his tripartite anthropology is also an exercise in ethics.²⁰ So when he explains how the soul stands midway between flesh and spirit, it '*joins* itself either to the flesh, thus becoming one with the flesh, or it *associates* itself with the spirit and becomes one with the spirit.'²¹ Again in Book Six he calls the soul a mean between flesh and the Spirit (*'spiritum'*)²²

¹⁷ Origen, *Hom. I-28 in Num.* XX 3.5-8,7: 'For the soul obeys either good or evil advisors of its own accord', *Homilies on Numbers/Origen*, trans. Thomas P. Scheck, ACT (Downers Grove, IL, 2009). In *De princ.* III 3.4-5 he says that either 'wicked spirits' take possession of the mind, thus 'persuading it to evil', or that man receives 'energy, i.e., the working, of a good spirit, when he is stirred and incited to good, and is inspired to heavenly or divine things; as the holy angels and God Himself wrought in the prophets, arousing and exhorting them by their holy suggestions to a better course of life,' *Origen: On First Principles*, trans. G.W. Butterworth (Gloucester, MA, 1973). See also *Manual of Discipline* (1QS) 3.18-26.

¹⁸ Origen offers one more allusion to angelic activity in the *Commentary on Romans* when commenting on *Rom.* 2:5f., and speaking of the eschaton, he remarks: 'Now whether those who are now with Christ, do anything and labor on our behalf in imitation of the angels who attend to the service of our salvation; or, on the other hand, whether even sinners, themselves without bodies, do anything in accordance with the intention of their own mind in no less imitation of the evil angels with whom they are to be cast into the eternal fire, as was indeed said by Christ; let his too be kept among the hidden things of God', *Comm. in Rom.* II 4.6 (2.4 Hammond Bammel). Despite the lack of emphasis on angels and demons in the 'two ways' teaching in the *Commentary on Romans*, they do play a considerable role in his overall theology. See Jean Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, trans. John Austin Baker (London, 1964), 434-41; *Origène* (Paris, 1948), 219-47.

¹⁹ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* I 18.9 (1.21 Hammond Bammel). Henri Crouzel notes the reason for the soul's inherent instability when noting, 'the soul is both the scene and the stake, and it is the soul, with its free will, that has to decide for one or the other. In itself, by reason of the two elements or tendencies that divide it, the soul is in league with both sides', *Origen* (1989), 92.

²⁰ Here (I 18.9; 1.21 Hammond Bammel) Origen (Rufinus?) equivocates in his otherwise fairly consistent usage terminology of seeing the body (*corporis*) as positive or neutral (e.g., I 18.10; VII 4.3; VII 5.9-11), and the flesh (*carnem*) as negative (e.g., II 11.2; II 13.26; IV 8.1; V 1.16; VI 1.9; VII 12.12; IX 33.1). When speaking of Jesus Christ, Origen uses *corporis* and *carnem* interchangeably, appraising both in wholly positive terms in order to undermine the docetic threat posed by his Gnostic opponents. See e.g. III 10.5; IV 2.5; IV 8.9-10; V 8.10; VI 7.4; VII 13.8; VIII 5.2; VIII 8.2, 12; VIII 10.7; IX 30.3; X 8.2; X 43.3-5.

²¹ *Ibid.* I 5.3 (1.7 Hammond Bammel), italics mine. Cécile Blanc explains: 'On ne peut donc jouir à la fois des délices de la chair et des délices de l'esprit, car ce qui est avantageux à l'un est nuisible à l'autre: de même que les désirs de la chair s'opposent aux désirs de l'esprit, de même la loi qui est dans nos membres s'oppose à loi de notre raison', 'L'attitude d'Origène à l'égard du corps et de la chair', *SP* 17 (1982), 850.

²² Origen is not always clear in distinguishing the ontology and activity of the human spirit and the Holy Spirit. For the relationship between the two in Origen's thought see Maureen Beyer Moser, *Teacher of Holiness: The Holy Spirit in Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to*

and says, 'if it *unites* itself with the flesh to obey the desire of sin, it becomes one body with it; but if it *unites* itself with the Lord it becomes one spirit (*'spiritus'*) with him.'²³ For Origen to choose spirit is to choose life, that is Christ, and to choose flesh is to choose death, that is the devil.²⁴

The 'two ways' ethic is woven seamlessly into the commentary as Origen uses a variety of images to convey the different ways. So as body and spirit recede into the background other concepts take their places for the free soul to choose. In *Romans* 11 he finds Paul's teaching on the olive trees to serve as a rebuttal to the doctrine of natures espoused by Valentinus and Basilides as well as being an expression of the 'two ways.'

[S]ince there is one nature for all rational beings, the choice of each – the liberty of the impulse of each is distributed equally – when summoned by the power of choice, and by guiding the soul subjected to them either toward *virtue* or toward *evil desire*, creates the species of a *good tree* or an *evil tree* ... And in this way, each person, according to the impulses of his own purpose, will be designated [either] a good olive tree, if he *travels down the road of virtue*, or a wild olive tree, if he *follows the opposite [path]*.²⁵

Finally, many of Origen's reflections on Paul's teaching regarding sinful humanity reveal a conscious attempt to clarify his theology in relation to the Gnostics. In his exegesis of *Romans* 3:12 he is careful to state that our rational natures were a good creation and were set on the right path (*'uia'*) as a gift from the Creator. But Adam turned from the 'right road' (*'uia recta'*) in Paradise to the 'wrong and tortuous paths of mortal life' (*'prauas et tortuosas mortalis uitae semitas'*).²⁶ Consequently, all who come in succession from Adam (*'ex ipsius successione'*) have turned aside and follow the opposing way, leading him to remark: '[N]o longer do they open their mouths and express the

the Romans (Piscataway, NJ, 2005), 55-69, where she concludes: 'The human spirit is the individual person's potential for participation in God's Spirit, a participation that must be learned and developed over a lifetime. For this reason, the human spirit itself is never opposed to God's Spirit, rendering such distinctions irrelevant in Origen's descriptions of the human spiritual journey', 68.

²³ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* VI 1.5 (6.1 Hammond Bammel), italics mine. Paul's language in *Rom.* 8:4 ('who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit') brings to the forefront the opposing ways of interpreting Scripture. Origen says the law of Moses has been placed in the middle 'between us and the Jews'. The one who understands the law according to the flesh 'does not come to Christ who is life'. But the one who spiritually interprets the law 'possesses life and peace, which is Christ', VI 12.6 (6.12 Hammond Bammel). See also I 10.2.

²⁴ *Ibid.* I 18.7 (1.21 Hammond Bammel). See also III 5.2 (3.2 Hammond Bammel): '*Pax nostra Christus est; uia ergo pacis uia Christi est.*'

²⁵ *Ibid.* VIII 11.4 (8.10 Hammond Bammel), italics mine. See VIII 11.7 (8.10 Hammond Bammel) where Origen insists that 'freedom of will always abides in nature'. For examples of how free will operates in Origen's writings see e.g. *Hom. 1-9 in Jud.* VI 2; *De princ.* III 1.1-24; *Hom. 1-14 in Ezech.* I 3.8.

²⁶ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* III 3.1 (3.2 Hammond Bammel).

word of God, the living word, but instead they open their throats and express the dead word, the word of the devil.'²⁷ Origen sketches his doctrine of sin through the opposing ways in a similar fashion in his long reflection on Adam's transgression in *Romans* 5:12-4. Since humanity is both descended from and instructed by Adam, choosing the way of the Lord is not guaranteed. Adam's example, coupled with individual freedom ('*libertas*'), produces a person who 'either goes the way ('*uiam*') of his fathers, as is written of several kings, or ... advances along the road ('*uia*') of his Lord God.'²⁸ The 'two ways' dilemma thus derives from and finds its exemplar in Adam. In this life and for these reasons the conflicted soul must continually choose between opposing ways. Free will is only restrained in the eschaton to those for whom the will finds fulfillment through the complete love for God, thus rendering impossible any ability to sin.²⁹

This 'two ways' teaching is ubiquitous in the *Commentary on Romans* and to a large extent characterizes Origen's approach to ethics.³⁰ The emphasis on contraries gives strength to his doctrine of free will and makes explicit what was usually implicit in second century expressions of this tradition. But this emphasis on anthropology and ethics always serves the greater purpose of advancing a cogent theodicy in response to his adversaries. By placing the emphasis on the free will of the soul to choose, Origen's refutation of the Gnostic doctrine of natures successfully navigates this theodicy in the direction of absolving God of any evil while highlighting his providential care for creation.³¹

²⁷ *Ibid.* III 3.3 (3.2 Hammond Bammel).

²⁸ *Ibid.* V 1.35 (5.1 Hammond Bammel); see also *1Kgs.* 15:26, 34.

²⁹ Origen, *Comm. in Rom.* V 10.15 (5.10 Hammond Bammel). My thanks to Elizabeth Ann Dively Lauro for clarification on this idea.

³⁰ 'This is why it seems to me that the Apostle understood that either righteousness or unrighteousness must dwell in a person who has cognizance, through being old enough to distinguish good and evil. If this is so, no soul can be found without one of the two dwelling in it; and it is certain that if that [soul] should desist from evil, it would then be found in the good', *ibid.* IV 1.17 (4.1 Hammond Bammel). See also IV 7.6. For free will as fundamental for ethics see I 18.7.

³¹ *Ibid.* V 1.37; V 3.6, 7; V 7.8; VIII 9.4 and *De princ.* III 3.5.

Origen on 1*Corinthians*: Homilies or Commentary?

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ABSTRACT

The fragments on 1*Corinthians* published by C. Jenkins over one century ago (1908-9) are generally attributed to the homiletical rather than to the commentary genre. Should it really be homiletical material, this series would be among the most outstanding evidence until now – despite the selection due to the *catena* compilation – of Origen's limited preaching preserved in the original language. The almost complete silence of the tradition regarding Origen's work, not only concerning the genre but the very existence of such a homiletical cycle or a commentary, makes both solutions a priori equally possible. A verification in order to confirm one or the other hypotheses is therefore necessarily entrusted to internal criticism. The present contribution assumes that the formal elements previously interpreted as indices of an oral origin of the *catena* fragments on 1*Corinthians* must not be strictly taken in that sense. On the contrary, it should be admitted that FrCor show some typical commentary features, not compatible with any of Origen's known series of homilies.

1. A testimony of exceptional value

The importance of Origen's fragmentary texts concerning the 1*Corinthians* is mainly linked to the considerable amount of these texts, which immediately stands out after a quick comparison with the remaining works concerning Paul's exegesis.

The byzantine *catenae*, in the original Greek version have preserved us rather ample portions of Origen's interpretation, especially regarding three Pauline letters: *Ephesians*, 1*Corinthians* and *Romans*. In the early years of the twentieth century these three series of exegetical fragments were published by different scholars in Oxford's *Journal of Theological Studies*. Despite their limits, these editions have been an important base of reference until the present.¹ The fact that they were published in the same Journal also enables us to make a rapid comparison of the extension of the three works based on their respective number of pages: while the text about *Romans* takes up 37 pages, and the one

¹ In order of edition: J.A.F. Gregg, 'The commentary of Origen upon the Epistle to the Ephesians', *JTS* 3 (1902), 234-44, 398-420, 554-76; C. Jenkins, 'Origen on 1st Corinthians', *JTS* 9 (1908), 232-47, 353-72, 500-14; 10 (1909), 29-51; A. Ramsbotham, 'The commentary of Origen on the Epistle to the Romans', *JTS* 13 (1911-2), 209-24, 357-68; 14 (1912-3), 10-22.

concerning *Ephesians* [= FrEph] occupies 55 pages, the fragments concerning the *1Corinthians* [= FrCor] are a good 69 pages long. Therefore we can surmise that FrCor are approximately 1/4 longer than FrEph and 3/4 longer than the surviving Greek parts about the *Romans*.²

If we fail to take into consideration the great *Commentary on Romans*, adapted twice through the translation and the reduction from 15 to 10 books made by Rufinus, the main role in the tradition of Origen's exegesis on Paul must be given to the *catenae* compilations.³ As is well known, they are those peculiar anthologies, made up of a florilegium of ἐρμηνεῖαι (exegetical interpretations), taken from several commentators of the same Biblical text, reduced into smaller units and classified according to the succession of the verses. Such anthologies began being edited in the fifth and sixth centuries AD, with the aim of passing on the best of the patristic exegesis of the golden age, for catechetical or liturgical purposes.

When compared to the translations – partial or complete – into other languages, the literary genre of the *catenae* fragments has the evident advantage of preserving some of the most characteristic traits of the original vocabulary of the anthologised works. In addition, when compared to the *excerpta* (extracts in form of passages) explicitly quoted within other works, such as the *Apologia pro Origene* of Pamphilus or the *Philocalia* – another significant means of indirect tradition for Origen's works – the *catenae* extracts have a generally more summarising and *ad sensum* form.⁴

² Such a comparison can be considered sufficient for our purposes even without a more attentive examination, by counting the lines or the words. Notice how, despite the greater length of the text (which can be attributed to the very different extension of *1Corinthians*, made up of 16 chapters compared to the just 6 chapters of *Ephesians*), the material preserved by FrCor is actually more selective than FrEph: suffice it to consider that around 180 of the 352 verses of *1Corinthians* are not taken into consideration at all by FrCor (in fact what is particularly missing is the entire chap. 8, dedicated to the question of food offered to idols), whereas FrEph cover around 112 of the 155 verses of the Pauline letter (118 including 6 more verses commented by Latin fragments from Jerome, according to our edition: see below).

³ The importance of the fragments concerning *1Corinthians* can also be confirmed by a general look at our recent collection, with Italian translation and comments, of all the Origen's texts referring to the Pauline exegesis, with the exception of *Romans*. See Origen, *Exegetica in Paulum. Excerpta et fragmenta – Egesesi paolina. I testi frammentari*, ed. F. Pieri, Opera Omnia di Origenes 14.4 (Roma, 2009) [= Origen, *Exegetica*]. To my knowledge, the main reviews are the following: F. Cocchini, *Aug.* 50/1 (2010), 311-9 [= Cocchini]; F. Ruggiero, *Il Regno/Attualità* 55/2 (2010), 43; A. D'Anna, *Paideia* 65 (2010), 677-81; F. Vinel, *RHPPh* 90/3 (2010), 450-1; M.-J. Edwards, *JTS* 61/2 (2010), 785-7; E. Junod, *Adamantius* 17 (2011), 510-2. In the pages of our edition, obviously different from those of the *JTS*, FrCor takes up a total of 165 pages; FrEph follows with 137, whereas all the others are considerably shorter. Therefore the ranking is as follows: 31 pp. on *1Thessalonians*; 9 pp. on *Titus*; 7 pp. on *Galatians* (both from the commentary and the *Stromata*); 5 pp. on *Hebrews* (both from the commentary and the homilies); 4 pp. on *Philemon*; 2 pp. on *Colossians*.

⁴ This tendency cannot be strictly considered a rule. Sometimes the *catena* compiler adopts a technique closer to the 'cutting' rather than the summary: in this case then the type of text is not

2. Remarks concerning the history of the edition

The first editor of the Origen's fragments on 1Corinthians was J.A. Cramer, who published them between 1842 and 1843. His work had the advantage – no longer present in the following editions – of enabling the reader to have a general look at the whole catena contained in the manuscript 227 (16th century) in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, which he reproduced integrally and in a generally faithful way.⁵ However, his edition contained several literal flaws and even some mistaken attributions, which were justly criticised by successive editors.⁶

C. Jenkins, in 1908-1909, was the first editor to extract the Origenian texts regarding 1Corinthians from Cramer's edition (1842-1843). The already known text was amended in several points based on the comparison with the text in the catena of the manuscript Vaticanus graecus 762 (11th century), which he recognised as an archetype of the Parisian document. He added about thirty other text fragments (from 54 to 72) taken from a different *catena*, preserved by the manuscript Pantokrator 28 of Mount Athos.⁷ Said additions – extremely varied in extensions, ranging from a few words to some lines – fortunately

very different from that of the shorter or longer citations. Another similar text type can be found in the short notes originally written by the author as *scholia*, in the technical sense of explanatory comments, especially concerning difficult and controversial passages in a Biblical text. This genre was already widespread during the Hellenistic period, especially for classical, literary canonical text, and Origen himself used it for several Biblical books. Even if we cannot exclude *a priori* the origin of the *catenae* material from *scholia* literature, it is normally derived from full-standing works.

⁵ Ed. J.A. Cramer, *Catenae Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum V, Catenae in Sancti Pauli epistolas ad Corinthios* (Oxford, 1841), 1-344. Concerning the features and the limits of Cramer's edition, see the presentation by C.H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles', in J. Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, extra volume (Edinburgh and New York, 1904), 484-531, especially 492-3. Also see A. von Harnack and E. Preuschen, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius II* (Leipzig, 1904), 46¹.

⁶ In particular, Jenkins pointed out the mistaken attribution to Origen by the previous editor of at least 15 fragments, correctly attributed to Chrysostom in the manuscript, which he rightly did not take into account for his edition. This and other similar observations were previously written in a preparatory article: *id.*, 'The Origen-citations in Cramer's Catena on 1st Corinthians', *JTS* 6 (1902), 113-6.

⁷ We may point out that, differing from Jenkins, Gregg had not taken into consideration the manuscript Pantokrator 28 for his edition of FrEph, uniquely based on the Paris manuscript Coislin 204, and we can presume that he did not even know of its existence. Actually – as mentioned in the description by K. Staab, *Die Pauluskatenen nach den handschriftlichen Quellen untersucht* (Rome, 1920), 255 – the textual form of the Mount Athos manuscript is very similar ('im wesentlichen identisch') to the *catena* type represented by Coislin 204 (at least as far as the compilations on *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians* are concerned) even though offering the exegesis in a more summarised form. We intend to give a diplomatic presentation, further integrating the critical text already presented in Origen, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 230-367, at the bottom of the pages in the edition of FrEph now being prepared for the series Sources Chrétiennes.

covered an area of commentary not mentioned in the Vatican and Parisian catena, referring to 1Cor. 14:5-35. A short time later C.H. Turner, while suggesting a certain number of other notes and corrections of detail (55 in all) to be made on Jenkins' edition, did not hesitate to attribute to the latter 'the labour and the merit of an *editio princeps*'.⁸

When I included the text, published by Jenkins, without major variations in our collection of all the Pauline fragments of Origen, I added a dozen slight corrections, consisting both in returning to the traditional textual form and making some new amendments⁹ in addition to those already proposed by Turner. We are presently awaiting a new edition and comments on FrCor by Ch. Markschies in the renewed series of the *Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller*.

3. The debate on the literary genre

The main fact that once more attracts our interest in this short article on FrCor is a reasonable doubt concerning the attribution – nowadays commonly accepted – to the homiletical rather than to the commentary genre. At the root of this doubt there is the almost complete lack of information regarding Origen's work, not only concerning the genre but the very existence of this text, with the exception of the following few clues.

The first, well known evidence consists in the catalogue of Origen's works preserved in Jerome's *Ep.* 33,4.¹⁰ At least in the form that has reached us, he does not mention any of the two letters to the Corinthians among the ones that are commented by Origen; nor does he mention any homilies on 1Corinthians, whereas he cites a group of eleven homilies on the 2Corinthians.

The only rapid self-reference by Origen to one of his previous interpretations of 1Cor. 1:2 appears in his *Homilies on Luke* 17, 11 which reached us in Jerome's translation: '*Memini, cum interpretarer illud quod ad Corinthios*

⁸ C.H. Turner, 'Notes on the text of Origen's Commentary on 1st Corinthians', *JTS* 10 (1909), 270-1; he also showed the same enthusiastic appreciation for Gregg's FrEph.

⁹ Now republished in Origene, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 52-217; for an index of our corrections on Jenkins's text, see *ibid.* 51 et *passim*. In the following exposition we refer to the numbers of the pages of this latter edition; the numeration of fragments is identical to the former.

¹⁰ Hieronymus, *Epistulae*, ed. I. Hilberg [= Jerome, *Ep.*], CSEL 54.1 (Wien and Leipzig, 1910), 255-9. The list of Origen's works was almost definitely derived from the lost Eusebius' work *Vita Pamphili*, and it was inserted by Jerome into his letter to Paula, generally dated in 385 AD. Pamphilus had reorganised the library of Cesarea (where Origen had mostly preached starting from the year 232), where a large number of books left by Origen were kept. Based on this information Origen must have left commentaries on *Romans*, *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, 1 and 2 *Thessalonians*, *Titus*, *Pihlemon* and homilies on 2 *Corinthians* (1 and/or 2) *Thessalonians*, *Galatians*, *Titus*, *Hebrews*. For a detailed presentation of the major critical problems of this list, see P. Nautin, *Origène, Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1977), 227-60, even if all the solutions proposed therein have not received general consensus.

*scribitur 'Ecclesiae Dei quae est Corinthi cum omnibus qui invocant eum', dixisse me diversitatem esse 'ecclesiae' et 'eorum qui invocant nomen Domini'.*¹¹ Said reference has commonly been considered, and actually is, insufficient to solve the problem of the literary genre, given the apparent general sense of the verb *interpretari*, which probably refers either to a real commentary or to preaching.¹²

A final clue, still more uncertain, can be found in another letter by Jerome. In *Ep.* 48,3, while debating some years later (393 AD) the exegesis of 1Cor. 7, he explicitly cites Origen among those who have worked commenting 1Corinthians: '*Origenes, Dionysius, Pierius, Eusebius Caesarensis, Didymus, Apollinaris latissime hanc epistulam interpretati sunt.*'¹³ This piece of testimony in some way integrates the absolute silence concerning writings on Paul's letter in the list of *Ep.* 33, demonstrating that Jerome did not completely ignore an Origenian work commenting 1Corinthians. Nevertheless, again the genre hinted at by *interpretati sunt* cannot be specified.¹⁴

We must add that more recently Y.-M. Duval, through a rich series of parallel passages, demonstrated the dependence Jerome's *Adversus Iovinianum* (393-394) on Origen's interpretation of 1Corinthians, especially concerning the interpretation of chapter 7, which was extremely important for the themes connected with marriage and sex ethics.¹⁵

Up to this point we have seen the few external elements at our disposal regarding the very existence of an Origenian interpretation of 1Corinthians, in a wide and undetermined sense. The more specific point regarding the genre is necessarily entrusted to predominantly internal criticism, even if this is more hypothetical if possible at all. The first modern scholar to affirm the homiletic

¹¹ Origène, *Homelies sur Luc*, ed. by H. Crouzel, F. Fournier and P. Périchon, SC 87 (Paris, 1962), 262-3; this exegesis is contained in FrCor 1. Also see P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 254. Among the scholars before Jenkins's edition, E.F. von der Goltz, *Eine textkritische Arbeit des zehnten bzw. sechsten Jahrhunderts*, TU 2.4 n.F. (Leipzig, 1899), 94, not finding any news either of a commentary or a homiletical cycle on 1Corinthians by Origen, had believed that this mention could refer to the *Stromata* or to another work containing exegesis passages.

¹² See below footnote 14.

¹³ Jerome, *Ep.* [footnote 10], 348. Such information should be compared with C.H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries' (1904), 485 who, after a survey of Jerome's testimonies concerning Paul, summarises: 'Of twenty or more Greek commentaries on one or another of these four epistles [1Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1Thessalonians] which Jerome had (or had had) in his hands only one has survived to our day other than in catena fragments ... Some of these twenty treatises would not, but for their casual mention by Jerome, have even been known by us to have existed at all'.

¹⁴ The range of meanings in which Jerome uses *interpretari* is actually quite a wide one. A very common and probably prevailing sense in his writings is 'to translate', often referring to the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scripture or to the so-called *recentiores* (Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion).

¹⁵ Y.-M. Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien. D'une crise de la société romaine à une crise de la pensée chrétienne à la fin du IV^e et au début du V^e siècle*, SE Aug. 83 (Roma, 2003), 112-43, 162-3.

feature of the catena fragments (which he read in Cramer's edition) is generally considered to have been E. Preuschen in 1904,¹⁶ although B.F. Westcott had already suggested considering FrCor as consisting of homiletic material.¹⁷ O. Bardenhewer and also H. Koch,¹⁸ later followed by H. Crouzel and finally by P. Nautin¹⁹ agreed with this assessment, without any further discussion.

In 1987 A. Monaci summarised the most relevant formal features to be found in FrCor, leading to the hypothesis that we are dealing with homilies. As she points out, we find: internal references to previous explanations; direct appeals to his public in rhetorical style; method of re-reading the already commented text, accompanied by further explanations; frequent use of the second person singular and plural; diatribe style and other mechanisms of allocution.²⁰ In the next paragraph we shall return to each of these points with a more careful evaluation. Especially after the essay by this scholar, the provenance of FrCor from a series of Origen's homilies lost in their entirety has been accepted – or simply re-stated – by a large number of the critics.²¹ Should it really be homiletic material, then FrCor would be among the most outstanding evidence until now of Origen's limited preaching preserved in the original language²² (*i.e.*, not taking into account Latin translations), despite the selection due to the catena compilation.

However, we must admit that even since the time of the text's first publication, and later, there had been doubts and reservation that led critics to be more cautious in attributing the text to either of the two genres. Cramer already

¹⁶ A. von Harnack and E. Preuschen, *Die Chronologie* (1904), 46¹.

¹⁷ B.F. Westcott, 'Origen', in W. Smith and H. Wace (eds), *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrine* IV (New York, 1877), 118; quoted by C.H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries' (1904), 493 who seemed to prudently agree with Westcott's assessment.

¹⁸ See O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* II (Freiburg i.B., 1914); H. Koch, 'Origenes', in A.F. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll (eds), *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* 31 (Stuttgart, 1939), 1047. Both state the almost complete certainty of the provenance from homilies.

¹⁹ H. Crouzel, *Mariage et virginité selon Origène* (Paris and Bruges, 1963), 9³ et passim; P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 240, 254 §46. As pointed out by Y.-M. Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien* (2003), 114⁶², Crouzel's essay was the first (and, we may add, still remains one of the few) to have made use of FrCor for the understanding of Origen's thought.

²⁰ See A. Monaci Castagno, *Origene predicatore e il suo pubblico* (Torino, 1987), 62⁵⁷ for the list of passages from FrCor that the scholar considers proof of her hypothesis.

²¹ In agreement with the conclusion of this scholar we find, for example C. Moreschini and E. Norelli, *Histoire de littérature chrétienne ancienne grecque et latine. I. De Paul à l'ère de Constantin* (Genève, 2000), 329; A. Grappone, 'Annotazioni sulla cronologia delle omelie di Origene', *Aug.* 40/1 (2001), 27-58, particularly page 45; Y.-M. Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien* (2003), 114: 'Le caractère homilétique est discernable à leur ton, à leurs renvois internes...'

²² As is well known, the only other homiletic series preserved in Greek, which both provide us the closest term of comparison for reconstructing the actual features of Origen's way of preaching, are the *Homilies on Jeremiah*. See Origène, *Homelies sur Jérémie*, ed. by P. Husson and P. Nautin, SC 231 and 238 (Paris, 1976-1977), and the *Homilies on 1st Kings*, ed. by P. and M.T. Nautin, SC 328 (Paris, 1986).

introduced his diplomatic edition of the Parisian catena observing that its main source of interest was the preservation of Origen's materials otherwise unknown even in the Latin translation, and he underscored: '*Origenis, dico, in primam sancti Pauli epistolam ad Corinthios commentarii*'.²³

The second editor of FrCor introduced the text with a title that denoted his reservation regarding the literary genre problem: 'Origen on 1st Corinthians'.²⁴ By so doing Jenkins carefully moved away both from the first editor's assumption and the choices of Gregg and Ramsbotham, who declared even in the title – in their editions of FrEph and of the *catena* fragments on *Romans* respectively – that they were in both cases dealing with a commentary in the strict sense.

On the other hand, in his already mentioned contribution of remarks on FrCor, C.H. Turner definitely referred to this work as 'Origen's Commentary on 1Corinthians',²⁵ showing that he undoubtedly felt it was equal to the analogous and recently edited FrEph.

In more recent times even the editor of the *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, clearly aware of the open character of the discussion concerning the genre, has prudently preferred to adopt a more general title for the classification of FrCor: *Fragmenta e catenis in Epistolam primam ad Corinthios*.²⁶

4. Elements for a genre classification

Very little has been said, and probably can be said, about the possibility of defining the formal character of Origen's commentaries in comparison to his homilies. Among the few scholars who have dealt with this question, E. Klostermann suggested that the difference between the two genres should simply be recognised in the quantity rather than in the quality of the explanations.²⁷

In more precise (although still general) terms, the more evident features that enable us to distinguish reciprocally the homilies from the systematic commentaries of the Scriptures can be defined as homilies by the liturgical context,

²³ J.A. Cramer, *Catena Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum* V (1841), Cramer also cites Jerome's evidence from *Ep.* 48, 3 considering it as evidence of this precociously lost work.

²⁴ See footnote 1.

²⁵ Apart from the several interesting observations concerning the language and contents of FrCor (the latter inspired by a marked historical interest), one would look in vain in Turner's short essay [see footnotes 8 and 17] for any element of evaluation regarding the literary genre: the commentary nature of both FrEph and FrCor seems now to be taken as a matter of fact.

²⁶ M. Geerard, *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 1 (Turnhout, 1983), n° 1458. The same general title was repeated in the canon of Origen's works published in J. Allenbach *et al.* (eds), *Biblia Patristica III. Origène* (Paris, 1980), 13. Strangely enough FrCor does not appear to have been registered by H.J. Frede, *Kirchenschriftsteller Verzeichnis und Sigel. Repertorium scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum saeculo nono antiquiorum. Siglis adpositis quae in editione Bibliorum Sacrorum iuxta veterem latinam versionem adhibentur* (Freiburg, 41995).

²⁷ E. Klostermann, 'Formen der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes', *ThLZ* 72 (1947), 203-8.

eventually hinted at; as commentaries by the methodological traits also common with grammarians or the interpreters of literary and philosophical works canonised by the scholarly tradition. But allusions to the liturgical background are generally rare, so that it would be incautious to draw any conclusion simply based on their rareness and/or uncertainty in a single work, especially when preserved in anthological form, as in the case of FrCor.²⁸ On the other hand grammatical, etymological and philological observations are also to be found in homilies, even if proposed less frequently and formulated in a somewhat less technical language.²⁹ It is therefore improper to base any argument mainly on the presence of said materials, which do not exclusively refer to one or the other genre.

An important contribution to this problem was given by E. Junod, who pointed out the probably two sole distinguishing features of the Origenian homiletic texts.³⁰ The first one is a more evident edifying intention, based on the persuasion that exegesis, especially when offered to a gathering of faithful, should bring an *ophéleia* (i.e. a spiritual utility or good), in order to nourish and strengthen the faith and virtues of the believers. The second one is an intentional and 'pastoral' reticence concerning some more personal theological theories and approaches – such as *apokathastásis* and eschatological themes, free will and predestination: all matters that raised heated debates already during Origen's life – or even deliberately neglecting heretical theories and mythologies, instead of fussy and far-reaching expositions.³¹

Both features seem to be insufficient to solve our doubts concerning the genre of FrCor. On the one hand, the orthodoxy criterion can hardly be applied to an anthology, whose compilation was clearly guided by a preoccupation to preserve exclusively what in the byzantine age was consistent with official ecclesiastical teachings, obviously much more defined than in Origen's time.³²

²⁸ Indeed, the accurate survey of Origen's whole homiletical corpus made by A. Grappone, 'Annotazioni sul contesto liturgico delle omelie di Origene', *Aug.* 41/2 (2001), 329-62 is simply unable to extract from FrCor any information concerning the liturgical context of Origen's preaching.

²⁹ Some examples can be seen in: P. Nautin, 'Introduction', in *Origène, Homélies sur Jérémie*, SC 232, Paris 1976, 117-8; B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, SBAW 18/1 (Basel, 1987), especially 103-22 about 'Die textkritische Methode im Kommentarwerk', where the author extracts many examples of Origen's philological remarks on the Biblical text both from homiletical and scholastic works, without any visible difference between the two genres.

³⁰ É. Junod, 'En quoi les homélies d'Origène se distinguent-elles de ses commentaires?', in G. Theissen et al. (eds), *Le défi homilétique. L'exégèse au service de la prédication. Actes du 3e cycle de théologie pratique des Facultés de théologie de Suisse Romande 1993*, Pratiques 13 (Génève 1993), 137-70 (German translation in E. Mühlenberg and J. van Oort [eds], *Predigt in der Alten Kirche* [Kampen, 1994], 50-81).

³¹ *Ibid.* 161-6.

³² The careful comparison between the content of FrEph and Jerome's *Commentary on Ephesians*, closely dependent on Origen's source, made by R.E. Heine, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, OECS (Oxford, 2002) has shown how the catena selection generally avoided reserving the more debated themes of Origen's theology, whose presence can still be inferred with reasonable certainty from Jerome's parallel commentary.

On the other hand, whereas the lack of *ophéleia* terminology actually supports the suggestion of a non-homiletical (*i.e.* commentary) nature of FrCor, being an essentially negative criterion it needs to be integrated by further more positive evidence.

In the following paragraphs we shall develop our argument in favour of the commentary nature of FrCor, first contesting that the passages often considered characteristic of an oral communication situation can be assumed as proofs in that sense (4.1); then stressing the typical commentary features that we do recognise in FrCor, thus rendering the hypothesis of a liturgical context in no way pertinent (4.2).

4.1. *Orality in FrCor?*

In our opinion the mechanisms pointed out by A. Monaci (and others) within FrCor as clues for their oral origin³³ are not strictly pertinent only to the form of a preached text. We here refer to the not exceptional use of the 2nd person singular and plural, interpreted as the sign of an appeal to a group of listeners (4.1.1), and to a passage pointed out as a case of ‘a direct appeal which leads us to believe there was a public present’ (4.1.2).

4.1.1. ‘General’ use of the second person singular and plural

According to the Italian scholar’s reasoning, we verified the following examples which it will simply be enough to review.

a) The first is the passage regarding 1Cor. 3:16-20, where – starting from the affirmation found in Paul’s text ‘Do you not know that you are God’s temple’ – Origen comments by saying ‘If you want to understand [our emphasis] what God’s real temple is, look for the squared, living and pure stones placed by the Word’.³⁴

b) A similar use of the 2nd person singular can be found at the end of the same short passage. Starting from the Biblical expression cited by Paul ‘The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile’ (Ps. 94:11 = 1Cor. 3:20), Origen again addresses to a general ‘you’ urging him in this way: ‘So that you can clearly understand, pay attention to Paul who sojourns in Athens and asks questions of those he randomly meets, until some philosophers approach him...’³⁵

c) A third example can be found in the comment of 1Cor. 6: 13-4. Wishing to avoid an inappropriate application of the principle just affirmed by Paul – ‘Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food’ –, in this way

³³ See A. Monaci Castagno, *Origene predicatore e il suo pubblico* (1987), 62⁵⁷.

³⁴ FrCor 16 = Origene, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 86: εἰ θέλει, ἀληθινὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ μαθεῖν.

³⁵ FrCor 16 = *ibid.* 88: “Ἰνα δὲ τοῦτο σαφέστερον νοήσῃς.

Origen warns us against a possible misunderstanding: 'Do not believe that, just as the stomach is made for food and food for the stomach, so even the body is made for carnal union. If you want to understand why the preceding words were said, listen to "Into a holy temple in the Lord"''.³⁶

In all these cases the 'you' whom Origen rhetorically turns to, is meant to enable a further explanation of the meaning, facing a possible difficulty or distorted interpretation: we feel that it evidently is the use of a typical – and indeed very well attested also in FrCor – means of allocution, addressing those who are following an explanation. Without necessarily qualifying such occurrences of 'you' as fictitious, nevertheless they can be explained as very generic ones, not uncommon even in a written text.³⁷ The relatively high frequency of similar addresses also leads us to remember that in the ancient and early Christian world a written commentary to a 'canonical' text (e.g. a philosophical or literary one) was quite normally the review of an exposition originally given in front of an audience of learners. The presence of formal addresses in the Origen texts we have at our disposal could therefore not necessarily be due to a liturgical, but rather to an eventually scholastic origin of commentaries, although they later underwent an editing process that left more or less evident traces of the primitive context they were pronounced in.³⁸

In several other cases, as far as the cases of the use of the 2nd person plural are concerned in FrCor, we believe they can be fully explained by a free paraphrase of the commented Pauline text.

d) A. Monaci also proposes considering as a clue of an oral exposition another passage taken from the comment on 1Cor. 4:6-8 (referring to the expression 'I wish that you had become kings, so that we might be kings with you'), Origen states: 'In fact, when you disciples and listeners enter the Kingdom, then we also will necessarily fully reach the Kingdom of Lord and the Lord Jesus'³⁹. The Italian scholar herein does recognise an imitation of the

³⁶ FrCor 29 = *ibid.* 130: Μὴ νομίσῃς ὅτι ... Εἰ θέλει, τὸν προεγούμενον λόγον μαθεῖν ... ἄκουε. Note that the second example here recorded is very close to that of footnote 34.

³⁷ Several examples of addresses to the 2nd person singular found in Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* are commented by G. Bendinelli, *Il Commentario a Matteo di Origene. L'ambito della metodologia scolastica nell'antichità*, SE Aug 60 (Rome, 1997), 66-71 [= G. Bendinelli, *Il Commentario a Matteo*]. The same scholar applies a similar methodological observation to Origen's *Commentary on John*; see *id.*, 'Il Commento a Giovanni e la tradizione scolastica dell'antichità', in E. Prinzivalli (ed.), *Il Commento a Giovanni di Origene: il testo e i suoi contesti. Atti del VII Convegno di studi del Gruppo Italiano di Ricerca su Origene e la Tradizione Alessandrina (Roma, 28-30 settembre 2004)*, Bibl. Adamantius 3 (Villa Verrucchio, 2005), 133-56.

³⁸ For analogous remarks concerning Didymus' commentaries as works reflecting school methodology, see Didimo il Cieco, *Lezioni sui Salmi. Il Commento ai Salmi scoperto a Tura*, ed. E. Prinzivalli, LCPM 37 (Milano, 2005), 32-5.

³⁹ FrCor 19 = Origen, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 104: "Ὅταν γὰρ ὑμεῖς οἱ μαθηταὶ καὶ ἀκροαταὶ βασιλεύσητε, τότε ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι καὶ ἡμᾶς καταντῆσαι ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ τελείαν βασιλείαν.

Pauline text, but limited only to the term ‘disciples’, which echoes the expression ‘so that you may learn (this) through us’ (1Cor. 4:6); believing that both the pronoun ‘you’ and the word ‘listeners’ refer instead to a public there present.

Without necessarily invoking the probable derivation of Origen’s explanation from teaching, the synonymous couple ‘disciples and listeners’ seems to be well explained in this passage as an amplified paraphrase of Paul’s lemma, strengthening the contrast between the ‘you’ used to refer to the receivers of Paul’s words and the apostolic ‘we’ in which Paul includes even himself in his position as a teacher. Little does it matter that in other places ‘listeners’ (ajkroataiv) indicates a public that was certainly present:⁴⁰ this does not seem enough to render such term a technical one for oral allocution, but rather a term expressing a generic polarity between teacher and disciples, regardless of the concrete communicative situation.

e) Another case of 2nd person plural speech can be found, for instance, in the passage already mentioned regarding 1Cor. 3: 16-20, where Origen unforeseen shifts from ‘we’ to ‘you’ exactly because he returns to imitating Paul’s text, containing the expression ‘You are God’s (holy) temple’: ‘It is therefore fine that we are all in agreement when speaking, so that we are together in the same thought and the same feeling; in fact, in this way, you are a well put together construction, to form a sacred temple to the Lord’.⁴¹

4.1.2. Exhortation and other mechanisms of formal address

Monaci has also classified the following examples of allocution as different from the previously mentioned cases.

f) While commenting 1Cor. 6:1-9, Origen particularly moves from the affirmation ‘neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals ... will inherit the Kingdom of God’ (v. 9), to develop the following recommendation to the youths: ‘Therefore we encourage even you, young men, to keep your age pure and not to contaminate yourselves by feminine corruption of that kind’.⁴² Said exhortation faces the non infrequent case of homosexual abuse of young men, especially committed by teachers, as was a socially accepted in Greek and Hellenistic society, but constantly refused and condemned by Christians.

⁴⁰ A. Monaci Castagno, *Origene predicatore e il suo pubblico* (1987), 63⁵⁷ cites as an example three passages taken from the *Homilies on Jeremiah*.

⁴¹ FrCor 16 = Origene, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 86: οὕτως γὰρ ἔστε οἰκοδομὴ συναρμο-λογουμένη εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν Κυρίῳ.

⁴² FrCor 27 = *ibid.* 126: Παρακαλοῦμεν οὖν καὶ ὑμᾶς, ὃ παῖδες, τηρῆσαι τὴν ἑαυτῶν ὥραν καθαρὰν καὶ μὴ μολυνθῆναι τοιοῦτῳ γυναικεῖῳ μολύσμῳ. This is one of the two passages considered as proof of the belonging of FrCor to the homiletic genre also by Westcott, quoted by C.H. Turner, ‘Greek Patristic Commentaries’ (1904), 493.

It is evident from the context of this passage that Origen's speech is addressed to some categories of potential receivers of his explanation of Paul's letter. Origen almost indiscernibly develops his explanation starting from the recommendation of the Apostle in a sort of enlargement and updating of the primitive text. We may note how he repeatedly paraphrases the Biblical lemma very closely, simply transforming Paul's exhortation into indications for various categories of the church community: 'Let us therefore remain far from judgments and from pagan tribunals...'; 'Let no one be deceived by persuasive words...'; 'Let no one use as an excuse the words: I was young...' and he then concludes by summarising 'May sin therefore reign on no one'. The paraphrase addressed to the 'young men' is simply rhetorically analogous to the previous exhortations, although evident age reasons prevent Origen from identifying himself too sympathetically with the category of *παῖδες*.

g) In a similar way A. Monaci has pointed out the presence of some imperatives in the 2nd person singular calling to special attention his supposed listener, such as in particular two passages introduced by *ἐλθέ*.⁴³ But similar imperatives – such as *ἄκουε*, *ὄρα*, *ἐπίστησον* and many other – occur quite commonly also in commentaries. It would be enough to look at the similar FrEph (whose commentary nature, we recall, has never been put into discussion) to realise that the analogy with FrCor goes far beyond the very similar traditional history and how closely FrEph offer a term of comparison also from the formal point of view.

h) Some expressions – like *εἴποι τις ἄν, ἐρεῖ γάρ τις* – introducing in hypothetical form objections and/or observations made by a fictitious interlocutor are finally qualified by the Italian scholar as markers of a 'diatribe style'.⁴⁴ In her attribution of FrCor to the homiletic genre, she also refers to internal references to previous interpretation⁴⁵ and a method of re-reading the

⁴³ FrCor 51 = Origen, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 182; FrCor 84 = *ibid.* 286; see A. Monaci Castagno, *Origene predicatore e il suo pubblico* (1987), 63⁵⁷. In his article 'Origen on 1st Corinthians' (1909), 29-51, particularly at page 45, C. Jenkins had remarked the peculiar style of the entire second *catena* passage (commenting 1Cor. 15: 20-3) containing *ἐλθέ*: 'This section ... has the appearance of a homily rather than a commentary, unless it be derived from the lost treatise *De resurrectione*'. But Cocchini (see footnote 3), 318-9 suggests that the 'you' addressed by Origen should rather be assimilated to the similar FrCor 89 and to the other related examples we have previously examined.

⁴⁴ FrCor 18 = Origen, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 98; FrCor 31 = *ibid.* 132. Note that in the third example alleged by Monaci (FrCor 87 = *ibid.* 210) the formula introducing a fictitious question in diatribe style (*ἂλλ' ἐρεῖ τις*) does not appear in Origen's text, but actually in the Biblical lemma itself.

⁴⁵ In the same sense, Westcott – quoted by C.H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries' (1904), 493 – considered the small phrase *περὶ ὧν καὶ πρῶην ἐλέγομεν* at the beginning of FrCor 12 = Origen, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 77 as further proof of the homiletic origin of the extant FrCor. No need to demonstrate that the verb *λέγειν* can equally refer to a spoken as well to a written text.

already commented text, developing further and more detailed exegeses.⁴⁶ Both expressive features – although not rare in homilies – are also well attested in the commentaries style, vividly rendering the situation of a scholastic explanation animated by questions, discussions and proposals of solution.⁴⁷

4.2. *Commentary method and style*

By illustrating the last examples we have already introduced some features which can be considered, if not exclusively pertinent to a commentary hypothesis, at least highly compatible with it. Such an ambiguity can be considered as the basis of the hesitation in attributing FrCor to one or the other of the two literary genres. As already mentioned, from 1904 to 1909, C.H. Turner himself changed his opinion, switching from the more conventional ‘homilies’ to the more personal ‘commentary’ solution. Although in 1904 he had already underscored: ‘Yet the Origen quotations in that Catena are so full, that it may be questioned whether so small a number of homilies as 11 could have provided so much matter’.⁴⁸

In our opinion, the right path towards the solution of the genre problem consists essentially in a more careful examination of the way the Pauline text is treated within FrCor. The overly technical language, but even more precisely the density of the exegesis often used in FrCor are not far at all from the usual language in commentaries. We refer to the very detailed expository style, by which a Biblical lemma is first enunciated in its fullness and then reduced into smaller units, to be carefully explained through a step-by-step discourse. Indeed, no other known homily series by Origen ever presented an explanation covering so much of the Biblical text⁴⁹ and with such regular distribution.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ For further examples of fictitious questions and internal repetitions as normal methodology to develop a scholastic quaestio see G. Bendinelli, *Il Commentario a Matteo* (see footnote 37), 66-71 and 140-216. Monaci herself, while describing Origen’s way of preaching, implicitly admits the almost complete fusion of methodologies between homilies and commentaries: ‘Il predicatore ... unisce all’elemento estemporaneo ... che gli consente sviluppi e digressioni sul filo di associazioni di immagini bibliche, quello ripetitivo-didattico che gli proviene dalla sua esperienza di scuola, dal possesso cioè di un metodo di insegnamento ... Del resto un aspetto fondamentale dell’insegnamento del grammatico era appunto la lettura ed il commento dei testi’, A. Monaci Castagno, *Origene predicatore e il suo pubblico* (1987), 78-9.

⁴⁸ C.H. Turner, ‘Greek Patristic Commentaries’ (1904), 493; as already seen [footnote 8], some years later, after the publication of Jenkins’s edition Turner definitely changed his opinion concerning the literary genre.

⁴⁹ The closest terms of comparison have already been mentioned in footnote 23; on the other hand, the *Homilies on Luke* [footnote 11], although translated into Latin, can hypothetically be compared to FrCor as the sole preserved cycle of Origenian homilies on the New Testament.

⁵⁰ In general, the Biblical text commented in Origen’s homiletical series extends in a very free way from a few verses to some chapters, summarised in their content or simply examined in their more relevant aspects. For a comprehensive survey of the preserved homily series and their content, see A. Grappone, ‘Annotazioni sul contesto liturgico delle omelie di Origene’ (2001), 29-44.

Rendering the evidence of this internal criticism compatible with the already remembered testimony made by Jerome in his well-known list of Origenian works remains a difficult task that is probably impossible to solve. According to many scholars, the omission of a Commentary on 1*Corinthians* from the list of *Ep.* 33,4 could be due to a *saut de même au même*; said solution has often been accepted and repeated.⁵¹ It is quite probable that the intention to link this text to the external evidence of Eusebius-Jerome played an important (although not necessarily intentional) role in the relative success of the 'homilies' hypothesis.⁵²

Until now there seems to have been less consideration of the possibility that Jerome, or the source he depended on, simply ignored the existence of any written works regarding 1*Corinthians*, at least at the moment when the list of Origen's works was transcribed. It would certainly not be the only mistake in Jerome's list, which seems to be lacking certain elements when compared to what we know from other sources: in fact, we read only the mention of a cycle of 17 *Homilies on Hebrews*, whereas nothing is mentioned regarding the existence of a commentary on the same book, in contrast with the four *excerpta* extracted from it preserved in Pamphilus' *Apology for Origen*.⁵³

Therefore, on the whole, it would be more prudent to bear in mind the incomplete reliability of the testimony of *Ep.* 33, rather than to accuse the manuscript tradition for all its limits.

⁵¹ C.H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries' (1904), 493 mentions Preuschen's proposal to identify FrCor with the 11 homilies (wrongly) related to 2*Corinthians* by Jerome, supposing that the information contained was nothing but a mistake which occurred accidentally in the manuscript tradition and actually referring to our *catena* text. See P. Nautin, *Origène* (1977), 240, 254 §46; Y.-M. Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien* (2003), 114.

⁵² A complement to said solution, still in the framework of the textual corruption mechanisms, implies that the work named in the list was actually 1*Corinthians*, and that the latter was accidentally changed from 'first' into 'second'. This would have in no way any bearing on the placing of this work among the homilies, that are listed by Jerome in a clearly distinguished section of his catalogue, apart from commentaries (*libri*).

⁵³ Now reprinted in Origene, *Exegetica* (see footnote 3), 408-11.

Resurrection, Spiritual Interpretation, and Moral Reformation: A Functional Approach to Resurrection in Origen

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ABSTRACT

Origen's understanding of the resurrection has been one of the most controversial aspects of his thought, and scholars such as Henri Crouzel have focused on adjudicating the merit of the accusations leveled against his views by his critics, both ancient and modern. Although this line of research has cleared away some misunderstandings, it remains an approach shaped by his opponents' questions and concerns. Instead of starting from the points of contention – resurrection's nature and mechanism – this study asks about its function in Origen, specifically focusing on how Origen uses resurrection to argue for the necessity of the spiritual interpretation of Scripture. Commenting on Jesus' rebuke of the Sadducees for knowing neither the Scriptures nor the power of God because they do not realize that there will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage in the resurrection (*Matth.* 22:29-30), Origen claims that this teaching is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament. He rejects suggestions that Jesus misspoke, *Matthew* mis-recorded Jesus' words, or the resurrection is to be found in 'hidden' books, instead arguing that marriageless resurrection is found in the Old Testament only when interpreted spiritually. Similarly, Origen argues that an important function of Jesus' Easter resurrection is to confirm his identity as the Son of God to his Jewish disciples so that he can teach them how to interpret the Scriptures spiritually without driving them away in shock. Furthermore, the fact that, for Origen, both resurrection and spiritual interpretation perform the same function – producing moral reformation – reinforces the connection between the two. In turn, this connection illuminates Origen's disdain for what he sees as the crass morality of Christians who insist on crass eschatology and crass exegesis.

One of the most controversial aspects of Origen's thought has been his understanding of the resurrection. Although he affirmed the resurrection of the dead as an apostolic doctrine in *On First Principles*,¹ he has been repeatedly accused of denying the doctrine or reinterpreting it to an unrecognizable degree.²

¹ *On First Principles* I Preface 5.

² See the criticisms of Methodius, Epiphanius, and Jerome (among others), and the eleventh anathema against Origen of the Second Council of Constantinople. For a survey of anti-Origenism, see Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992), ch. 3.

Consequently, his views on the resurrection played an important role in the fierce controversies that developed around his legacy, culminating in the Second Council of Constantinople's anathema against those who affirm an ethereal resurrection and the destruction of the substance of our current bodies.

As a result, more recent interpreters, such as Henri Crouzel, have focused on adjudicating the merit of these accusations, seeking to determine what exactly Origen thought was going to happen in the eschatological resurrection and whether or not his views were as problematic as his opponents claimed they were.³ Consequently, the few passages in which Origen directly addresses the 'mechanics' of the resurrection, such as the fragment of his commentary on *Psalm 1* preserved by Epiphanius,⁴ have received much attention. However, although this line of research has brought real advances – scholars now recognize, for example, that Methodius misunderstood or misrepresented Origen's view that the soul retains the εἶδος of the body in the resurrection⁵ – it remains an approach to Origen's view of the resurrection that is shaped by the questions and concerns of his opponents.

An alternative approach, however, is to focus on the *function* of resurrection instead of resurrection's *mechanics*.⁶ So, instead of asking what exactly Origen

³ In a series of articles published between 1972 and 1982, Henri Crouzel explores Origen's understanding of the resurrection in great detail with an eye towards countering the caricatures of Origen's eschatology derived from his opponents: 'L'exégèse de 1 Cor. 3,11-15 et la purification eschatologique', in Jean Daniélou, Jacques Fontaine and Charles Kannengiesser (eds), *Epektasis, Mélanges offerts au Cardinal J. Daniélou* (Paris, 1972), 273-83; 'Les critiques adressées par Méthode et ses contemporains à la doctrine origénienne du corps ressuscité', *Gregorianum* 53 (1972), 679-716; 'La «première» et la «seconde» résurrection des hommes d'après Origène', *Didaskalia* 3 (1973), 3-20; 'Les prophéties de la résurrection chez Origène', in Michele Pellegrino (ed.), *Forma Futuri, Studi in onore del Cardinale M. Pellegrino* (Turin, 1975), 980-92; 'La thèse platonicienne du «véhicule de l'âme» chez Origène', *Didaskalia* 7 (1977), 225-37; 'L'Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène', *Gregorianum* 59 (1978), 291-331; 'Mort et immortalité selon Origène', *BLE* 79 (1978), 19-38, 82-96, 181-96; 'La doctrine origénienne du corps ressuscité', *BLE* 81 (1980), 175-200, 241-66; 'Différences entre les ressuscités selon Origène', *JAC Ergänzungsband* 9 (1982), 107-16. Crouzel summarizes his findings in *Origen* (San Francisco, 1989), ch. 13. Similarly, Henry Chadwick defends Origen against Justinian's accusation of teaching that resurrection bodies will be spheres in 'Origen, Celsus, and the Resurrection of the Body', *HTR* 41 (1948), 83-102. Most recently, and in conversation with earlier defenders of Origen, see Lawrence R. Hennessey, 'Origen of Alexandria: The Fate of the Soul and the Body after Death', *SecCent* 8 (1991), 163-78; Mark Julian Edwards, 'Origen No Gnostic; Or, On the Corporeality of Man', *JTS* NS 43 (1992), 23-37; and *id.*, 'Origen's Two Resurrections', *JTS* NS 46 (1995), 502-18. For a sample of the kind of scholarship on Origen's eschatology and understanding of the resurrection to which Crouzel and Chadwick were responding, see Eugène de Faye, *Origen and His Work* (London, 1926), 145-65.

⁴ *Panarion* LXIV 12.1-16.9.

⁵ H. Crouzel, 'La doctrine origénienne du corps ressuscité' (1980), 250-7.

⁶ In its focus on the 'work' done by resurrection for Origen, this study draws its inspiration from recent studies of early biblical interpretation that privilege the actual function of various interpretive strategies. See David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient*

seems to have thought would happen at the resurrection, we ask what Origen is doing when he invokes resurrection. I believe that this approach can open up insights into resurrection's place in his thought that might be clouded by an excessive focus on *how* Origen says the resurrection will *happen*. This approach might also help us understand why Origen taught such a controversial view of the resurrection.

One of the challenges posed by this approach is the sheer volume of data. Not only are Origen's writings rife with resurrection terminology, but that terminology has a variety of referents: the eschatological resurrection of the dead, Jesus' resurrection at Easter, the believer's moral resurrection associated with baptism, and so forth. Although one could analyze the functions of each of these resurrections in isolation from each other, I believe that a more fruitful way forward is to analyze every instance of the language of resurrection. By casting as wide a net as possible, such an approach can detect patterns in the function of resurrection across different referents that might suggest deeper structures in Origen's thought.

Of course, to be truly comprehensive, one would need to trace Origen's use of all terminology that could be associated with resurrection. Thus, in addition to obvious terms like ἀνίστημι and ἀνάστασις, it would need to take into account terms like ἐγείρω. For the purposes of this study, however, I have restricted my attention to forms of ἀνίστημι, along with forms of *resurrectio* in Latin translations of Origen's works. These terms occur so frequently in Origen's extant works that I believe attention to them provides a representative sample of Origen's use of resurrection terminology.

Even with this restriction, though, the number of relevant passages runs into the hundreds. Since discussing the full findings that emerge from these passages would require a much larger study, the aim of this study is modest: it seeks only to explore briefly some of the connections that a functional analysis reveals between resurrection and spiritual interpretation in Origen. I hope, however, that the fruitfulness of a functional analysis becomes apparent even in this short study.

The first passage of interest comes from the seventeenth book of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*.⁷ Origen is commenting on the passage in which the Sadducees try to illustrate the absurdity of the eschatological resurrection with a story about a woman who consecutively marries seven brothers (*Matth.* 22:23-33).

Alexandria (Berkeley, 1992), and Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, 1999).

⁷ Origen's discussion of this passage is in *Commentary on Matthew* XVII 29-36 (*Origenes Werke* X, ed. Erich Klostermann, GCS 40 [Leipzig, 1935-7], 663-703; all translations of Origen are my own). In XVII 29, he discusses the relationship between the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection and that of the recipients of 1 *Corinthians*. In XVII 30-2, Origen offers a fascinating allegorical interpretation of the levirate marriage law upon which the Sadducees base their question. He begins to treat the actual discussion in XVII 33.

In response, Jesus accuses the Sadducees of knowing neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. The Sadducees' crude attempt at a *reductio ad absurdum*, Jesus says, fails because they do not understand that people will neither marry nor be given in marriage in the resurrection; instead, they will live like the angels in heaven.

Origen stops and dwells on Jesus' accusation that the Sadducees do not know the Scriptures.⁸ He asks: Which Scriptures teach that there will be no marrying in the resurrection? Where in the law or the prophets do we learn that people will be like the angels in heaven after the resurrection? Origen answers at the outset of his discussion that no such teachings can be found in the Old Testament, at least not expressed explicitly. How, then, can Jesus castigate the Sadducees for not knowing the Scriptures?

Origen acknowledges that some might restrict the Sadducees' ignorance of Scripture to their truncated canon and attribute their ignorance about the resurrected state to their ignorance of the power of God.⁹ This reading would make the details of the resurrected state a function of God's power instead of Scripture's content, saving the interpreter from needing to find those details taught in Scripture. But Origen is clearly not satisfied with this answer. Despite acknowledging its possibility and refraining from directly refuting it, he twice steers the reader towards a different solution. Instead of denying that Jesus' claim implies that these details about the resurrection are taught in Scripture, he accepts that claim and asks how we might make sense of it.¹⁰ One solution, he says, is simply to disbelieve *Matthew's* account and say that Jesus made no such claim. Another solution is to accept *Matthew's* account but disbelieve Jesus. A third solution is to look to the 'ἀποκρύφους' for texts that give clearer details about the resurrected existence.¹¹ Origen rejects all of these solutions: The first denies the truth of Scripture, the second denies Jesus' reliability, and the third functions outside that which is commonly accepted among those who have believed.¹² The only acceptable solution, the one to which Origen returns, is to claim that these details about the resurrected life are taught in Scripture – *but only when Scripture is interpreted according to its deeper, spiritual sense*.¹³ Origen appeals to *Heb. 10:1's* claim that the law is only the shadow of good things to come to justify such interpretation in general.¹⁴ He then points to the

⁸ *Commentary on Matthew XVII 34.*

⁹ *Commentary on Matthew XVII 35.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ 'λόγους' is suggested as a conjectural emendation in order to supply a noun for 'ἀποκρύφους' to modify (GCS 40, 698).

¹² οὐκ ἐπὶ ὁμολογούμενον πρᾶγμα παρὰ τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν ἐλεύσεται (GCS 40, 698).

¹³ Origen consistently uses the term τροπολογία to refer to this deeper exegesis (XVII 34 [GCS 40, 692]). When he invokes *Gal. 4* to justify it, however, he shifts to ἀλληγορία (XVII 35 [GCS 40, 698]).

¹⁴ *Commentary on Matthew XVII 34.*

Sarah-Hagar allegory in *Gal.* 4:22-31 and the claim in *Eph.* 5:32 that marriage is a great mystery pointing to Christ and the church to justify the spiritual interpretation of Old Testament narratives and laws about marriage. That the resurrected will be like the angels, neither marrying nor being given in marriage, is hidden in these laws and narratives. Thus, Origen concludes that the Sadducees' problem was not that they missed something explicitly taught in Scripture; their mistake was to deny the existence of a deeper sense in Scripture.¹⁵

Of course, this interpretive move should come as no surprise. Origen is famous for using difficulties in the text to prove the need for spiritual interpretation, as he himself explains in *On First Principles*.¹⁶ I have highlighted this move, however, because it shows how Origen uses the Old Testament's notorious vagueness on the nature of the afterlife to connect discussions of the resurrection life to spiritual interpretation. In the next passage I will discuss, Origen again uses resurrection to justify spiritual interpretation, although in a different way.

At the beginning of the second book of *Against Celsus*, Origen responds to the accusation that Jewish converts to Christianity have been deluded into abandoning their ancestral law.¹⁷ As part of his response, Origen tries to explain why some of Jesus' disciples, such as Peter, continued to observe the law literally while with Jesus and even for some time after his ascension. Origen explains this delayed shift in attitude toward the law by arguing that Jesus could not have introduced Peter and the other disciples to spiritual interpretation of the Jewish law until after his death and resurrection.¹⁸ The disciples, Origen observes, were Jewish, and as such had been trained up since infancy to be committed to the literal interpretation of the Jewish law. Had Jesus decided to tell them about spiritual interpretation of the law, his disciples probably would have been unable to accept such teaching. Instead of accepting these shocking new ideas because of their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, the son of the living God, Origen says that Jesus' disciples would have turned on Jesus because they would not have been able to imagine that the Messiah could say such blasphemous things about the law. According to Origen, this is why Jesus told his

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Origen does not, however, indicate which Old Testament laws relating to marriage teach, when interpreted spiritually, that the resurrected will neither marry nor be given in marriage. He does, however, offer a list of the kinds of laws concerning marriage in which spiritual truths can be discerned (without saying what truths should be discerned in them): laws about divorce, polygamous marriages in which one wife is loved and another hated, marriages to women captured in war, etc. When he treats Jesus' Old Testament proof-text ('I am the God of Abraham', etc.), he sees in it only evidence for life after death (*Commentary on Matthew* XVII 36). He does not draw out implications for the nature of that life.

¹⁶ *On First Principles* IV 2.9.

¹⁷ *Against Celsus* II 1.

¹⁸ *Against Celsus* II 2.

disciples in *John* 16:12 that he still had many things to say to them, although they could not yet bear to hear them. Jesus needed to wait until *after* his death and resurrection to introduce them to spiritual interpretation. The idea seems to have been that it was only after Jesus' death and resurrection that his disciples would have been so sure of his identity as the Messiah that they could have accepted this new teaching about spiritual interpretation. Thus, when Peter was on the roof in Joppa, he was finally ready to learn about the true interpretation of the law.

This reading is supported by the fact that we find Jesus' resurrection performing this same identity-confirming function at the end of the twelfth book of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*.¹⁹ Origen is commenting on Jesus' injunction to Peter, James, and John after the transfiguration to not tell anyone about what they had seen until after his resurrection (*Matth.* 17:9). He says that this was Jesus' way of protecting the multitudes from being overly shaken by his crucifixion after hearing about his prior, glorious transfiguration. Once they had seen Jesus' resurrected glory, they could be told about his transfiguration without the danger of being devastated by the incongruity of the crucifixion of one who had been so glorified.

To return to Peter and the law, then, we see how Origen has once again linked resurrection with spiritual interpretation. Where he earlier used Jesus' claim about what Scripture says about the resurrected state to prove the necessity of spiritual interpretation, here the function of Jesus' own resurrection is to produce the conditions under which spiritual interpretation could be introduced to the fledgling Christian movement. Thus, Origen can say, in a homily on *Exodus*, that Jesus' resurrection was a turning point, after which 'he filled the believers with bread, because he gave to us the books of the law and the prophets that were formerly unknown and unexamined, and granted these documents to the church for our instruction, so that he himself might be the bread in the gospel'.²⁰

The connection between resurrection and spiritual interpretation in Origen goes beyond the simple fact that resurrection necessitates or enables spiritual interpretation, however. Origen also consistently – although certainly not exclusively – has resurrection performing the same function as spiritual interpretation of Scripture: that is, to produce moral transformation.

This function appears across all the possible referents of resurrection terminology; I can only mention representative samples here. First, in his *Commentary on John*, Origen explains that Jesus claims to be the resurrection and the

¹⁹ *Commentary on Matthew* XII 17, XII 19.

²⁰ *Homilies on Exodus* VII 8: 'Credentes repleverit panibus pro eo, quod libros legis et prophetarum ignotos prius et incognitos dederit nobis et ad instructionem nostrum haec ecclesiae instrumenta concesserit, ut ipse sit panis in evangelio' (Origenes Werke VI, ed. Willem A. Baehrens, GCS 29 [Leipzig, 1920], 215).

life because he produces a real moral transformation in those who draw near to him, casting off that which is dead and assuming a newness of life.²¹ Second, Jesus' Easter resurrection also makes possible a new kind of life characterized by a new morality. For example, in his *Commentary on Romans*, he develops the idea that Jesus' resurrection establishes a pattern of obedient death and mortification followed by resurrection and new life, a pattern creating the possibility of emulation through death to sin, mortification of vices, and moral transformation in this life that produces likeness to Christ.²² Similarly, noting that Jesus begins to call the disciples 'brothers' instead of 'children' after Easter, which he reasons must indicate their maturation, Origen says in the *Commentary on John* that it is 'just as if they were changed by the resurrection of Jesus'.²³ Third, drawing on *Rom.* 6:3-11, Origen makes extensive use of resurrection language to describe the moral transformation of the believer associated with baptism. Thus, Origen invokes the sense of resurrection as walking in newness of life to explain how Scripture, on the one hand, can describe physically alive but morally corrupt people as dead (Adam and Eve dying immediately after eating from the forbidden tree) while, on the other hand, describing physically dead but morally renewed people as alive (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).²⁴ And finally, for Origen, the eschatological resurrection differentiates among the resurrected in a way that reflects and carries forward the processes of moral transformation (or deformation) begun in this life.²⁵ As a result, Origen claims that, in contrast to the Pharisees, who believe in the resurrection of the dead and the world to come, the Sadducees 'know nothing stored up after this life for a person, whether for the one who progressed towards virtue or for the one who did not even take care to begin to depart from the mountains of vice'.²⁶

The importance for Origen of the connection between resurrection and moral reformation becomes especially clear when he uses that connection to differentiate the Christian understanding of resurrection from dangerously similar competitors. In *Against Celsus* I 68, Celsus accepts for the sake of argument the veracity of the miraculous stories associated with Jesus, including his resurrection, but then asks how these are any different from the miracles associated with common magicians. In response, Origen contrasts Jesus' motives with those of magicians: While the latter perform miracles for show and never think

²¹ *Commentary on John* I 37.

²² *Commentary on Romans* V 9.7, IX 39.2-4.

²³ *Commentary on John* XXXII 30.372: ὡς περὶ μεταποιηθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ (*Origène: Commentaire sur Saint Jean V*, ed. Cécile Blanc, SC 385 [Paris, 1992], 346).

²⁴ *Commentary on John* XX 25.

²⁵ See H. Crouzel, 'Différences entre les ressuscités selon Origène' (1982).

²⁶ *Commentary on Matthew* XII 1: οὐδὲν ἴσασι μετὰ τὸν βίον τοῦτον ἀνθρώπων ἀποκείμενον, ἥτοι ὡς ἐπ' ἀρετὴν προκόψαντι ἢ μηδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐπιτηδεύσαντι ἐξελθεῖν τῶν τῆς κακίας ὁρῶν (GCS 40, 69-71).

to use their skills and proceeds to incite others to morally reformed lives, Jesus uses miracles to bring about the ‘correcting of morals’ (τὴν τῶν ἡθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν) among those who see his works.²⁷ In other words, Jesus’ resurrection is distinguished from anything a magician might do by its connection to positive moral reformation.

In a second passage, Celsus uses the voice of a mocking Jew to argue that Christianity’s teachings about the resurrection of the dead, the judgment of God, and the honor and fire that will come upon the righteous and unrighteous, respectively, are nothing new because they are already taught in Judaism.²⁸ Once again, Origen sets off the Christian view by appealing to moral reformation: ‘[A]ll the teachings of present-day Jews are myths and trifles, for they do not have the light of the knowledge of the Scriptures. The teachings of the Christians, on the other hand, are the truth, able to lift up and raise to a height a person’s soul and understanding, and persuading a person to have a citizenship, not like the earthly one of the earthly Jews, but one in heaven’.²⁹

As for spiritual interpretation, Karen Jo Torjesen has shown how integral it is to Origen’s vision of moral transformation.³⁰ The image of God in the human soul is restored through a process of moral purification and ever-increasing knowledge of the Logos, and exegesis of Scripture both reflects and moves this process forward. Thus, beyond the fact that the three levels of interpretation described in *On First Principles* IV 2.4 – body, soul, and spirit – correspond to readers at different stages along the path to full restoration of the divine image, Origen’s sequential interpretations of verses in a passage are designed to apply the Logos’ teachings in those verses to the reader in a way that furthers his or her spiritual progress.³¹ In his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, for example, Origen not only draws the reader’s attention through each verse’s meaning with respect to the church’s relationship to Christ and then the soul’s to Christ, but he also uses the sequence of spiritual meanings to draw the reader towards a deeper understanding of the soul’s progressive union with the bridegroom.³² Without spiritual interpretation, as Origen himself says, the result of reading the *Song of Songs* is quite the opposite of spiritual edification.³³

²⁷ *Against Celsus* I 68: ὁ δὲ δι’ ὧν ἐποίει παραδόξων ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ἡθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν τοὺς θεωροῦντας τὰ γινόμενα καλῶν (*Origène: Contre Celse I*, ed. Marcel Borret, SC 132 [Paris, 1967], 268).

²⁸ *Against Celsus* II 5.

²⁹ *Against Celsus* II 5: πάντα μὲν τὰ Ἰουδαίων τῶν νῦν μύθους καὶ λήρους – οὐ γὰρ ἔχουσι τὸ φῶς τῆς γνώσεως τῶν γραφῶν –, τὰ δὲ Χριστιανῶν ἀλήθειαν, ἐπᾶραι καὶ μετεωρίσαι ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴν καὶ νοῦν δυνάμενα καὶ πείθοντα ἔχειν τι πολίτευμα οὐχ ὅμοιον τοῖς κάτω Ἰουδαίοις κάτω που ἀλλ’ ἐν οὐρανοῖς (SC 132, 292).

³⁰ Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Structure in Origen’s Exegesis* (Berlin and New York, 1986).

³¹ *Ibid.* 130-8.

³² *Ibid.* 55-6, 93-6.

³³ *Commentary on the Song of Songs* Prologue 1.

That resurrection not only necessitates and enables spiritual interpretation but also often performs the same function illuminates why Origen thinks crass exegesis and crass eschatology go hand in hand with crass morality. Thus, in *On First Principles*, Origen attacks Christians who ‘think that the future promises of return are to be expected in the enjoyment and wanton excess of the body’.³⁴ He accuses these Christians of understanding the Scriptures in a ‘Judaistic’ sense,³⁵ because they ‘desire, after the resurrection, to have the particular kind of flesh from which the faculty for eating and drinking and doing all the things of flesh and blood will never be absent’.³⁶ In other words, these Christians are using the eschatological resurrection to guarantee that ‘that which is should be once again’, thereby justifying fleshly desires and enjoyments.³⁷ For these Christians, resurrection’s function is to validate the status quo, both hermeneutically and morally – the exact opposite of what we have seen to be one of its key functions for Origen. No wonder he found their views to be so perverse.

³⁴ *On First Principles* II 11.2: ‘Arbitrantur repromissiones futuras in uoluptate et luxuria corporis expectandas’ (Origène: *Traité des Principes I*, ed. Henri Crouzel and Manlio Simonetti, SC 252 [Paris, 1978], 396).

³⁵ *On First Principles* II 11.2: ‘Haec ita sentient qui Christo quidem credunt, Iudaico autem quodam sensu scripturas diuinas intellegentes, nihil ex his dignum diuinis pollicitationibus praesumpserunt’ (SC 252, 398).

³⁶ *On First Principles* II 11.2: ‘Praecipue carnes iterum desiderant post resurrectionem tales, quibus manducandi et bibendi et omnia, quae carnis et sanguinis sunt, agendi nusquam desit facultas’ (SC 252, 396).

³⁷ *On First Principles* II 11.2: ‘Ut iterum sit hoc, quod est’ (SC 252, 398).

‘Preexistence of Souls’? The ἀρχή and τέλος of Rational Creatures in Origen and Some Origenians

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ABSTRACT

I examine the doctrine of the soul, its composition, origin, and destiny, in some eminent Christian Platonists: Origen with his doctrine of the λογικά, the Christian Middle Platonist Bardaisan of Edessa, Gregory of Nyssa, Evagrius, and Adamantius in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* (which I suspect to include more of Origen’s thought than is commonly assumed). I investigate how their psychology is related to the themes of creation and apokatastasis, a doctrine that, not accidentally, is shared by them all, but that does not presuppose a belief in the ‘preexistence of souls’. A common pattern emerges, which renders the label ‘preexistence of souls’ inadequate. From this research it results that the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, Gregory, and Evagrius are closer to Origen’s authentic thought on the λογικά and their spiritual bodies between protology and eschatology than is usually assumed. Gregory, I argue, did not criticise Origen’s purported preexistence of souls. As for Bardaisan, more and more clues point to a relationship with Origen’s thought and his tradition.

Origen

Justinian, who never read Origen’s writings, promoted a condemnation of what he mistook for his doctrines. Among the rebuttals of doctrines that he attributes to Origen, but were not Origen’s, in his letter to Men(n)as a prominent place is occupied by that of the ‘preexistence of souls’, which is still ascribed to Origen by scholars,² and was already known at the end of the third century: Pamphilus *Apol.* 159 attests that Origen was being accused of maintaining the preexistence

¹ I warmly thank Mark J. Edwards, Christopher Beeley and Panayiotis Tzamalikos for participating in the workshop *The Soul in the Origenian Tradition*, and Mark for co-organising it. I am also grateful to all those in attendance for the excellent discussion we had on both days.

² Just to give an example of how Origen’s preexistence is still often depicted: Origen imposed ‘a mind-body dualism upon the human organism in which the intellectual part of the soul both preexisted and was severed from the body in which it was provisionally contained’, so Susan Wessel, ‘The Reception of Greek Science in Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*’, *VC* 63 (2009), 24-46, 25.

of souls to their own bodies. Justinian derives most charges precisely from that of the preexistence. Origen's notion of the existence of the Ideas or *logoi* of all realities in God's Logos-Wisdom *ab aeterno* is presented by Justinian as the heretical doctrine of the coeternity of genera and species with God (συννῆδια). Justinian thinks that Origen taught the coeternity of souls with God, their preexistence as disembodied entities, 'bare souls', their embodiment only after their fall, and even their metempsychosis.³ The charge of supporting metempsychosis in *Princ.* I is then expressed by Photius, *Bibl. Cod.* 8,3b-4a Bekker: μετεμψυχώσεις τε γὰρ ληρωδεῖ. Justinian closely relates preexistence of souls to metempsychosis (88-90): 'the cause of this absurdity [*sc.* metempsychosis] is the following: to believe that souls preexisted'. He cites Gregory Nyssen's refutation of the preexistence of souls;⁴ he deems it directed against Origen, which is not the case, as I shall show. About a decade later, in his *Epistula ad synodum de Origene*, Justinian connects again the doctrines he ascribes to Origen with Pythagoras, Plato, and Plotinus on the basis of Origen's supposed adhesion to the metempsychosis theory, and attributes again to Origen the idea that souls put on bodies as a result of their fall, after a disembodied preexistence.⁵ But in Origen's view the *logika* did not receive a body for the first time after their fall and as a result of it.

In fact, metempsychosis was overtly and repeatedly rejected by Origen as impious. I need not even argue this.⁶ Also, Origen was clear that the Ideas/*logoi*

³ 'Those *logika* who had committed sin and for this reason fell from the condition in which they were, according to the gravity of their sins became incarnated in bodies for punishment; they are purified and return to the condition in which they were before; they take off their bodies completely, and then again, for the second and third time, and many more times, they are incarnated again in different bodies for the sake of punishment'. At 106-16 Justinian collects Greek quotations from Origen's Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, but from the lore of bits that had been used for centuries in the Origenist controversy, always cut at the very same points, modified, extrapolated from their context, and at best misunderstood, when not utterly falsified. Justinian never read the whole masterpiece of Origen, let alone anything else of his commentaries or other works. From Book 1, 'creatures are coeternal with God', is a misunderstanding of the eternal existence of Ideas of all things in God's Logos. Justinian then passes on to the fall of the *logika* and endeavours to present Origen's doctrine as a kind of metempsychosis that goes so far as to include the assumption of animal's (even fishes') bodies on the part of human souls. But Origen was adamant in his rejection of any form of metempsychosis. Justinian does not pay attention to the metaphorical value of Origen's statements and his words, ἵν' οὕτως εἴπω. At the end of his letter to Menas, among the anathemas that had to be subscribed by bishops and abbots and represented 'Origen's blasphemies', Justinian lists again the preexistence of bare souls, their union with bodies after the fall as punishment, and the coeternity of creatures with God.

⁴ At 92, Justinian insists again that the right doctrine of the Fathers 'forbids to say that souls exist prior to bodies' (93; see 96).

⁵ 'When the intellects had satiety [κόρος], so to say, of the love and contemplation of God, according to each one's change into the worse, they put on bodies, fine or more dense [λεπτομερέστερα ἢ παχυμερέστερα σώματα ἀμφιάσασθαι]'. Likewise in Anath. 1, 14, and 15 appended to the 553 Council decrees, the 'preexistence of souls' is mirrored by the restoration of disembodied intellects. Origen supported neither.

⁶ See Panayiotis Tzamalikos, *Origen: Philosophy of History and Eschatology* (Leiden, 2007), 48-53, with my rev. in *RFN* 100 (2008), 453-8. See also U. Bianchi, 'L'anima in Origene e la

of rational creatures, which preexisted *ab aeterno* in God's Logos-Wisdom with those of all beings,⁷ became substances only when they were created as independent beings. In *Princ.* II 9,2 Origen insists that the *logika* were created while they did not exist; they began to exist at a certain point (albeit not in the time measured by the sun and the stars, which did not yet exist⁸). They began to exist as created independent substances, not coeternal with God: '*secundum praefigurationem et praeformationem semper erant in Sapientia ea, quae protinus etiam substantialiter facta sunt*' (*Princ.* I 4,4-5). The preexistence of the *logika* as projects in God's Logos and their subsequent creation as substances is also declared in a Greek passage: *Comm. in Io.* I 19,114-5. Here Origen uses the metaphor of a project in an architect's mind that was used by Philo:⁹

A house or ship are built on architectonic models, so one can say that the principle of the house or ship consists in the paradigms and *logoi* found in the craftsman. In the same way, I think, all things were made according to the *logoi* of future beings that God had already manifested beforehand in Wisdom. It is necessary to maintain that God founded [κτίσας], so to say, a living Wisdom, and handed it the task of transmitting the structure [πλάσις], forms [εἶδη], and, to my mind, substances [οὐσίαι] too, from the archetypes in it to beings and matter.

God's Wisdom contains all forms-Ideas or paradigms of all creatures. These existed there *ab aeterno*, before their creation as substances. But they do not exist *ab aeterno* substantially as creatures. In this respect, not even the *logika* are coeternal with God. Only the Son and the Spirit are. Rational creatures are created prior to the time measured by stars – Origen was aware of the 'perishability axiom' (see below) –, but not coeternal with God, since only God is eternal proper.¹⁰

questione della metempsychosi', *Augustinianum* 26 (1986), 33-50; L. Lies, 'Origenes und Reinkarnation', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 121 (1999), 139-58; 249-68.

⁷ Besides *Princ.* I 4,4-5, quoted immediately below, see also *Comm. in Io.* I 9 (11) and XIX 22 (5), in which the Son, as Wisdom containing many forms, is identified with the intelligible world. This is conceived in a Middle-Platonic fashion: the Ideas are in God's Logos, rather than in hyperouranios. What Origen criticises in *Princ.* II 3,6 is not necessarily Plato's view: 'Let nobody have occasion to maintain that I affirm the existence of the images that the Greeks call Ideas, because it is alien to my way of thinking to maintain the existence of an incorporeal world that consists only in fantasy, or mental representation, and in the fallaciousness/transitoriness of thoughts'. George Boys-Stones, 'Time, Creation, and the Mind of God', *OSAPh* 40 (2011), 319-37, 334, thinks that Origen is here rejecting the *Stoic anti-Platonic* position. Indeed, Plato did not at all regard his metaphysical Ideas as images, fantasies, or thoughts, or mental representations that can be wrong or are transitory. Nor did Origen consider the Ideas inside God's Logos in this way.

⁸ In Middle Platonism, e.g., Plutarch, *Quaest.* 1007C, it was common to regard time as having its beginning with the cosmos, and more particularly with the movement of the sky.

⁹ See my 'Cristo-Logos in Origene', in *Dal Logos dei Greci e dei Romani al Logos di Dio. Ricordando Marta Sordi* (Milan, 2011), 295-317.

¹⁰ See my 'Origene ed il lessico dell'eternità', *Adamantius* 14 (2008), 100-29. On God as absolutely transcending time see Panayiotis Tzamalikos, *Origen: Cosmology and Ontology of Time* (Leiden, 2006), 21-38, with my review in *RfN* 99 (2007), 177-81.

Justinian levels against Origen the same accusation as Porphyry did: that of applying to Scripture the exegetical strategy of Greek allegoresis, used by philosophers in the interpretation of myths.¹¹ Both Justinian and Porphyry presuppose the incompatibility of philosophy and Christianity, against which Origen already had to defend himself.¹² This is why Justinian goes on to accuse Origen, Arius, and the Manichaeans of deriving their 'heresies' from Plato, among which that of the punishment of human souls in bodies. Justinian proceeds to a refutation of this thesis, which was not Origen's. Justinian argues that, if souls received a body because of their sin and for the sake of expiation, they should no longer sin after their incarnation, and their bodies should not cooperate with them in sin. His conclusion is that the body was not created after, as a punishment for the soul, but bodies and souls were created together. 'The human being is neither a body without a soul nor a soul without a body' (74) and 'the soul neither preexists nor gets embodied because of its sin' (84), a statement Origen would have endorsed. Indeed, he did not assume that the *logika* received a body only after their fall. The latter *transformed* their bodies, but did not *determine* their existence. Mark Edwards is right to deny that Origen attributes the union of soul and body to a transgression of a 'preexisting soul' that God punished with its incarnation, as has often been maintained on the basis of *Frg.* 15 K. of Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, coming from late and unreliable sources.¹³ Indeed, for Origen corporeality did not come about after sin, but the *logika* were provided with a body from the beginning: not heavy and corruptible, but similar to the 'spiritual body' of resurrection. After the fall, they were not given a body for the first time, but had their fine, immortal body changed into a perishable (in the case of humans) or a 'ridiculous' one, in the case of demons. The devil, due to his detachment from God, when he was the first to fall, had his body turned into one much worse, not *qua* mortal, but *qua* ludicrous, while other bodies are not so, but glorious (*Comm. in Io.* I 17,97-8).¹⁴ Origen expands on this in *Comm. in Io.* XX 22,182: the devil

is that famous 'first earthly being' in that he was the first to fall down from the superior state and wanted a different life from the superior one. Thus he deserved to be the

¹¹ See my 'The Philosophical Stance of Allegory in Stoicism and its Reception in Platonism, Pagan and Christian', *IJCT* 18 (2011), 335-71.

¹² See Ilaria Ramelli, 'Origen, Patristic Philosophy, and Christian Platonism', *VC* 63 (2009), 217-63. On Porphyry's work against the Christians, from where the passage against Origen stems, see at least most recently Sébastien Morlet (ed.), *Le traité de Porphyre contre les chrétiens: un siècle de recherches, nouvelles questions. Actes du colloque international, Paris IV-Sorbonne 8-9 septembre 2009* (Paris, 2011).

¹³ See his 'Origen no Gnostic, or, on the Corporeality of Man', *JTS* 43 (1992), 21-7; *Origen against Plato*, 89-97, 160; Marguerite Harl, 'La préexistence des âmes dans l'œuvre d'Origène', in *Le déchiffrement du sens* (Paris, 1993), 262-3; J. Konstantinovskiy, *Evagrius* (2009), 127: 'Origen may have not traced corporeality to a primordial fall from grace'.

¹⁴ 'The one who is called dragon, because he fell from his pure life, became worthy of being enchained before anyone else to a material body. This is why the Lord ... can say: "This is the beginning of material creation, made to be laughed at by his angels". It is certainly possible that

principle, not of the foundation (of the Son) [κτίσμα],¹⁵ nor of the creation (of the *logika*) [ποίημα], but only of what was moulded with clay [πλάσμα] by the Lord. He became such as to be the object of derision by the Lord’s angels.

The idea that the devil was the beginning of material creation was taken over by the author of *De trinitate* ascribed to Didymus, but with κτίσμα instead of πλάσμα, which does not respect Origen’s terminology (*Trin.* I 17,2).¹⁶ As for angels, for Origen they have a heavenly, ethereal, and pure body, similar to that of the stars (*De or.* 7); their body does not come from the dust of the earth (*ibid.* 23,4); their food is spiritual (*ibid.* 27,9-10). Origen’s position that even angels have a body will be kept by Caesarius (*i.e.* Cassian the Sabaite according to P. Tzamalikos).¹⁷ Origen expressly speaks of two kinds of bodies, earthly and not earthly, still in *Protr. ad mart.* 3, toward the end of his life (248). Very Platonically, he maintains that to love God and have communion with God, the soul must detach itself from its body, be this an *earthly* or *another kind* of body, *i.e.* spiritual.¹⁸

the dragon is, not the beginning of the Lord’s material creation [πλάσμα] in general, but rather the beginning of the many beings made to be laughed at by angels, while others may be in a body, but not in this way’.

¹⁵ In *Comm. in Io.* I 19,114-5, κτίσις refers to the atemporal foundation of God’s Wisdom on the part of God. This is Scriptural language and does not mean that Origen deemed the Son-Logos-Wisdom a creature. In the present passage as well, I think that κτίσμα indicates the foundation of God’s Wisdom, which is in turn the agent of creation; ποίημα indicates the creation of intellects, along with their fine bodies and the world, not yet diversified; and πλάσμα, what was moulded as the subsequent transformation of the fine bodies into bodies apt to the life of fallen intellects, in a world that was diversified according to the intellects’ diversified wills.

¹⁶ ὥστε τὸν διάβολον πρῶτον κτίσμα εἶναι λέγει ἑαυτὸν ποιήσαντα ἐγκαταπαίζεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἁγίων ἀγγέλων διὰ τὸ ἀνόσιον αὐτοῦ καὶ κακόβουλον τῆς προαιρέσεως. Origen’s terminology is very clear in *Hom. in Ier.* 1,10, where he remarks that, πάνυ διαλεκτικώτατα, *i.e.* in a way that is in perfect accord with Plato’s distinctional dialectic, Scripture does not say, ‘before I created [ποίησαι] you in the womb, I know you’ (in reference to God’s words to Jeremiah), because it is when the divinity created the human being in the image of God that God ‘has created’ (πεποίηκε); on the contrary, when God made the human being from the earth, God ‘moulded’ it (ἐπλασεν). Thus, the human being that is ‘created’ (ποιούμενον) by God is not that which ‘is formed in the womb’ (ἐν κοιλίᾳ γίγνεται), but ‘what is moulded from the earth is what is founded in the womb’ (τὸ πλασσόμενον ἀπὸ τοῦ χοῦ τῆς γῆς, τοῦτο ἐν κοιλίᾳ κτίζεται). The latter is the mortal body.

¹⁷ Cass., *Quaest. et resp.* 47: ἀσώματοι μὲν οἱ ἄγγελοι καθ’ ἡμᾶς, σῶμα δὲ καθ’ ἑαυτοῦς, ὡς ἄνεμος ἢ πῦρ ἢ ἄήρ. Σώματα γὰρ ὑπάρχουσι λεπτὰ καὶ ἄϋλα, ἔξω τῆς ἡμετέρας παχύτητος. The same is maintained by Cassian in *Seren. Prim.* 86v: angelic powers ἔχουσι γὰρ καὶ αὐταὶ σώματα, εἰ καὶ πολλῶ λεπτότερα τοῦ ἡμετέρου. Tzamalikos’s theory on Cassian-Caesarius: *A Newly Discovered Greek Father: Cassian the Sabaite eclipsed by John Cassian of Marseilles* (Leiden, 2012); *The Real Cassian Revisited: Monastic Life, Greek Paideia, and Origenism in the Sixth Century* (Leiden, 2012).

¹⁸ ὅλη τῇ ψυχῇ νομίζω ἀγαπᾶσθαι τὸν Θεὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποσπώντων καὶ διϊστάντων αὐτὴν διὰ πολλὴν τὴν πρὸς τὸ κοινωνῆσαι τῷ Θεῷ προθυμίαν οὐ μόνον ἀπὸ τοῦ γῆνιου σώματος ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπὸ παντὸς σώματος.

Origen's interpretation of the 'skin tunics' (*Gen.* 3:21) is consistent with this. E.g. in *Hom. in Lev.* 6,2 these tunics are not the body, but mortality: '*pelliciis, inquit, tunicis, quae essent mortalitatis quam pro peccato acceperat.*' In *Frg. in I Cor.* 29 he admits that the human being had a body before falling and receiving those tunics, which represent, not the body tout court, but the heavy and corruptible body given by God to humans after the fall. Already Clement warned that the identification, endorsed by the encratite Cassian, of the skin tunics with the body was incorrect (*Strom.* III 14,95,2). Origen, in *CC IV* 40, declared that the skin tunics conceal a mystery that is deeper than that of the fall of the soul according to Plato (*Phaedr.* 248CD). Procopius (*Comm. in Gen.* 3:21 [PG 87,1 221A]) very probably attests to Origen's interpretation of the skin tunics: these are not the body, since, according to those who allegorised the Bible (οἱ ἀλληγοροῦντες), the human being in paradise already had a body, 'fine and suitable for life in Paradise' (λεπτομερὲς σῶμα καὶ ἄξιον τῆς ἐν Παραδείσῳ διαγωγῆς), called by some 'luminous' (ὅ τινες αὐγοειδὲς ἐκάλεσαν) and immortal, which corresponds to the human being 'moulded from the earth' (ἀπὸ τοῦ χοῦ πλασθείς), while the human being created 'according to the image' corresponds to the soul (ὁ μὲν κατ' εἰκόνα τὴν ψυχὴν σημαίνει). The tunics are mortal, heavy corporeality, given to humans after sin: 'They say that initially the soul used the luminous body as a vehicle, and this body was later clothed in the skin tunics'. But at the resurrection humans will recover immortality.

An important confirmation to Procopius' attestation is provided, to my mind, by his quasi-contemporary Gobar (*ap. Phot. Bibl. cod.* 232,287b-291b), who knew Origen and his admirers well and often reports his thought. He too attests to Origen's identification of the skin tunics with mortality, heavy corporeality, and liability to passions, which arrived after sin but will be shed at the resurrection (288a). The very key-term αὐγοειδὲς is here, which indicates that Procopius, too, was referring to Origen. A further confirmation comes from Origen himself, in two passages. One is a passage of undisputed authenticity and preserved in Greek: *Comm. in Matth.* XVII 30, where the angels' bodies are described as αἰθέρια and αὐγοειδὲς φῶς. The second is preserved in Latin, but is of undisputed paternity, and from the Latin it is easy to reconstruct the underlying Greek: *Princ.* III 6,4.¹⁹ Here the risen body in the *telos* is described as

¹⁹ 'Paul also mentions the spiritual body [*1Cor.* 15:44] ... the quality of the spiritual body must be such as to constitute a suitable dwelling place not only for blessed and perfect souls, but also for all creation, which will be liberated from enslavement to corruption [*Rom.* 8:21]. Speaking of this body, the Apostle also said: "We have a dwelling place not made by human hands and eternal in heaven. For visible things are temporal, but invisible things are eternal" [*2Cor.* 4:18]. In comparison with all these bodies that we see both on earth and in heaven, which are moulded and not eternal, what is invisible, not handmade, and eternal is by far superior. From this comparison it is possible to imagine how great will be the beauty, brightness, and splendour, of the spiritual body ... The nature of this body of ours ... can be brought by the Creator to the condition

‘finest’ = λεπτομερές and ‘brightest’ = αὐγοειδές. Moreover, the depiction of this body as a suitable dwelling place for life in Paradise corresponds to Procopius’s passage as well. This, along with the passage from the *Commentary on Matthew* and Gobar, confirms that Procopius was speaking of Origen when he referred to the ‘allegorists’ who postulated a λεπτομερές and αὐγοειδές prelapsarian body at the beginning. For such will also be the risen body in the end. Indeed, the subtle body at the beginning is perfectly parallel to that of the resurrection, after the deposition of the ‘skin tunic’ that was added to the original immortal body: ‘*cum corpus humanum, crassitudinis huius indumento deposito, uelut nudum coeperit sustinere tormenta*’ (*Comm. in Ps. 6 ap. Pamphilus, Apol. 157*).

Origen was misunderstood by Epiphanius, *Anc. 62,3*, who reports that he interpreted the skin tunics as the body (τὸ σαρκικὸν ἢ τὸ σῶμα); he repeats the same in 64.4.²⁰ In 62,3 Epiphanius relates that Origen laughed at the notion of God who, as a tailor, works with skin cuts and sews tunics, βυρσεύσας δέρματα χιτῶνας ἐργάσεται. This is important to confirm Origen’s paternity of the fragment in Theodoret, *Frg. 121 Coll. Coisl. in Gen.* It probably comes from Origen’s *Commentary on Genesis* (D11 Metzler) and states that it is unworthy of God (ἀνάξιον θεοῦ) to think that God, like a tailor who works with skins, cut and sewed those tunics, καταρράψαντα δέρματα δίκην σκυτοτόμου. Some (τινες) identified the skin tunics with mortality (νέκρωσις) which covered Adam and Eve, ‘put to death due to sin’.²¹ Porphyry, who knew Origen’s work, used the same notion in *Abst. II 46*: ‘In the Father’s temple, *i.e.* this world, is it not prudent to keep pure our last garment, the skin tunic, and thus, with this tunic made pure, live in the Father’s temple?’ and *I 31*: ‘We must remove these many garments, both this visible garment of flesh and those inside, which are close to those of skin.’

Only the Trinity is conceived by Origen as incorporeal, all creatures need a body, whether spiritual or fleshly, in order to live, and bodies can be separated from the *logika* only theoretically (*Princ. II 2,2*: ‘*materialem vero substantiam opinione quidem et intellectu solo separari ab eis, et pro ipsis vel post ipsas effectam videri, sed numquam sine ipsa eas vel vixisse vel vivere: solius*

of a finest, purest, and brightest body, as the condition and deserts of the rational nature will require’. On Paul’s notion of σῶμα πνευματικόν in *1Cor. 15:44* see now the controversial Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul* (Oxford, 2010), 31-8, 72 and *passim*.

²⁰ The identification of the skin tunics with the body *tout court* returns in Aglaophon’s words in Methodius’ *De resurrectione* 1.4.

²¹ On the Theodoret fragment: A. Parvan, ‘Genesis 1-3: Augustine and Origen’, *VC* 66 (2012), 56-92, 77, thinks that it is Origen and that Origen interpreted the skin tunics as the body *tout court*. But see J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity* (Mercer University, 1988), 318-26.

namque Trinitatis incorporea vita existere recte putabitur).²² Origen was possibly inspired by Clement in this respect, and surely inspired Ambrose in turn (*De Abr.* II 8,58, [PL 14, 506]). In *Princ.* II 3,2 Origen even offers a cogent syllogism to demonstrate that it is impossible for any creature to live incorporeally: if any can live without a body, then all will be able to do so, but then, corporeal substance would be useless; therefore, it would not exist. Which is not the case. Indeed, to this hypothesis Origen in *Princ.* II 3,2-3, opposes 1*Cor.* 15:53: 'This corruptible being must necessarily put on incorruptibility; this mortal being must put on immortality.' He comments:

The expressions 'this corruptible being' and 'this mortal being', said with the tone of one who touches and indicates, what else do they fit, if not corporeal matter? *This same corporeal matter, which is now corruptible, will put on incorruptibility*, when the perfect soul, instructed on the incorruptible truths, begins to make use of the body ... When *this body, which one day we shall have glorious*, will participate in life, then it will attain what is immortal, and therefore will also become incorruptible ... What else will incorruptibility and immortality be if not God's Wisdom, Logos, and Justice, which inform the soul, wrap and adorn it?

The objection that Origen puts forward in §3 comes from people who believe that the *logika* can live without body, what Origen repeatedly denied on the grounds that only the Trinity can do so.²³

In *Princ.* IV 4,8 Origen claims again that rational creatures always need a body, by necessity (corporeal matter '*tamdiu necesse est permanere quamdiu*

²² *Princ.* II 2,2: 'If it is absolutely impossible to claim that *any other nature besides the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* can live without a body, the argument's coherence compels to understand that rational beings were created as the principal or main creation [*principaliter*], but *the material substance can be separated from them* – and thus appear to be created before or after them – *only theoretically and mentally*, because *they can never have lived, or live, without matter*. For *only the Trinity* can be correctly thought to live without a body. Therefore ... the material substance, which by nature is capable of being *transformed from all into all*, when it is dragged to inferior creatures [*ad inferiora trahitur*], is formed into a dense and solid body ... but when it serves [*ministrat*] more perfect and blessed creatures, it shines forth in the splendour of heavenly bodies and adorns with a *spiritual body* both God's angels and the children of the resurrection'. See *Princ.* I 6,4: 'I cannot understand how so many substances can live and subsist without a body, whereas it is a *prerogative of God alone, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, to live without material substance and any union with corporeal elements. Therefore, one may say that in the end every corporeal substance will be so *purified* as to be understood as ethereal and endowed with heavenly purity and integrity'; in the same passage Origen bases himself on 1*Cor.* 7:31 and *Isa.* 65:17 to demonstrate that there will be 'not a total destruction or annihilation of the material substance, but a certain change of quality and transformation of habit' ('*non omnimodis exterminatio vel perditio substantiae materialis, sed immutatio quaedam qualitatis atque habitus transformatio*'). *Princ.* IV 3,15: 'The Trinity's substance ... is neither corporeal nor endowed with body, but it is *wholly incorporeal*'; *Hom. in Ex.* 6,5: 'No one is invisible, *incorporeal*, immutable, beginningless and endless ... but the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit'.

²³ 'However, those who believe that rational creatures can live without a body may observe at this point...'

permanent ea, quae eius indigent indumento. Semper autem erunt rationabiles naturae, quae indigeant indumento corporeo; semper ergo erit et natura corporea, cuius indumentis uti necesse est rationabiles creaturas). Thus, they had a body at the beginning of their substantial existence, when God created both them and matter, with a potential for infinite transformations.²⁴ Origen indicates that matter was created by God at the same time as the *logika* in *Princ.* II 9,1: ‘When Scripture states that God created all “by number and measure”, we shall be correct to apply the noun “number” to rational creatures or minds ... and “measure” to bodily matter ... These are the things we must believe were created by God in the beginning, before anything else’. Bodies are not posterior to the *logika*, but were created along with them.

An impressive parallel exists between Origen and Porphyry. Just as Origen maintained that only the three ἀρχαί (Father, Son, and Spirit) are incorporeal, so did Porphyry claim that only the three ἀρχαί (One, Nous, and Soul)²⁵ are incorporeal (*Ad Aneb.* 3); all other beings have bodies: gods, ethereal; demons, aerial; and souls, earthly. In *CC VII* 32 – particularly valuable as it is preserved in Greek and reflects a confrontation with a Middle Platonist – Origen analogously insists on the necessity that the soul always be in a body that is suited to the place or situation in which it happens to be, according to its spiritual progress or elongation from the Good.²⁶ The soul is *always* with a body, even after death (καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀπαλλαγῇ σώματι χρῆται ἡ ψυχὴ, *Res. ap. Method.*, *Res. ap. Phot.*, *Bibl. cod.* 234,301a). That the soul has a body adapted to its spiritual refinement and progress is also stated in *Hom. 2 in Ps.* 38,8,²⁷

²⁴ This is explained very well in the part that immediately precedes the above-quoted passage: ‘The intelligible nature *must necessarily use bodies*, because, *qua* created, it is *subject to movement and alteration*. For what *was not and began to exist* is for this very reason mutable in its nature and does not possess good or evil substantially, but accidentally ... The rational nature was *liable to movement and alteration*, so that, according to its deserts, it could be endowed with a different body, of this or that quality. This is why God, who knew in advance which the different conditions of souls or spiritual powers might be, *created the corporeal nature as well*, which, according to the will of the Creator, *could be transformed, changing qualities, as required by the situation*’ (*Princ.* IV 4,8).

²⁵ For the identification of the three ἀρχαί in Origen and in Plotinus/Porphyry (and the possible influence of Origen on Porphyry) see my ‘Origen, Greek Philosophy, and the Birth of the Trinitarian Meaning of *Hypostasis*’, *HTR* 105 (2012), 302-50.

²⁶ ἡ τῇ ἑαυτῆς φύσει ἀσώματος καὶ ἀόρατος ψυχὴ ἐν παντὶ σωματικῷ τόπῳ τυγχάνουσα δέεται σώματος οἰκείου τῇ φύσει τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ.

²⁷ ‘*Anima quae peccat crassior efficitur ... sicut autem peccatum incrassescere facit, ita e contrario virtus subtilem animam reddit ... crassescat et, ut ita dicam, carnea efficiatur anima peccatoris ... carnem sine dubio animas nominat crassiores et peccatrices. Si ergo incrassescat anima ut efficiatur caro ... est ergo opus Dei ut tabescere faciat et consumat omne quidquid crassioris est materiae quo circumdatur anima ut extenuet et elimet prudentiam carnis, et ita demum animam ad subtilem rerum caelestium et invisibilium revocet intellectum ... nos qui animam nostram incarnavimus vel incrassavimus ... si hinc adhuc carnes fuerimus egressi, mittemur in illos cacabos qui succeduntur lignis vel feno vel stipula, id est operibus nostris.*’

*Res. II ap. Pamph., Apol. 134,*²⁸ and *Comm. in Ps. 1 ap. Pamph., Apol. 141*: ‘*Necesse est animam in locis corporeis habitantem uti corporibus talibus quae apta sint his locis in quibus degit.*’ That rational creatures’ bodies change according to their moral status – the measure of their elongation from the Good – is also attested by Jerome, although he gives the wrong impression of an original incorporeality of the *logika* (in a work from his anti-Origenian period, to be read critically).²⁹

In fact, Origen expressly rejected the preexistence of bare souls. In his exegesis of *Titus* preserved by Barsanuphius (*Doctr. c. opin. Orig.* [PG 86, 891-3]) he stated: ‘The doctrine that *souls exist before bodies* is justified neither by the apostles nor by the ecclesiastical tradition’; Origen ‘characterised whoever maintains this doctrine as a heretic’. The body he is speaking of in *Comm. in Cant. II 5,23* is the heavy, mortal one: ‘*utrum nuper creata [anima] veniat et tunc primum facta cum corpus videtur esse formatum, ut causa facturae eius animandi corporis necessitas exstitisse credatur.*’ Origen finds this solution obviously ridiculous,³⁰ and passes on to the second alternative: ‘*an prius et olim facta ob aliquam causam ad corpus sumendum venire aestimetur. Etsi ex causa aliqua in hoc deduci creditur, quae illa sit causa.*’ That he means the mortal body is clear from shortly before (5,16): ‘*Sed et Iob omnem hominum vitam umbram dicit esse super terram [Job 8:9] credo pro eo quod omnis anima in hac vita velamento crassi huius corporis obumbratur.*’ The Church or soul, *i.e.* rational creatures exist neither before their own bodies nor before the *καταβολή* of the cosmos, and it is only in a mystical sense that they can be said to exist before the cosmos: ‘*ab initio humani generis et ab ipsa constitutione mundi, immo, ut Paulo duce altius mysterii huius originem repetam, ante etiam constitutionem mundi*’ (*Comm. in Cant. II 8,4*). If Origen’s last phrase alludes to the *logika*’s existence in God’s Wisdom before everything, this would also allow for Henryk Pietras’ hypothesis that the material world itself was not created after the *logika*’s fall; rather, at that point it simply underwent a modification and diversification, but it existed earlier.³¹ In *Princ. II 1,1*

²⁸ For a sojourn in the *mansio beatorum* the body will be luminous; for a sojourn in *poenis* it will be adapted to suffering.

²⁹ *C. Io. Ierosol. ad Pamm. 16, de Origenis erroribus*: Origen ‘*dixit cunctas rationabiles creaturas, incorporeales et invisibiles* [invisible, but not absolutely incorporeal, since only the Trinity can be so], *si negligentiores fuerint, paulatim ad inferiora labi, et iuxta qualitates locorum ad quae defluunt adsumere sibi corpora. Verbi gratia, primum aetherea, deinde aerea. Cumque ad viciniam terrae pervenerint, crassioribus corporibus circumdari.*’

³⁰ In *Princ. I* pref. 5 Origen declares that Scripture and the apostolic teaching have left the origin of souls in darkness. So also in *Comm. in Cant. II 5,21,22* he declares it necessary to investigate whether the soul is incorporeal, whether it is simple or composed of two, three, or more parts, and whether it is created. In this case Origen rejects both traducianism and the infusion of a soul in a body already formed in the womb.

³¹ ‘L’inizio del mondo materiale e l’elezione divina in Origene’, in György Heidl and Robert Somos (eds), *Origeniana Nona* (Leuven, 2009), 653-68.

Origen observes that the cause, not of the world, but of diversity in it, is 'the variety and difference of movements and falls of those who have abandoned the initial unity'. This may imply that before that diversification the world already existed, but was characterised by unity: that of the *logika* and their fine bodies. Indeed, matter had already been created, for the *logika* to be endowed with their luminous, immortal bodies from the beginning of their existence as substances. That the *logika* were endowed with fine bodies from the beginning also helps explain how they could diversify their wills at a certain point. For, according to Origen, 'there cannot be diversity *without bodies*' (*Princ.* II 1,4). That the world became varied, not at the beginning of its creation, but only after the *logika* began to diversify their wills, detaching them from the only Good, is also indicated by *Princ.* II 9,2: 'The Creator of the universe, receiving all those germs and causes of variety and diversity, according to the diversity of the intellects [*mentes*], that is, the *logika* [*rationabiles creaturae*]..., rendered the world varied and diversified'. He did not create it only then, but he transformed it, in accord with the *logika*'s transformation. In *Princ.* II 9,2 Origen seems to imply that all the intellects detached themselves from the Good, to various degrees: 'every *nous*, neglecting the Good to a greater or lesser extent due to its own movements, was dragged to the opposite of the Good, that is, evil'.³² The only exception is Christ's *logikon*. But this is discussed by Christopher Beeley in this publication.³³

Only in respect to the eventual 'deification' did Origen admit of the possibility that 'becoming God' will entail becoming bodiless, as God is (*Princ.* III 6,1; II 3,3-5), but this is not at odds with the resurrection of the body, which Origen endorsed. What is more, that of incorporeality in deification is one of two alternatives that Origen puts forward, the other being the preservation of the body even in *θέωσις*.³⁴ Indeed, in *Princ.* III 6,6, Origen states that the *logika* will have a spiritual body in the final apokatastasis.³⁵ Here, again, Justinian entertained

³² See *Princ.* II 8,4: 'I think we should not deem the fall and degradation of the intelligence the same for all, but that some more and some less got transformed into souls, and some retained something of their original capacity, others nothing or very little'.

³³ See also Rowan Williams, 'Origen on the Soul of Jesus', in *Origeniana* III (Rome, 1985), 131-7; Ilaria Ramelli, 'Gesù Cristo come entità mostruosa e ibrida in rappresentazioni pagane e cristiane tra II e III secolo', in I. Baglioni (ed.), *Costruzione e percezione delle entità ibride e mostruose nelle culture del Mediterraneo antico*, Museo delle Religioni Raffaele Pettazzoni, Velletri, 8-11 June 2011 (Rome, 2012).

³⁴ *Princ.* II 3,7: 'Either we shall be able to live without a body when all will be subject to Christ and, through Christ, to God the Father and "God will be all in all", or even when all will be subject to Christ and through Christ to God the Father, with whom it will form one spirit, because rational natures are spirit, even then the corporeal substance will continue to stick to the purest and most perfect spirits, and, transformed into an ethereal state, will shine forth in proportion to the merits and condition of those who assume it'.

³⁵ 'We must believe that all of this corporeal substance of ours will be brought to that state when every being will be restored to be one and the same thing [*John* 17:21] and God will be all

(obviously having been reported) an inaccurate opinion about Origen's thought. For another charge against Origen in *Ep. ad Men.* 92,³⁶ as ungrounded as the others, is that of having denied the resurrection of the body. This purported denial depended, again, on Origen's supposed belief in the preexistence of 'bare souls'. What Origen rather maintained was the resurrection of a body that is the same as the mortal body for each human, but with different *qualities*. These seem to be the qualities of the light, immortal body with which the *logika* were endowed from the beginning. The individual identity of a body, even through transformations, is guaranteed, in Origen's view, by an immutable metaphysical form or εἶδος (*Princ.* II 10,2: 'Every body is endowed with its individual form'). That the risen body is the same as the present as for individual identity, but with much better qualities, is stated in *Comm. in Ps. 1 ap. Pamph., Apol.* 141 ('*eadem in nobis speciem [εἶδος] permanet ab infantiam usque ad senectutem ... ipsam permansuram etiam in futuro, plurima tamen immutatione in melius et gloriosius facta ... nec haec species exterminabitur licet gloriosior eius effecta sit permutatio*'), *Frq. in Luc.* *Frq.* 140 on *Luke* 9:28 ('At the resurrection the saints' bodies will be *far more glorious* than those which they had in the present life, but they will *not be other bodies than these*'), and *De res.* II *ap. Pamph., Apol.* 132: what rises is '*hoc corpus quod mortuum relinquitur*.' For bodies change qualities according to the place they are in.³⁷ Indeed, this question was included by Origen in his programme of research into the soul: it is necessary to investigate 'the question of the essence of the soul, of the principle of its existence, of its joining this earthly body ... whether it is possible that it enters a body for a second time, whether this will happen during the same cycle [περίοδος] and the same arrangement [διακόσμησις], in the same body or in another, and, if it is in the same, whether it will remain *identical to itself in its substance only acquiring different qualities* [*sc.* Origen's position], or it will remain the same in both its substance and its qualities, and whether the soul will always use the same body or it will change' (*Comm. in Io.* VI 85). *CC* III 42 in this respect is momentous, since its paternity is beyond doubt and is preserved in Greek; here Origen remarks that Jesus's risen body was the same as his mortal body, but with its qualities changed (ἀμείψασαν ποιότητος), so 'to have no longer the properties of fleshly weakness'.³⁸ Such was also the prelapsarian

in all [*1Cor.* 15:28] ... Once all rational souls will have been brought to this condition, then the nature of this body of ours, too, will be *brought to the glory of the spiritual body*'.

³⁶ Justinian depended on a dossier against Origen's supposed doctrines collected by monks at the Mar Saba monastery in Palestine.

³⁷ See also Origen, *De res. ap. Pamph., Apol.* 134: '*Sane qualis fuerit unius cuiusque praeparatio in hac uita, talis erit et resurrectio eius: qui beatius hic uixerit, corpus eius in resurrectione diuiniore splendore fulgebit, et apta ei mansio beatorum tribuetur locorum; hic uero qui in malitia consumpsit tempus sibi uitae praesentis indultum, tale dabitur corpus quod sufferre et perdurare tantum modo possit in poenis*.'

³⁸ Ἀμείβειν ποιότητος τὴν ὑποκειμένην πάσαις ποιότησιν ὕλην, πῶς οὐ δυνατόν καὶ τὴν σάρκα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἀμείψασαν ποιότητος γεγενῆσθαι τοιαύτην, ὅποιαν ἐχρῆν εἶναι τῇ

body of the *logika*. In *Princ.* III 6,6 as well, Origen is clear that the individual identity will be kept in the passage from the mortal to the risen body:

We must not believe that this, of which now we avail ourselves in dishonor, corruptibility, and weakness is one, and another one will be that of which we shall avail ourselves in glory, incorruptibility, and power, but *it will be again this same body*, which, after shedding the present imperfections, *will be transformed* into glory and will become a spiritual body, so that what was a cheap vase, once purified, will become a precious vase [*Rom.* 9:21], suitable for receiving beatitude. And we must believe that in this condition it will always remain, without further transformation, by will of the Creator, as Paul attests, saying: ‘We have an eternal dwelling place in heaven, not made by human hands’ [*2Cor.* 5:1] ... the Apostle clearly states that the dead who are resurrected *will not be given other bodies*, but they will receive *these same bodies as they had on earth*, but improved’.

This improvement will consist in a transformation from a psychic to a spiritual body (*Princ.* III 6,6).³⁹ The transformation that the mortal body will undergo at the resurrection is described in *Princ.* III 6,5.⁴⁰ In Origen’s view, as in Gregory of Nyssa’s after him, the risen body will manifestly be composed of the same four elements as the mortal body. For Origen rejected the Aristotelian fifth element, as is clear not only from a Latin passage,⁴¹ but also from two Greek ones, *CC* IV 60 and 56. In the former, Origen refers to the Platonists as those who do not add a fifth element and maintain that matter always endures, through changes of qualities. In IV 56 he explicitly rejects the Aristotelian doctrine as incompatible with the Christian faith: ‘For the Church’s faith does not accept Greek philosophers’ opinion, according to whom, beyond this body which consists of four elements, there is a fifth corporeal substance, which is completely different from this body of ours’. In *Princ.* II 10,1-3 Origen further investigates the nature of the risen body. In 10,1 he refers to his now lost *De resurrectione*, in two books, and declares that he is going to take over some points of it, for the sake of those who had criticised him, evidently some

ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ τοῖς ἀνωτέρω αὐτοῦ τόποις πολιτευομένην, οὐκέτι ἔχουσιν τὰ τῆς σαρκικῆς ἀσθενείας ἴδια καὶ ἅτινα μιαιώτερα ὀνόμασεν ὁ Κέλσος.

³⁹ ‘This *same* body which is called psychic because it serves the soul [ψυχῇ], when the soul, united to God, will become one and the same spirit with God [*1Cor.* 6:17], then it too will *pass on to the spiritual condition*’. Here the spiritualised body seems to remain in the very *telos*.

⁴⁰ ‘We, who believe in the resurrection, think that as a consequence of death a *transformation* has come about, but *the substance of the flesh continues to exist*, and by will of its creator at a certain moment will be brought to life again and *undergo another transformation*. Thus, what first had been earthly flesh, taken from earth [*1Cor.* 15:47], will be dissolved by death and reduced to dust and earth ... but then it will be taken again out of the earth, and, yet later, according to the deserts of the soul who inhabits it, will *progress into the glory of the spiritual body* [*1Cor.* 15:44]’.

⁴¹ *Princ.* III 6,6: ‘*Non enim, secundum quosdam Graecorum philosophos, praeter hoc corpus quod ex quattuor constat elementis, aliud quintum corpus, quod per omnia aliud sit et diversum ab hoc nostro corpore, fides ecclesiae recipit.*’

'Gnostics' who denied the resurrection of the body.⁴² This debate between Origen and 'Gnostics' (Valentinians) on the resurrection of the body is reflected in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* (see below). Origen adduces 1Cor. 15:44 ('A psychic body is sown, a spiritual body will rise') and remarks that, 'if it is the case that the bodies rise, and rise as spiritual, then there is no doubt that they rise from death *having shed away corruptibility and mortality* ... The power and grace of the resurrection *transform the psychic body into a spiritual body, transporting it* from a condition of indignity to one of glory'.

Much earlier than Justinian, Pamphilus's *Apology* attests that the charge concerning the 'preexistence of bare souls' circulated against Origen already in the third century. Indeed, the eighth accusation reported by Pamphilus sounds as follows: '*ei de anima obiiciunt ... quod ante corpus eam factam dicat exsistere*' (*Apol.* 159). This time, Pamphilus (*Apol.* 8) does not quote passages from Origen – his usual apologetic strategy –, but he remarks that Origen never wrote a *De anima* because this matter is uncertain and the apostles left the issue of the soul's origin unclarified. In fact, Origen did not support the preexistence of disembodied souls, but of intellects equipped with a subtle, spiritual body from the beginning. Pierius, Pamphilus' teacher, supported the preexistence of embodied intellects, like Origen and Pamphilus himself. The latter claimed that only in this way is it possible to account for the different situations of humans without holding God responsible for them. The problem was again theodicy. Pamphilus, like Rufinus after him, insightfully realised that Origen's concern was theodicy and the necessity of rejecting 'Gnostic' predestinationism. Indeed, I argued elsewhere that the polemic against Gnostic determinism was the very basis of his theory from protology to eschatology.⁴³ Pamphilus, like Rufinus, lucidly realised Origen's anti-Gnosticism. That of the soul and its preexistence and relation to the body was an interesting question for contemporary 'pagan' Neoplatonists as well. Porphyry in *VP* 13,10-1 attests that he himself, for three days on end, asked Plotinus questions 'about the way in which the soul is in the body', and Plotinus never stopped explaining. Plotinus devoted his fourth *Ennead* to the soul, its origin, and its union with the body. He grounded his criticism of Epicurean and Stoic conceptions of the soul as a concourse of atoms, without intrinsic unity and stability, in the psychology that emerges from Plato's *Phaedo* (*Enn.* IV 7,2-4). In various places Porphyry, too, who knew at least Origen's Περὶ Ἀρχῶν and probably also his *Commentary on*

⁴² 'Gnostics' shared with Origen the apokatastasis doctrine, but with major differences, one of which is that they excluded the resurrection of the body from it. See my 'Apokatastasis in Coptic Gnostic Texts from Nag Hammadi and Clement's and Origen's Apokatastasis: Toward an Assessment of the Origin of the Doctrine of Universal Restoration', *Journal of Coptic Studies* 14 (2012), 33-45.

⁴³ See Ilaria Ramelli, 'La coerenza della soteriologia origeniana', in *Pagani e cristiani alla ricerca della salvezza*, *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum* 96 (Rome, 2006), 661-88; *ead.*, 'Origen' (2009).

John, discusses the soul, for instance in Σύμμικτα ζητήματα, Περὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς δυνάμεων, Πρὸς Γαῦρον, etc. He also defends the immortality of the soul against the Peripatetic Boethus, but also against Stoic and Epicurean conceptions, in Περὶ ψυχῆς πρὸς Βόηθον. Longinus’ monograph, quoted by Eusebius, also belongs to Plotinus’ school and was an investigation on the soul and its preexistence. Longinus too criticised the materialist conception of the soul entertained by Stoics and Epicureans, just as Gregory Nyssen will do in *De anima et resurrectione*, which took over Origen’s *De resurrectione* also considering Methodius and probably the *Dialogue of Adamantius*. He knew Bardaisan’s thought as well.⁴⁴

Bardaisan

Bardaisan of Edessa († 222) was a Syriac Christian philosopher and teacher close to Middle Platonism, like Origen; there are reasons to suspect contacts between the two and their schools.⁴⁵ Eusebius, who relied on the library and intellectual heritage of Origen, knew and excerpted Bardaisan’s work against Fate; moreover, sources favourable to Bardaisan come all from the Origenian tradition. A role in this was probably also played by the fact that both Bardaisan and Origen were strong assertors of the doctrine of free will and believed in apokatastasis understood as universal salvation achieved in the end through purification and instruction, essentially thanks to Christ-Logos.⁴⁶ Bardaisan, like Origen, upheld the Intellect-Soul-Body tripartition, typical of Middle and Neoplatonists and late Stoics,⁴⁷ and, like Origen, thought that souls result from the descent of Intellects. It is likely that Bardaisan also believed intellects to be endowed with fine, light, and immortal bodies. The Intellect-Soul-Body tripartition appears in several texts; the most important is *Liber Legum Regionum* 551; 572 Nau.⁴⁸ Here, in the context of a defence of free will and human

⁴⁴ On Gregory’s knowledge of at least Bardaisan’s work on Fate see my *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation. Also in the Light of Origen and the Original Fragments from De India* (Piscataway, 2009), 138–42.

⁴⁵ See I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan of Edessa* (2009); *ead.*, ‘Bardaisan: a Syriac Christian Philosopher’s Interpretation of *Genesis* in the light of Plato’s *Timaeus*’, in Rainer Hirsch-Luipold (ed.), *Kosmologie, Kosmogonie, Schöpfung* (Tübingen, 2012). Bardaisan, ‘Maximus’ (ap. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* VII 22), and the *Dialogue of Adamantius* are the only substantial gaps in the detailed treatment of creation from Origen to Gregory of Nyssa in Charlotte Köckert, *Christliche Kosmologie und kaiserzeitliche Philosophie* (Tübingen, 2009).

⁴⁶ See my ‘Origen, Bardaisan, and the Origin of Universal Salvation’, *HTR* 102 (2009), 135–68.

⁴⁷ See my ‘Tricotomia,’ in Virgilio Melchiorre (ed.), *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (Milan, 2006), XII 1172–6.

⁴⁸ Although written by a disciple and a product of his school, it is very probable that the *Liber* faithfully reproduces Bardaisan’s thought: argument in my *Bardaisan* (2009), 70–107. I add that one of the most important proofs is that Eusebius knows and cites long excerpts that correspond

responsibility, Bardaisan draws a coherent picture of the three components of the human being and the powers that govern each of them: 1) the body, in its present state of mortal body (ܚܝܠܐ), is governed by nature, which decides that it must be born and die, that it cannot survive without food, *etc.* 2) the soul, understood as the vital soul (ܠܚܐ = ψυχή), is governed by fate, which for Bardaisan is not an independent force or divinity that has power over human free will, but is submitted to God; on it the events of one's life depend that do not depend on one's free will, such as poverty, illness, *etc.*⁴⁹ 3) the intellect (ܠܡܝܢ = νοῦς), or spirit (ܡܢܗܝܡܢܐ), is not governed by fate or nature, but is free ('child of free will', as the Syriac has it). Most of Bardaisan's work *Against Fate*, which survives in Greek excerpts in Eusebius and in a Syriac reworking in the *Liber*, is devoted to arguing that moral choices for good or evil depend on each one's free will, and not on Fate administered by the stars, or other deterministic schemes. In *HH* 1,9 Ephrem too, a valuable but biased source on Bardaisan,⁵⁰ attests to his anthropological tripartition:

It is still necessary to insist with Bardaisan, that he may confess that the human being cannot be deprived of any of the *three forms* of which it is composed, just as nobody could take away its form from the fire, unless one also extinguishes the fire itself. To such an extent is it necessary that the number of parts remain, as long as life remains. For this is how nature created it: *provided with three forms*.

The tripartition is into intellect, soul, and body; Ephrem's words are intelligible in the light of his conviction that Bardaisan denied the resurrection of the body, which may not have been the case.

The soul, the intermediate human component, in Bardaisan's view results from the descent of the intellect, and that of mortal bodies is a further level of descent: 'According to this process and order, the *intellects* are transformed in their

to the Syriac *Liber*, but in a Greek translation that he ascribes to Bardaisan's own work *On Fate*. Eusebius' Caesarea library was mostly built upon Origen's funds, and, also given the close relationships between Origen, Bardaisan, their thought, and their traditions, I even wonder whether Origen possessed Bardaisan's work in his own library. This was translated into Greek very early, probably during Bardaisan's lifetime. Bardaisan himself was perfectly bilingual and could write in both Syriac and Greek.

⁴⁹ I suspect that it is also for the sake of this tripartition that Bardaisan hesitated to abolish fate also in name, after eliminating it in fact: he needed something between nature and free will to govern the intermediate part between the body and the intellect, that is, the soul understood as vital, and not intellectual. This is the point that was missed by Diodore of Tarsus in his criticism (see my *Bardaisan* [2009], 142-61). For he did not take into consideration that Bardaisan had a trichotomic, and not dichotomic, view of the human being; he thought that for Bardaisan the body was subject to fate, whereas in Bardaisan's view the body is subject to *nature*, and what is subject to fate is the *vital soul*. Ephrem too reveals the same mistake: in *PR* I 124,8-28, the body is said to be subject to 'stupid guide signs', *i.e.* the heavenly bodies, which in the *Liber* are the executors of God's will under the name of 'fate'; the spirit, instead, endowed as it is with free will, is said to be able to determine itself however it wants.

⁵⁰ A critical assessment of his testimonies is offered in I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan* (2009), 172-254.

descents to souls, and the souls are transformed in their descents to *mortal bodies*’ (*Liber*, 574 Nau).⁵¹ This corresponds to Origen’s idea. This is also why the soul is declared by Bardaisan to be unable to grasp God, which is a privilege of the intellect, and not of the inferior soul. This is attested by Ephrem in *HH* 54,3: ‘They say that the soul, too, is constituted on the basis of the ‘beings’, but *it cannot grasp the Being* that is its source and root.’ The Being, in Ephrem’s terminology, is the Godhead, the source of the intellect that has descended to the level of soul. The ‘beings’ are planets (in reference to the widespread ancient doctrine of the derivation of the soul’s qualities from planets⁵²) or elements, which Bardaisan also calls ‘beings’ and regards as anterior to this world but created by God. The soul is unable to grasp God because the faculty of knowledge belongs to the intellect, and not to the vital soul. The latter is the psychic level; the former is the intellectual and spiritual level. Bardaisan’s anthropological tripartition and the gnoseological excellence of the intellect over the soul explains another report from Ephrem, *HH* 29,4-5, and *PR* II 158,20-30: unlike the intellect, which is the rational and divine component of the human being,⁵³ the vital soul does not possess knowledge: ‘The *Logos*, they say, is the *unknown yeast* hidden in the *soul*, which is *deprived of knowledge* and a stranger both to the mortal body and to the *Logos*. If things stand so, the body, being *earthly*, cannot adhere to the soul, nor can the soul adhere to the *Logos*, who is *divine*.’ Bardaisan refers to the yeast in *Matth.* 13:33 and sharply distinguishes the three present components of the human being. The mortal body is earthly; the soul is an intermediate entity, and the intellect is divine⁵⁴ and derives from the Godhead, unknowable in its transcendence (this idea was grounded in Plato’s *Timaeus*, well known to Bardaisan, and widespread in Middle Platonism).

In *PR* II 159,9-13 Ephrem properly refers to the followers of Bardaisan: ‘The soul in respect to the mortal body, they say, is *fine*, but it is “*corporeal*” in comparison with the intellect’. The vital soul is finer than the mortal body, but it is not immaterial as the intellect is. This is in line with Origen’s view: only the rational soul is immaterial and immortal, and yet, since only God can live without a body, even the intellects needed bodies from the beginning, to exist as individual substances; then, when due to sin they acquired mortal bodies,

⁵¹ I use my edition and translation in *Bardaisan on Human Nature, Fate, and Free Will: The Book of the Laws of Countries* (Tübingen, 2013).

⁵² The astronomical meaning of *ityē*, ‘beings’, is well attested also in the *Liber*, 544, 548, and 572 Nau, and another passage from Ephrem, *PR* I 8,8-10, refers to the qualities conferred to the soul by each planetary circle: ‘The soul is formed and constituted by seven parts.’

⁵³ Al-Bīrūnī († 1048) in his *Chronology*, 207,5-12 Sachau provides a testimony, albeit somewhat distorted, on Bardaisan’s anthropology which confirms that Bardaisan viewed the intellect/spirit/*Logos* as divine and distinct from the vital soul: ‘Bardaisan was convinced that God’s light had sought a place in his heart.’ Bardaisan did not refer to his own heart, but to all human intellects, the true dwelling place of the image of God.

⁵⁴ Ephrem in *PR* II 220,35-221,6 also attests that for Bardaisan the intellect, being the faculty of knowledge, is a part of God: therefore, it is the divine element in every human.

the inferior soul was also needed to mediate between *nous* and mortal body. That ‘density’ is expressed as ‘corporeality’ indicates that Bardaisan contemplated different degrees of corporeality, more or less dense. This is relevant to his probable idea of different kinds of bodies, more or less dense, mortal or immortal. That Bardaisan too thought that all beings have a body apart from God is suggested by a fragment preserved by Ephrem.⁵⁵

In *Liber*, 547 Nau, and in a fragment *ap. Ephrem PR II 158,20-6* the intellect, endowed with free will, is considered to be the image and gift of God in the human being. This corresponds to the authentic and extremely reliable fragment from *De India*⁵⁶ in which a statue representing at the same time the cosmos and a living human being (probably as cosmic Adam and cosmic Christ), has on its head, sitting on a throne, the ‘divine image/statue’ (ἄγαλμα) that is the intellect. The work of the intellect in a human is the same as that of God’s Logos in the world: it governs it. Not by chance, immediately after, Bardaisan adds a detail that confirms that he was constructing his symbolic statue in the light of the *Timaeus*: ‘They say it was God to give this statue to his Son, when he was founding the cosmos, that he might have a model to contemplate’. The divine image over the head of the statue represents the νοῦς, both human and cosmic. It is divine as in the *Timaeus*, where the intellectual souls created by the Demiurge are ‘gods’ produced by the Demiurge. Both in the human being and in the cosmos, the intellect is in the royal seat, given its ruling function. The depiction of the νοῦς as ἄγαλμα in Bardaisan is identical to Origen’s description of God’s Logos and the νοῦς of every human as an ἄγαλμα, in two passages, one preserved in Greek. In *Princ.* I 2,8 Origen describes the Son-Logos as a divine statue that reproduces God the Father; the latter is like a huge statue that fills the world, while the Son is an identical statue, but smaller, so to be apprehended by creatures’ intellectual sight. *CC VIII* 17-8 even preserves the term ἄγαλμα used by Origen in reference both to the Son-Logos, the image of the Father, and to the νοῦς of every human who imitates Christ.⁵⁷ Bardaisan thus

⁵⁵ Ephrem, *PR I* 135,37: God is ‘in the place’. Bardaisan considered the Godhead to be unknowable because of its transcendence, but he also maintained – like Clement, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa – that it is present in the world through its Logos, which performed the creation, remains in it, and sustains it. This explanation eliminates the necessity of hypothesising that Bardaisan conceived of God as bodily and material. Bardaisan probably regarded all the rest as corporeal, including souls and spiritual realities, every being apart from God, even if he entertained a notion of corporeality at various levels, from the finest and subtlest to the heaviest. These degrees of corporeality are all characterised by atoms (Ephrem, *PR II* 214,47-215,44; 217,43-8; 220,10-33). However, the application of atoms to the spiritual powers derived from the tripartition of Bardaisan’s Logos is only attested for a subsequent phase of Bardaisanism (Ephrem, *PR II* 220,10-33; the so-called third cosmological tradition).

⁵⁶ It is the second reported by Porphyry, *De styge* Frg. 376 Smith, and it is quoted *verbatim*. See my ‘Bardaisan’ (2013).

⁵⁷ ‘Of all the images in creation, the most excellent by far is that which is in our Saviour, who said: “The Father is inside me”. And a statue [ἄγαλμα] in the image of God the Creator is

conceived the human being as divided into body, vital soul, and the intellectual soul, regarded as the divine component in each human. That the image of God is not in the body, nor in the inferior soul, but in the intellect, is a notion that Bardaisan shares with Philo, Origen, and Gregory Nyssen.⁵⁸

In *HH* 29 Ephrem, albeit without mentioning Bardaisan, seems to allude to his anthropological tripartition and offers interesting information on the mortal body. The latter is made of pure components but also darkness, which in Bardaisan’s cosmology has to do with evil.⁵⁹ Ephrem observes that, according to an unnamed author, this negative component can only be active when a human is awake, while it must sleep when one is asleep. This is consistent with Bardaisan’s idea of evil: evil is close to nothingness, has no existence or activity of its own, but comes into being only because of an intellect’s evil will. Once again, this understanding of evil in Bardaisan is similar to Origen’s, and different from that of some ‘Gnostics’ and the Manicheans.

The mortal body, having in itself particles of darkness, *i.e.* evil, is destined to corruption, but not so the light, immortal body, which Bardaisan is likely to have postulated, like Origen. He is charged by heresiologists with denying the resurrection of the body tout court, but he probably denied the resurrection of the

present in each of those who endeavour to imitate him. They made that statue by contemplating God with a pure heart’. Clement, who may have been a disciple of Bardaisan, mostly uses *ἄγαλμα* to indicate the statues of pagan gods, and in *Pr.* 4,51,6 he opposes the statues of the pagan gods, which in his view are demons (*δαίμονας*), as ‘dead matter fashioned by the hand of an artisan’ (ὡς ἀληθῶς τὸ ἄγαλμα ὕλη νεκρὰ τεχνίτου χειρὶ μεμορφωμένη), to the true God, who is an intelligible divine image: ἡμῖν δὲ οὐχ ὕλης αἰσθητῆς αἰσθητόν, νοητόν δὲ τὸ ἄγαλμά ἐστιν. Νοητόν, οὐκ αἰσθητόν ἐστὶ τὸ ἄγαλμα ὁ θεός, ὁ μόνος ὄντως θεός. *Ibid.* 4,59,2 Clement describes as *ἄγαλμα* or divine image the human being, *qua* εἰκὼν of God: ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν οἱ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ περιφέροντες ἐν τῷ ζῶντι καὶ κινουμένῳ τούτῳ ἀγάλματι, τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, σύννοικον εἰκόνα. The same is repeated at 10,98,3: Μόνος ὁ τῶν ὄλων δημιουργός, ὁ ‘ἀριστοτέχνας πατήρ’, τοιοῦτον ἄγαλμα ἐμψυχον ἡμᾶς τὸν ἀνθρώπον ἐπλασεν, and at 12,121,1: ὁ θεοφιλῆ καὶ θεοεἰκελα τοῦ Λόγου ἄνθρωποι ἀγάλματα... In *Strom.* VII 3,16,5 Clement identifies the *ἄγαλμα* or divine image with the soul of a righteous person: ἄγαλμα θεῖον καὶ θεῷ προσεμφορὲς ἀνθρώπου δικαίου ψυχῇ. See *ibid.* 5,29,6-8: τὸ ἀπεικόνισμα εὐροίμεν ἂν, τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἄγιον ἄγαλμα, ἐν τῇ δικαίᾳ ψυχῇ ... ἄγαλμα ἐνάρετον; *ibid.* 9,52,2-3: τῶν ἐμψυχῶν ἀγαλμάτων τῶν ἀνθρώπων ... ἄγαλμα ἐμψυχον ... τοῦ κυρίου; *Ecl. pr.* 37,1: ἄγαλμα θεῖον τὸν ἀνθρώπον.

⁵⁸ See my ‘Philosophical Allegoresis of Scripture in Philo and Its Legacy in Gregory of Nyssa’, *SPhilo* 20 (2008), 55-99. Indeed, Philo, close to Middle Platonism, displays interesting similarities with Bardaisan’s description of the intellect as a divine enthroned image and of the unknown matter of the statue, in *De op. m.* 69-71: the human being is after God’s image and likeness; this image and likeness, though, should not be individuated in human body, but in the *nous*, ‘the ἡγεμών of the soul.’ The intellect of each human is modeled on that of the universe as its archetype, and is ‘a god of the person who bears it around as a divine image’ (θεὸς τοῦ φέροντος καὶ ἄγαλματοφοροῦντος αὐτόν). The *nous* of the cosmos has the same function as the *nous* in each human. And its nature/substance is unclear: ἄδελον ἔχει τὴν οὐσίαν.

⁵⁹ On the testimony of the so-called cosmological traditions on Bardaisan see the analysis in my *Bardaisan* (2009), 314-55.

heavy body and, like Origen, maintained its transformation into a spiritual body. There are no original fragments that confirm this alleged denial; there is no trace of it in the most reliable sources: the *Liber*, the fragments from *De India* quoted by Porphyry, and few other direct quotations from his works. Ephrem's words, that according to Bardaisan there will be no resurrection of the bodies produced *after* the fall, does not rule out, but rather seems to imply, that in the resurrection the bodies will be restored to their condition *prior* to the fall. This means that the risen bodies will be, not heavy, mortal, and liable to passions, but fine, immortal, and spiritual, adapted to the life that will obtain after the resurrection. Neither did Origen deny that there will be a resurrection of the bodies, in spite of accusations levelled against him. Nor did he maintain that before the fall the human being was bodiless. Similarly, Bardaisan may have, not denied the resurrection tout court, but admitted of a restoration of the prelapsarian bodies to spiritual bodies. In this connection, it is significant that Bardaisan shared Origen's, Methodius' and Gregory of Nyssa's view that the death of the prelapsarian body is a benefit, in that it limits sin and paves the way to the restoration of that body to the spiritual body. This is attested – although not without misunderstandings – by Ephrem in *CN* 51: Bardaisan 'deprives the body of its resurrection and the soul of its companion, and calls "gain" the damage caused by the serpent.' The damage caused by the serpent in *Genesis* can be called a gain only if identified with physical death; spiritual death can by no means be deemed a gain. Therefore, according to Bardaisan, the fall produced not only spiritual death, but also physical death. The latter is not connatural with the human being, but it is a consequence of the fall; thus, it solely affects the postlapsarian body.⁶⁰ Ephrem may have misunderstood a notion of the resurrection as the restoration of the body to its prelapsarian state for a denial of the resurrection of the body tout court. This regularly happened in Origen's case.

Ephrem in *PR* II 160,14-6 observes that, according to Bardaisan, the body, being heavy by nature, cannot adhere to the soul, which is light. When the body dies, the soul, 'light, swiftly flies away.' This is consistent with the idea of the heaviness of the mortal body, but the light, spiritual body of the prelapsarian state and of the resurrection can adhere to the soul. According to Bardaisan the mortal

⁶⁰ This contradicts Ephrem's statement that according to Bardaisan Adam's sin produced spiritual death alone, and not physical death, and that the human body would have been liable to destruction even without the fall, and that the life brought about by Christ is only spiritual life, that is, the salvation of the soul, and not also bodily resurrection. Ephrem's interpretation is at odds with the fragment he himself reports, and is not confirmed by any other fragment from Bardaisan. In a fragment preserved by Ephrem (*PR* II 165,9-19) the intellectual and rational soul is said to have been liberated by Christ from 'the ancient impediment' that arose from Adam's sin and thus can finally ascend to the 'bridal room of light' (attested in *PR* II 164,29-40). This is not incompatible with the doctrine of a spiritual risen body. I suspect that Bardaisan, like Origen, regarded the death caused by Adam and the life produced by Christ on both planes, physical and spiritual: on the one hand, physical death and resurrection of the body to an incorruptible body; on the other, spiritual death due to sin and spiritual life, *i.e.* salvation.

body, and all the present world, is composed not only of pure elements, but also of particles of darkness-evil. However, it is not entirely constituted by the 'nature of evil(ness)' of which Ephrem speaks in *PR* I 147,18-20; this is a Manichaean concept, and it is typical of Ephrem to assimilate Bardaisan to Manichaeans.⁶¹ In Bardaisan's view, the spiritual body, before the fall and at the resurrection, is unmixed, without particles of darkness-evil. This is why it can be immortal. Prelapsarian bodies cannot be immortal, because they contain evil, which must eventually disappear – a tenet of both Bardaisan's and Origen's eschatology⁶² –, but not so the unmixed, spiritual bodies: there is no ontological necessity for these to disappear. Ephrem claims that for Bardaisan the dead body returns to 'dust' (*PR* II 143,1-24). This is a biblical statement, which Bardaisan could refer to the mortal body; it does not imply the exclusion of a spiritual body for those resurrected. That Bardaisan believed in the resurrection of the body is further suggested by Sozomen in *Hist. eccl.* III 16, where it is stated that Bardaisan and his 'son' (biological or spiritual) 'drew inspiration from the Greek philosophers' theories concerning the soul and *the body's birth and destruction and palingenesis*'. The 'palingenesis' from the context seems to be the body's rebirth after its destruction.

In *PR* II 153 Ephrem accuses Bardaisan of depriving both Adam's sin and Christ's sacrifice of significance, because he did not think they brought about, the former the death of the body, and the latter its resurrection. But Bardaisan, as I have argued, by calling 'gain' the death caused by Adam, shows that he thought his sin did cause the death of the body, since 'gain' cannot refer to spiritual death.⁶³ Bardaisan, like Origen, probably thought that Adam's sin produced *both* physical *and* spiritual death. Since the latter is more serious, Bardaisan, again like Origen, emphasised it. That Adam introduced the death of the soul, and Christ its vivification, is clear from Ephrem's literal quotation in *PR* II 143-69:

According to Bardaisan's teaching, the death which Adam introduced was an *impediment to the souls*, in that they were impeded in the place of their crossing, because Adam's sin impeded them. And the life – I quote – that our Lord has brought about lies

⁶¹ Darkness-evil is in the body, but Bardaisan does not deem the body evil, and doomed to perish on this account, and the soul good. This is typical of Manichaean dualism, which Ephrem unduly ascribes back to Bardaisan, since in Ephrem's day Manichaeism was regarded as the main menace to Christianity. But Bardaisan deemed evil incapable of determining anything, *qua* mere passivity and negativity. Doing evil depends on each human's free will, belonging to the intellectual soul. The body, *per se*, is neither evil nor good, and the particles of darkness that are in it are also scattered throughout the world. The death of the body is not a punishment for the body's evilness, but the consequence of the fall, which depended on human free will.

⁶² See my 'Origen, Bardaisan' (2009).

⁶³ Likewise, in *PR* II 143,17-22 (see also 162,32-8; 164,41-165,8), Ephrem remarks that according to Bardaisan the first human being who died was Abel, the just, and, since he died before Adam's death, the death decreed by God against Adam was not physical, but spiritual. This is Ephrem's inference. But Abel died before Adam only because he was killed while young; his death does not mean that, if Adam had not sinned, he would have died all the same, as Ephrem thinks Bardaisan thought. Abel's death must be included in the death decided by God for Adam.

in the fact that he *taught the Truth* and rose/ascended/was lifted up, and *let them cross and enter the Reign*. This is why – I quote – our Lord taught us that ‘whoever observes my Word *will not taste death in the world to come*,’ because – I quote – this person’s soul *is not impeded* when it crosses in the crossing place, as it was the case with the ancient impediment by which *souls were impeded* when our Saviour had not yet come.

Ephrem indicates that Bardaisan, like Origen, understands death as both physical and spiritual; he regards the latter as more important,⁶⁴ but not as the sole one.

Beck’s research⁶⁵ has also cast light onto Bardaisan’s idea of an ascending gradation from a heavy and corruptible corporeality to a lighter and lighter one. The latter is that of the spiritual body that Origen postulated for the intellects before their fall and for humans at their resurrection. Bardaisan, too, may have entertained a similar view, all the more in that the idea of an incorruptible and immortal body, whose material is unknown but that is not immaterial, is attested in Bardaisan’s fragment from *De India* quoted by Porphyry. Here, the cosmic Adam and the cosmic Christ⁶⁶ are depicted as endowed with a living but incorruptible body, resembling the prelapsarian and risen body. Its unknown matter is similar to *imperishable* wood, though it is not wood; it bleeds and sweats, but it is incorruptible. This is because it is the glorious and immortal body as it was before the fall and will be after the resurrection. This immortal body is made of pure entities without any mixture of darkness, which instead is in this world and in all mortal bodies and will be completely purified off only at the end of the world.⁶⁷ As Thomas McGlothlin suggested,⁶⁸ Bardaisan is the probable polemical target of Aphrahat’s *Dem.* 8. This is particularly relevant to the present research, because in that *Demonstratio* the view is criticised of one who believed in the resurrection of a spiritual and not a heavy body. This is the opinion ascribed to his followers: ‘We know of course that the dead shall rise; but they will be clothed in a *heavenly body* and *spiritual forms* ... the spirit of the just shall ascend into heaven and *put on a heavenly body*’. These people grounded their argument in Paul’s words, ‘The body that is in heaven is *different* from that which is on earth’. The reference is to 1Cor. 15:44, which

⁶⁴ Indeed, what Bardaisan says in the fragment reported by Ephrem in *PR* II 164,18-26, ‘death is sin’, perfectly corresponds to the main meaning ascribed to ‘death’ by Origen in *Dial. Her.* 25-30: the death of the body is no evil; the worst kind of death is the death of the soul, which consists in sin: this is ‘the real death’. But this does not entail the denial of physical death.

⁶⁵ Edmund Beck, ‘Bardaisan und seine Schule bei Ephräm’, *Le Muséon* 91 (1978), 271-333, 300-7.

⁶⁶ It is all humanity and all the world; for this statue represents, in its androgyny, the totality of the microcosmos, *i.e.* humanity, and in the representation of the cosmos on all of its surface, the totality of the macrocosmos.

⁶⁷ This results from the ‘cosmological traditions’; see here below for Moses Bar Kepha; full account in I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan* (2009), 314-55.

⁶⁸ In a communication at the Syriac Symposium at Duke University in June 2011, forthcoming.

Aphrahat has just quoted: 'There is an animal body, and there is a spiritual body'. That Aphrahat is thinking of Bardaisan seems to me to be confirmed by his reference to the interpretation of the death that was decreed for Adam after his sin as a spiritual death.⁶⁹ Thus, Aphrahat seems to confirm that Bardaisan believed in the resurrection of a spiritual body. This is likely to be also the prelapsarian body in his view.

In the above-quoted fragment, Christ's salvific action is contemplated in its intellectual respect: he taught the truth and 'ascended/arose/was lifted up', which may refer to his ascension, resurrection, and/or being lifted on the cross. The last case may refer to *John* 12:31-2: 'Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, when I am *lifted up* from earth, shall *drag all people to me*'. This statement, in its universalism, is relevant to the apokatastasis doctrine, which Bardaisan supported. If Jesus' salvific being lifted up refers to the cross, this confirms the centrality of the Cross in Bardaisan's thought. As it emerges from the 'cosmological traditions', the 'Mystery of the Cross' was already active at the beginning of creation, when the Logos ordered the preexistent 'beings' liberating them from darkness-evil,⁷⁰ but not completely: the complete liberation will be at the end of the world. The Cross operates as a mystery of purification and reconciliation that will find its full achievement at the end of the world, with apokatastasis. In a passage from the so-called cosmological traditions Christ's conception and birth are described as providing purification for this world, which will culminate in the eventual apokatastasis. It is preserved by Moses Bar Kepha,⁷¹ who expounds Bardaisan's cosmology. First he recounts that the preexistent beings (Fire, Wind, Water, and Light) were disposed at the four cardinal points, and their Lord was on high, and darkness

⁶⁹ 'He laid a commandment on Adam and said to him, "In the day that you eat of the tree, you shall surely die". And after he had transgressed the commandment, and had eaten, he lived nine hundred and thirty years; but he was accounted *dead to God because of his sins*'.

⁷⁰ I limit myself to quoting Barhadbshabba 'Arbaya: 'The world – I quote – originated from an accident. How? In the beginning – I quote – Light was in the East, and the Wind – I quote – was opposite to it, in the West; the Fire was in the South, and the Water opposite to it, in the North. Their Lord was on high, and the enemy, that is, darkness, in the depths. And because of an accident – I quote – the "beings" set themselves in motion. One of them – I quote – began to move and reached that which was beside it, and the power that each of them individually possessed was thus reduced. The heavy descended and the light ascended, and they mingled with one another. And then all of them were upset, began to flee, and sought refuge in the Most High's mercy. Then a strong voice descended to the noise of that movement, that is, *the Logos, the Word of Thought*. It separated darkness from the pure beings, and the former was chased away and fell into its place down there, below. And the Logos separated them and placed each of them, by itself, in its region, *according to the mystery of the cross*. And from their mixture it built up this world. And for it a period of time was fixed: the Logos established for it a limit within which it must remain. As for that which is not yet purified, it will come *at the end of time and will purify it*'.

⁷¹ Its first edition was offered by F. Nau in *Patrologia Syriaca* 1.2.513-4 on the basis of Syr. Ms. Paris 241, fol. 17v. The critical edition is now found in Alberto Camplani, 'Note bardesaniche', *Miscellanea Marciana* 13 (1997), 11-43, 18-20.

beneath, but they suddenly crashed into one another and were invaded by darkness. So, they cried to God for help. Bardaisan's words follow, describing the work of Christ-Logos sent by God:

Then – I quote – when this tumult resounded, the Word of Thought [*sc.* Logos] of the Most High, who is Christ, descended, and *separated that darkness from the pure beings*. Darkness was expelled and fell into the abyss, which becomes its nature. He gave each being its own region, in good order, *according to the Mystery of the Cross*. And *from the mixture of these beings and their enemy, darkness, he constituted this world*, and established it in the middle, lest another mixture occurred between them and what had already been mixed, while *it is purified and purged by a unique conception and birth until it will be concluded* [or: 'until peace'].

Christ is active not only in the creation, with his cross, but also in history with his incarnation and sacrifice, which produce a purification that will culminate in apokatastasis.

Christ's cross has reopened the access to salvation, closed by Adam's sin; it becomes an instrument of reconciliation. In Bardaisan's fragment from *De India*, preserved by Porphyry, the Cross is even one and the same thing with the cosmic Christ, whose arms are outspread in the form of the Cross. The living and immortal statue that Bardaisan describes 'is standing with its arms outspread in the symbol/mystery of the cross' (ἑστὼς ὀρθός, ἔχων τὰς χεῖρας ἡπλωμένας ἐν τύπῳ σταυροῦ). The statue of the cosmic Crucified is androgynous, to comprise all humanity, and has the whole cosmos, *i.e.* all beings, chiselled upon it; it includes the whole humanity and the whole world because it is Christ, who has taken up humanity, and the cosmic Christ. This is also why it is crucified.⁷² Since 'it was God to give this statue to his Son, when he was founding the cosmos, that he might have a model to contemplate', as Bardaisan explains, reminiscent of the *Timaueus*, this statue represents the world and at the same time its paradigm. It is in the shape of a cross, because the world was created by the Logos under the sign of the Cross. Christ-Logos is both the

⁷² An interesting short fragment on Bardaisan preserved by Moses bar Kepha in his *Commentary on the Hexameron* suggests that the cosmos is seen as the body of Christ, who in this case would be again the cosmic Christ: 'Bardaisan said: A particle of vitality out of superabundance overflowed from the Mother of Life and was crowned with the *purple of obscurity*. And by means of its refinement the constitution of this visible world was produced' (my translation). Christ took up a body made of the mixture of the elements with darkness; from its refinement the visible cosmos results. This points to a conception of the cosmic Christ in which the body of Christ is the cosmos. The purple also indicates the blood of Christ's body, which notably comes out also in the body of the statue of the cosmic Christ in Porphyry's fragment. This fragment is published on the basis of mss. Mingana Syr. 65 and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Syr. 241 by Alberto Camplani in *École Pratique des Hautes Études. Section de sciences religieuses, Annuaire. Résumé de conférences et travaux* 112 (2003-4), 29-50. I am grateful to him for providing me with his manuscript, where the Syriac is correct (in the publication it is not). This is the cross that orders and unifies the universe, material and spiritual; it unites earth and heaven, humans and God. It opens the access to salvation to rational creatures.

producer of the cosmos and, *qua* Logos, the very seat of the ideal model (κόσμος νοητός) and, hence, the model itself: the cosmic Christ and Christ-Logos the Creator. Bardaisan interpreted the Son of God as the Logos who, in the *Prologue of John*, was the agent of creation; this is also clear in the ‘cosmological traditions’. He interpreted Plato’s *Timaeus* in the light of Christianity and Middle Platonism. As an equivalent of the good Demiurge, he has God, God’s Son who functions as a Demiurge and is the Logos – as the cosmological traditions confirm – and the intellectual paradigm of the cosmos. This paradigm is the Logos, because this is the seat of the Ideas in Middle Platonism and in this way is the transcending unity of all, ‘all in One’, as the Christian Middle Platonist Clement said.⁷³ As a consequence, the model of the cosmos created by Christ-Logos *is* Christ, the cosmic Christ. This is why the human statue with the cosmos carved on it spreads its arms in the shape of a cross, and is living, but incorruptible and imperishable. God’s Logos, under the *epinoia* of Wisdom, is the seat of the Ideas and the agent of creation according to Origen as well (*e.g. Comm. in Io.* I 19,114-5). For Bardaisan, Christ-Logos is the synthesis of the *Timaeus*’ two active principles of the creation of the cosmos: the Demiurge, a good God, and the intellectual paradigm that he followed in the creation. As for matter, the passive principle, in the *Liber* and the cosmological traditions the ‘beings’ or elements that represent it are described as creatures of God, albeit preexisting the present world.

Bardaisan uses a peculiar image of decorations (the figures of all existing beings chiselled on the surface of the statue) to represent the Ideas or *logoi* of all beings on the surface of the body of Christ-Logos. This bears an impressive similarity to Origen’s image of the Ideas or *logoi* of creatures that were initially found as decorations on the surface of the body of Christ-Logos-Wisdom in *Comm. in Io.* XIX 22,147 (with a reminiscence of *Eph.* 3:10). These were decorations on the body of Christ-Wisdom as the creator of the world, and formed his ‘intelligible Beauty with many decorations’ (πολυποίκιλον νοητὸν κάλλος, *ibid.* I 9,55). The notion of Christ-Logos’ body covered with decorations representing the Ideas of creatures is identical in Origen and in Bardaisan, and is not present in other previous authors.⁷⁴ Origen might have read Bardaisan’s *De India* shortly after its composition in AD 220-222, or at least this section. This was interesting to him because of the interpretation of the *Timaeus* and *Genesis*, and the Christianisation of Middle Platonism found in it. If it was known to Porphyry and probably, therefore, in Plotinus’ school, it is certainly

⁷³ See my ‘Clement’s Notion of the Logos “All Things As One”. Its Alexandrian Background in Philo and its Developments in Origen and Nyssen’, in Zlatko Pleše and Rainer Hirsch-Luipold (eds), *Alexandrian Personae: Scholarly Culture and Religious Traditions in Ancient Alexandria (1st ct. BCE-4th. CE)* (Tübingen, 2013).

⁷⁴ Clement cited *Eph.* 3:10 in *Strom.* I 3,27,1, but joining it to *Hebr.* 1:1, and referring it to the variety of God’s Wisdom in art, science, faith, and prophecy, and not to the *logoi* of creation on the body of Christ-Logos.

possible that Origen read it in the same Greek translation or redaction that was available to Porphyry. Or they may depend on a common, unknown source. Likewise, as I mentioned, Bardaisan's work against Fate could have been known to Origen, who may even have brought it to Caesarea, where Eusebius read and excerpted it in a form that corresponds to the Syriac *Liber Legum Regionum*.

On the basis of Bardaisan's fragment from *De India* and that on the salvific effect of Christ's teaching and his cross, which removed the impediment produced by Adam's sin; of the cosmological traditions that speak of the creation 'in the Mystery of the Cross'; of the passage that describes Christ's conception and birth as bringing purification to this world, which will culminate in the end, and of the final section of the *Liber*, in which apokatastasis is described as a result of teaching, it seems that in Bardaisan's view Christ's role is pivotal both in creation – performed by him according to the Mystery of the Cross – and in the history of salvation, culminating in apokatastasis. The role of Christ in creation, salvation, and apokatastasis is also emphasised by Origen and Gregory of Nyssa.⁷⁵ The Cross is in the image of the cosmic Christ, subsuming the universe as Christ-Logos, seat of all the ideas and creator of the world from the *kosmos noētos*, on the model of the *Timaeus*, but read against the *Genesis* account of the Bible. The Cross is active in the creation-ordination of the world from preexisting 'beings' that are creatures of God, like Origen's *logika*, and in the purification of the world until apokatastasis. As for Bardaisan's tripartite anthropology and his doctrine of the body and its resurrection, I have argued that it seems very close to Origen's and indeed was liable to the same misunderstandings.

Dialogue of Adamantius

The *Dialogue of Adamantius*, known to the Cappadocians as a dialogue of Origen and translated by Rufinus as such, is a mysterious work, partially cited by Eusebius (but under the name of Maximus) and Methodius. The exact relationships between these excerpts, the *Dialogue*, its extant Greek redaction, and the Latin translation are difficult to assess. I extensively demonstrated elsewhere⁷⁶ that the arguments adduced by Adamantius in the *Dialogue* are likely to be more similar to Origen's true thought than is commonly assumed, and that Rufinus' translation is closer to the original Greek than the extant Greek

⁷⁵ See my 'Origen and the Apokatastasis: A Reassessment', in Sylvia Kaczmarek and Henryk Pietras (eds), *Origeniana Decima*, BETL 244 (Leuven, 2011), 649-70, and *Apokatastasis* (Leiden, 2013).

⁷⁶ In 'The *Dialogue of Adamantius* as a Document of Origen's Authentic Thought? Part One', *SP* 52 (2011), 71-98; 'Part Two', *SP* 56 (2013), 227-73 (this volume). A new critical edition and a commentary will hopefully contribute to the advancement of research into this enigmatic text.

is (which is also quite late). The same seems to be the case with the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*,⁷⁷ composed in Greek around AD 395 and translated by Rufinus. While it was commonly assumed that the translation differs from the extant Greek because Rufinus altered his *Vorlage* – what is also supposed in the case of our *Dialogue* – in order to describe the Egyptian monks as Origenians, now, thanks to comparisons with Sozomen and the Syriac recensions,⁷⁸ it is clear that Rufinus translated faithfully the original Greek and it is the extant Greek that reveals alterations, deletions, and additions, as I strongly suspect it happened with the *Dialogue*. In the *Historia*, the passages lacking in the later Greek are all related to Origenism.⁷⁹ Likewise, in the extant Greek of the *Dialogue*, all passages on apokatastasis have been expurgated, but Adamantius clearly supported this doctrine, like Origen (with whom the Cappadocians identified Adamantius, who bore Origen’s byname). Adamantius supports it in the framework of a discussion against ‘Gnostics’ and Marcionites – the same context in which Origen developed and supported it.

Here I concentrate on the issues of creation, the body-soul relationship, the resurrection, and the eventual apokatastasis of all rational creatures. Adamantius’ positions are perfectly coherent with Origen’s and point to a doctrine of the creation of *logika* endowed with spiritual bodies that, as a consequence of the fall, were transformed into mortal in the case of humans, but will return to their spiritual nature and incorruptibility in the end. Adamantius supports the doctrine of the so-called *creatio ex nihilo*, as is clear especially from *Dial.* 835c: ‘*nihil dico esse quod factum non sit uel creatum nisi solum deum, caetera autem omnia quae sunt facta esse et creata definitio*’. His position coincides with that of Origen, who for this reason criticised the theory of an eternal, preexistent matter. For instance, in *Comm. in Io.* I 17 (4,22,14) he polemicalises against those who considered matter to be uncreated. Among Christians, these were mainly ‘Gnostics’ and Marcionites, Origen’s chief opponents, whom Adamantius too opposes. Origen contends that God created every being ‘from non-being’. Likewise in *Princ.* II 1,4 Origen attacks those Gnostics who postulated the coeternity of matter with God. Exactly like Adamantius, Origen holds that God created matter and its qualities, and in IV 4,7 argues that no substance can exist without qualities.⁸⁰ In *Princ.* II 1,4 he

⁷⁷ Edition of the extant Greek: André-Jean Festugière, *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* (Bruxelles, 1971); edition of Rufinus’ version: Eva Schultz-Flügel, *Tyrannii Rufini Historia monachorum* (Berlin, 1990).

⁷⁸ Sozomen, for instance, knows passages that are present in Rufinus but absent from the extant Greek, which means that they were present in Rufinus’s *Vorlage* and not invented by him. See Caroline Bammel, ‘Problems of the *Historia Monachorum*’, *JTS* 47 (1996), 92–104. The Syriac recensions confirm the anteriority of Rufinus’ translation to the extant Greek according to Peter Tóth in G. Heidl and R. Somos (eds), *Origeniana Nona* (Leuven, 2009), 613–21.

⁷⁹ This is why C. Bammel, ‘Problems’ (1996), 99 concluded that ‘the Greek has undergone a clumsy and incompetent revision as a result of fear of Origenism’.

⁸⁰ ‘*Numquam substantia sine qualitate subsistit, sed intellectu solo discernitur hoc quod subsistat corporibus et capax est qualitatis, esse materia.*’

declares that, even if matter is without qualities *per se*, 'it cannot subsist without qualities'. Matter was created by God and did not exist without qualities prior to God's creation. Thus, Origen held a doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* by denying the preexistence of uncreated matter (*Princ.* IV 4,8). In *Princ.* I 3,3, too, Origen rejects the hypothesis of the coeternity of matter with God, within an argument that aims at demonstrating that God created all, just as Adamantius' own argument does.⁸¹ Origen's argument and Adamantius' argument are identical. Origen adduces a further argument in *Princ.* II 4,3 in order to demonstrate that matter was created by God. He uses questions and answers structured as objections, the same as in 'Maximus' quoted by Eusebius.⁸² Origen engages in a *reductio ad absurdum* of the hypothesis that matter is uncreated and coeternal with God.⁸³ He expressed his position not only in a doctrinal context, but even in a homiletic one: in *Hom. 1 in Ps. 38*, 10 he contends that every creature is *ex nihilo*⁸⁴ and in *Hom. in Gen.* 14,3 he rejects again the coeternity of matter with God. He maintained that no substance can exist without qualities, denying the preexistence of a material substratum deprived of qualities. In this way he laid the theoretical foundations of the *creatio ex nihilo* concept (not new in Jewish and Christian traditions, and perhaps not extraneous to some Middle Platonists⁸⁵). He criticised those who regarded matter as uncreated and qualities as created, and insisted that matter exclusively consists in qualities. Important proofs come not only from Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, but also from works preserved in Greek, such as his *Commentary on John* and *Contra Celsum*. Interesting relationships emerge between Origen, the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, and the Middle Platonist Maximus of Tyre on this score, which I have explored elsewhere.⁸⁶ Origen treated this question in his *Commentary on Genesis*. From there very probably a fragment of it derives, preserved by Eusebius (*PE* VII 20), in which Origen criticised those who thought that God could not create without preexistent matter and opposed to his adversaries the argument of divine omnipotence. They do not consider God's power. For God creates through his

⁸¹ 'Quod autem a deo uniuersa creata sint nec sit ulla substantia quae non ab eo hoc ipso ut esset acceperit, ex multis totius scripturae adsertionibus conprobatur, repudiatis atque depulsis his, quae a quibusdam falso perhibentur, uel de materia deo coaeterna uel de ingenitis animabus.'

⁸² See my "'Maximus" on Evil, Matter, and God', *Adamantius* 16 (2010), 230-55.

⁸³ 'Materia facta est aut ingenita, id est infecta? Et si quidem dixerint quia infecta est, id est ingenita, requiremus ab eis si materiae pars quidem aliqua Deus, pars autem mundus.'

⁸⁴ 'Ad comparisonem Dei vero, etiam si Petrus sim ... substantia mea ante Eum [sc. God] nihil est. Et satis proprio vocabulo natura usus est. Nihil enim est omne, quamvis magnum sit, quidquid ex nihilo est; solus enim est Ille qui est et qui semper est.'

⁸⁵ Creation of matter by God was supported by Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, and Tertullian. For the origin of the Christian doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* see also Jean-Pierre Batut, *Pantocrator. Dieu le Père tout-puissant dans la théologie prénicéenne* (Paris, 2009), esp. Ch. 2, on *creatio ex nihilo* from Scripture to Theophilus. For Atticus in Middle Platonism see my 'Atticus and Origen on the Soul of God the Creator: From the Pagan to the Christian Side of Middle Platonism', *Jahrbuch für Religionsphilosophie* 10 (2011), 13-35.

⁸⁶ "'Maximus" on Evil' (2010), 230-55.

will, which is sufficient to that.⁸⁷ Origen underlines the difference between his Christian thought and Greek philosophy on the eternity of matter in *Hom. in Gen.* 14,3: ‘The doctrines of moral philosophy and the so-called physical philosophy are almost all the same as ours; they differ from ours, however, in the claim that matter is coeternal with God.’⁸⁸

A long section is devoted to the resurrection in the *Dialogue of Adamantius*; it begins at 859b. Adamantius refutes the Bardaisanite Marinus’ contention that the resurrection of the body will not take place. Adamantius upholds the identity between the body that will rise and that which one had in one’s earthly life: ‘*hoc corpus dico resurgere quo circumdamur*’ (859c). Origen also maintained that one’s resurrected body will be the same (*hoc idem*) as one’s earthly body, and not another, distinct one (*non aliud*; see *Princ.* III 6,6 and above).⁸⁹ Adamantius maintains, like Origen, that the body, now and in the resurrection, is constituted by the four elements and no other. Adamantius explains the resurrection in terms of permanence of the four elements and change of qualities. He claims that what guarantees the identity between one’s risen and one’s mortal body is the *ratio substantialis* of one’s individual body. This is perfectly consistent with Origen *Princ.* II 10,3: the *ratio substantialis* of one’s earthly body allows its reconstruction in the resurrection⁹⁰ and guarantees the identity between one’s mortal and one’s risen body. The body’s metaphysical form works as *principium individuationis*. The risen body is not a different body from the mortal one; it is the same, but made spiritual, or *remade* so. This idea, indeed, in Adamantius and Origen alike, goes together with that of spiritual bodies from the beginning of the *logika*’s substantial existence, which excludes the preexistence of bare souls, and even the preexistence of intellects themselves to a body. Their spiritual bodies became mortal due to the fall, but will be restored in the end.

⁸⁷ ‘If one mistakenly maintains, because of human craftsmen, that it is impossible to admit that God created the existing beings without the *substratum of uncreated matter* [χωρὶς ὕλης ἀγενήτου ὑποκειμένης], since neither a sculptor can even begin his own work without bronze, nor a carpenter without pieces of wood ... well, to object to this person it is necessary to conduct a research into the *power of God* [ζητητέον περὶ δυνάμεως Θεοῦ] ... *God’s will is sufficient to call to existence* [ἰκανή ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ ἡ βούλησις ποιῆσαι γενέσθαι] the substance he needs ... It is equally absurd that matter may subsist without being created, given that it is so much, so great, and so capable of God’s creative Logos.’

⁸⁸ ‘*Moralis vero et physica quae dicitur philosophia paene omnia quae nostra sunt sentit; dissidet vero a nobis cum Deo dicit esse materiam coaeternam.*’

⁸⁹ ‘*Non aliud corpus est quod nunc in ignobilitate et in corruptione et in infirmitate utimur, et aliud erit illud quo in incorruptione et in uirtute et in gloria utemur, sed hoc idem, abiectis his infirmitatibus, in quibus nunc est, in gloriam transmutabitur, spiritale effectum, ut quod fuit indignitatis uas, hoc ipsum expurgatum fiat uas honoris et beatitudinis habitaculum. In quo statum etiam permanere semper et immutabiliter creatoris uoluntate credendum est.*’

⁹⁰ ‘*Ratio ea quae substantiam continet corporalem; ratio illa ipsa quae semper in substantia corporis salva est; ratio illa reparandi corporis.*’

Adamantius, in line with Origen, refutes Marinus' objection that the body is the cause of all evils for the soul and rather depicts it as the συνεργόν of the soul (862d).⁹¹ Origen also regarded the body as the συνεργόν and minister of the soul, which does what the soul wants. In *Princ.* III 6,6 he remarks that in the present arrangement of things, the body serves the soul; in the end it will serve the spirit or intellect.⁹² Conversely, the human soul uses the body, now fleshly and after the resurrection spiritual: the quality changes, but the body is the same (*Princ.* II 3,2).⁹³ Adamantius remarks that Paul speaks of risen 'bodies', not 'flesh', because the risen body will no longer be flesh, as it was not yet when it was still clay. But it will be the same body, with different qualities. In Paul's words (*'Corruptibile hoc induet immortalitatem'*) *hoc* is deictic and indicates this mortal body, as though he were touching and indicating it.⁹⁴ Therefore, it is this flesh here that will be resurrected, and not another,⁹⁵ although once risen it will no more be flesh. The idea that Paul is using a deictic pronoun, as touching and indicating the mortal body, is expressed by Origen as well, likewise in the framework of a discussion of the identity between the risen and the mortal body.⁹⁶ The resemblance with Origen's ideas extends up to the tiniest details.

The alignment with Origen's views is even clearer in Adamantius' adhesion to the apokatastasis doctrine, which both in the *Dialogue* and in Origen's reflection originates from the theodicy question (*Dial.* 848e). According to Adamantius, just as to Origen, all rational creatures are involved in this eschatological process (which in the case of humans will be preceded by the resurrection of their bodies and their transformation into spiritual bodies), ultimate perdition (ἀπώλεια) is ruled out, and the parable of the lost sheep is an illustration of apokatastasis itself. The extant Greek of the *Dialogue* entirely omits this

⁹¹ *'Ais animam propter peccatum uinctam esse in corpore, tum deinde paululum progrediens ais causam malorum omnium esse corpus, cum superius dixeris animam priusquam corpus acciperet delinxisse. Si ergo potuit anima peccare sine corpore, non erit animae corpus causa peccati ... corpus non uidemus uinculum esse animae, sed cooperari ei et administrare.'*

⁹² *'Idem ipsum corpus, quod nunc pro ministerio animae nuncupatum est animale, per perfectum quendam, cum anima, adiuncta Deo, unus cum eo spiritus fuerit effecta, iam tum corpus, quasi spiritui ministrans, in statum qualitatemque proficiat spiritalem.'* In *Princ.* II 3,2 Origen describes humans as 'a soul that makes use of a body' (see IV 2,7), just as in CC VII 38, where he adds the identification of the soul with the 'interior human being' spoken of especially by Philo.

⁹³ *'Materiae corporalis, cuius materiae anima usum semper habet, in qualibet qualitate positae, nunc quidem carnali, postmodum uero subtiliori et puriori, quae spiritalis appellatur.'*

⁹⁴ *'Uelut manu continentis et demonstrantis apostoli uox uidetur.'*

⁹⁵ *'Haec est caro quae resurget, et non alia pro hac erit.'*

⁹⁶ Origen, in *Princ.* II 3,2, is considering *'si omnia possunt carere corporibus, sine dubio non erit substantia corporalis.'* He refutes this hypothesis using 1Cor. 15:53-6, and comments: *'Quod enim ait, "corruptibile hoc" et "mortale hoc" uelut tangents et ostendents affectu, cui alii conuenit nisi materiae corporalis? Haec ergo materia corporis, quae nunc corruptibilis est, "induet incorruptionem" cum perfecta anima et dogmatibus incorruptionis instructa uti eo coeperit.'*

passage. The original Greek probably included it,⁹⁷ and Rufinus duly translated it, but later it was athetised from the Greek for doctrinal reasons. Since in 849a Adamantius is said to have expounded the orthodox doctrine, in the day of Justinian or afterwards many could not accept that ‘orthodoxy’ included apokatastasis. But Rufinus could and did. The case is the same with another passage on apokatastasis in *Dial.* 856e, where nine lines in Rufinus’ Latin are completely lacking in the extant Greek. While in Greek there is a logical gap, in Latin the argument flows. In these lines Adamantius, on the basis of 1*Cor.* 15:47 and *Gen.* 2:7, equally absent from the extant Greek, speaks again of apokatastasis, here seen as the restoration of God’s image in humans. This is also the way Origen and Gregory Nyssen described it. For all of them, this image is not in the body, but in the soul. This was insufflated into the human moulded from the earth; only in this way could it, moulded from clay (which in Procopius’ fragment is the prelapsarian, spiritual body), become God’s image: when endowed with a soul.⁹⁸ This is clearly the *nous* with its originally spiritual body. The image was lost – which entailed that the spiritual body became mortal – but it will be recovered thanks to Christ, who took up a mortal body and sanctified humanity: ‘*cum in eo nostra fuisset imago reparata, ita demum et ipsius imago restitueretur in nobis*’. When the image is recovered, the intellectual soul will recover its spiritual body.

Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory of Nyssa is probably the most faithful and insightful follower of Origen, with whom he shared, among much else, the concepts of *creatio ex nihilo* and universal apokatastasis, and the rejection of the preexistence of bare souls. Like Origen, and Adamantius, Gregory believed in *creatio ex nihilo* and claimed that matter, an aggregate of qualities, was created by God, as is clear e.g. from *In illud: Tunc et Ipse Filius* 11,4-9 Downing.⁹⁹ This was a brilliant solution to the problem – urgent for Christian Platonists – of how God, who is immaterial par excellence, and for Origen the only absolutely immaterial being, could have created matter: God in fact created the intelligible qualities, whose concurrence is identified with matter itself. Gregory’s pivotal, and broadly

⁹⁷ Argument in my ‘The Dialogue of Adamantius’ (2011-2012).

⁹⁸ ‘*Primus homo de terra terrenum ... non potuisset homo dici, nisi fuisset coelitus inspiratus, insufflauit enim deus in faciem eius spiritum uitae, et factus est homo in animam uiuentem ... ille terrenus suscepit imaginem deitatis.*’

⁹⁹ ‘God’s will [τὸ θεῖον θέλημα] became matter and the substance of creatures.’ See also *Apol. Hex.* 69A-C. Ch. Köckert, *Kosmologie* (2009), 400-526 concentrates on his *In Hexaëmeron*, of which she offers a treatment. See Cinzia Arruzza, ‘La matière immatérielle chez Grégoire de Nyse’, *FZPhTh* 54 (2007), 215-23; Ch. Köckert, ‘The Concept of Seed in Christian Cosmology’, *SP* 47 (2010), 27-31.

Platonic, distinction between intelligible and sense-perceptible underpins this conception.¹⁰⁰

Like Origen, again, Gregory in *De anima* and elsewhere shows to uphold the immortality of the rational soul, which – in line with the Platonic tradition – he regards as immaterial, incorporeal, intelligible, adiaesthetic and divine, and distinct from the soul's inferior faculties. In *Hom. op.* 8 (see *De an.* 60) Gregory finds in the *Genesis* creation narrative support to the tripartition of the soul into vegetative (vital), sense-perceptive (animal) and rational, which is superimposed to the body-soul-spirit tripartition, with the following equation: 'body' = vegetative soul; 'soul' = sense-perceptive soul; 'spirit' = intellectual soul. Interestingly, in this equation the actual body disappears. At the same time – unlike 'pagan' Platonists, but like Origen – Gregory supported the mortal body's resurrection and transformation into spiritual; this will initiate a process that culminates in the eventual apokatastasis of all humans and all rational creatures. Universal restoration will begin with the resurrection of the dead. Gregory affirms that the risen body is the same as the present as for individual identity (affirmed also in *De an.* 76¹⁰¹ and in the discussion in 137B-145A, where Gregory expounds the absurdities deriving from the assumption that the risen body will be only identical to the mortal and not also transformed, or else will not be the same as the dead one), but it is spiritual and immortal. This is also Origen's view. Origen quoted 1Cor. 15:42-4 to support the identity of the mortal and the risen body in *Princ.* III 6,6,¹⁰² and the same is done by Gregory, who refers to 1Cor. 15:35-52 in a set of comparisons with the earthly body: each soul will be given back its body, but the latter will then have a 'more magnificent complexion' (*De an.* 153C).¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ The distinction between αἰσθητόν/σωματικόν and νοητόν/νοερόν is presented by Gregory as 'the supreme partition of all beings' (*C. Eun.* I 105,19; *In Cant.* VI 173,7-8); 'it is impossible to conceive of anything outside this division in the nature of beings' (*Or. cat.* 21,9-10). This division is clear in *In Cant.* VI 174, where the material substance is said to be finite, diastematic, and sense-perceptible, while the intellectual substance is described as infinite and unlimited, and is further divided into God, immutable, uncreated and creator of all, and the intellects, created and preserved in the Good only by participation in God.

¹⁰¹ 'For, if what is proper to a certain being were not to return exactly, but, instead of a certain peculiar characteristic, something else of the same kind were assumed, the result would be one being instead of another, and a similar result would not be the resurrection, but the creation of a new human being ... it must be *the same* (individual) in every respect'.

¹⁰² 'The Apostle clearly says that the risen dead will not be given *other* bodies, but they will receive *the same bodies* they had when alive, and even *better*. For he declares: "an animal body is sown, a spiritual body will rise; it is sown in corruptibility, it will rise in incorruptibility; it is sown in weakness, it will rise in power; it is sown in ignominy, it will rise in glory"'.

¹⁰³ The glorious body of 1Cor. 15:52, wrapped in incorruptibility, as Macrina says explicitly quoting Paul in 155D and 157A, will cause no more sins and will no longer prevent the soul from remaining in the Good. Its new characteristics, incorruptibility, glory, honour, power, drawn from Paul's text, are typical of God's nature: originally they also belonged to the human being as εἰκὼν of God, and then they are hoped for again for the future (157AB); the same concept, based on

The identity between mortal and risen body, and the transformation of qualities are also underlined in *De an.* 108:

This garment that is the body, which now will be destroyed by death, will be *woven again from the same components*, but not in this gross and heavy structure. The thread will be worked differently, so to obtain a *finer and more aerial* result, so that you will still have what you love, but at the same time it will be given back to you *in a better condition*, more beautiful and worthier of love.

In *De mortuis* Gregory analogously observes that the qualities of the earthly body 'pass on to something more divine', so to 'exceed every conjecture of our thought' (GNO IX 62-3); even the reproductive capacity will be transformed into the capacity for generating virtue. Both Origen and Gregory maintained the identity between the earthly and the risen body, but with a change in its qualities.

The role of the soul in the resurrection of the body is famously asserted by Gregory in *Hom. op.* 27, just as in *De an.* 76¹⁰⁴; 80A-88C¹⁰⁵: after the return of the particles of one's body to their respective elements (see also *De an.* 20C-21A), the soul can still recognise and bring them together (see also *De an.* 45C-48B¹⁰⁶; 85A¹⁰⁷), dragging to itself what is συγγενές τε καὶ ἴδιον and οἰκεῖον to itself.

Paul's account of the spiritual body, concludes the whole dialogue in 160D. The body can be resurrected in its very same elements, but glorious and immortal, only thanks to Christ, who has extended his own being human and being good to all: Adam 'was dissolved because of sin, and for this reason was called earthly: as a consequence, his descendants, too, became all earthly and mortal. But Paul necessarily drew the second consequence, too: that the human being is reconstituted again in its elements [ἀναστοιχειοῦται, the same concept as developed in *De anima*], from mortal to immortality; for he says that *the Good has become ingrained in human nature, passing on from one to all*, in the same way as evil, too, passed on from one to the whole race, by expanding in the succession of those who were born each time' (*In Illud* 11 Downing).

¹⁰⁴ 'The soul knows the natural property of the elements that contributed to the constitution of the body ... even after these have separated ... the soul will continue to be found near each element, adhering to what is proper to itself thanks to its own cognitive faculty, and will remain there until there will be the reunion of the separate elements into one and the same unity, with a view to the reconstitution and regeneration of the previously dissolved body, which will be the resurrection'.

¹⁰⁵ Here, Macrina offers a spiritual exegesis of the parable of Lazarus (*Luke* 16:19-31), in order to demonstrate the συμφωνία of her argument, namely that, after death, the soul maintains the human being's individuality, while the body is dispersed in various elements.

¹⁰⁶ The soul, *qua* intellectual substance (οὐσία νοερά), is adimensional and simple (ἀδιάστατος, ἀπλή), and can thus remain close to all the elements of its own body at the same time and always (*De an.* 45C-48B). 'What is intelligible and adimensional neither contracts nor expands ... Therefore, nothing prevents the soul from being equally present to the body's elements, both when they are mixed together in their concourse, and when they separate due to the dissolution of the compound'.

¹⁰⁷ 'If therefore the soul keeps being present near the elements that from the body have been brought back to the universe, not only will it be able to recognise the complex of those which concurred to the realisation of the whole compound, and will continue to be found in them, but it will also know very well the constitution of each part, *i.e.* thanks to which particles found in the elements our limbs were produced. Therefore, it is not at all unlikely that the soul, being found in the whole complex of the elements, is also found in each one singularly'.

Indeed, Gregory regards the resurrection as the soul's act of *oikeiōsis* or re-appropriation of what belongs to her, which seems to me parallel to Gregory's notion of the eventual apokatastasis as God's supreme act of *oikeiōsis* or re-appropriation of all creatures, which belong to God but were alienated by evil.¹⁰⁸ This is another aspect of the resurrection-restoration assimilation in Gregory, resulting from his holistic view of the resurrection – not only of the body, but also of the intellectual component of the human being – which is a heritage of Origen. Notably, for Gregory in the restoration of the body the intellectual soul plays the same role of re-appropriation as is played by God in the eventual universal restoration. And just as the mortal body is restored to its prelapsarian state of spiritual body, so is the intellectual soul restored to its prelapsarian condition, free from evil. What Gregory adds in *Hom. op.* 27, that the mortal body continually changes, but its εἶδος remains unaltered (ἀμετάβλητον), directly derives from Origen.¹⁰⁹ Gregory builds on Origen's distinction to affirm that the intellectual soul – the part of the soul that is in the image of God, θεοειδές – is not joined by nature to the material ὑποκείμενον, which is always in flux (ῥέον) – a problem that Gregory also brings forth in *De an.* 141 exactly in the discussion of the resurrection¹¹⁰ – but to the εἶδος, which is stable and always identical to itself (μόνιμόν τε καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχον). The union of soul and body that forms the human being must be qualified, in Gregory's view, as the union of the intellectual soul (the only bearer of the divine image) and the substantial form (εἶδος) of the body, as opposed to its material ever-changeable substratum or ὑποκείμενον. Gregory is adopting Origen's concepts and very terminology. The εἶδος of the body, he explains, remains in the soul even after the body's death as a kind of seal, so that the soul allows for the reconstitution of the body in its elements (ἀναστοιχείωσις). This soul is the intellectual soul. In *De anima* Gregory treats this soul as the true human being (an idea that goes back to Plato, *Alcib.* I, 129E-130C; *Rep.* IV 441E-442B287, *Phaedr.* 246B), its true nature, and the image of God. Origen was acquainted with the 'perishability axiom', like Gregory (see below), and used it in reference to the world (Pamph., *Apol.* 25,41-3: '*mundus iste a certo tempore coeperit et sit soluendus*'; in *Princ.* II 3,6 he proves to be aware of this axiom's use in Middle Platonism¹¹¹), but also to the human being: it was immortal from the very

¹⁰⁸ On which see my 'The *Oikeiōsis* Doctrine in Gregory of Nyssa's Theology: Reconstructing His Creative Reception of Stoicism', forthcoming.

¹⁰⁹ Analysis of Origen's theory in my 'Origen's Exegesis of Jeremiah: Resurrection Announced throughout the Bible and its Twofold Conception', *Augustinianum* 48 (2008), 59-78.

¹¹⁰ E.g.: 'The coming and going of our nature, proceeding and always moving through the movement of alteration, stops when it ceases to live, but until one remains alive, it has no interruption ... Thus, if one is not even the same as the previous day, but becomes another due to this continuous substitutive transformation, then, when the resurrection will bring back our body to life, one will definitely become a whole row of humans ... the newborn baby, the toddler, the child, the boy, the man, the father, the aged man, and all the intermediate stages'.

¹¹¹ Porphyry, who knew this use and Origen's, used the perishability axiom to argue that the world was not created in time and thus is incorruptible and eternal (ἀίδιος, *ap. Zachar., De op.*

beginning, lost its immortality after its sin, and will recover it in the end; it could not be restored to immortality if it had not been immortal from the beginning: '*reddi enim videbitur posse quod amissum est, non tamen conferri id quod ex initio conditor non dedit*' (*Comm. in Cant.* II 5,26). in *Princ.* IV 4,9-10 Origen claimed that the human intellectual soul participates in the intellectual light of the divinity, and since the latter is incorruptible and eternal,

[it is] impious to suppose that the intellect, which is able to receive God, *can be subject to death according to its substance*, as though the fact of receiving God were not sufficient to guarantee its eternity. Indeed, even if the intellect, out of neglectfulness, loses its capacity for receiving God in itself in a pure and full way, nevertheless it retains in itself the possibility of *recovering a better knowledge*, when the interior human being, who is also called rational, is *restored* into the image of God, who created it ... The human being is made *in the image of God*. However, the signs of the divine image are to be recognised *not in the figure of the body*, which is corruptible, but in *wisdom, justice, moderation, virtue, knowledge*, discipline of the soul, and all that complex of virtues that are *in God in a substantial manner* and that can be found in the human being thanks to personal engagement and imitation of God.

Much of this comes from Philo.¹¹² According to Origen, as later to Gregory, what keeps the intellectual soul alive and truly an image of God is sticking to the Good, God, who only *is*. Gregory and Origen also agree that the soul will eschatologically be identified *only with the intellect* and not the vital or impulsive soul, nor the irascible or desiring soul, as the inferior faculties of the soul are accessory and will disappear. This is a point on which Gregory insists in *De anima*. In *Princ.* II 8,2-3 Origen cited 1*Cor.* 15:44, on the death of a psychic body and the resurrection of a spiritual body, and observed that Paul attaches much more importance to the spirit than to the soul; 'he associates with the Holy Spirit more the *nous* than the soul'. If 1*Pet.* 1:9 promises the salvation of 'souls', and not of intellects or spirits, this is because the soul in the end will return to be *nous*.¹¹³ For 'the *nous* that fell from its original condition and dignity has become, and has been called, "soul", but if it will have emended and corrected itself, *it will return to being a nous*' (*Princ.* II 8,4). The status of *nous* was its original status. While the true human being, in the image of God, is the rational or intellectual soul, in Gregory's view as well, passions and sins are subsequent 'accretions' that must be purified off (*De an.* 52-6; 64 with the allegorisation of the darnel parable; *In Illud* 3: the intellect after purification can recover the intelligence of the truth which is natural

mund. 140-3 Colonna; Al-Shahrastani, *Kitab al-Milal wal-Nihal*, 345 Cureton: according to Porphyry, Plato in his *Timaeus* did not describe a creation in time, but a being originated by a cause).

¹¹² *Op. mund.* 69 on the human being as image and likeness of God in its intellect (see *ibid.* 134; 136; 139), as opposed to the sense-perceptible and gendered human being (*ibid.* 151-2); see *Plant.* 18-20; *LA* I 90; I 31; II 13; I 88.

¹¹³ 'It is necessary to examine whether the soul, having reached salvation and attained the blessed life, will not *cease to be a soul* ... if the Lord has come to save the soul that was lost, the saved/recovered soul will no longer be a soul'.

to it). The skin tunics of *Gen.* 3:21 received by Adam and Eve after sin are identified by Gregory, as by Origen, with the heavy body and the *πάθη* connected to it. In his second *Homily on the Song of Songs* he has the soul say that she has taken up a 'skin tunic', allegorised as a 'dark look', because she abandoned purity, and in the eleventh he insists on the skin tunic as a consequence of sin, the 'old garment' that one must put off in order to put on the new one, *i.e.* Christ, in sanctity and justice. In *De virg.* 12-3 the skin tunics are 'a fleshly mentality'. In *Vit. Moys.* (GNO VII 1,39-40), they are 'a dead and earthly kind of vision.' Thus, they are directly linked to death. The 'dead and repelling tunic' composed of 'irrational skins' is 'the form of the irrational nature in which we have been wrapped after we have become familiar with passion' (*De an.* 148), but 'all that surrounded us, made of irrational skin, will be taken off and put down together with the deposition of the tunic'. After the resurrection, all the elements of the irrational, 'animal' nature, which are accidental, and not essential, to human nature, will vanish: bodily organs will lose the functions imposed on them by animal life (144B-148C), such as intercourse, conception, delivery, excretion, *etc.*; the risen will 'move in the heavenly regions with *incorporeal nature*'. Gregory does not mean that the risen will be bare souls, but that they will have *spiritual* bodies, and since this state is the restoration to the original condition, this suggests that at the beginning, too, they had spiritual bodies:

Resurrection is the restoration [*ἀποκατάστασις*] of our nature to its *original condition* [*πρὸς τὸ ἀρχαῖον*]. But in the *original life*, of which God himself was the creator, there existed no old age, nor infancy, nor suffering..., but *human nature was something divine*, before the human being acquired the impulse to evil. All these things broke into us together with the breaking in of vice. Thus, *life without vice will have no necessity to be spent among the accidents brought about by vice ... After returning to its state of impassible beatitude*, it will have nothing to do with the consequence of vice ... Therefore, it would be unreasonable to search, in that life, for the accidents that have come about for us as a consequence of passion. (*De an.* 148)¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ See *De an.* 153C, 156: 'As the body of the ear is formed from the seed, thanks to God's power that, with his art, makes the ear out of the grain itself – and the ear is neither completely identical to the seed nor completely different –, so the mystery of resurrection, too, has been indicated in advance through the wondrous modifications taking place in the seeds, in that God's power not only will return you the *same body* which will be dissolved, but will also *add other splendid and beautiful characteristics* thanks to which your nature will be constituted in a *greater magnificence*. He says: "It is sown in corruption, it rises in incorruptibility; it is sown in weakness, it rises in power; it is sown in dishonour, it rises in glory; it is sown as a 'psychic' body, it rises as a spiritual body". For, as the grain in the sod ... becomes an ear while maintaining its *individuality*, although it comes out *completely different* from what it was before..., in the same way human nature too, after abandoning in death all its characteristics, which it had acquired through the tendency to subjection to passions, I mean ignominy, corruption, weakness, differentiation according to the age, does not lose itself, but it changes into incorruptibility as into an ear, and into glory, honour, power, perfection in all respects, and in such condition that its life is no longer governed by natural properties, but passes into a *spiritual state which is free from passions*'.

What is accidental and derived from the fall will not be part of the risen body, which will return to being what it was ‘at the beginning’. This suggests that in the beginning it was a *spiritual* body.

This is why Gregory, like Plotinus,¹¹⁵ but also like Basil after all,¹¹⁶ embraces Plato’s exhortations in the *Phaedo* to detach one’s soul from the body as much as possible, meaning not the body tout court, but the *earthly* body, which came after sin and is liable to passions:

Those who are *living in the flesh* should absolutely, thanks to life according to virtue, *separate and liberate themselves, in a way, from any relationship with the flesh*, lest after death it happen that we need again a second death, that which, by purifying us, will *eliminate the remnants of the fleshly glue*, but, after the *chains that envelop the soul have been broken*, its dash to the Good may become light and swift, *without any corporeal annoyance that drags it down to itself* (*De an.* 88).¹¹⁷

The ‘remnants of the carnal glue’, the ‘material load’, the ‘ruins of materiality’, the ‘material and earthly passions’ must be purified off in the other world with a painful process, if a soul has been unable to get rid of them in this.¹¹⁸ Gregory uses similar terms in *De an.* 105:

It is impossible that our rush toward that realm take place, unless what oppresses us is finally shaken away from our soul, I mean this *heavy, annoying and earthly load*, and

¹¹⁵ Plotinus in *Enn.* I 2,5 speaks of ‘separate from the body insofar as possible’, and in I 4,14 hopes for the ‘separation from the body’. In III 6,6, 71-2, true resurrection is ‘*from* the body, and not *with* the body’, being a *κάθαρσις* from the sense-perceptible. But both Gregory and Origen insist that the risen body will be, not sense-perceptible, but spiritual.

¹¹⁶ The idea of the body and life in this world as a prison for the soul is supported by Basil, esp. in *Reg. ampl.* q. 2, r. 1, and is widespread in imperial and late-antique literature both ‘pagan’ and Christian. Gregory Nazianzen uses the metaphor of the body as a tomb in *Ep.* 31,4, *Or.* 7,22, and *Carm. c. carn.* II 1, 46,9 (PG 38, 1378), and that of the body as enchainment in *Ep.* 32,11.195, *Or.* 17,9 and 7,21 and *Or.* 32,27.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* 88A, 89C the soul, in order to contemplate the intelligible realm, is said to have to detach itself from the body as much as possible, and withdraw into itself, as in Plato, *Phaed.* 65CD, 67A, 79D, 80E, 83B. See Gregory’s tenth *Homily on the Song of Songs*: the intellect, when it is detached from sense-perception, can turn to upper realities and its activity can be pure. When the soul, *i.e.* the intellectual soul, ‘rejoices in the contemplation of what really exists’, it can ‘receive the vision of God with pure and bare mind’. See Origen *Comm. in Rom.* III 2,13. See also Gregory’s fifteenth *Homily on the Song of Songs*: the soul ‘must *purify itself from everything and every material thought*, transporting itself in its wholeness to the *intellectual and immaterial realm*, and become a most luminous image of the archetypal Beauty’. Plato’s image of the body as the soul’s tomb is expressly used by Gregory Nyssen too, *V. Macr.* 54, and explains the reason why he considers philosophy itself to be a ‘preparation for death’. *De mort.* 50-2 Lozza: ‘The soul can adhere to the intellectual and immaterial [*νοεῖν καὶ ἀύλου*] only when it gets rid of the *weight of matter* that surrounds it ... when, thanks to death, we attain incorporeality, we get close to that nature which is free from every physical *heaviness*’. Not from the body tout court, which will be resurrected, but from the heavy, corruptible body.

¹¹⁸ ‘The divine power, out of love for humans, extracts what belongs to itself from the ruins of *irrationality and materiality* ... the soul, enveloped by *material and earthly passions*,

we, purified and liberated from the *bond of passion* that we had with that load in our life down here, can *join in purity what is similar and familiar to us*.

This purification of the soul from the 'earthly load' will make it possible for God to achieve his purpose, which, through the resurrection, is universal restoration and union with God:

God's goal is one and only one: ... when some will have been already purified from evil during the present life, while others will have been cured through fire for the necessary periods of time..., to offer to all the participation in the goods that are in God ... Now, this is nothing else, I think, but *coming to being in God* (*De an.* 152).

The human being did not know evil in the beginning and will not in the end. All rational creatures will experience restoration to the Good (*In illud* 13),¹¹⁹ and even all creation: *πάσης τῆς κτίσεως ἐν σῶμα γενομένης*. All creation will become 'one and the same body', the body of Christ, and thus will be one with God. In *In illud* 20,8-24 Gregory is clear that not only humans, but also all rational creatures and even all creation¹²⁰ will join in apokatastasis, having become the body of Christ. In *De an.* 101-4 and *In illud* 17,13-21, Gregory links 1Cor. 15:28 to the eventual disappearance of evil with a syllogism¹²¹ he draws directly from Origen: if God must be 'all in all' in the end, then evil will be no more, lest God be found in evil. He also takes from Origen, *Princ.* I 6,1 and III 5,6, the equation between universal submission to Christ and universal salvation, and, for instance in *De an.* 72B and 136A and *In illud* 20,8-24, he derives the interpretation of *Phil.* 2:10-1 in this light of universal salvific submission from Origen *Princ.* IV 6,2.¹²² Still in his last *Homily on the Song of*

experiences pains and tension when the Godhead drags to itself what belongs to it, whereas what is *alien to it*, because in some way it has been united and mixed with it, is scratched away with violence, bringing to the soul sharp and unbearable suffering ... whoever is oppressed by a *heavy material load* will necessarily have a flame applied for longer to consume this load'.

¹¹⁹ 'One day, the nature of evil will pass to non-being, after disappearing completely from being, and divine and pure Goodness will enfold in itself *every rational nature*, and none of those who have come to being thanks to God will fall outside God's kingdom, when, once all evil that is mixed up with the beings has been consumed, as a kind of waste of nature consumed through the fusion of purifying fire, *every being that originated from God will return precisely as it was from the beginning*, when it had not yet received evil.'

¹²⁰ See *In Illud* 27: Christ will unite *all beings*, τὰ πάντα, to himself.

¹²¹ Esp. *De an.* 104: 'He who is all also is "in all". And in this it seems to me that Scripture teaches the *complete disappearance of evil*. For, if in all beings there will be God, clearly in them there will not be evil.' In the passage from *In Illud* Gregory argues that God will be all in all when in all beings there will be no evil left; Paul's phrase expresses the non-substantiality of evil. For God will be all in all when nothing evil will be extant in beings, since it is impossible that God be in evil. Thus, either God will not be in all, in case anything evil should remain among creatures, or, if we have to believe that God will really be in all, then we get the demonstration that nothing evil (μηδὲν κακόν) will remain.

¹²² See my 'Christian Soteriology and Christian Platonism', *VC* 61 (2007), 313-56; Morwenna Ludlow, *Gregory of Nyssa: Ancient and (Post)Modern* (Oxford, 2007), with my review in *RBL* 04/2008.

Songs, he hammers home the idea of the final ἕνωσις in God, basing himself on *John* 17 and viewing this unity as a unity of will, like Origen.¹²³

He granted them to be no longer divided into many parts in the decision for the Good [καλόν],¹²⁴ due to their diversity, but he declared that all would be one and the same thing, in the One who is the only Good ... For the race toward beatitude is common to *all souls of every order* ... until they become *one and the same thing with all those who look at the same object of their desire*, and *no evilness is left in anyone*. Then God will really be ‘all in all’.

The image with which Gregory concludes his probably last work, the *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, dedicated to Olympia (the deaconess who in Constantinople protected the Origenian monks chased by Theophilus of Alexandria), is still that of the apokatastasis of all rational souls as unity and concord in God and with God after the eradication of all evil.

Like Origen, indeed, Gregory definitely supported universal apokatastasis,¹²⁵ as the restoration of all rational creatures to their initial condition, or rather an even better condition and infinite development in the Good. Gregory’s insistence on the *angelic* nature of the life of humans in their prelapsarian state not only finds a perfect correspondence in his idea of the angelic life of apokatastasis (anticipated by the ascetic life of Macrina and other virgins on earth),¹²⁶ and in the eschatological reunion of humans and angels – including the former demons – in the feast of apokatastasis,¹²⁷ when all of them will equally dance

¹²³ See my ‘Harmony between *Arkhē* and *Telos* in Patristic Platonism’, *IJPT* 2013.

¹²⁴ For the closeness of Beauty and Good in Gregory of Nyssa see my ‘Good/Beauty, Ἀγαθόν/Καλόν’, in Giulio Maspero and Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco (eds), *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 99 (Leiden, 2010), 356–63.

¹²⁵ On this point see M. Ludlow, *Universal Salvation* (2000), *passim* and, with further arguments, my *Apokatastasis* (Leiden, 2013), also with demonstration of the Christological foundation of apokatastasis in Gregory and precise dependences on Origen, and refutation of two recent claims that Gregory did not support universal salvation.

¹²⁶ ‘Their life was at the boundary between human and angelic nature. Qua free from human passions, these women were superior to a merely human life ... Albeit living in the flesh, they were not made heavy by their body, but, light, they were lifted aloft and wandered all over the firmament together with the heavenly powers’ (V. *Macr.* [GNO VIII/1,382–3]); Macrina ‘albeit in a human body, imitated the angelic life’ and had ‘a flesh that refrains from what is proper to it, a belly closed to its natural impulses, just as we think it will be at the resurrection’ (*Ep.* [GNO VIII/2,64]). Likewise Basil ‘wandered in the firmament along with the heavenly powers, and no fleshly weight prevented the voyage of his spirit’ (*In Bas.* [GNO X/1,131,16–8]). Indeed, in *De virginitate* Gregory depicts the ideal of one who ‘imitates with his or her unsullied life the purity of incorporeal powers’ and in this life already enjoys the goods of the resurrection (GNO VIII/1, 309).

¹²⁷ *De an.* 72B: ‘When one day, after long cycles of ages, evil has vanished, there will remain nothing else but Good, and *even those creatures* [sc. demons] *will admit, in concord and unanimity* [sc. with the two other rational orders], *Christ’s lordship*’; see *Ref. Eun.* [GNO II/2,396–7]; *Hom. in Cant.* II and VI: angels are models for humans; they are models of *apatheia* which belonged to human as well before the fall. *De an.* 136A: ‘The Apostle, expressing the harmony

in one choir around God,¹²⁸ but it is also in non casual agreement with Origen's claim that all rational creatures are of one and the same nature (*De an.* 105¹²⁹) and before the fall formed one choir and enjoyed unity among themselves and with God; only after the fall were they differentiated into angels, humans, and demons. Origen also thought that these orders of *logika* will return to unity in the eventual apokatastasis, and Gregory clearly followed in his footsteps.

Gregory, also drawing on Origen, in *De an.* 156 insists that the *telos* will reproduce the *arkhē*: 'The object of our hope is nothing but *what was at the beginning*.' In the end we shall 'become *what we were before falling onto the earth*.' This should mean that the original creation implies, like the recreation at the resurrection, *a rational soul with its spiritual body*. Gregory is not saying that the *telos* will reproduce the original plan of God which was never realised because of the fall; he expressly says the *telos* will reproduce the situation that actually existed before the fall. Since the *telos* will see *rational souls endowed with spiritual bodies*, this suggests that Gregory conceived of intellects endowed with a spiritual body at the beginning as well,¹³⁰ like Origen. Another funda-

of the whole universe with God, means, rather transparently, what follows: "Every knee will bend in front of him, of heavenly and earthly creatures and of those of the underworld, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, for God the Father's glory", through the "horns" signifying the angelic and heavenly breed, and through the rest the intellectual creatures coming after the angels, *i.e.* us, who will be all involved in one and the same big feast characterised by harmony'. 'God's feast will be prepared by all who will have been consolidated again and restructured by means of resurrection, so that all will take part in one and the same joy, and there will be no more difference to divide the rational nature in its participation in goods that are the same for all, but those who now are excluded due to vice will be finally able to enter the recesses of divine beatitude' (133D). In *De an.* 132C-136A Macrina explains the spiritual meaning of *Ps.* 117(118):27, detailing how the Tabernacles Feast symbolises both resurrection ('the construction of our destroyed home, consolidated again in bodily form, through the *gathering of elements*') and apokatastasis.

¹²⁸ *De an.* 132C-136A. See my 'Harmony' (2013).

¹²⁹ 'This is why the rational nature was created: that the richness of divine goods should not remain unproductive, but by the Wisdom who founded the universe souls might be created as kinds of containers and receptacles endowed with free will, that there might always exist a place capable of receiving the goods, such as to become larger and larger thanks to the addition of what is infused into it'. See also 72B: 'Since three are the conditions of rational nature – one, which since the beginning has been allotted the incorporeal life and which we call angelic; the other, tied to flesh, which we call human, and the third, freed from flesh thanks to death –, I think that the divine Apostle ... intended to indicate that general harmony of all rational nature that one day there will be in the Good, calling "heavenly" what is angelical and incorporeal and "earthly" what is joined to a body, and referring the "underworld" to what is separate from the body, or else, if among rational beings we can see, besides those mentioned, some other nature too, which if one wished to call of demons or spirits, or anything else of the sort, we would have nothing to object ... a nature that voluntarily fell away from the best lot, and, renouncing Beauty and the Good, instead of these put in herself the thoughts coming from their contrary: it is this nature that, some say, the Apostle included among the creatures of the underworld'.

¹³⁰ Albeit he does not use either this or the following argument, Martin Parmentier, 'Greek Patristic foundations for a theological anthropology of women in distinctiveness as human beings',

mental point that leads to the same conclusion is the following: if the soul is adiatematic – which Gregory stresses, in accord with the Platonists –, it transcends not only the local, but also the temporal dimension; it is created by God, but it cannot be created *in time*. This would imply a creation anterior to the existence of time and the sky. For the soul transcends time and belongs to the order of eternity, as all spiritual realities, which are not subject to spatial or temporal laws. I shall return to this pivotal argument in connection with Gregory's use of the 'perishability axiom'.

Gregory, like Origen, does not believe in the preexistence of bare souls. As I shall point out, he declares each soul to be originated together with its body, and he adds that the Idea, *logos* or project of each *nous* with its body is present in God *ab aeterno*; then came their creation as substances, as Origen also maintained. The question is: which body? Is each *nous* created with its spiritual, immortal body? This would be the same solution as Origen's. It is never said by Gregory that each rational soul is created together with a *mortal* body. I suspect Gregory does not say so because he is well aware of the serious philosophical inconsistency that this would bring about, also in respect to the perishability axiom (see below). What Gregory says is that the human being was created at the beginning, with a project that was anterior to the world itself and with an anticipated preparation of a 'matter' that is unlikely to be the matter of the prelapsarian mortal body and would thus point, again, to an incorruptible body, all the more in that the preparation of this matter is mentioned together with the delineation of the form of the human being as the image of the beauty of God the Logos.¹³¹ This, too, clearly refers to the prelapsarian state, before the assumption of mortal bodies.¹³² Indeed, the image of God in *Hom. op.* 5 is said to be virtue, beatitude, impassivity, intelligence, Logos, love.¹³³ In *Hom. op.* 11 it is again made clear that what is in the image of God in humans is their intellect, whose immateriality is stressed, with the consequent rejection of any attempt at locating it in the brain or the heart *etc.*; what

AThR 84 (2002), 555-82, 556-7 also seems to think that both the prelapsarian and the postlapsarian state of humans are corporeal; only, that of the former was an asexual and immortal corporeality, and that of the latter a sexual and mortal one.

¹³¹ *Hom. op.* 3: 'Creation was made somehow instantly, so to say, by the divine power ... But the decision to create the human being had come *before* and the being that was destined to appear was *delineated in advance* by the creator through the project of the Logos ... so that the human being *received a more ancient dignity than its birth*, having obtained the dominion over the beings before coming to being ... For the human being, God *prepared in advance even matter*, before its realisation, and *assimilated its form to the archetypal Beauty*.'

¹³² These, however, are instruments for the necessities of the Logos, and the intellect does operate through mortal senses (*Hom. op.* 9-10).

¹³³ 'Now, divine Beauty ... is contemplated in an ineffable beatitude, according to virtue ... Our creator has adorned his image with virtues ... purity, impassivity, beatitude, refraining from every evil, and everything else of this kind, thanks to which in human beings the likeness to God is formed ... The divinity is Intelligence and Logos ... Love'.

is adiastatic is not comprised in any place *or time*. In *Hom. op.* 14 Gregory insists again that the intellect is not found in any part of the body and the intellect's movements are distinct from those of the body. The intellect, through the soul, vivifies matter and adorns it; when matter is left alone, it is ugly and shapeless. Like in *De anima*, in *Hom. op.* 15 as well the soul proper is said to be the λογική.

Hom. op. 16 is relevant to the present research, in that it offers an interpretation of the creation of the human being in the image and likeness of God; in the prototype created there was neither male nor female; this division is 'a departure from the prototype', since in Christ there is neither male nor female (*Gal.* 3:28). Gregory repeats that what was in the image of God is the intellect, and not the mortal body. Gregory expressly speaks of double creation: 'Double is the creation of our nature, one which is assimilated to the divinity, and the other which is divided according to this division', that into genders, which is alien to God; it rather pertains to beasts (in *Hom. op.* 18 passions are said to have arisen in humans after these assumed the irrational life of beasts after the fall, which in *Hom. op.* 20 is described as choosing good and evil rather than good alone, as in *De an.* 81).¹³⁴ Thus the human being proper (*nous*) is not like the cosmos (a microcosm), but rather like the Creator of the cosmos, but in the part that is divided into genders it is like beasts. 'The *priority* belongs to the *intellectual* component [προτερεύει τὸ νοερόν]', whereas the association with irrationality is ἐπιγεννηματική; it came afterwards. For Scripture *first* speaks of the creation in the image of God, and *after* of male and female. Creation in the image of God also means that the human being initially participated in the divine goods, since God is the Good. Like Origen, Gregory warns that in his interpretation he is not speaking dogmatically, but 'by exercise'. Scripture uses the aorist: God 'made [ἐποίησε] the human being' meaning that God made all humanity 'once and for all' (ἅπαξ), 'in the first creation' (ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ κατασκευῇ). This suggests that each human, intellectual soul and spiritual body, was created then. Gregory observes that the intellect is present in all humans; gender difference 'was created afterwards, as the last thing, in the moulded human being' (προσκατεσκευάσθη τελευταῖον τῷ πλάσματι), due to the fall (*Hom. op.* 17). Gregory cites Jesus's words that in the next life humans will be ἰσάγγελοι and will not marry. For in the resurrection there will

¹³⁴ 'In the beginning, human life was *uniform*, with "uniform" I mean that which is contemplated in the Good alone, immune from any mixture with evil. And this thesis is testified to by the first law of God, which, after granting to the human being the participation in the totality of the goods found in Paradise, without restrictions, forbade exclusively the one whose nature was composed by a mixture of opposites, in that evil was mixed with the Good, threatening death as a punishment for those who should transgress. But the human being, voluntarily, in the movement of its free self-determination, abandoned the lot that was unmixed with evil and attracted to itself the life that is composed by the mixture of opposites. However, divine providence did not at all leave our foolish decision without a remedy.'

be 'the restoration of those who have fallen to their *original condition* [εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον]'. Without the fall, humans would have multiplied like angels, with angelic bodies. In the resurrection too will they have angelic bodies. This indicates, again, that Gregory thought of an initial union of intellectual soul and spiritual/angelic body, a model that, like Origen's, differs from that of the preexistence of bare souls. This is confirmed by *Hom. in Eccl.* 1, where Gregory states that the risen body is the same as that of the first creation (clearly the spiritual body): 'The body was made and created by God's hands exactly as the resurrection will reveal it in due course. For, *just as you will see it after the resurrection, so was it created at the beginning.*'

In *De an.* 60B Gregory states that the intellect cannot dwell in a body unless joined with sense-perception. Is this necessary also for a spiritual body? This would not seem to be the case. This is why neither will the intellectual soul need its inferior parts to be united to the spiritual body in the end, as Gregory explicitly argues in *De anima* and in his first *Homily on the Song of Songs*.¹³⁵ Therefore, again, this should be the case also for the beginning.

In *De anima* and *De hominis opificio* Gregory criticises metempsychosis, and not Origen's doctrine of the *logika*. Gregory did not believe in the preexistence of souls to bodies, but neither did Origen. In *Hom. op.* 28 Gregory famously maintains that the soul does not exist before the body, nor the body before the soul; the same appears in *De an.* 121. It is crucial to establish *which* soul and *which* body. In both texts, this discussion comes immediately after a rebuttal of metempsychosis. Indeed, in *Hom. op.* 28 the context, like in *De an.* 108,¹³⁶ is a refutation of metempsychosis, and not of Origen. In *De an.* 108 the preexistence of souls is explicitly ascribed to the same people who support metempsychosis, and the repeated reference to the loss of the soul's wings clearly points to Plato and Neoplatonism. The patent reference to the incarnation of human souls into plants also excludes any connection with Origen. Also, in *De an.* 116-7 the fall of the souls, due the loss of their wings, into a material body as a combination of the soul's sin and the coupling of two humans or animals or the peasant's sowing of a plant¹³⁷

¹³⁵ 'After the resurrection, the body will be transformed into its elements, until it becomes incorruptible, and thus it will join the human soul, while the passions that now torment us by means of the flesh will not rise together with the future body, but a state of peace will receive our life, when ... there will no longer be an internal war that opposes the movements of *passion* to the law of mind and will no longer drag the soul, defeated and almost enslaved by sin. Then, human nature will be pure from all this, and thought will be a unity composed of both substances, flesh and spirit, because *every corporeal disposition will have been wiped away from (human) nature*'.

¹³⁶ Here Macrina also hammers home the identity between the mortal and the risen body: 'On our part, we maintain that around the soul there comes to be constituted *the same body as before*, formed by the harmonic union of *the same elements*; those people [*sc.* certainly not Origen], on the contrary, think that the soul passes on to *other bodies*, of both rational and irrational beings, and even beings deprived of sense-perception.'

¹³⁷ The scene of souls that wait for the incarnation and watch for the birth of baby humans or animals to sneak into their bodies was also ridiculed by Lucretius, *RN* III 776-81. Gregory may

cannot possibly refer to Origen. The reference in *Hom. op.* 28 to those who have treated of the ἀρχαί is a generic designation for protology or metaphysics and does not indicate Origen (so in Just., 2*Apol.* 7,8 on the Stoics; *Dial.* 7,2 on Thales; Clem., *Strom.* IV 1,2,1; V 14,140,3; Clement in *Div.* 26,8 says that a mystery concerning the Saviour is concealed in the Greeks' exposition περὶ ἀρχῶν καὶ θεολογίας, 'in metaphysics and theology'). Even if περὶ ἀρχῶν is taken as a title, which is by no means sure, it can easily refer to many other works Περὶ ἀρχῶν besides Origen's, for instance Longinus' or Porphyry's. The latter, who may have been a Christian for a while, treated in it the eternity of the intellect and metempsychosis. This work of Porphyry, and other Middle and Neoplatonic works of this kind, correspond much more closely to Gregory's criticism than Origen's work. Gregory says, 'one before us' (τις πρὸ ἡμῶν), and not 'one of us' Christians; one who upheld the transmigration of souls and wrote on the ἀρχαί, on protology: besides Plato, it may well be Plotinus, who believed in metempsychosis of human souls even into animal bodies (*Enn.* III 4,2,16-24), and wrote on the ἀρχαί in his *Enneads* (περὶ τῶν τριῶν ἀρχικῶν ὑποστάσεων), or Porphyry, who believed in metempsychosis, perhaps extended to animals¹³⁸ (Eusebius, *Dem. Ev.* I 10,7 ascribes to Porphyry the view that there is no difference between the souls of irrational beings and human rational souls), and precisely wrote a Περί Ἀρχῶν.¹³⁹ That τις πρὸ ἡμῶν does not necessarily refer to a Christian such as Origen is proved by Origen's own three references to Philo the Jew in the very same terms in *Comm. in Matth.* XVII 17 (τῶν μὲν πρὸ ἡμῶν ... τις); *Hom. in Num.* 9,5 ('quidam ex his ante nos'); and *CC* VII 20: τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν τινες. What is more, in Gregory himself the expression τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν τινες indicates a non-Christian such as Philo, notably in a passage in which Gregory disagrees with Philo (*Vit. Mos.* II 191). Likewise τις πρὸ ἡμῶν can well indicate a non-Christian such as Porphyry, in a passage in which Gregory disagrees with him. The doctrine of the 'preexistence of souls', τὰς ψυχὰς προϋφεστάναι, 'as a people in a State of their own', joined to a body only on account of their demerits, is not Origen's. Besides Plato and Neoplatonism, it can be 'Gnostic' or, more easily, Manichaean. All the more so in that critique of Manichaeism is very probable in *De an.* 108, where metempsychosis is attacked because it even prohibits the consumption of vegetables and fruit, and again in 121, exactly in a discussion of the anteriority of soul or body.¹⁴⁰ To this position Gregory opposes that of some who thought that the

have known his passage, or there is an intermediate or a common source.

¹³⁸ A. Smith, 'Did Porphyry Reject the Transmigration of Souls into Animals?' *RhM* 127 (1984), 277-84.

¹³⁹ See I. Ramelli, 'Origen' (2009).

¹⁴⁰ *De an.* 121-4, in which Gregory also assumes *creatio ex nihilo*: 'How can what moves derive from the stable nature (of God)? How can the dimensional and composite derive from the simple and adimensional nature? ... It is equally absurd to maintain either that the creature comes directly from God's nature, or that all beings have been constituted by some other substance ... because one will introduce a material nature extraneous to the divine substance and made equiv-

body exists prior to the soul, which Gregory, like Origen and Pamphilus, abhors because it would make 'flesh worthier than the soul'. The theory of the preexistence of souls and the creation of their bodies only afterwards is described by Gregory as a 'myth', which fits 'Gnostic' and Manichaean mythology, besides Plato's protological and eschatological myths. Gregory, far from refuting Origen's positions, appropriates precisely *Origen's* zetetic method to *refute* this 'myth'. And he refutes metempsychosis as the wandering of a soul through disparate bodies, including animals and plants, just as Origen repeatedly refuted it.

The position refuted by Gregory Nyssen, including the transmigration of human souls into animal bodies, was already rejected by Origen himself in *Comm. in Matth.* XI 17, which is preserved both in Greek and in Rufinus' translation of Pamphilus' Apology, 180: '*Hi quidem qui alieni sunt a catholica fide transferri animas ex humanis corporibus in corpora animalium putant ... nos uero dicimus quia per multam uitae negligentiam humana prudentia cum fuerit inculta atque neglecta efficitur uelut irrationabile pecus, per imperitiam uel per negligentiam, non per naturam.*' In *Comm. in Matth.* XIII 1-2, also reported by Pamphilus, *Apol.* 182-3, Origen rejected even the transmigration of souls from human to human bodies, on the grounds that this would entail the eternity of the world, a 'pagan' Neoplatonic tenet which is denied by Scripture: '*dogma alienum ab ecclesia Dei de transmutatione animarum, quod nec ab apostolis traditum est nec usquam in Scripturis cautum est ... quod utique superfluum fiet si finis nullus emendationis occurrat, nec erit umquam quando non anima transferatur. Et si semper pro delictis animabus ad corpora diuersa redeundum est, qui umquam mundo dabitur finis?*' Rather, Origen maintains, after the end of the world sinners will be punished, not by entering new bodies, but otherwise: '*uindicta non ex transmutatione animarum (non enim iam ad peccandum locus erit), sed alia genera erunt poenae.*'¹⁴¹ The very same

alent to the eternity of being, *qua* ingenerated. *This is precisely what the Manichaeans too have imagined, and some exponents of Greek philosophy adhered to the same opinions, turning this phantasy into a philosophical doctrine ...* As for each one of the aspects that are grasped in the corporeal nature, let me only say that none of these which are observed concerning the body is body, not the shape, nor the colour, nor the weight ... nor any other of all these aspects that are observed among the qualities, but each of them is a relationship, and their reciprocal concourse and union becomes a body. Since, therefore, the qualities that constitute the body are caught by the intellect, and not by sense-perception, and since the divinity has an intellectual nature, what labour will be, for what is intellectual, to create intellectual realities? The reciprocal concourse of the latter originated the nature of our body'. Gregory admits of the first creation of intellectual beings, coming close to Origen's idea of the first creation of the *logika*. Indeed, Gregory in 128 includes the human nature within the intellectual nature: 'Because every intellectual nature is stably constituted in its fullness, it is logical that at a certain point the human nature, too – since not even this proves extraneous to the intellectual nature – will come to its perfect accomplishment, so as not to be eternally found in a state of imperfection.'

¹⁴¹ The same was maintained by Origen in his *Commentary on Proverbs*, reported by Pamphilus, *Apol.* 188: both humans and demons will be punished by means of the *πῦρ αἰώνιον*, and not of reincarnations.

motivation for the rejection of metempsychosis, *i.e.* because it entails the eternity of the world, is given in *Comm. in Cant.* II 5,24: ‘*Si quidem secundum auctoritatem Scripturarum consummatio immineat mundi et corruptibilis status hic in incorruptibilem commutabitur, ambiguum non videri quod in praesentis vitae statum secundo aut tertio in corpus venire non possit. Nam si recipiatur hoc, necessario sequitur ut huiusmodi successionibus consequentibus finem nesciat mundus.*’ It is interesting that Origen himself in his *Commentary on Proverbs* (ap. Pamph., *Apol.* 186) attests that some Christians, too, believed in metempsychosis, including reincarnation of human souls in animals.¹⁴² Gregory may have had in mind these people (Manichaeans?) as well, though the mention of a work on the ἀρχαί rather points to Porphyry. At any rate, it is not Origen that Gregory targets in his criticism of metempsychosis.

Just as Nyssen’s, also Nazianzen’s critique of metempsychosis, which is closely related to that of the preexistence of souls, is certainly not directed against Origen. According to some critics, it rather addresses Orphic ideas.¹⁴³

In the subsequent chapter, *Hom. op.* 29, Gregory reinforces his argument by observing that the cause of the constitution of the soul and the body of each human is one and the same. But again: *which* soul? Very probably the intellectual soul, since Gregory insists so much on the accessorial nature of the lower soul faculties. And *which* body? The mortal body or the fine, incorruptible one? Gregory repeats that the totality of humanity began to exist first (προϋφεστάναι). What preexisted are not bare souls, but humanity as a whole. Gregory distinguishes God’s plan from the substantial existence of rational creatures, which began at a certain point as a result of God’s act of creation. The creation of humanity ‘at the beginning’ further differs from the earthly existence of each human in a given historical time, in which the soul manifests itself gradually along with the growth of the body.

An analysis of the essence of the soul in Gregory will help here. The soul is defined by him as οὐσία γενητή, ζῶσα, νοερά, ‘created, living, and intellectual substance’, (*De an.* 29B).¹⁴⁴ This definition has of course many parallels, especially in Middle and Neoplatonism,¹⁴⁵ and is tenable if the soul is regarded as created *before time*. This would dissolve a serious

¹⁴² ‘*Uidetur autem mihi et illa adsertio quae transferri animas de corporibus in alia corpora adseuerat peruenisse etiam in aliquos eorum qui Christo credere uidentur ... putauerunt transmutari humanam animam in pecudum corpora.*’

¹⁴³ M. Herrero de Jáuregui, ‘A quién dirige Gregorio de Nazianzo su crítica de la reencarnación (*De anima* 22-52)?’, *Adamantius* 13 (2007), 231-46, who thinks that Gregory’s target was a long Orphic poem in 24 rhapsodies, preserved in *Frags.* 90-359 Bernabé.

¹⁴⁴ Γενητός was used by Plato in *Tim.* 28BC – well known to Gregory –, in order to indicate the cosmos, created by the Demiurge.

¹⁴⁵ Alcín., *Didasc.* 117 H. = 49 Whittaker; Plot., *Enn.* IV 7, on the soul, which is described as generated and of intellectual nature; the authentic human being, αὐτὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, coincides with the (rational) soul; Iambl., *De an.* ap. Stob., *Anth.* I 362 Wachsmuth.

contradiction that would arise and stand if the body together with which the soul is said by Gregory to be originated is understood as the *mortal* body: the contradiction raised by the ‘perishability axiom’. Gregory, like Basil in his *Homilies on the Hexaëmeron* – of which Gregory offers a continuation – is well aware of that axiom. Indeed, Basil cited it, which was considered to be rooted in Plato,¹⁴⁶ in *Hom. in Hex.* 1,3: ‘The beings that had a *beginning in time* [τὰ ἀπὸ χρόνου ἀρξάμενα] will necessarily have an *end in time* as well [καὶ ἐν χρόνῳ συντελεσθῆναι].’¹⁴⁷ Gregory not only knew this axiom, but, like Origen, expressly applied it to the world: if it is created in time, it will necessarily have an end (*Hom. op.* 23). He even deems the perishability axiom grounded in Scripture (*Wis.* 7:1-18; PG 45, 796B-C). But when Gregory states that the soul is created at the same time as the body, if he means the *mortal* body, this will imply that the soul is created in time and thus is *not immortal*. This, indeed, is the conclusion Norris gathers from Gregory’s thesis that the soul is created together with the body.¹⁴⁸ Clearly, Norris understands this ‘body’ as mortal without hesitation. And if Gregory indeed meant that the (intellectual) soul is created with the *mortal* body, he would give rise to a flat contradiction. Gregory, however, does *not* say that the body at stake is the mortal one, and I suspect that his reticence is intentional, since he was well aware of the problem entailed by the perishability axiom and was not at all a poor, inconsistent, or opportunistic thinker (who either did not even realise contradictions and philosophical problems, or chose to take them into consideration only when useful to his own ends). He knew Origen’s and Pamphilus’ position on the perishability axiom. Pamphilus (*Apol.* 168-70) had deployed it extensively precisely in defence of Origen’s doctrine of the origin of the *logika*. After observing in 166 that in the Church there were different opinions on the origin of the soul,¹⁴⁹ and after rejecting, on the basis of theodicy, that of the simultaneous creation of soul and mortal body (167), he rejects traducianism as well and invokes the perishability axiom against both theories: ‘*necesse est eam* [the intellectual

¹⁴⁶ John Philoponus, *De aet. mund.* 17, refers to Plato, *Resp.* 546A and *Phaedr.*, 245D. On Plato’s view of the soul bibliography is infinite; recently Michael Davis, *The Soul of the Greeks: An Inquiry* (Chicago, 2011), in its four chapters on Plato analyses passages from *Republic*, *Phaedrus* and *Euthyphro*, but not *Phaedo* or *Timaeus*.

¹⁴⁷ See Dirk Krausmüller, ‘Faith and Reason in Late Antiquity’, in Maha Elkaisy-Friemuth and John Dillon (eds), *The Afterlife of the Platonic Soul*, Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 9 (Leiden, 2009), 47-76, 48. My review in *BMCR* September 2010.

¹⁴⁸ Richard Norris, *Manhood in Christ. A Study in the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia* (Oxford, 1963), 28: ‘Nyssen rejects not only the doctrine that the soul is everlasting, but also the view that the individual soul comes into existence apart from its body.’

¹⁴⁹ See *Apol.* 172: given that there is no doctrine on the origin of the soul in *apostolica praedicatione*, as Origen had already observed, one cannot call ‘heretics’ those who have different opinions on this matter. So also Rufinus, *Apol. ad Anast.* 6.

soul]¹⁵⁰ *simul cum corpore emori et esse mortalem si simul cum corpore* [sc. the mortal body] *uel seminata uel formata uel nata est* (168); ‘*necessario simul cum corporibus corrumpentur si eandem cum corporibus etiam originem sumunt secundum ipsorum rationem*’ (170).

On the hypothesis that Gregory is in fact speaking of a *spiritual* body – the one the human being had before the fall and will recover at the resurrection, and which became mortal only after the fall – the contradiction vanishes and the perishability axiom stands. This is suggested not only by all I have adduced so far, but also by Gregory’s statement in one of his last works:

In the large house of God, the Apostle says, some vases are made of gold or silver; with this, I think, he meant the *created, intelligent, and incorporeal substance*. Other vases, on the other hand, are of wood or clay – and with this, I think, he means *us, who have been made earthy and of clay as a consequence of our disobedience*. The sin, committed by means of a piece of wood, made us *wooden vases, while we formerly were golden vases*. And the use of the vases is different *according to the dignity of their matter* ... But a certain vase can, by its free will, *become a golden vase, from wooden, or a silver vase, from clay*.

Gregory speaks like Origen on the passage of rational creatures from one order to another; even the Pauline metaphor of the vases is the same as Origen used in *Princ.* III 6,6 to differentiate the mortal body from the spiritual, prelapsarian and risen body. Rational creatures’ bodies are transformed as a consequence of their moral choices; they had luminous, spiritual bodies before the fall, but these were transformed into mortal or demonic bodies on account of sin; however, after the elimination of sin, these bodies too will return to be angelic. Rational creatures’ bodies, in the *telos*, will be as they were in the *arkhē*, before the *logika* received evil.

What is more, this is confirmed by Anastasius Sinaita (*Sermo II in const. hom. sec. im. Dei* 3), according to whom Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen, ‘the divine Gregories’ (Γρηγορίους τοῖς θείοις), believed that ‘Adam had a body that was incorruptible, immortal, and more immaterial’; this ‘was turned by God into a body that is liable to passion and denser’. This doctrine is likely to have been misrepresented by Barsanuphius (*Doctr. c. opin. Orig.* [PG 86, 891-902]), who ascribes the theory of the preexistence of souls to both Nazianzen and Nyssen. Still in the fifteenth *Homily on the Song of Songs*, Gregory offers a revisitation of Plato’s myth of the fall of the soul’s wings, ruling out all implications related to metempsychosis, just as Origen did. After establishing, on the basis of *Matth.* 23:37, that Scripture teaches that ‘in the nature of God there are wings’, he goes on to consider that the human being

¹⁵⁰ Pamphilus means *intellectual* souls, as is clear from 171: Origen ‘*fatetur unius substantiae omnes esse animas et immortales et rationabiles ... factas a Deo. Quando autem factae sint, olim simul aut nunc per singulos nascentium, quid periculi est alterum e duobus opinari?*’

was made in the image of God; 'therefore, the one who was created according to the image also had the likeness to the Archetype in every respect', referring to the first creation of the human being, before the fall;

but, according to Scripture, the Archetype of human nature has wings: as a consequence, *our nature, too, was created winged*, so to have its likeness to God also in its wings ... 'Wings' means *power, beatitude, incorruptibility*, and the like.¹⁵¹ Thus, the human being, too, *possessed these qualities, as long as it was completely similar to God*, while *subsequently the inclination toward evil deprived us of those wings*. When we left the protection of God's wings, we were *despoiled of our own wings*. For this reason God's grace was revealed and illuminated us, that we could *reject impiety and worldly desires*, and could *put on our wings again* by means of holiness and justice.

Not a bare soul, but the human being, *nous* and immortal body, existed before the fall. And the wings of the intellectual soul were, and will still be, virtues and the incorruptibility and beatitude that derive from them.

Evagrius

Evagrius was profoundly influenced by Origen, and probably by Gregory of Nyssa as well.¹⁵² The doctrine of the soul, its composition, origin, relation with the body, and eschatological destiny, underlies all of his works, both those on theology/metaphysics and those on spiritual ascent and asceticism. These two groups have been unfortunately split apart and received different treatments: the ascetic works were praised, but the metaphysical speculations, especially in *Kephalaia Gnostica* and *Letter to Melania* or *Great Letter*, were condemned. The link between Evagrius' doctrine of the soul and that of apokatastasis is manifest in the latter group. In *Kephalaia Gnostica* and *Letter to Melania*, his reflection on eschatology is closely related to the rest of his thought, which is oriented toward the *telos*. This is also the case with Origen and Gregory. For the end is the accomplishment of God's plan for rational creatures; this is why it reflects the beginning. To investigate the 'preexistence of souls' in Evagrius, therefore, it is necessary to analyse not only his protology, but also his eschatology.

In his *Letter to Melania* Evagrius states that the intelligible creation was joined to the sense-perceptible creation 'for reasons that it is impossible to

¹⁵¹ Compare the closing sentence of Gregory's *De anima*, which is taken over by him after many years almost *ad verbum*.

¹⁵² Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Burlington, 2009); Julia Konstantinovskiy, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Making of a Gnostic* (Burlington, 2009); *ead.*, 'Soul and Body in Early Christian Thought: A Unified Duality?', *SP* 44 (2010), 349-55; the part I devote to Evagrius in *Apokatastasis* (2013); 'Evagrius and Gregory: Nazianzen or Nyssen?', *GRBS* 2013.

explain here'. This refers to the union of souls with mortal bodies, but this is not the beginning of the story. Sense-perceptible creation, indeed, is the 'secondary creation', as it is often called in *Kephalaia Gnostica*, and the object of 'natural contemplation'. It is helpful in that, while with some advanced intellects Spirit and Son communicate directly, with others they must do so by means of this secondary creation. The latter is not evil, as Origen too clarified in his anti-'Gnostic' and anti-Marcionite polemic, but providential, *qua* mediation, for those who are far from God due to 'their evil deeds.' This mediation was created by God's Wisdom and Power, the Son and the Spirit,¹⁵³ which are absolutely incorporeal as all the Trinity is (a tenet of Origen's metaphysics as well).¹⁵⁴ But the most advanced rational creatures do so without the mediation of creation, as Evagrius clarifies. The intellect-soul-body tripartition is applied both to rational creatures and to the relationship between God and rational creatures, who are the body of God (a probable development of Origen's notion of the *logika* as the body of Christ¹⁵⁵): 'Just as the intellect operates in the body by means of the mediation of the soul, likewise the Father, too, by means of the mediation of his own soul [*sc.* the Son and the Spirit], operates in his own body, which is the human intellect' (*Ad Mel.* 15).

Intellect (*nous*) > soul (mediator) > body
 Father > Son and Spirit > intellects

Human intellects know thanks to the Logos and the Spirit (*ibid.* 19); they become aware of their nature through the Logos and the Spirit, who are their souls; in turn, human intellects are the bodies of the Son and the Spirit (*ibid.* 21). We *logika* are the intelligible creation and are now found joined to this visible creation, 'for reasons that it is impossible to explain here'. Evagrius refrains from speaking of the relationship between the fall of the intellects and their acquisition of sense-perceptible bodies, which require the mediation of the soul. He ascribes the role of 'soul' to the Logos and the Spirit as well, evidently because of the mediation they perform between the Father and the intellects. Evagrius does not specify whether non-sense-perceptible bodies also require the mediation of the soul.

The *nous*-soul-body tripartition is ubiquitous in Evagrius. He follows both the anthropological tripartition into body, soul, and intellect/spirit, and the Platonic tripartition of the soul into θυμός, ἐπιθυμία, and νοῦς/λογικόν.¹⁵⁶ On

¹⁵³ 'The whole ministry of the Son and of the Spirit is exercised through the creation, for the sake of those who are far from God' (*Ad Mel.* 5).

¹⁵⁴ E.g. Περὶ λογισμῶν 41,48-9; *Ep.* 39,134-5 Géhin; *Schol.* 1 in *Ps.* 140,2.

¹⁵⁵ See my 'Clement's Notion' (2013). This is also connected with Origen's equation between the body of Christ and the Temple, the stones of which are rational creatures. This is why in *Comm. in Io.* VI 1,1-2 the Temple is called a λογικὴ οἰκοδομή.

¹⁵⁶ This tripartition is evident in *Kephalaia Practica* 89: 'The soul of rational beings is tripartite into rational ... appetitive ... and irascible.' It also emerges in a number of passages from

this tripartition Evagrius' whole ethics and theory of spiritual ascent is based. Evagrius, like Nazianzen, follows Plato's tripartition without hesitation (Origen and Nyssen followed it, but sometimes expressed doubts because it is not sufficiently grounded in Scripture¹⁵⁷). Within this partition, the intellect is assigned indisputable excellence,¹⁵⁸ as it has an ontological and axiological priority over sense-perception:

The bare intellect is that which, by means of the contemplation that regards it, is joined to the knowledge of the Trinity.¹⁵⁹ *In the beginning* the intellect had God, who is incorruptible, as teacher of immaterial intellections. *Now*, however, it has received corruptible sense-perception as teacher of material intellections. (*KG* III 6; 55)

Like Origen, Evagrius also considers the soul to be a fallen *nous*. As Origen depicted the soul as a *nous* that has cooled down from its ardent love for God, with a famous etymological wordplay (*Princ.* II 8,2-3), Evagrius, in *KG* III 28, likewise defines the soul as 'an intellect that, in its carelessness, has fallen down from Unity and, due to its lack of vigilance, has descended to the order of the *πρακτική*' (*KG* III 28), *i.e.*, from contemplation to practical life, ethics, and particularly asceticism; the description of sin and vice as carelessness and lack of vigilance is typical of Origen. The intellect should be oriented toward the angels, but if it proceeds on the path of the soul, which should rather be its instrument – as the body is the soul's instrument – it risks ending up among demons (*KG* II 48). Indeed, rational creatures, for Evagrius just as for Origen, can switch from one order to another between angels, humans, and demons, during the aeons, according to their spiritual progress or regression, and receive

Evagrius' *Kephalaia Gnostica*, *e.g.*: 'Knowledge and ignorance are joined to the intellect, the appetitive part (of the soul) is susceptible of chastity and lust, and the irascible part usually experiences love and hatred' (I 84); 'The one whose intellect is with the Lord all the time, and whose irascible part is full of humility thanks to its remembering God, and whose appetitive part is entirely oriented toward the Lord – it is proper to such a person not to fear his/her enemies, those which circulate outside our mortal bodies' (IV 73); 'Knowledge has the intellect, love the irascible faculty (of the soul), and chastity the appetitive part' (III 35); 'The irascible faculty, when it is troubled, blinds the seer; the appetitive faculty, when bestially moved, hides the visible objects' (V 27).

¹⁵⁷ In *De an.* 49C-52A Macrina leaves aside Plato's image of the two winged horses and the chariot (*Phaedr.* 246AD) representing the soul's two inferior faculties and the rational part as charioteer, as well as the theories proposed by other philosophers about the soul, and takes up the theory of soul found in Scripture. Origen too, in *Princ.* III 4,1, rejects Plato's threefold division of the human soul on the grounds that this scheme is 'not much confirmed by the authority of sacred Scripture'.

¹⁵⁸ *E.g.*: 'The intellect is the seer of the Holy Trinity' (*KG* III 30); 'the intellect is the most valuable of all the faculties of the soul' (*KG* VI 51).

¹⁵⁹ The idea that only the 'bare intellect' can see the nature of God, whose name and place are unknown, is also found in *KG* II 37 and III 70: 'One is, among all beings, without name, and its land/place is unknown'; 'it is proper to the bare intellect to say what its nature is, and now there exists no clear answer to this question, whereas in the end there will be not even the question'. It is not entirely clear whether the nature that the bare intellect can know is its own or God's.

bodies appropriate to each state.¹⁶⁰ Humans, thanks to their free will, can become good like angels or evil like demons; this is why ‘humans are intermediate between angels and demons’ (*KG* IV 13). Spiritual death reigns over demons, because of their choice for evil, and life over angels; humans are ruled by life and death together (*KG* IV 65).

Indeed, God’s first creation was the creation of ‘primary beings,’ the *logika*, who originally dwelt in a unity of concord. The latter is also described as essential knowledge and was broken by a dispersion of the intellects’ acts of will. Then the intellects descended to the rank of souls. Heavy, mortal bodies were thus provided by God for these. This was the creation of ‘secondary beings’, which came after the ‘first judgement’, operated by Christ, who divided rational creatures into angels, humans, and demons according to the gravity of their falls. The second creation, that of sense-perceptible beings, for Evagrius just as for Origen, is not evil or a punishment (*KG* III 53: ‘none of the mortal bodies should be declared to be evil’): it is God’s providential strategy for the restoration of souls to intellects. Christ himself was the agent of the second creation¹⁶¹ and of all aeons, each of which – as is the case with Origen – results from a judgement.¹⁶² Heavy bodies and material creation are providential; Christ assumed a mortal body, after assuming a light one beforehand, and his risen body revealed how human risen bodies will be.¹⁶³ Just because, like

¹⁶⁰ ‘Among humans, some will be in feast with the angels, others will mingle with the host of demons, and yet others will be tormented along with the humans who have defiled themselves with deficiencies’; ‘the firstborns are the rational creatures who in each one of the aeons get closer to the excellent transformation’, which is the transformation into a better state, *e.g.* from human to angel, and ultimately *θέωσις*; ‘from the order of angels come the order of archangels and that of the psychic; from that of the psychic, that of demons and that of humans; from that of humans angels and demons will derive in turn, if it is true that a demon is the one who, because of excess of *thymos*, has fallen from the *praktikē* and has been joined with a dark and extended (immortal) body’ (*KG* V 9-11).

¹⁶¹ ‘The knowledge concerning the secondary nature is a spiritual contemplation, that of which Christ availed himself as he created the nature of bodies and aeons from it’ (*KG* III 26).

¹⁶² *KG* II 75: ‘As many accountable beings the Judge has *judged*, so many *aeons* he has also done, and the one who knows the number of *judgements* also knows the number of *aeons*’. Each aeon begins with the end of the preceding one and the Judgement that follows the latter. In this Judgement, God establishes the role and the kind of body that each rational creature will have in the new aeon, on the basis of the spiritual development of each one: ‘A Judgement of God is the coming into being of an aeon, to which he gives a mortal body in accord with the degree (of development) of each one of the rational creatures’ (*KG* III 38). Partial Judgements take place after each aeon, in which each rational creature is assigned a body and place in the world according to its spiritual progress: ‘As for the righteous *Judgement* of our Christ, the transformation of the *bodies*, of the *lands*, and of the *aeons* reveals it. As for his forbearance of spirit, on the other hand, those who fight against virtue reveal it. But above all his mercy, it is those who are guided by his Providence without being worthy that reveal it’ (*KG* II 59).

¹⁶³ ‘Christ to human beings, before his coming, showed an angelic body that had the appearance of a mortal body; to the last, however, it is not that (spiritual) body which he has now that he has shown, but has revealed them *that which they will have*’ (*KG* IV 41).

Origen, Evagrius regards mortal bodies and their souls as a good means for fallen intellects to be restored, he warns that those who hate flesh hate the Creator.¹⁶⁴

Mortal bodies will have to disappear when all inherit immortality, simply because they are mortal and have performed their task in this world.¹⁶⁵ They will disappear in apokatastasis, when also evil and ignorance will vanish, in two steps: 'Just as the first rest of God will reveal the removal of *evil* and the *vanishing of thick bodies*, likewise the second, too, will reveal the *vanishing of bodies, as secondary beings*, and the removal of *ignorance*' (KG III 68). This will bring about knowledge (not only of sense-perceptible beings, but also of intelligible ones), and in a unified way, in accord with the final unity: 'The elimination of the *aeons*, the abolition of *mortal bodies*, and the vanishing of *names* will accompany the knowledge regarding rational creatures, while there will be *unanimity* of knowledge, in accord with the *unanimity* of substances' (KG II 17). The elimination of diastematic realities like aeons – extensions of time –¹⁶⁶ and sense-perceptible bodies – which extend in space and time – and

¹⁶⁴ 'To those who curse the Creator and *speak evil of this mortal body of our soul*, who will show them the grace that they have received, while they are subject to passions, to have been joined to such an instrument? But to witness in favour of my words are those who in visions of dreams are scared by demons, and when they awake they take refuge as among angels, when the mortal body suddenly awakes' (KG IV 60).

¹⁶⁵ KG I 26: 'If the *human mortal body is a part of this world*, and if, on the other hand, "the form of this world will pass", it is clear that the *form of the mortal body will also pass*'. KG III 6: 'Just as the first trumpet revealed the coming into being of mortal bodies, so will also the last trumpet reveal the vanishing of mortal bodies'. KG I 58: 'One of the kinds of death has birth as its primary cause; a second comes from the saints against those who do not live in justice, whereas the mother of the third will be remission. Now, if a *mortal is the one that is meant by nature to be liberated from the mortal body* to which it is joined, something immortal is the one that is not meant by nature to experience this. For *all those who have been joined to a mortal body will also necessarily be liberated*'. Mortal bodies are not bodies *tout court*.

¹⁶⁶ At the end of all aeons, the submission of all to Christ, who will submit to God (1Cor. 15:28), will take place when all will be brought to unity: 'When Christ will no longer be impressed in various *aeons* and in all sorts of *names*, then he too will submit to God the Father, and will delight in the knowledge of God alone. This knowledge is not divided in *aeons* and in *increments* of rational creatures' (KG VI 33). Indeed, Evagrius' conception of aeons is close to that of Origen: there are several aeons (αἰῶνες, not κόσμοι) before the final apokatastasis. During the aeons, rational creatures increase their virtue and knowledge, and get purified; after all this has been accomplished, the series of aeons will cease and the fullness of divine eternity [ἁϊδιότης] will remain. 'After the aeons, God will make us "in the likeness of the image of his Son", if the image of the Son is essential knowledge of God the Father ... The more the aeons will increase, the more the intellections appropriate to them will have us know the Holy Trinity' (KG VI 34; VI 67). Evagrius adheres to Origen in claiming that the succession of aeons is not infinite, but it had a beginning and will equally have an end: 'Just as the destruction of the last aeon will not be followed by a new creation, so also the creation of the first aeon was not preceded by a destruction' (KG V 89). The aeons are necessary to the spiritual and intellectual development of rational creatures. If the *telos* were now, it would catch most of them dramatically behind in such a development. Only when they are developed will God bestow his goods on them: 'If in

of plurality marked by names¹⁶⁷ will characterise the return to the final unity, which mirrors the original unity. This ἐνωσις is conceived by Evagrius, as by Origen, as unanimity and concord, a convergence of all wills. It will also imply the unification of the three components of the human being and of the *logika* with God, in the framework of the elimination of divisions, oppositions, and plurality.¹⁶⁸

And there will be a time when *body, soul, and intellect will cease to be separate* from one another, with their names and their plurality, since *the body and the soul will be elevated to the rank of intellects*; this conclusion can be drawn from the following words: 'That they may be *one* in us, just as you and I are One' [John 17:22]. And thus there will be a time when *the Father, Son, and Spirit, and their rational creation, which constitutes their body, will cease to be separate, with their names and plurality*. And this conclusion can be drawn from the words, 'God will be *all in all*' [1Cor. 15:28] (*Ad Mel.* 22).

Bodies' and souls' elevation to the order of intellects is also affirmed in *KG* I 65; II 17; III 66; 68; 15. A final obliteration of the hypostases of the Trinity, or of the distinction between God and the intellects is ruled out in the continuation (*Ad Mel.* 23-5); the three Persons will remain and intellects, souls, and spirits will be absorbed in each of them:

But when it is declared that the *names* and *plurality* of rational creatures and their Creator will pass away, it does not at all mean that the hypostases and names of the Father, Son, and Spirit will be obliterated. The nature of the *intellect* will be joined to the substance of the Father, since it constitutes his body [2Pet. 1:4]. Similarly, the names 'soul' and 'body' will be subsumed under the hypostases of the Son and the Spirit. And the one nature and three Persons of God, and of God's image, will remain eternally, as it was before the Inhumanation, and will be after the Inhumanation, thanks to the *concord of wills*. Likewise, body, soul, and mind are (now) *separate in number* due to the *differentiation of wills*. But when the names and plurality that have attached to the intellect *due to this movement* (sc. of will) have passed away, then the multiple

the aeons to come God is to show his goodness to rational creatures, it is clear that he will do so *after* this aeon that comes, since beforehand rational creatures will be unable to receive his holy richness' (*KG* IV 38).

¹⁶⁷ Quantity, plurality, and number are attached to secondary beings, what Gregory of Nyssa reckons diastematic realities: "'One" is a number of quantity. Now, *quantity* is linked with *mortal corporeal* nature. Therefore, *number* is proper to secondary natural contemplation' (*KG* IV 19). This contemplation pertains to secondary beings, those of the second creation, which will be subsumed into the first. Therefore, quantity and number will disappear in the subsumption of secondary beings into primary beings. Evagrius also suggests that there is a corporeal nature that is not mortal.

¹⁶⁸ For the importance of harmony and unity and their connection with the beginning and the end in Evagrius and Origen, see my 'Harmony' (2013). The *nous*-soul-body differentiation and their eventual reunion are reminiscent of Origen's theory (especially in *Princ.* II 8,3) of the descent from intellect to soul to body at the beginning due to a differentiation of the intellects' wills, and the final subsumption of body and soul under the intellect in the end, with the return to a complete unity of will.

names by which God is called will pass away as well ... It is not the case that those distinctions are inexistent, but those who needed them will no more exist ... They are different from rational creatures, whose cause is the Father as well; but these derive from him by grace, whereas the Son and the Spirit derive from the nature of his essence.

The initial and the final unity are unions of wills. The Persons of the Trinity have the same will; all rational creatures will have the same will, and each component in them will have the same will, not as now that the *nous* wants one thing and the body another. Every *nous*' will shall be oriented to the Good. Like Origen, indeed, Evagrius explains the present differentiation of the *logika* with the differentiation of their wills that occurred with the fall (the 'movement' in Origen's and Evagrius' terminology). In the end, that differentiation will disappear, as it did not exist at the beginning. 'Just as the fire in its power pervades its own body, so will also the *intellect* in its power *pervade the soul*, when the whole of it will be mingled to the light of the Holy Trinity' (*Ad Mel.* 26). Likewise, in *KG* VI 20 God is said to have created the first creation, of incorporeal realities, and only subsequently the second, that of bodies, which came after the *logika*'s 'movement', that is, after they dispersed their wills in different directions, instead of toward God alone.¹⁶⁹ This is why Evagrius says that it was sin to detach the intellects from unity and to diversify *nous*, soul, and body (*Ad Mel.* 26-30):

There was a time when the intellect, because of its free will, *fell from its original order and was named soul*, and, having *plunged further*, was named *body*. But there will come a time when *body, soul, and intellect, thanks to a transformation of their wills, will become one and the same thing*. Since there will come a time when the *differentiations of the movements of their will shall vanish*, it will be elevated to the original state in which it was created. Its nature, hypostasis, and name will be *one*, known to God. Please, do not be amazed at my claim regarding the union of rational creatures with God the Father, that these will be one and the same nature in three Persons, with no juxtaposition or change ... When the intellects return to God, like rivers to the sea, *God entirely transforms them into his own nature*, colour, and taste. They will be *one and the same thing, and not many any more*, in God's infinite and inseparable unity, in that they are united and joined to God.¹⁷⁰ ... Before *sin operated a separation between*

¹⁶⁹ 'Before the *movement*, God was good, powerful, wise, creator of *incorporeal* realities, Father of the *rational beings*, and omnipotent; after the '*movement*,' God has become creator of *mortal bodies*, judge, ruler, physician, shepherd, doctor, merciful and patient, and moreover door, way, lamb, high priest, *etc.*' See *KG* III 24.26: 'The knowledge of the primary nature is a spiritual contemplation, that of which the Creator availed himself in creating *intellects*, which only are susceptible of his nature. The knowledge concerning the secondary nature is a spiritual contemplation, that of which Christ availed himself in *creating the nature of bodies and aeons* from it.'

¹⁷⁰ That this union is by grace is clear from *Ad Mel.* 63: Evagrius describes this as a great miracle, not anything natural but a gift of grace, that rational creatures, which became alienated from God because of the mutability of their free will, shall enjoy eternal *ἔνωσις* with their Creator, by grace. Not only the notion of the final apokatastasis as *ἔνωσις*, but also its being by grace was a tenet of Origen's eschatology. Evagrius describes 'the *telos* of all intellects' as 'the union

intellects and God, as the earth separated the sea and rivers, *they were one with God, without discrepancy*, but when their sin was manifested, they were separated from God and alienated from God ... When *sin, interposed between intellects and God*, has vanished, they will be, *not many, but again one and the same*.

Evagrius draws a core distinction between the intellects' eternal existence in God and their creation as independent substances in time, which is relevant to the issue of the preexistence of souls:

I do not mean that rational creatures were eternally in God *in their substance*, since, although they were *completely united to God in God's Wisdom* and creative power, *their actual creation did have a beginning*; however, one should not think that it will have an end, in that they are united to God, who has no beginning and no end. (*Ad Mel.* 27-30)

He adds that they have no end because of the perishability axiom. Evagrius' claim that intellects preexisted *ab aeterno* in God, but were created as substances only at a certain point, derives from Origen, *Princ.* I 4,4-5,¹⁷¹ who thought that when the *logika* were created as individual substances they also acquired a fine, immortal body (which may have functioned as *principium individuationis*). In fact, in *Ad Mel.* 38-9 Evagrius speaks of 'this sense-perceptible body', composed by God's Wisdom from the four elements, and subject to God's providence, thus suggesting that there is another kind of bodies, which are not sense-perceptible. This is in line with Origen's views, and is confirmed by the *Kephalaia Gnostica*. Here, there is a terminological differentiation in Syriac between sense-perceptible and spiritual bodies (which is regularly blurred in modern translations and retroversions, but may cast much light on Evagrius' doctrine of the soul-body relationship¹⁷²). This is confirmed by the Greek of *Praktikos* 49: the intellect 'is naturally constituted for prayer even without *this body*', which points to *another* body, different from the mortal. The reason that Evagrius indicates in *Ad Mel.* 46 for the assumption of sense-perceptible bodies on the part of humans is the original fall, with which 'they gave up being the image of God and wanted to become the image of animals', a description that is close to Gregory of Nyssa's depiction of the fall and the

of all these different knowledges in one and the same and unique real knowledge' and as 'they all becoming this one without end' (66).

¹⁷¹ '*Deum quidem Patrem semper fuisse, semper habentem unigenitum Filium, qui simul et Sapientia ... appellatur ... In hac igitur Sapientia, quae semper erat cum Patre, descripta semper inerat ac formata conditio et numquam erat quando eorum, quae futura erant, praefiguratio apud Sapientiam non erat ... ut neque ingenitas neque coaeternas Deo creaturas dicamus, neque rursum, cum nihil boni prius egerit Deus, in id ut ageret esse conversum ... Si utique in Sapientia omnia facta sunt, cum Sapientia semper fuerit, secundum praefigurationem et praeformationem semper erant in Sapientia ea, quae protinus etiam substantialiter facta sunt.*'

¹⁷² I hope to show this in my new edition, translation, and commentary of Evagrius' *KG* (forthcoming).

rise of mortal bodies.¹⁷³ Evagrius' concept that the intellectual soul is in the image of God is an initial datum in humans, while likeness must be acquired voluntarily by each one, by means of virtue, just as Origen too thought (*Ad Anat.* 61; 18;¹⁷⁴ see Origen *Princ.* III 6,1).

Indeed, the nourishment and life of souls is their virtue, their sticking to the Good.¹⁷⁵ This is not only an ethical, but an ontological principle, which Evagrius shares with Origen. The first and essential Good is God, and nothing is opposed to it (*KG I 1*). This is why in *KG I 89* Evagrius states that all intellects have been naturally made by God-the Good in order to exist, and to know, and God is 'essential knowledge'; intellects *qua* creatures of God have non-being as their contrary, and knowledge has evilness and ignorance as its contrary, but none of these is contrary to God. This is why in *KG I 41* Evagrius insists on the ontological priority of Good and virtue over evil and vice: 'If death comes after life and illness after health, it is clear that *evilness, too, is secondary vis-à-vis virtue*; for vice is the soul's death and illness, but *virtue comes before*'. From the ontological and chronological priority of Good over evil, Evagrius, like Origen and Nyssen, infers the eschatological disappearance of evil:

There was a time when evil did not exist, and there will come a time when *evil will no more exist*. But there was no time when the Good did not exist, and there will be no time when it will no more exist. For the seed of good energies is inextinguishable. And what persuades me of this is also the rich man who in Sheol was condemned because of his evil, and took pity on his siblings. Now, pity is a beautiful germ of virtue. (*KG I 40*; see *Pract.* I 65 [PG 40, 1240A-B])

Virtue's germs never die, not even in hell, since they come from God, the Good. It is evil, which is no creature of God, that will disappear in the end. No creature of God, according to Evagrius just as to Origen, is evil by nature: 'If an essence is not said to be superior or inferior to another, and a demon has been called by our Saviour worse than another, it is evident that demons are not evil in their essence' (*KG IV 59*). The three main categories of rational creatures are characterised by three different relations to θεωρία,¹⁷⁶ but, after

¹⁷³ Evagrius observes that Christ took up conception and birth, and curse and death, in order to free us from all this, which is unnatural to him and, in the plan of God, is also unnatural to humans (*Ad Mel.* 56-8).

¹⁷⁴ 'Love manifests the divine image [εἰκόν], which is conformed to the Archetype, in every human ... Your luminous homage to God will be when, by means of the energies of Good that you possess, you will have impressed God's likeness [ὁμοίωσις] in yourself.'

¹⁷⁵ Just as the body dies without food, so does the soul die without its proper nourishment, which is virtue (*Ad Mel.* 52). This is consistent with Origen's notion of κακία as determining the death of the soul, developed by the Alexandrian especially in his *Dialogue with Heraclides*, and elsewhere, and drawn from Paul and Philo.

¹⁷⁶ 'Peculiar to angels is to be always nourished with the contemplation of beings; to humans, to be not always (nourished with it), and to demons (is to be nourished with it) neither in a time nor without time' (*KG III 4*).

the vanishing of evil, the eventual apokatastasis will involve all; all will finally attain knowledge and enjoy contemplation.

Knowledge and contemplation characterise a kind of beatitude that is well suited for the *logika*. Beatitude, indeed, is identified by Evagrius with knowledge and contemplation of God, perfect gnosis and θεωρία.¹⁷⁷ It is natural that the opposite of beatitude for intellects is ignorance:

The highest doctrine concerning the Judgement should remain unknown to mundane and young people, in that it can easily produce despise and neglect. For they do not know that the *suffering* of a rational soul condemned to punishment consists in *ignorance*. (*Gnost.* 36)

Here Evagrius shows the same concerns as Origen about divulging the true meaning of damnation and the related theory of universal restoration. Evagrius opposes Sheol as a place of ignorance that produces suffering to Paradise as a place of learning: 'Just as Paradise is the place of *instruction* for the righteous, so can Sheol produce the torment of the impious' (*KG* VI 8). Knowledge is in turn inseparable from true love (*KG* I 86; IV 50).¹⁷⁸ Spiritual love plays in knowledge the same role as light does in vision.¹⁷⁹ I have already pointed out that for Evagrius the opposite of knowledge is ignorance *and* evilness, which results from a lack of love for the Good. This is explained by the fact that he conceives ignorance as 'the shadow of evil', thus showing that to his mind ignorance and evil cannot exist independently of one another:

If the earth were destroyed, night would no more exist on the face of the firmament. Likewise, when *evil* has been eliminated, *ignorance* will no more exist among rational creatures, because ignorance is the shadow of evil. (*KG* IV 29)

The eradication of evil and ignorance from among all rational creatures will take place in the eventual apokatastasis.

The attainment of the perfection of the *nous*, which consists in knowledge, first requires the perfection of the inferior parts of the soul (a Neoplatonic idea¹⁸⁰). This is why Evagrius draws a close connection between *apatheia* and

¹⁷⁷ Of the latter Evagrius often speaks, *e.g.* in *KG* I 27, in which he classifies all forms of θεωρία: 'Five are the main contemplations, under which every contemplation is classified: the first is said to be the contemplation of the adorable and holy Trinity; the second and the third, the contemplation of incorporeal realities and of bodies; the fourth and fifth, the contemplation of the Judgement and of Providence.'

¹⁷⁸ *KG* I 86: 'Love is the perfect state of the rational soul, a state in which the soul cannot love anything which is among corruptible beings more than the knowledge of God.' *KG* IV 50: 'There is one good kind of love, which is forever: that which *true knowledge elects*, and it is said to be inseparable from the intellect.'

¹⁷⁹ *KG* III 58: 'The one who must see written things needs light, and the one who must learn the wisdom of beings needs spiritual love.'

¹⁸⁰ This has been rightly shown by Blossom Stefaniw, 'Exegetical Curricula in Origen, Didymus, and Evagrius: Pedagogical Agenda and the Case for Neoplatonist Influence', *SP* 44 (2010),

knowledge, the former on the ethical plane, pertaining to the soul, and the latter on the intellectual one, pertaining to the *nous*, in *KG* VI 55, I 81, and V 12, where the ideal state of the *nous* is presented as the alienation from the sense-perceptible world.¹⁸¹ In Evagrius, as in Gregory Nyssen, *apatheia* is related to the concept of passions as adventitious in rational creatures, secondary, and against nature.¹⁸² As they were not at the beginning, they will have to disappear in the end. The characterisation of beatitude as knowledge and of the eventual *apokatastasis* as universal is clear, e.g., from *KG* III 72:

The heritage of Christ is *the knowledge of the Unity*. Now, if all will become coheirs of Christ, *all will know the holy Unity*. However, it is impossible that they become his coheirs, unless they first have become his heirs.

Knowledge of God is the *telos* of the entire history of the *logika*; each aeon aims at their knowledge of God.¹⁸³ The *logika*'s final attainment of knowledge will represent their 'resurrection'. Evagrius lists three kinds of resurrection, all of which entails a restoration to an original, perfect state: the resurrection of the body, from corruptible to incorruptible, which suggests again the original existence of an incorruptible body – this would make Evagrius' view even closer to Origen's –; that of the soul, from passible to impassible, and that of the intellect, from ignorance to true knowledge (*KG* V 19.22.25).¹⁸⁴ Like Origen's and Gregory Nyssen's, Evagrius' idea of the resurrection is holistic; it will involve the whole of the human being, including its soul and intellect: the soul will be liberated from passions, and the *nous* will be illuminated and vivified by knowledge. Such a resurrection/vivification is – as in Origen and Gregory – linked to restoration: 'Life has vivified at the beginning living beings; subsequently, those who

281-95. In *Περὶ λογισμῶν* 26 Evagrius is clear that it is impossible to acquire science without having renounced mundane things, evil, and, after these, ignorance. See also *KG* I 78-80. See in Clement the passage from the cathartic to the eoptic mode in *Strom.* V 70,7-71,2.

¹⁸¹ 'It is then that the intellect approaches the intelligible realities: when it does not unite itself any longer to tempting thoughts coming from the passionate part of the soul. The glory and light of the intellect is *knowledge*, whereas the glory and light of the soul is *impassivity*.' 'The intellect that has liberated itself from passions and sees the intellections of beings does not truly receive any more the representations that (are formed) by means of sense-perceptions, but it is as though *another world were created by its knowledge*, attracted its thought to itself, and rejected the sense-perceptible world far from itself' (*KG* V 12).

¹⁸² 'If all the faculties that we have in common with animals belong to the corporeal nature, it is evident that the *irascible* and *appetitive* faculties do not seem to have been created together with the rational nature before the movement', i.e. the movement of will that determined the fall; 'not all the thoughts prevent the intellect from knowing God, but only those which assault it from the *irascible* and *appetitive* parts, and which are *against nature*' (*KG* VI 85 and 83).

¹⁸³ 'An aeon is a natural system that includes the various and different bodies of rational creatures, *for the sake of the knowledge of God*' (*KG* III 36). The idea of αἰών as a 'natural system' entirely depends on Origen.

¹⁸⁴ See *KG* II 15: 'When the rational nature receives the *contemplation* that is about it, then also all the faculty of the *intellect* will be healthy'.

are alive and those who die; in the end, it will vivify also the dead' (*KG V 20*). The eventual vivification of the dead is not only the resurrection of bodies, but also the spiritual resurrection of those dead due to sin.¹⁸⁵

The restoration of the intellects depends on a process that is led by Christ in several ways, primarily in his capacity as Logos and teacher: 'Just as those who teach children the letters write them on tablets, in the same way Christ, too, while he teaches his wisdom to rational creatures, has traced it in the nature of the mortal body' (*KG III 57*). Mortal bodies, as I have already pointed out on the basis of the *Letter to Melania*, are an instrument in the process of the instruction of intellects that leads to their restoration to perfection, that is, the immaterial knowledge of the Trinity.¹⁸⁶ This, indeed, was the first knowledge intellects had in the beginning, before the movement of their free will, their detachment from unity, and their fall into the orders of souls and heavy bodies; thanks to divine Providence, souls and bodies will be, not destroyed, but elevated to the rank of intellects and these will return, pure, to the Holy Trinity.¹⁸⁷

Essential Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, Gregory of Nyssa, and Evagrius seem to be much closer to Origen's authentic thought concerning rational creatures and their spiritual bodies between protology and eschatology than is commonly assumed in scholarship. For Nyssen in particular, I have argued that he did not criticise Origen's purported preexistence of souls, just as Nazianzen did not. As for Bardaisan, more and more clues point to a relationship with Origen's thought and his tradition. In the thinkers here examined a common pattern has emerged, which renders the label 'preexistence of souls' more and more inadequate.

¹⁸⁵ See the same blending of resurrection and restoration in *KG III 9*: 'In the aeon to come *the bodies of ignorance* will be overcome, whereas in that which will be after it the transformation will receive an increment of fire and air, and *those who are below will apply themselves to science*, if it is true that "the houses of the impious will receive purification" and that Christ "works miracles today and tomorrow, and on the third day is done".' The mention of 'bodies of ignorance' points to the existence of different bodies.

¹⁸⁶ 'If it is true that the *perfection of the intellect is immaterial knowledge*, as it is said, and immaterial knowledge is only the Trinity, it is clear that in perfection nothing of matter will remain. And if this is so, the intellect, finally bare, will become *a seer of the Trinity*' (*KG III 15*).

¹⁸⁷ 'God's Providence is double: on the one hand, it is said to preserve the existence of bodies and incorporeal realities; on the other hand, to push rational creatures from evilness and ignorance to virtue and knowledge. *The first knowledge to be found in rational creatures is that of the Holy Trinity*; then, there occurred the *movement of free will*, Providence, which rescues and never abandons anyone, and then the Judgement, and again the movement of free will, Providence, the Judgement, and so on with all this *up to the Holy Trinity*. Thus, every Judgement comes between the movement of free will and divine Providence' (*KG VI 59.75*).

The *Dialogue of Adamantius*: A Document of Origen's Thought? (Part Two)

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ABSTRACT

The present essay stems from a long and careful research triggered by Richard P.C. Hanson's invitation to a closer examination of the *Dialogue of Adamantius* (which indeed, notwithstanding some contributions that have appeared meanwhile, remains an important desideratum in Patristic scholarship and early Christian literature), and by the mystery that surrounds this text, its composition, its double redaction, Greek and Latin, and its relation to Origen, a mysterious 'Maximus', Eusebius, Methodius, the Philocalists, and Rufinus. The first part of this article has already been published in a previous issue of *Studia Patristica*.¹

V.8 Adamantius' debate with Marinus: evil and resurrection

Noteworthy points also emerge from Adamantius' debate with the Bardaisanite Marinus. It is interesting that at the beginning of Book 3, at the setting out of the debate between Adamantius and Marinus, the latter appeals to Scripture (834a: *cupio ostendere quis nostrum, frater Adamanti, in scripturis diuinis rectiorem tramitem teneat*).² In fact, Bardaisan, like Origen, based his speculation entirely on Scriptural exegesis, and his immediate disciple, who is also portrayed in the *Liber legum regionum*, followed him on this path.³ It is not at all certain whether the three theses that are attributed to the Bardaisanites in the *Dialogue* reflect Bardaisan's own thought,⁴ all the more in that their formulation vary from their first exposition to the subsequent development of the debate; but surely Adamantius' refutation thereof perfectly coincides with Origen's own thought. The most

¹ *SP* 52 (2012), 71-98.

² In the extant Greek: βούλομαι δεῖξαι εἰ ἡμεῖς εὐγνωμόνως περὶ τὰ δόγματα τῶν γραφῶν φερόμεθα ἢ ὑμεῖς.

³ See I. Ramelli, *Bardesane Kata Heimarmenes* (Rome and Bologna, 2009).

⁴ I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation. Also in the Light of Origen and the Original Fragments from De India*, Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 22 (Piscataway, 2009), 152-6, argues that they do not.

significant difference between the first and the second formulation of Marinus' three theses regards the first thesis, which I am going to tackle now.

V.8.1 *Evil, the devil, and death*

In 834b Marinus expresses the Bardaisanites' contentions in a negative form:

Absurdum mihi uidetur quod malum a deo factum sit [τὸ κακὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγενῆσθαι], *deum enim nullius mali auctor est* [κακῶν ἀναίτιος], *sed et quod dicitis uerbum dei carnem hominis assumpsisse, uel quod dicitis hanc carnem, qua nunc circumdamur, resurrecturam, quae utique in scripturis uel onus uel sepulcrum uel uincula nominatur, pro eo quod anima peccatrix uinculis huius corporis alligata est, sicut apostolus Paulus clamabat liberari a corpore mortis huius. Ista tria sunt quae requiro.*

In 835a Marinus reformulates these three claims as follows:

Placet mihi, sicut iste dicit, unum esse deum. Tria tamen sunt in quibus non consonamus cum ecclesia catholica...: quod diabolus non sit a deo creatus [τὸν διάβολον οὐχ ὑπὸ θεοῦ ἐκτίσθαι] *et Christum non dicimus de muliere natum, et carnem hanc non esse resurrecturam.*

The first thesis asserts – evidently in order to maintain that God is not responsible for evil – that God did not create either evil itself (κακόν, *malum*: first formulation), or the devil (διάβολος, *diabolus*, second formulation, which will be developed in the subsequent discussion). Now, these two statements are in fact completely different, and precisely Origen's position makes this clear. For he maintained that God did not create evil, but he certainly thought that God created the devil, qua rational creature (which is also why he believed that he will convert and be restored in the end). The devil is a creature of God, evil is not, and this is why it has no ontological subsistence.

The confusion in rendering the Bardaisanites' thought in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* might have originally arisen from the ambiguity of the Syriac term *bišā* (= Greek κακόν / κακός) which means both 'evil' and 'the evil one, the devil', since in Syriac there is no difference between masculine and neutral forms. At any rate, in 835c, Marinus repeats his thesis according to the second formula – which does not coincide in the least with Bardaisan's own doctrine⁵ –: *Diabolum ex semet ipso esse pronuntio et a semet ipso uel exortum uel factum, et duas radices esse dico, bonam et malam*. Then he equates again evil and the devil, by calling these two roots *duae naturae bona et mala* and subsequently, again, *bonum* and *malum*.

⁵ In 836c light and darkness, representing good and evil, are described as two equal and anti-theoretical principles ('*Nulla eis societas est, nec aliquid habent inter se commune. Suis terminis horarum et tenebrae uoluuntur et lux. Duodecim habet lux suas horas et duodecim tenebrae*'), which is not typical of Bardaisan's own thought, which made of darkness a passive principle, deprived of an activity and a subsistence of its own. See I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan* (2009), *passim*.

Adamantius' position ('*ego nihil dico esse quod factum non sit uel creatum nisi solum deum, caetera autem omnia quae sunt facta esse et creata definitio*', 835c) exactly coincides with that of Origen, because the latter excluded evil from creatures and from existing substances. That the devil is a creature is asserted by Adamantius, just as it is by Origen, in 837c: '*ergo diabolus corruptibilis est et mutabilis. Quodsi est, utique ingenuus non erat, sed factura est*'. And that evil is no creature and no existing substance is stated by Adamantius, precisely as it is by Origen,⁶ in 837d: '*Bonum dico substantiale esse, malum uero accidens ... principali ipsi Bono numquam accidet malum, sed his qui positione boni sunt propter liberi arbitrii facultatem*.' Evil is not a substance, but a result of a bad choice and has no ontological consistence of its own, whereas the Good itself is God. The choice is that of freewill (αὐτεξούσιον, *arbitrii sui potestas*) given by God to both the devil and all human beings and all rational creatures (837e; see also 839c: '*eum angelum, qui a deo factus est et lucis particeps fuit, postmodum per liberi arbitrii facultatem [τῇ αὐτεξουσιότητι] in deterius commutatum, in apostatam decidisse*'). On this point Adamantius entirely agrees with Origen, and also with Bardaisan as a character of the *Liber legum regionum*. Since evil derives from a choice and is not a substance or nature, those who have chosen evil can convert to the Good. This is precisely Christ's aim according to Adamantius, whose argument is the same as that used by Origen against some Gnostics' assumption that there are creatures that are evil by nature and others that are good by nature: '*si immutabilis est mali natura, sine causa laborat Iesus, cupiens interimere mala quae interim non possunt. Ut quid ergo passus est ut mortem destrueret, quae non potest destrui?*' (837ab). The argument is *per absurdum*, of course, and the death at stake is clearly spiritual death (which Origen in his *Dialogue with Heraclides* designated as 'the death of the soul', the real death, ὁ ὄντως θάνατος, caused by sin). This also demonstrates the centrality of Christ's work against evil and death according to Adamantius, with coincides with the crucial role assigned by Origen to Christ in relation to the *apokatastasis*.⁷ Another argument against the same Gnostic assumption is brought forward in 838e: '*Si uero non potest fieri bonus natura sua hoc denegante quippe quae malae radices sit, iniuste pro malitia condemnatur quam mutare non poterat*' (see also 839a: '*Si non habeant arbitrii sui libertatem, ostende quomodo iuste iudicantur*'). Now, the same argument was repeatedly used by Origen, and is also used by Bardaisan in the *Liber legum regionum*.

It is also remarkable that Eutropius' observation in 836f exactly corresponds to Origen's argument aiming at demonstrating that eternal life cannot possibly

⁶ On the ontological non-subsistence of evil for Origen see Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, 'Christian Soteriology and Christian Platonism. Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Biblical and Philosophical Basis of the Doctrine of Apokatastasis', VC 61 (2007), 313-56.

⁷ This is demonstrated in the first integrative essay in I. Ramelli, *Gregorio di Nissa Sull'anima e la resurrezione* (Milan, 2007). Further arguments now in *ead.*, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis* (Leiden, 2013).

coexist with eternal death. Eutropius states: '*Si dicitis ingenitas et increatas atque immutabiles esse ambas istas substantias* [sc. light and darkness, good and evil], *necessario et unius naturae sunt, immo et similes atque eadem ambae sunt, quod utique impossibile est.*' Origen's train of thought concerning life and death is remarkably identical:

Aeternum aeterno contrarium non erit, sed idem. Nunc autem certum est mortem uitae esse contrarium: certum est ergo quod, si uita aeterna est, mors esse non possit aeterna ... Cum mors animae, quae est nouissimus inimicus, fuerit destructa ... regnum mortis pariter cum morte destructum erit (Comm. in Rom. 5.7).

Good and evil, just as life and death, are opposite to each other; as a consequence, they cannot be equal, otherwise they would be of one and the same nature, which is impossible: Good is substance and plenitude, but evil is no substance and is privation; likewise, life is eternal, but death is not eternal. For, neither evil nor death are God or creatures of God. Adamantius' and Origen's arguments coincide.

V.8.2 Resurrection, body and soul. The use of Paul, trimmings in the Greek, and revealing words

A long section is devoted to the resurrection in the *Dialogue of Adamantius*: it begins at 859b, as a debate concerning Marinus' third contention, that the resurrection of the body will not take place. Adamantius refutes this contention. As I have mentioned, it is often stated that Adamantius' position in this dialogue does not reflect Origen's true position, but in fact corrects it into a more 'orthodox' view. It has even been maintained that Origen's true thought is rather reflected in Marinus' radical position in the *Dialogue*, which is patently inexact. For Marinus denies the resurrection of the body, whereas Origen never did so.⁸ Indeed, Origen's position is exactly the same as that held by Adamantius.

The first thing that Adamantius contends is that the body that will rise is the same as the body one had in one's earthly life: '*Hoc corpus dico resurgere quo circumdamur*' (859c). He next faces Marinus' objection that one person's body is never the same and continually changes: '*Substantia corporis semper demutetur et defluat.*' Clearly Marinus here speaks of substance in the sense of the material substance of the body (that which Origen called ὑποκείμενον), not its metaphysical essence or form (what Origen denominated εἶδος), whereas Adamantius refuses to admit that the οὐσία of the body is its material substratum; this is why he argues as follows in 860bc: '*Si ex eo quod defluit substantiae mutabilis est corpus, et corpus aliud pro alio efficitur, deberet utique, etsi*

⁸ See I. Ramelli, 'Origen's Exegesis of Jeremiah: Resurrection Announced throughout the Bible and its Twofold Conception', *Augustinianum* 48 (2008), 59-78.

membrum exciditur uel amputatur ... rursum per cibos reparari.' I shall show that this is precisely Origen's conception.

Eutropius follows Adamantius' contention when he observes that, if the body itself changed and became a different body each time (instead of being its material substratum to change), the body would be ἀνυπόστατον and it would not exist: it would lack its metaphysical principle of existence and identification – what Origen called εἶδος. There is something that changes and flows every day and hour in the body – as Gregory of Nyssa will assert too, who knew both Origen's conception of resurrection and the *Dialogue* and who will observe it in *De anima et resurrectione* –, but it is not the body's οὐσία or ὑπόστασις that changes, it is not its metaphysical principle, but its material substratum. As Eutropius puts it, nourishment does not create a new bodily substance.⁹

The next question that Marinus raises is how the same body can be resurrected after all of its elements have been dispersed (861b). This is the very same problem raised in Nyssen's *De anima*, where it is formulated in the same terms.¹⁰ Adamantius' first reply, that everything is possible with God (*Luke* 28:27), who created the bodies and all elements, which are at God's service, is the same we also find again in Gregory's dialogue. Adamantius' position in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* is that the body, both now and in the resurrection, is constituted by the four elements and not by any other. Now, it is clear that this was precisely the real view of Origen as well, as is clear not only from a passage of Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, which is available only in Latin (3.6.6: '*non enim, secundum quosdam Graecorum philosophos, praeter hoc corpus quod ex quattuor constat elementis, aliud quintum corpus, quod per omnia aliud sit et diversum ab hoc nostro corpore, fides ecclesiae recipit*'), but also from one that is extant in Greek, CC 4.60, where Origen refers to the Platonists as those who do not add a fifth element (μετὰ τοῦ μὴ προσίσθαι πέμπτου σώμα) to the four and maintain that matter always endures through changes of qualities (τὸ γὰρ ὑπομένον ἢ ὕλη, ἀπολλυμένης τῆς ποιότητος). It is notable that this is precisely the explanation offered by Adamantius concerning the resurrection in the *Dialogue*: permanence of the four elements, change of qualities.

When Adamantius states, against Marinus, that sometimes Scripture refers to the human soul in order to indicate the whole of the human being (802b), he quotes *Gen.* 46:27, where he interprets ψυχαί as 'humans'. It is noteworthy that exactly the same occurs in Origen's exegesis of this passage in *Princ.* IV

⁹ '*Non ut nouam tribuat homini substantiam corporis, sed ut ipsa quae est nutriet et consequet.*'

¹⁰ Full commentary on this point in I. Ramelli, *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007). Marinus' identical formulation of it is: '*Homo ex terra et aqua, igni et aëre constat. Cum ergo mortuus fuerit ac resolutus, unumquodque elementum quod suum est recipit ... et quod aëris est ad aërem redit, et quod terrae est in terram reuertitur. Quomodo ergo in resurrectione possibile est eundem hominem resurgere, cum partes eius ex quibus constiterant refusae sint et redditae generalibus elementis? ... ita ergo necesse erit, si resurget homo, alium pro alio resurgere.*'

3.11, where he interprets *animae* with *patres* and allegorises their descent into Egypt in the sense of illuminated rational creatures' descent into this world.¹¹ And there are many other places, too, in which Origen interprets ψυχή in Scripture as 'human being'.¹²

Adamantius' refutation of Marinus' objection that the body is the cause of all evils for the soul runs as follows:

ais animam propter peccatum uinctam esse in corpore, tum deinde paululum progrediens ais causam malorum omnium esse corpus, cum superius dixeris animam priusquam corpus acciperet delinquisse. Si ergo potuit anima peccare sine corpore, non erit animae corpus causa peccati ... corpus non uidemus uinculum esse animae, sed cooperari ei et administrare [συνεργόν] (862d).

Again, Adamantius' words are perfectly in line with Origen's true thought: Origen did not think that corporeality tout court came only after the original sin, but he conceived of the λογικά (intellectual or rational creatures) as provided with a body from the beginning, and endowed with a subtle form of corporeality, of course different from the heavy and corruptible bodies we have in this world and more similar to the σῶμα πνευματικόν of resurrection, which nevertheless will be the same as the present one for each human being.¹³ After

¹¹ 'Et quae sit illa descensio in Aegyptum septuaginta animarum, quae septuaginta animae fiant in Aegypto sicut sidera caeli in multitudine ... quae descensio patrum sanctorum in Aegyptum, id est in hunc mundum, uideri poterit ad illuminationem ceterorum atque ad humani generis instructionem a prouidentia Dei esse concessa.'

¹² E.g. *Comm. in Io.* 13.24.142; *Exp. in Prov.* (PG 17, 228C); *Hom. in Iob* (PG 17, 84A-B); *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1300C); *Hom. in Ier.* 5.15; 14.6; *Fr. in Luc.* 186.2: Δοκεῖ γάρ μοι ἐν τῷ ὁ λύχνος τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς τοιοῦτόν τι ἀποφαίνεσθαι· τὸ διορατικὸν ἐν τῇ ὅλῃ ψυχῇ, ἐν τῷ ὅλῳ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ νοῦς ἐστιν.

¹³ See my *Gregorio di Nissa*, first integrative essay; Anders Lund-Jacobsen, 'Gen 1-3 as Source for the Anthropology of Origen', VC 62 (2008), 213-32, 215, and the key text of Procopius – who heavily depended on Origen's commentaries, including his lost commentary on *Genesis* – on *Gen.* 3:21 (*Comm. in Gen.* [PG 87,1.221A]): ὁ μὲν κατ' εἰκόνα τὴν ψυχὴν σημαίνει, ὁ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ χοῦ πλασθεὶς τὸ λεπτομερὲς σῶμα καὶ ἄξιον τῆς ἐν παραδείσῳ διαγωγῆς (ὅ τινες αὐγοειδὲς ἐκάλεσαν), οἱ δὲ δερμάτινοι χιτῶνες τὸ Δέρμα καὶ κρέας με ἐνέδυσας, ὁστέοις δὲ καὶ νεύροις με ἐνεΐρας. Τῷ δὲ αὐγοειδεῖ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐποχεῖσθαι πρότερον λέγουσιν, ὅπερ ὕστερον ἐνέδυσας τοὺς δερματίνοὺς χιτῶνας. Gobar, a theologian from the sixth century (*ap. Phot. Bibl. cod.* 232, 287b-291b), was well acquainted with Origen, Athanasius, and Gregory Nyssen, and wrote on Trinitarian, protological, and eschatological issues (e.g., on the 'skin tunics', the resurrection, the judgment, and the non-eternity of otherworldly punishments). Here he often reports what is probably to be regarded as Origen's true thought, for instance, not the preexistence of 'bare souls', but *logikà* endowed of a form of corporeality, albeit not heavy, in accord with Origen's idea that only God is completely incorporeal (288a; full demonstration in my *Apokatastasis* [2013]). I think that he reports Origen's authentic thought as attested by Procopius as well, concerning the 'skin tunics', identified with the 'heavy body', different from the luminous, pre-lapsarian body, which will be recovered at the resurrection: ἄλλο ἦν τὸ πρὸ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ ἀνθρώπου σῶμα, ὅπερ καὶ αὐγοειδὲς καλοῦσι, καὶ ἄλλο τὸ μετὰ τὴν παράβασιν, ὃ νυνὶ περικεῖμεθα σάρκινον, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν οἱ δερμάτινοι χιτῶνες, ὅπερ καὶ ἀποτιθέμεθα ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει (288a). The comparison with Procopius confirms that it is

the fall, rational creatures were not given a body for the first time, but had their subtle body changed into a heavy and perishable body. For only the Trinity is conceived of by Origen as absolutely incorporeal, while all creatures do have a body, whether spiritual or heavy (*Princ.* II 2.2).¹⁴ It is likely that Origen was inspired by Clement¹⁵ in this respect, and in turn he surely inspired Ambrose (*De Abr.* 2.8.58, PL 14, 506).¹⁶ In *Princ.* II 3.2 he even offers a cogent syllogism – with a *per absurdum* argument such as is repeatedly found in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* as well – to demonstrate that it is impossible for any creature to live without a body: if any creature can live without a body, then all creatures will be able to live without a body, but then, since corporeal substance would be useless, corporeal substance would not even exist. Which is not the case. Only in respect to the eventual deification (θέωσις) did Origen admit of the possibility that ‘becoming God’ will entail becoming bodiless (3.6.1 and 2.3.3-5), but this is not in the least at odds with the resurrection of the body, which Origen fully endorsed.

It is also precisely Origen’s view that the body is the συνεργόν and minister of the soul and does what the soul wants, as is stated by Adamantius in the above-quoted passage. Indeed, in *Princ.* 3.6.6 Origen asserts exactly the same thing as Adamantius does: in the present state, the body serves the soul; he adds that in the *telos* it will serve the spirit:

Idem ipsum corpus, quod nunc pro ministerio animae nuncupatum est animale, per profectum quendam, cum anima, adiuncta Deo, unus cum eo spiritus fuerit effecta, iam tum corpus, quasi spiritui ministrans, in statum qualitatemque proficiat spiritalem.

Conversely, in *Princ.* II 3.2 the human soul is said to use the body, either the present, heavy body or the spiritual one at resurrection: ‘*materiae corporalis, cuius materiae anima usum semper habet, in qualibet qualitate positae, nunc quidem carnali, postmodum uero subtiliori et puriori, quae spiritalis appellatur.*’¹⁷ Accordingly, Origen uses twice Plato’s definition of the human being as ‘a soul

the same conception that is described; the adjective αἰσθητός is even identical in both testimonies and it is very likely to go back to Origen himself.

¹⁴ ‘Si uero impossibile est hoc ullo modo adfirmari, id est quod uiuere praeter corpus possit ulla alia natura praeter Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, necessitas consequentiae ac rationis coartat intellegi principaliter quidem creatas esse rationabiles naturas, materialem uero substantiam opinione quidem et intellectu solo separari ab eis ... sed numquam sine ipsa eas uel uixisse uel uiuere: solius namque Trinitatis incorporea uita exsistere recte putabitur’. See also Brian E. Daley, ‘Incorporeality and “Divine Sensibility”: The Importance of *De Principiis* 4.4 for Origen’s Theology’, *SP* 41 (2006), 139-44.

¹⁵ *Exc. ex Theod.* 10: οὐδὲ τὰ πνευματικά καὶ νοερά οὐδὲ οἱ ἀρχάγγελοι οἱ πρωτόκτιστοι οὐδὲ μὴν οὐδ’ αὐτὸς ἄμορφος καὶ ἀνείδεος καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀσώματος ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ καὶ μορφήν ἔχει ἰδίαν καὶ σῶμα ἀνὰ λόγον τῆς ὑπεροχῆς τῶν πνευματικῶν πάντων.

¹⁶ ‘Nihil materialis compositionis immune atque alienum putamus praeter illam solam uenerandae Trinitatis substantiam’.

¹⁷ See also *Princ.* I 7.3: ‘Neque motus ullius corporis sine anima effici potest’.

that makes use of a body' in *CC* 7.38 (ἄνθρωπος μὲν οὖν, τουτέστι ψυχὴ χρωμένη σώματι, λεγομένη ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχὴ) and *Princ.* IV 2.7: ἀνθρώπους δὲ νῦν λέγω τὰς χρωμένας ψυχὰς σώμασιν.

The Bardaisanite Marinus' next objection to the resurrection of the body (863a) consists in the quotation of 1*Cor.* 15:50: '*Caro et sanguis regnum dei non possidebunt, neque corruptio incorruptionem.*' To this, Adamantius replies by remarking that a spiritual understanding of these words is required:

spiritaliter dicta sunt ... carnem et sanguinem nominat turpes actos et inhonestos, uel eos homines qui carnalia sapiunt ... carnem dicit carnalem et pessimam conuersationem ... uitam carni deditam, quam et ideo alienam efficit a spe futurorum bonorum ... caro quoque habet salutem ... si Christi membra sunt corpora nostra, aut pereunt Christi membra, aut carnem saluari necesse est.

Now, Origen's interpretation of σὰρξ in this Pauline passage is absolutely identical in *Princ.* II 10.3, where he paraphrases *caro et sanguis* with *carnis et sanguinis passionibus*, in the selfsame context of a discussion on the resurrection.¹⁸ And, also within a treatment of the resurrection in *CC* 4.19, Origen again invokes a spiritual and not literal interpretation of the words σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα in 1*Cor.* 15:50: after quoting them, he says that they are ἀπόρρητόν τι καὶ μυστικόν and that it is necessary to abandon the literal meaning in order to understand them. Paul himself has indicated this, Origen notes, by warning his readers: Ἴδου μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω. And the spiritual interpretation of those words is made clear by Origen soon after, when he says that they designate the total defeat of death, which wounded the souls by means of the wounds of sin (τὸ πάλαι ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν προειρημένον, ἀναίρεσις τῆς νίκης τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κέντρον, ᾧ κεντῶν τὴν ψυχὴν ἐμποιεῖ αὐτῇ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τραύματα). It is evident that here too Origen understands σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα in the spiritual sense, as sin. Even clearer in its simplicity is *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1673D), where it is plainly stated that 'flesh' here means 'evilness, vice': ὁ Παῦλός φησι· Σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν Θεοῦ κληρονομεῖσαι οὐ δύναται. Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ σὰρξ τὴν κακίαν σημαίνει. A further confirmation comes from *De or.* 26.6, where flesh and blood in Paul's words are equated with earth and interpreted as sin.¹⁹

It is also very interesting that Adamantius in 864d-865a quotes 1*Cor.* 15:29-42, but the extant Greek entirely lacks the following verses, which

¹⁸ 'Si credunt apostolo quia corpus, in gloria et in uirtute et in incorruptibilitate resurgens, spiritale iam effectum sit, absurdum uidetur ... dicere id rursum carnis et sanguinis passionibus implicari, cum manifeste dicat apostolus: "quoniam caro et sanguis regnum Dei non possidebunt"'.
¹⁹ ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἁμαρτάνων ... ἐστὶ γῆ, ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ... οὐρανός ἐστιν ... τῆς μὴ ὠφελοῦσης σαρκὸς καὶ συγγενοῦς αὐτῇ αἵματος μὴ δυναμένων κληρονομεῖν βασιλείαν θεοῦ, κληρονομεῖν δ' ἂν λεχθισομένων, ἐὰν μεταβάλωσιν ἀπὸ σαρκὸς καὶ γῆς καὶ χου καὶ αἵματος ἐπὶ τὴν οὐράνιον οὐσίαν.

the Latin faithfully reports: *'seminatur in corruptione, surgit in incorruptione; seminatur in contumelia, surgit in gloria; seminatur in infirmitate, surgit in uirtute; seminatur corpus animale, surgit corpus spiritale.'* These words, rather than being an addition of Rufinus, were surely present in the original text, given that Marinus' subsequent objection is grounded precisely in them. And it is no accident that they were very dear to Origen, and were then emphasized by his follower Gregory Nyssen in his *De anima*. These words give rise to Marinus' objection: *'His quae legisti non hoc corpus dicitur resurgere, sed aliud pro hoc.'* But Adamantius observes that Paul's words indicate that the resurrected body will be the same as one's present body, with the difference that it will be made incorruptible, glorious, and immortal, as he has already maintained (*'non naturae mutatio, quia non aliud est quam granum frumenti istud quod surrexit in culmum ... assumptis secum indumentis gloriae incorruptionis et immortalitatis'*). And I have shown that this was precisely what Origen, too, held.

It is again the same words by Paul that occasion Marinus' immediately following objection in 865e: *'Manifestissime dicit hoc apostolus, quia seminatur corpus animale, resurget corpus spiritale; seminatur in corruptione, surget in incorruptione.'* Adamantius' extensive and fundamental reply is, once more, totally absent from the extant Greek, which is highly significant. In it, he explains and deepens the fundamental thesis he has already set forth: the body that will rise will be the same as one has now, but *'omne fragilitate deposita carnali; deposita ignominia surget in gloria. Hoc tale corpus, ita ut omnibus uitii expurgatum spiritale nominauit apostolus; corpus tamen dixit.'*

Then Adamantius introduces an important concept in his explanation, by resuming the distinction between substance and qualities that was offered much earlier in the *Dialogue* in relation to matter, and by applying it to the body: the risen body will maintain the same substance as the earthly body has, but it will change its qualities into better:²⁰

cum dicat 'corpus', substantiam designat; cum uero dicat 'animale' uel 'spiritale' de qualitatibus loquitur ... eadem perdurante substantiam, sola qualitas in melius et gloriosius immutabitur.

But Marinus, in a further section that again has no parallel in the extant Greek, proclaims that he will only be convinced by Scripture, and he opposes again to Adamantius Paul's declaration in 1Cor. 11:50:

Argumentis non opus est, sicut ab initio placuit. Scripturae auctoritati omnes cedamus. Dele de apostolo quia 'caro et sanguis regnum dei non possidebunt'. Hoc lucidius nihil est. Resurgere non potest quod a regno dei pronuntiatur alienum.

²⁰ This clarification will be taken over in *De anima* by Gregory of Nyssa, who read it in the *Dialogue* and considered it to be Origen's. I shall show that in a sense he was not wrong, in that the *Dialogue* does seem to reproduce Origen's thought.

This objection, as Adamantius himself remarks,²¹ was already proposed beforehand, and was already refuted by Adamantius by means of a moral interpretation of 'flesh and blood' in the sense of 'sin'. However, it is typical of an oral debate or exposition to return more than once upon the same point. The style itself, with brief and paratactical sentences in Marinus' present objection, is characteristic of spoken language. It is very likely that, here too, Rufinus in his version has preserved the account of a dispute.

Since Marinus does not accept Adamantius' first interpretation of 'flesh and blood' in the moral sense,²² the latter is ready to propose an alternative exegesis, at a different level. It is significant that such a manifold kind of explanation of Scriptures is typical of Origen.²³ Adamantius sets out to observe that Paul does speak of bodies in the resurrection, even if one refuses to admit flesh there. And he explains this with the fact that our body will no more be flesh, just as it was not yet flesh when it was still clay.²⁴ But it will be the very same body, only with different qualities. Therefore, when Paul says, '*Corruptibile hoc induet immortalitatem*', he means this very body, and *hoc* is a deictical pronoun ('*uelut manu continentis et demonstrantis apostoli uox uidetur*'). As a consequence, '*haec est caro quae resurget, et non alia pro hac erit*'.

Now, it is worth noticing at once that this very idea that Paul is using a deictical pronoun when he says, '*Corruptibile hoc induet immortalitatem*', is expressed by Origen as well, precisely in the framework of a discussion concerning the identity between the resurrected body and the present body. There is no doubt that Adamantius' argument is identical to Origen's, up to the tiniest details. Indeed, Origen, in *Princ.* II 3.2, is taking into consideration the possibility that the corporeal substance will totally disappear in the next world ('*si autem omnia possunt carere corporibus, sine dubio non erit substantia corporalis*'). But he immediately refutes this hypothesis by having recourse to 1Cor. 15:53-6, and comments:

Quod enim ait, 'corruptibile hoc' et 'mortale hoc' uelut tangētis et ostendentis affectu, cui alii conuenit nisi materiae corporali? Haec ergo materia corporis, quae nunc corruptibilis est, 'induet incorruptionem' cum perfecta anima et dogmatibus incorruptionis instructa uti eo coeperit.

²¹ He responds: '*Hoc in superioribus exposuimus. Sed si illud non sufficit, iterum respondebimus*'.

²² '*Numquid apostolus in hoc loco, sicut tu interpretatus es, de moribus tractabat aut de uitis, ut carnem carnales diceret? De resurrectione erat ei sermo ... unde euidenter apparet quod ipsam naturam 'carnem' nominauit quam regnum dei non esset adeptura*'.

²³ See, e.g., I. Ramelli, 'Origen and the Stoic Allegorical Tradition: Continuity and Innovation', *InvLuc* 28 (2006), 195-226.

²⁴ '*Sicut ab initio deus, assumens limum terrae, uertit in carnem, et eo iam proprie non tam terra quam caro nominatur ... ita et in futuro, cum naturam carnis huius deus in corpus resuscitauerit spiritale, iam non dicetur caro, quia haec quae erant propria carnis abiecit, id est quia neque esuriet neque sitiet ... aut concupiscentiis stimulabitur*'.

Origen's argument, quotation, and interpretation, including the precise detail of the deictical pronoun, are identical to those of Adamantius in the *Dialogue*.

As Eutropius summarizes in his short intervention between two long speeches of Adamantius,²⁵ the substance (*natura uel substantia*) of the present body will endure, whereas its quality (*qualitas*) will change. This is what Adamantius has very briefly anticipated beforehand, as I have mentioned, and now it is precisely on this substance and its characterization as a metaphysical principle that Adamantius' following discourse focuses.

Morientibus hominibus iterum qualitas corporis immutatur ex carne. Etenim efficitur terra uel puluis. Permanet tamen indefecta et incolumis ratio substantialis ... permanente integra ratione substantiae, qualitates eius, quae iam frequenter dei uoluntate mutatae sunt, rursum ... in melius et gloriosius commutentur, nec tamen substantiae ueritatis ratio interisse credatur.

As is evident, the permanent principle in the body, which earlier was called *substantia* or *natura*, as opposed to changing qualities, is now called *ratio substantialis*, *ratio substantiae*, *substantiae ueritatis ratio*, which may be the translation of οὐσίας λόγος, ὑποστάσεως λόγος, ὑποστάσεως ἀληθείας λόγος, or simply οὐσία / ὑπόστασις or εἶδος = 'form' in the sense of 'substance', 'substantial form' in Aristotle's vocabulary (which was taken up by Origen precisely in reference to the permanent principle of the body). Indeed, *ratio substantialis* would be an excellent Latin version of εἶδος in this sense of metaphysical principle (essence, substance, determining the being of a reality). Now, as I shall show in a moment, εἶδος in this meaning is very well attested in Origen's extant Greek works; οὐσίας λόγος is attested twice in Origen, in CC 6.64²⁶ and above all in *Hom. in Ier.* 20.1, where it precisely bears the meaning of 'substance' in its metaphysical value: ὁμώνυμα δὲ ἐστὶν, ὃν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὃ δὲ κατὰ τοῦνομα τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ἕτερος, 'two things are homonyms when they have only the name in common, but their respective substance [οὐσίας λόγος] is conceptually different'. Origen is again adhering to an Aristotelian vocabulary, as is clear from Aristotle's repeated use

²⁵ Eutropius' words, which begin on p. 233.18 van de Sande Bakhuyzen, surely end at l. 23, just after '*manente substantia qualitas immutata est*'. The following words, '*Permanere etenim in eo deus ipse pronuntiat*', and the whole following speech, with the theorization concerning the metaphysical principle called *ratio substantialis*, belong, I think, to Adamantius, and not to Eutropius, to whom the editor erroneously ascribes them (followed by Buchheit, 97). I argue that this is the case on the basis, not only of the contents of this metaphysical treatment and the inclusion in it of the *Genesis* quotation '*terra es et in terram ibis*', but also of the parallel with the extant Greek, which, as I have mentioned, is missing for this section: when it resumes, on p. 234.1 of the edition (at 864f), it is Adamantius who is still speaking, not Eutropius.

²⁶ Origen is discussing the problem of God's οὐσία, and is saying that God does not participate in the οὐσία, but is rather participated in by all those who have God's spirit; he observes that the philosophical investigation concerning the essence is very difficult but at the same time very important: πολλὸς δ' ὁ περὶ τῆς οὐσίας λόγος καὶ δυσθεώρητος.

of οὐσίας λόγος, in *Met.* 1037a24, where it is related to the metaphysical principle (ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ τί ἦν εἶναι);²⁷ 1045b29-31, where it is defined as being in its primary sense, whereas qualities are secondary to it, just as in Adamantius' and Origen's arguments;²⁸ 1064a22;²⁹ *De part. anim.* 695b.18.³⁰

As for ὑπόστασις, there are almost seventy occurrences of this term in Origen's extant works, almost all of them in an ontological meaning. That he often regarded οὐσία and ὑπόστασις as virtually synonymic – apart from the Trinitarian discourse, where they are rigorously distinguished,³¹ and in reference to the common nature but different individual substances of rational creatures – is proven, for instance, by *CC* 1.23, where they indicate the substance and existence of pagan deities, which of course Origen denies;³² the same is the case in 8.67 (αὐτῆς, *sc.* of Athena, τὴν ὑπόστασιν καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν).³³ Likewise, in *CC* 6.71 Origen speaks of the οὐσία and ὑπόστασις of human souls and angels that cannot be destroyed.³⁴ Likewise, in *Comm. in Io.* 20.22.182, he describes the human being that is in the image of God, as distinct from that which was fashioned from the earth, first as the better ὑπόστασις, and immediately after as the better οὐσία between the two.³⁵ And in *Princ.* III 1.22 the term indicates rational substances (τῶν λογικῶν ὑποστάσεων), *i.e.* angels, humans, and daemons.³⁶ In *Comm. in Io.* 20.22.182 it is the primary

²⁷ ἐν μὲν τῷ τῆς οὐσίας λόγῳ τὰ οὕτω μόρια ὡς ὕλη οὐκ ἐνέσται.

²⁸ Περὶ μὲν οὖν τοῦ πρώτως ὄντος ... περὶ τῆς οὐσίας· κατὰ γὰρ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον λέγεται τὰλλα ... τό τε ποσὸν καὶ τὸ ποιὸν καὶ τὰλλα τὰ οὕτω λεγόμενα· πάντα γὰρ ἕξει τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον.

²⁹ Πῶς ὁ τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ληπτέος, πότερον ὡς τὸ σιμὸν ἢ μᾶλλον ὡς τὸ κοῖλον. τούτων γὰρ ὁ μὲν τοῦ σιμοῦ λόγος μετὰ τῆς ὕλης λέγεται τῆς τοῦ πράγματος, ὁ δὲ τοῦ κοίλου χωρὶς τῆς ὕλης.

³⁰ Οὐκ ἔχουσι δὲ ἀπηρτημένα κῶλα οἱ ἰχθύες, διὰ τὸ νευστικὴν εἶναι τὴν φύσιν αὐτῶν κατὰ τὸν τῆς οὐσίας λόγον.

³¹ On which see documentation in my 'Origen's Anti-Subordinationism', *VC* 65 (2011), 21-49. A specific work has been devoted to Origen's use of ὑπόστασις in the Trinitarian field, its innovative nature, its sources, and its aftermath: 'Origen, Greek Philosophy, and the Birth of the Trinitarian Meaning of Hypostasis', *HTR* 105 (2012), 302-50.

³² Δεικνύτω τοίνυν ὑπόστασιν καὶ οὐσίαν Μνημοσύνης ... παραστησάτω δύνασθαι κατ' οὐσίαν ὑφεστηκέναι (see also *CC* 3.23: εἰ δύνανται ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν καὶ ἄξιοι εἶναι σεβασμῶν).

³³ See *CC* 6.26: εἰ δύνανται ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν καὶ ἄξιοι εἶναι σεβασμῶν.

³⁴ ἀσώματον οὐσίαν οὐκ ἴσμεν ἐκκυρουμένην οὐδ' εἰς πῦρ ἀναλυομένην τὴν ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴν ἢ τὴν ἀγγέλων ... ὑπόστασιν.

³⁵ ἡμῶν δὲ ἡ προηγουμένη ὑπόστασις ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος· ἡ δὲ ἐξ αἰτίας ἐν τῷ ληφθέντι ἀπὸ τοῦ χοῦ τῆς γῆς πλάσματι. καὶ εἰ μὲν ὥσπερ εἰ ἐπιλαθόμενοι τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν κρείττονος οὐσίας ὑποτάξομεν ἑαυτοὺς τῷ ἀπὸ τοῦ χοῦ πλάσματι...

³⁶ See also *Philoc.* 21.21: ἐνὸς φυράματος ὄντος τῶν λογικῶν ὑποστάσεων. Each rational creature has an individual hypostasis of its own, but all of them share in the nature or essence (οὐσία), and thus all of them constitute one and the same 'lump'. Gregory of Nyssa, who heavily draws on Origen, will insist on the unity of the φύραμα of the whole human race, a core concept in his anthropology and soteriology.

substance of the human being, which is in the image of God: ἡμῶν δὲ ἡ προηγουμένη ὑπόστασις ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος. Analogously, in *Dial. Her.* 16 Origen defines the κατ' εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος as better than any 'corporeal substance' (κρεῖττον πάσης σωματικῆς ὑποστάσεως). In *Sel. in Ez.* 13.817.21 it is the individual substance of each single soul, distinct from any other: ἐκάστη ψυχὴ ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν ἔχει, ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ λόγῳ ἵσταμένη, καὶ οὐκ ἐν ἄλλῳ. In *CC* 6.65 ὑπόστασις designates the essence and existence of all things, whose cause is God (τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς τῶν πάντων ὑποστάσεως). In 6.73 Origen precisely mentions the essence (ὑπόστασις) of the body, just as in Adamantius' discourse: τὸ αἰσθητὸν σῶμα οὐκ ἀπαγγέλλει τὸν τρόπον τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, meaning with this, *e.g.*, whether a thing is created or uncreated.³⁷

³⁷ At times Origen refers this term to the Trinity, *e.g.* in 8.12, where he explains that God's essence is one, but that the Father and the Son are two in their individual substances: ὄντα δύο τῇ ὑποστάσει πράγματα. The Son is the express image (χαρακτήρ) of God's substance (ὑποστάσεως). See also *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1600B; 1581C-D); *Comm. in Io.* 32.16.193. In the case of the Trinity, in *Schol. in Matth.* 17.309.47 Origen draws a distinction between one οὐσία, the common divine essence, and three ὑποστάσεις, the substance of each Person. Likewise, in *Comm. in Matth.* 17.14 he criticizes those who think that the Father and the Son are one and the same in their individual substance (ὑπόστασις), maintaining that they can be distinguished only conceptually: οἱ συγχέοντες πατὸς καὶ υἱοῦ ἔννοιαν καὶ τῇ ὑποστάσει ἓνα διδόντες εἶναι τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν, τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ μόνῃ καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασι μόνοις διαιροῦντες τὸ ἐν ὑποκειμένον. In *Comm. in Io.* 10.37.246 Origen blames those who think that the Father and the Son are one in their essence (ἐν οὐσίᾳ) but not different in their individual substances: διαφόρους οὐ κατὰ ὑπόστασιν λέγεσθαι πατέρα καὶ υἱόν. *Sel. in Ps.* 1125A: Wisdom substantially belongs to God's Logos, κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν, according to the individual substance of the Son-Logos. *Schol. in Matth.* (PG 17, 309C-D): the Son was generated from the Father's very essence in a real begetting: Ἐνυπόστατος ἡ γέννησις· ἀπετέχθη ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς ὁ Υἱός; they are one in the essence but three in their individual substances: οὐσία μιᾷ· τρεῖς δὲ ὑποστάσεις τέλειαι ἐν πᾶσι. *Comm. in Io.* 1.39.292: Christ is the Logos, whose substance is the principle that is Wisdom: λόγος ... νοηθήσεται ὁ Χριστὸς ... ἐν ἀρχῇ τῇ σοφίᾳ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχων. In *Fr. in Eph.* 1.14 Origen observes that Christ, Logos and Wisdom and Power of God, has God's substance (Θεοῦ ὑπόστασις), and in *Exp. in Prov.* (PG 17, 185A) he defines God's Wisdom to be an οὐσία and absolutely eternal (ἀίδιος); in *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1656A-B) Christ is said to be God not by participation, but by nature (οὐ κατὰ μετουσίαν, ἀλλὰ κατ' οὐσίαν), just as Christ is holy μὴ μετουσία, ἀλλ' οὐσία (*Schol. in Ap.* 20). Indeed, Christ is ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας πρωτότυπος οὐσία (*Fr. in Eph.* 19). In *Comm. in Matth. Ser.* 146.5 Origen notes that all virtues are attached to Christ's substance (ἀντανακολουθοῦσαι ὡς αἱ ἀρεταὶ τῇ ὑποστάσει τοῦ Χριστοῦ), so that Christ is justice, wisdom, etc. In *Princ. fr.* 33, from Athanasius, *De decr. Nic. syn.* 27.1-2 p. 23.17-30 Opitz, Origen claims that Christ is the image of the Father's own substance: αἰδίως συνεῖναι τὸν λόγον τῷ πατρὶ ... ἡ τῆς ἀρρήτου καὶ ἀκατονομάστου καὶ ἀφθέγκτου ὑποστάσεως τοῦ πατρὸς εἰκὼν. In *Fr. in Io.* 123.6 Origen details that the Spirit belongs to God's οὐσία and has a ὑπόστασις or individual substance of its own, and criticises those who think that it is simply a power or activity of God: τὸ δὲ Ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ δεικνύσι οὐσίαν εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα. τινὲς γὰρ οἰοῦνται ἐνέργειαν εἶναι θεοῦ, μὴ ἔχον ἰδίαν ὑπόστασιν. See *Comm. in Io.* 2.10.76 for the distinction between the Son and the Holy Spirit in the ὑπόστασις. The most patent attestation is *ibid.* 2.10.75: Ἡμεῖς μέντοι γε τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις πειθόμενοι τυχάνειν, τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱόν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα. It is clear from these authentic

Οὐσία is related, but not identical, to ὑπόστασις in *Comm. in Gen.* (PG 12, 48C), where the former is applied to matter, described as substance, which is denied by Origen – just as by Adamantius earlier in the *Dialogue* – to be ἀγέννητος, and is described as underlying the existing substance (ὑπόστασις) of this world: Πόθεν δὲ καὶ τὸ μετρεῖν τῆς ὑποκειμένης οὐσίας τὸ τοσόνδε, ὥς διαρκέσαι τῇ τηλικούτου κόσμου ὑποστάσει; In *De or.* 27.8 Origen equates the οὐσία of incorporeal beings and their ὑπόστασις as substance;³⁸ in *Frg. in Eph.* 25.14 Origen observes that ‘we participate in Christ if we maintain the principle of the substance [ὑποστάσεως] steadfast up to the end’, where he probably means the principle of our substance, how it is in God’s intention. Indeed, he states that, because Christ is the Logos, Christ’s substance permeates all rational creatures: τὴν προηγουμένην αὐτοῦ ὑπόστασιν ... διήκουσαν ἐπὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον κατὰ τὰς ψυχὰς τὰς λογικὰς (*Comm. in Io.* 2.35.215). Origen also comments on the definition of faith in *Hebrews* as ‘substance [ὑπόστασις] of things that are hoped for’ in *Comm. in Ro.* 3.5-5.7 (from P. Cair. 88748 + cod. Vat. gr. 762) 212.2. ‘Substance’ (ὑπόστασις) is opposed to ‘concept’ (ἐπίνοια) in *Comm. in Matth.* 10.14,³⁹ in *Frg. in Lam.* 16,⁴⁰ and in *Frg. in Io.* 121bis: ἐπινοία μόνη καὶ οὐχ ὑποστάσει τὴν διαφορὰν ἔχει τὸ ὕδωρ πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα: the mystical water differs from the Spirit only conceptually but not in substance (see also *ibid. frg.* 36). The dative form ὑποστάσει corresponds to the syntagm καθ’ ὑπόστασιν, meaning ‘substantially’: ἡ ἐντολὴ τοῦ θεοῦ ... αὐτὴ ἐστὶ καθ’ ὑπόστασιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ (*Frg. Io.* 95).

The term οὐσία occurs more than two hundred times in Origen’s extant Greek writings: here I am not, of course, concerned with its meaning ‘material substance’ designating, e.g., gold, iron, wood, fire, and the like, but with its ontological-metaphysical meaning (‘essence’, ‘nature’, or ‘substance’ of something), in which case οὐσία is practically always employed in the singular, whereas for the plural it is ὑποστάσεις that is preferred, designating individual substances. The above-mentioned case of the Trinity is to be singled out: one οὐσία, three ὑποστάσεις.⁴¹ But this applies also to creatures. In *Comm. in Io.* 20.29.263 Origen, faithful to his principle that rational creatures are not different in nature (οὐσίᾳ)

passages that Origen was the forerunner and inspirer of the Nicene formula μία οὐσία, τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις. In *Hom. in Ier.* 16.6 Origen says that Scripture affirms that the Godhead is ‘fire in its substance’ (τῇ οὐσίᾳ), but it warns that it tells this ‘to those who are able to understand’, since in fact Origen maintained that the divinity is unknowable in its essence (οὐσία) and is even beyond being: πρότερον τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἢ οὕτως ἔλθῃ ἐπὶ τὸ ἐνιδεῖν τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἢ τῇ ὑπερέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας δυνάμει καὶ φύσει τοῦ θεοῦ (*Comm. in Io.* 19.6.37).

³⁸ ἡ μέντοι κυρίως οὐσία τοῖς μὲν προηγουμένην τὴν τῶν ἀσωμάτων ὑπόστασιν εἶναι φάσκουσι νενόμισται κατὰ τὰ ἀσώματα.

³⁹ Εἰ δὲ ταυτὸν ἐστὶν ὑποστάσει, εἰ καὶ μὴ ἐπινοία, βασιλεία οὐρανῶν καὶ βασιλεία θεοῦ.

⁴⁰ Οἱ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες ἤτοι τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ ἢ καὶ τῇ ὑποστάσει.

⁴¹ On this see my ‘Origen’s Anti-Subordinationism’ (2011).

but only in their choices for good or evil, states that all spirits are of one and the same nature (οὐσία), the evil ones being different from the good only due to their choices.⁴² Similarly, those who do evil are children of the devil, not in nature, but on account of their deeds: ὁμοιουμένων αὐτῷ τῷ ποιεῖν τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ διὰ τὴν οὐσίαν (*Comm. in Io.* 20.24.219).⁴³ In *Comm. in Io.* 20.23.200 Origen claims that the essence (οὐσία) of all rational natures is one and the same, whether they actually follow reason or not;⁴⁴ indeed, it is not nature (οὐσία) that is different, but an accident, *i.e.*, the decision of disobedience: οὐχ ἡ οὐσία διάφορος, ἀλλὰ τι αἷτιον ἐπισυμβέβηκεν τοῦ παρακούειν καὶ τοῦ παρορᾶν. The essence (οὐσία) of all human souls is one and the same, and the devil is not of a different substance (οὐσίας ἑτέρας), incapable of turning to the good (*Comm. in Io.* 20.24.202-203; see also 198: ὡς ἑτέρας οὐσης τῆς τοῦ διαβόλου οὐσίας παρὰ τὴν τῶν ἄλλων λογικῶν οὐσίαν). It is clear that evil for Origen cannot be an οὐσία, because it has no ontological subsistence of its own, it was not created by God, and will not endure in the end.⁴⁵ Note that exactly the same denial that evil can ever be an οὐσία is well attested in the *Dialogue of Adamantius*.⁴⁶

In *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1560A-E) Origen opposes the creation of heaven κατ' οὐσίαν, which occurred only once, to its providential creation (κατὰ τὴν πρόνοιαν), which is continual, and affirms that in the end the heavens will pass away, but what will be destroyed will not be their substance, but their present form: Ἀπολοῦνται οἱ οὐρανοὶ οὐ κατ' οὐσίαν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ σχῆμα. In its essence, from the ontological point of view, the Godhead is everywhere (κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν πανταχοῦ γὰρ πάρεστι καὶ τὰ πάντα πληροῖ, *ibid.* 1521A). The equivalence between φύσις and οὐσία in their ontological meaning is clear from *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1240E): the heavens that contain God's glory and Christ, the Sun of Justice, are of a spiritual and intelligible nature (τῆς νοερᾶς εἰσι φύσεως), whereas these visible and perishable heavens are of a corporeal nature: τῆς σωματικῆς εἰσιν οὐσίας. This equivalence is even clearer from the expression, φύσει καὶ οὐσίᾳ (*Comm. in Matth.* 17.27). The expression κατ' οὐσίαν, 'by nature', is opposed to καθ' ἔξιν, 'by habit', in the case of God, who is the only one to be good by nature (*Sel. in Num.* [PG 12,

⁴² Πάντα ὅμοια εἶη ἂν ψευδῇ πνεύματα, ἀπὸ τοῦ ψεύστου πατὴρ εἰληφότα τὸ εἶναι ψευδῇ πνεύματα, κατὰ τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ τὴν κακίαν, καὶ οὐχ ὅτι τὸ κατ' οὐσίαν.

⁴³ See also *ibid.* 211 and 168, where Origen points out that Jesus said, ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου, not: ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου, as Heracleon maintained, as quoted at 199: πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος, ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου ἦσαν; see also 170.

⁴⁴ Παντὸς τοῦ πεφυκότος λόγῳ παρακολουθεῖν ἢ παρακολουθητικὴ οὐσία ἡ αὐτὴ ἐστιν, εἴτε παραδέχεται τὸν λόγον εἴτε ἀνανεύει πρὸς αὐτόν.

⁴⁵ See I. Ramelli, 'Christian Soteriology' (2007), 313-56.

⁴⁶ Οὐτε γὰρ φόνος ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία, οὐτ' αὖ πάλιν μοιχεία, οὐτε τι τῶν ὁμοίων κακῶν. Οὐκ ἔσονται οὐσαὶ τὰ κακά. I quote the Greek according to *Philoc.* 24. Basil and Nazianzen took it to be Origen's; this is why they included it in their anthology of Origen's works.

577E]). Moreover, especially in the theological discourse, οὐσία is opposed to ἐνέργεια as activity.⁴⁷ Of course, οὐσία is also found to indicate the nature of a whole category of beings: e.g., ἡ τῶν νοητῶν οὐσία (*Schol. in Ap.* 25).

Adamantius' substance terminology in the *Dialogue*, therefore, corresponds to Origen's. What is more, Adamantius' idea that what is kept in one's resurrected body is the *ratio substantialis* or *ratio substantiae* (οὐσίας λόγος) of one's earthly body is exactly what Origen states in *Princ.* II 10.3: in our earthly bodies there is a *ratio substantialis* that will allow their reconstitution at the moment of resurrection: '*ratio ea quae substantiam continet corporalem; ratio illa ipsa quae semper in substantia corporis salva est; ratio illa reparandi corporis.*' This is what allows the identification of one's earthly body and one's risen body: its *ratio substantialis* or its εἶδος, that is, its metaphysical form or substance, which functions as *principium individuationis* of one's body, making it a given person's body and not another's, as shown above.

That Origen himself identified the εἶδος of one's body with its *ratio substantialis* = λόγος is proved by a passage of his lost *Commentary on Psalm 1:5* preserved by Methodius, *De resurrectione* 1.24 and quoted by Epiphanius (*Pan.* 64), in which Origen assimilated the εἶδος (metaphysical form or substance) to the Stoic λόγος that is the vital principle of a body, which transforms the corporeal qualities but keeps the same εἶδος – what will happen at the resurrection.⁴⁸ One may wonder whether this principle for Origen was not the soul itself. He never seems to assert this plainly, at least in the extant writings, but he might suggest this by describing the soul in *Princ.* II 3.2 as *indumentum corporis* in an *intelligibilis ratio* ('*sicut ergo Christus indumentum est animae, ita intelligibili quadam ratione etiam anima indumentum esse dicitur corporis*'), which will ensure the reconstitution of the body at resurrection.

Unlike the section on substance and qualities in bodies in the *Dialogue*, which is extant only in Latin and is totally absent from the extant Greek, the following section of Adamantius' speech, concerning the demonstration of resurrection not only on the basis of philosophy, but also on the basis of Scripture (with quotations mainly from *2Corinthians* and *Romans*), returns to having a parallel in the Greek text. Of course, as I have mentioned, the close relation

⁴⁷ Ἡ μὲν οὐσία αὐτοῦ ἱλαστήριον, ἡ δὲ ἐνέργεια ἱλασμός, in reference to Christ in *Comm. in Rom.* 3.5-5.7 (P. Cair. 88748 + cod. Vat. gr. 762), 162.17. On the opposition *ousia* – *energeia* in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa see Ilaria Ramelli, 'Apopatismo cristiano e relativismo pagano: un confronto tra filosofi platonici', in Angela M. Mazzanti (ed.), *Verità e mistero nel pluralismo culturale della tarda antichità* (Bologna, 2009), 101-69.

⁴⁸ Ὁ σπερματικός λόγος ἐν τῷ κόκκῳ τοῦ σίτου δραζάμενος τῆς παρακειμένης ὕλης καὶ δι' ὅλης αὐτῆς χωρήσας, περιδραζάμενός τε αὐτῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἶδους, ὃν ἔχει δυνάμεων ἐπιτίθησι τῇ ποτε γῇ καὶ ὕδατι καὶ ἄερὶ καὶ πυρὶ, καὶ νικήσας τὰς ἐκείνων ποιότητας μεταβάλλει ἐπὶ ταύτην ἣς ἐστὶν αὐτὸς δημιουργός· καὶ οὕτως συμπληροῦται ὁ στάχυς, εἰς ὑπερβολὴν διαφέρων τοῦ ἐξ ἀρχῆς κόκκου μεγέθει καὶ σχήματι καὶ ποικιλίᾳ. The similitude is here with the transformation of seeds into crops because of Paul's use of this resurrection metaphor in *1Cor.* 15.

between philosophical argument and Scriptural authority is typical of Origen, both in his treatises and in his oral performances. On the basis of Paul, Adamantius concludes that *caro, quae seruiebat legi peccati, idcirco liberata est a Christo ut saluaretur: nemo enim ad hoc dicitur liberatus ut pereat*. The conclusion is clear and the argument forceful, so that Eutropius assigns the palm of victory to Adamantius.

Also, note that the alternative exegesis of ‘flesh’ in 1Cor. 15:50 offered here by Adamantius is again the same as Origen’s, who provided the same two possible explanations. I have already adduced good evidence of the first (flesh = sins); the second (flesh = present quality of the body, which will change) is attested in *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1096B),⁴⁹ in the very same context of a treatment of the resurrection:⁵⁰ the material ὑποκείμενον of our body changes, according to Origen, not only after our death, but already during our life, with – we would say – its constant cellular renewal. Thus, it will also change at the resurrection: the earthly quality of our present body will disappear, but its metaphysical principle, its substance or substantial form – which Adamantius calls *ratio substantialis* in Rufinus’ translation, and which Origen calls εἶδος here, according to an originally Aristotelian vocabulary – will remain unaltered.⁵¹ In 1096A Origen expresses this very clearly: οὐχὶ τοῦ εἶδους τοῦ προτέρου ἀφανιζομένου, κἂν ἐπὶ τὸ ἐνδοξότερον γένηται αὐτοῦ ἡ τροπή ... τὸ πρῶτον ὑποκείμενον ... μὴ ἔσσεσθαι ταυτὸν τότε. The substantial form will not disappear, but endure, while its mode – that is, its qualities – will change and become more glorious; as for the material substratum, it will be no more the same, but already now it constantly changes from day to day.⁵² In 1097C-D

⁴⁹ Οὐδὲ νῦν δύναται δύο ἡμερῶν εἶναι τὸ πρῶτον ὑποκείμενον ... ἑτεροῖον μὲν σπεῖρεσθαι, ἑτεροῖον δὲ ἀνίστασθαι. Σπεῖρεται γὰρ σῶμα ψυχικὸν ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν ... τὴν γῆνιν ποιότητα ἡμᾶς ἀποτίθεσθαι μέλλειν ἡμᾶς, τοῦ εἶδους σωζομένου κατὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ... ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν Θεοῦ κληρονομήσαι οὐ δύναται, οὐδὲ ἡ φθορὰ τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν ... σὰρξ δὲ οὐκέτι, ἀλλ’ ὅπερ ποτὲ ἐχαρκτηρίζετο ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τοῦτο χαρκτηρισθήσεται ἐν τῷ πνευματικῷ σώματι.

⁵⁰ Origen is contrasting an excessively literal exegesis of 1Cor. 15:50: βούλονται οἱ ἀπλοῦστεροι κατὰ τὰς λέξεις ταύτας, οὐδὲ ἀνάστασις σαρκῶν ἔσται, ἀλλὰ ὁστέων μόνον, καὶ δερμάτων, καὶ νεύρων.

⁵¹ In 1097AB Origen summarizes what he has been saying on the ontological plane (φυσιολογοῦντες) about the substantial form and the material substratum in the body, τὰ περὶ τοῦ εἶδους καὶ τοῦ πρώτου ὑποκειμένου. He repeats that what will perdure into the resurrection is the substantial form of the body, τὸ σωματικὸν εἶδος.

⁵² In *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1093B-D) Origen insists that what makes one person be that person rather than another one is not only his or her soul, but also the substantial form of his or her body, which guarantees that this body is always the same (and which here would seem to be distinct from the soul): οἷον ἡ Παύλου, ἡ Πέτρου, αἰεὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὄντος, οὐ τοῦ κατὰ ψυχὴν μόνου ... τῷ τὸ εἶδος τὸ χαρκτηρίζον τὸ σῶμα ταυτὸν εἶναι ... τὸ εἶδος, καθ’ ὃ εἰδοποιεῖται ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ Παῦλος, τὸ σωματικόν, ὃ ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει περιτίθεται πάλιν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον μεταβάλλον ... Ὡς περ δὲ τὸ εἶδος ἐστὶ μέχρι τοῦ πέρατος, κἂν οἱ χαρκτηρὲς δοκῶσι πολλὴν ἔχειν παραλλαγὴν· οὕτως νοητέον καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος, εἶδος ταυτὸν εἶναι

Origen resumes the simile of the wheat grain and joins the Stoic conception of seminal λόγοι to the Aristotelian ‘substantial form’, by making the former the bearers of the latter, which embraces matter (*i.e.*, the four elements), gives it its own form, and determines its qualities: this is how the seed (or the corpse) is changed into a crop (or a risen body) while changing its qualities but maintaining its substantial form.⁵³ Our body will be no more flesh, but spiritual, and yet it will be our body, and not another body, nor something that is not a body. It is evident that Adamantius holds the selfsame view.

Indeed, I argue that what Adamantius says in this section of the *Dialogue* about resurrection coincides with Origen’s authentic thought. Origen does admit the resurrection of the body, but at the same time he also takes this resurrection in a spiritual sense, as is clear in his *Commentary on the Psalms*,⁵⁴ in a passage that, as I have mentioned, can be reconstructed thanks to Methodius, *De res.* 1.20-4, and to Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.10-2, who quotes Methodius *verbatim*,⁵⁵ who in turn quoted Origen. Here, Origen does two things:

1) he criticizes those ‘too simple among the Christians’, who believe that the resurrection will involve ‘the bodies that surround us’, in ‘the whole of their (material) substance’, τῆς οὐσίας ὅλης. Origen shows the absurdity such a claim gives rise to: for instance, the resurrected body should include the blood or hair lost during all of one’s earthly life, and even the ownership of a body would become uncertain, given that one’s body can be eaten by animals which are eaten in turn by other animals or people. Origen observes that the simple, against these aporetic results, take refuge into the omnipotence of God (ἐπὶ τὸ πάντα εἶναι δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ καταφεύγουσι). This solution does not satisfy

τῷ μέλλοντι, πλείστης ὅσης ἐσομένης τῆς ἐπὶ κάλλιον μεταβολῆς. In 1092C-D Origen, after asking his opponents whether the body’s ὅλη οὐσία will be resurrected (which they understand in the material sense, whereas he understands it in the ontological-metaphysical sense), raises the question whether in the risen substance there will be included, *e.g.*, the blood that was extracted via phlebotomies, or all the hair that has grown during one’s life.

⁵³ ὁ σπερματικὸς λόγος ἐν τῷ κόκκῳ τοῦ σίτου δραξάμενος τῆς παρακειμένης ὕλης, καὶ δι’ ὅλης αὐτῆς χωρήσας, περιδραξάμενος αὐτῆς τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἶδους, ὃν ἔχει δυνάμεων ἐπιτίθησι τῇ ποτε γῇ καὶ ὕδατι καὶ ἀέρι καὶ πυρὶ νικήσας τὰς ἐκείνων ποιότητας, μεταβάλλει ἐπὶ ταύτην ἣς ἐστὶν αὐτὸς δημιουργός· καὶ οὕτως συμπληροῦται ὁ στάχυς εἰς ὑπερβολὴν διαφέρων τοῦ ἐξ ἀρχῆς κόκκου, μεγέθει καὶ σχήματι.

⁵⁴ See Henry Crouzel, ‘Les critiques adressées par Méthode et ses contemporains à la doctrine origénienne du corps ressuscité’, *Gregorianum* 53 (1972), 679-715; Michael Mees, ‘Paulus, Origenes, und Methodius über die Auferstehung der Toten’, *Augustinianum* 26 (1986), 103-13; Gilles Dorival, ‘Origène et la résurrection de la chair’, in *Origeniana Quarta* (Innsbruck and Wien, 1987), 291-321; Emanuela Prinzivalli, *Magister Ecclesiae* (Rome, 2002), 87-109; *ead.*, ‘The Controversy about Origen before Epiphanius’, in Wolfgang A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg (eds), *Origeniana Septima* (Leuven, 1999), 195-213, 204-9; Hendrik S. Benjamins, ‘Methodius von Olympos, Über die Auferstehung: Gegen Origenes und gegen Porphyrius?’, *ibid.* 91-8.

⁵⁵ Τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ μακαρίτου Μεθοδίου εἰς τὸν περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως λόγον κατὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ὁριγένους εἰρημένους, ἅτινα ἐνταῦθα κατὰ λέξιν παραθήσομαι.

Origen, especially in that the absurdities that have arisen are ‘a chatter of poor thoughts, impossible and at the same time unworthy of God’ (εἰς φλυαρίαν πτωχῶν νοημάτων, ἀδυνάτων τε ἅμα καὶ θεοῦ ἀναξίων). They offend both reason and God’s greatness. Especially the latter, that grounded in what is worthy or unworthy of God, is an argument that was particularly dear to Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Rufinus, and other followers of Origen, who employed it also in support of the apokatstasis theory.

Origen rather explains that, since ‘the nature of the body is changeable’ (τρεπτήν εἶναι τὴν σωματικὴν φύσιν), its resurrection will not involve the material ὑποκείμενον or substratum of the body, which, unlike the substance of the soul, continually changes,⁵⁶ like a river. The material substratum will not be the same in the resurrection, but it is never the same even now; there are no two days in which it is the same.⁵⁷ Origen invokes 1Cor. 15:50, according to which ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God’. He interprets these words just as Adamantius does in the *Dialogue* the second time: they do not mean that the body will not rise, but that what will be kept in the resurrection is one’s body’s εἶδος, which is the metaphysical *principium individuationis* of the body’s corporeal matter and characterizes it as the body of one given person:⁵⁸

Καὶν ρευστή ἢ ἡ φύσις τοῦ σώματος, τῷ τὸ εἶδος τὸ χαρακτηρίζον τὸ σῶμα ταῦτόν εἶναι ... τοῦτο τὸ εἶδος, καθ’ ὃ εἰδοποιεῖται ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ Παῦλος, τὸ σωματικὸν ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει περιτίθεται πάλιν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον μεταβάλλον.

Even if the substance of the body flows away, the metaphysical form that characterises the body remains the same... This metaphysical form of the body, according to which Peter and Paul are respectively informed, in the resurrection is again put on by the soul and changes into better.

The bodily εἶδος remains the same throughout one’s life, and will remain the same in the resurrection, too, with the difference that there will be a dramatic transformation into a greater beauty.⁵⁹ As Origen puts it in chapter 22, ‘the form of the former body will not vanish, although its style changes to become more glorious’. Moreover, it will greatly improve in beauty when humans shall receive their spiritual bodies. This is very well explained in *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1093,18-33).⁶⁰ In the Methodius excerpt, Origen makes it clear,

⁵⁶ Τὸ ὑλικὸν ὑποκείμενον οὐδέποτε ἔχει ταῦτόν ... οὐ κατὰ ψυχὴν μόνον, ἧς ἡ οὐσία οὔτε ῥεῖ.

⁵⁷ Τὸ πρῶτον ὑποκείμενον ἂν τις λέγοι μὴ ἔσσεσθαι ταῦτόν τότε ... οὐδὲ νῦν δύναται δύο ἡμερῶν ταῦτόν εἶναι τὸ πρῶτον ὑποκείμενον.

⁵⁸ For possible roots of this concept in Aristotle see David Konstan and Ilaria Ramelli, ‘Aristotle on Individual Forms: The Grammar of *Metaphysics* Lambda 5, 1071 a 27-29’, *CR* 56 (2006), 105-12.

⁵⁹ Τὸ εἶδος ταῦτόν ἐστιν ἐκ βρέφους μέχρι τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου ... τὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος εἶδος ταῦτόν εἶναι τῷ μέλλοντι, πλείστης ὅσης ἐσομένης τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ κάλλιον μεταβολῆς.

⁶⁰ Διόπερ οὐ κακῶς ποταμὸς ὠνόμασται τὸ σῶμα· διότι, ὥς πρὸς τὸ ἀκριβὲς τάχα, οὐδὲ δύο ἡμερῶν τὸ πρῶτον ὑποκείμενον ταῦτόν ἐστιν ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν· καίτοιγε τοῦ οἴον ἢ

like Adamantius, that the transformation between one's earthly and one's resurrected body will be only of its qualities, which change in accord with the place in which the body is found: to stay on earth, the body will have earthly characteristics; in the Kingdom of heaven it will have spiritual characteristics – but, Origen insists, 'the former εἶδος will not vanish;' there will be no longer flesh, but the same principle of individuation that the metaphysical form provided in the flesh will be provided by it in the spiritual body, so that the latter will be the same body as the fleshly body.⁶¹

2) Origen also interprets the resurrection, as prophesied in *Ez.* 37,⁶² in a clearly spiritual way (just as he does also in *Comm. Io.* 28.7.54)⁶³: not a resurrection of bones, skin, and nerves, as it would be on the literal level, but a resurrection from the death caused by sin, the death that hands us to our enemies, the powers of evil, because of our sins. This is why Jesus calls the sinners 'sepulchres' in *Matth.* 23:27; now, Origen says, 'it becomes God to open the sepulchre of each of us, and bring us out of the sepulchre, alive again, just as the Saviour pulled out Lazarus'.⁶⁴ This is clearly the spiritual resurrection, liberation from sin, salvation.

The point is, to my mind, that in Origen's view these two interpretations of death and resurrection, bodily and spiritual, do not exclude one another at all, but, on the contrary, coexist. Indeed, also in his Biblical exegesis both the literal and the spiritual sense, or senses, as well, remain and coexist, with no reciprocal exclusion, and this precisely constitutes one of the main differences between, on the one side, Origen's hermeneutical method applied to Scripture

Παύλου, ἢ Πέτρου, ἀεὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὄντος, οὐ τοῦ κατὰ ψυχὴν μόνου, ἧς ἡ οὐσία οὔτε βεῖ καθ' ἡμᾶς, οὔτ' ἐπεισαγόμενόν τι ἔχει ποτέ, κἄν βρευστή ἦν ἡ φύσις τοῦ σώματος, τῷ τὸ εἶδος τὸ χαρακτηρίζον τὸ σῶμα ταῦτόν εἶναι· ὥς καὶ τοὺς τύπους μένειν τοὺς αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν ποιότητα Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου τὴν σωματικὴν παριστάνοντας· καθ' ἣν ποιότητα καὶ οὐλαὶ ἐκ παίδων παραμένουσι τοῖς σώμασι, καὶ ἄλλα τινὰ ιδιώματα, φακοί. Καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις εἴ τι ἐστὶν ὁμοίον τούτῳ τὸ εἶδος, καθ' ὃ εἰδοποιεῖται ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ Παῦλος, τὸ σωματικὸν δ' ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει περιτίθεται ἄλιν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον μεταβάλλον, οὐ πάντως τότε ἐτι ἐντεταγμένον τὸ κατὰ τὴν πρώτην ὑποκείμενον. "Ὡς περ δὲ τὸ εἶδος ἐστὶ μέχρι τοῦ πέρατος, κἄν οἱ χαρακτῆρες δοκῶσι πολλὴν ἔχειν παραλλαγὴν, οὕτως νοητέον καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος, εἶδος ταῦτόν εἶναι τῷ μέλλοντι.

⁶¹ Ἀναγκαῖον γάρ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐν τόποις σωματικοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν κεχρησθαι σώμασι καταλλήλοις τοῖς τόποις ... μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν καὶ ἐν τόποις διαφέρουσιν ἔσεσθαι ἀναγκαῖον χρῆσθαι σώμασι πνευματικοῖς· οὐχὶ τοῦ εἶδους τοῦ προτέρου ἀφανιζομένου ... σῶρξ δὲ οὐκέτι, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ποτὲ ἐχαρακτηρίζετο ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τοῦτο χαρακτηρισθῆσεται ἐν τῷ πνευματικῷ σώματι.

⁶² Both the Old Testament prophecy and the idea that the spiritual body will be more beautiful and worthy of love than the material body will return in the Origenian St Gregory of Nyssa, in his *De anima*, see my essay and commentary in my *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007).

⁶³ See Emanuela Prinzivalli, 'Origene e Metodio a confronto su un brano escatologico di Paolo', *ASE* 1 (1984), 129-36.

⁶⁴ Πρέπει δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἀνοίγειν τὰ μνημεῖα ἐκάστου καὶ ἐξάγειν ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἡμᾶς ἐξωποιοιμένους, ὥς περ ὁ σωτὴρ τὸν Λάζαρον εἴλκυσεν ἐξ ὧ.

and, on the other side, both ‘Gnostic’ exegesis applied to Scripture (for instance, the Valentinian Heracleon’s interpretation of the *Gospel of John*) and pagan exegesis applied to myths, especially the allegorical exegesis of the Platonic tradition, which tended to annihilate the literal meaning.⁶⁵

Indeed, both in his *Dialogue with Heraclides* and in his exegesis of 1*Corinthians* Origen explicitly rejects the position of those heretics who deny the resurrection of the body. In *Dial. Her.* 5.12 he declares: ‘only the Church, against all heresies that deny the resurrection, professes the resurrection of the dead body’.⁶⁶ And in *In I Cor.* 84⁶⁷ he states that it is heretics who deny the resurrection: οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν αἰρέσεων ... ἀθετοῦσιν τῷ ἔργῳ, εἰ καὶ μὴ τῷ λόγῳ, ‘the heretics in fact deny the resurrection, although they do not do so in words’. In particular, Origen accuses them of interpreting the resurrection exclusively in an allegorical sense – whereas he himself, as I have mentioned, interpreted it at both the literal and the spiritual level – and thus denying the reality and historicity of the Saviour’s resurrection. Therefore, Origen observes that, if they interpret our resurrection merely in an allegorical sense, they should do so also in respect to the resurrection of Jesus: εἰ δὲ οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι ἀλληγορεῖν θέλουσιν τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀνάστασιν, ἀλληγορεῖτωσαν καὶ τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος (*In I Cor.* 81; 44 Jenkins). For, as Origen makes clear both in this work and in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*, our resurrection will be analogous to that of Christ: ἀνάγκη ὁμογενῇ εἶναι τὴν ἀνάστασιν αὐτοῦ τῇ ἀναστάσει τῶν ἀνισταμένων. This is why the modality of Christ’s resurrection and the kind of body he had after it is important also in order to find out how our resurrected bodies will be. Origen inclines to think that the risen Jesus’ body was of a better substance, *melioris substantiae corpus*.⁶⁸ Here *substantia*, like in the above-quoted words of Marinus *substantia corporis semper*

⁶⁵ As the Neoplatonist Secundus Salustius said, the facts narrated in myths ‘never happened, but they are allegories of eternal truths’; Origen, on the contrary, almost always maintains the literal meaning of the Bible, together with the higher interpretive levels. See I. Ramelli, *Origen and the Stoic Allegorical Tradition* (2006), with detailed evidence, and *ead.*, ‘Giovanni Crisostomo e l’esegesi scritturale: le scuole di Alessandria e di Antiochia e le polemiche con gli allegoristi pagani’, in *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo. Atti del XXXIII Incontro di Studiosi dell’Antichità Cristiana, Roma, Istituto Patristico Augustinianum 6-8 maggio 2004*, I (Rome, 2005), 121-62. A different discourse should be reserved for Plato’s own myths and their exegesis in later Platonism. On the importance of myth and their role in Plato’s philosophy see Catalin Partenie (ed.), *Plato’s Myths* (Cambridge and New York, 2009), esp. Ch. 1: Michael Inwood, ‘Plato’s Eschatological Myths, on the myths found toward the end of *Gorgias* and *Republic*’; Ch. 2: David Sedley, ‘Myth, punishment, and politics in the *Gorgias*’, and Ch. 5: Gianfranco R.F. Ferrari, ‘Glaucon’s reward, philosophy’s debt: The myth of Er’. Ferrari suggests that in *Phaedo* and *Phaedrus* Plato, more optimistically than in *Republic*, seems to believe that the philosopher may escape metempsychosis.

⁶⁶ Μόνη ἡ ἐκκλησία παρὰ πάσας τὰς αἰρέσεις ἀρνούμενας τὴν ἀνάστασιν ὁμολογεῖ ἀνάστασιν νεκροῦ σώματος.

⁶⁷ Ed. Jenkins, *JTS* 10 (1909), 45-6.

⁶⁸ *Hom. in Luc.* 17: ‘*Quomodo resurrexerit, utrum ipse et talis qualis mortuus est, an certe in melioris substantiae corpus resurrexerit*’.

demutetur et defluat, probably does not translate οὐσία (indeed, in Marinus' words it is likely to translate an original ὑποκείμενον), and Origen's statement should definitely not be taken to point to a different body, other than the dead one, but to the same body, made finer and better in its texture.

Indeed, that Origen, in spite of the accusations levelled against him,⁶⁹ maintained, like Adamantius in the *Dialogue*, that one's resurrected body will be the same (*hoc idem*) as one's earthly body, and not a different one (*non aliud*), is also extremely clear from *Princ.* III 6.6:

Non aliud corpus est quod nunc in ignobilitate et in corruptione et in infirmitate utimur, et aliud erit illud quo in incorruptione et in uirtute et in gloria utemur, sed hoc idem, abiectis his infirmitatibus, in quibus nunc est, in gloriam transmutabitur, spiritale effectum, ut quod fuit indignitatis uas, hoc ipsum expurgatum fiat uas honoris et beatitudinis habitaculum. In quo statum etiam permanere semper et immutabiliter creatoris uoluntate credendum est.

It is again those 'heretics' who denied the resurrection of the body as professed by the Church and felt offended by it ('*offenduntur quidam in ecclesiastica fide*') that Origen counters in *Princ.* II 10.1-2. Here, he takes up some arguments he has already developed in his (now lost) treatise *De resurrectione*.⁷⁰ First, he argues that it is necessarily the body that will be resurrected, since only what has fallen and is dead can be resurrected.⁷¹ Then he observes that the body that each

⁶⁹ Such accusations are reflected, for instance, in Epiphanius, *Pan.* LXIV 10-2, who supports the thesis that the present body is the same as the resurrected one, and, like Origen, grounds his argument in Christ's resurrected body, but presents Origen as denying the identity of the dead and the resurrected body: αὐτὸ τὸ σῶμα τὸ ψυχικὸν αὐτὸ πνευματικόν, ὥς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν ἀνέστη ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, οὐκ ἄλλο σῶμα ἐγείρας, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ ὄν, καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον παρὰ τὸ ὄν, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ὄν εἰς λεπτότητα μεταβαλὼν πνευματικὴν καὶ πνευματικὸν ὅλον συνενώσας, εἰσερχόμενος θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ... τί οὖν ἦν τὸ εἰσελθὼν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων; ἄλλο παρὰ τὸ ἐσταυρωμένον ἢ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐσταυρωμένον; πάντως που οὐ δυνήσῃ. Ὁρίγενες, μὴ ὁμολογήσῃ αὐτὸ τὸ ἐσταυρωμένον. ἐλέγχει σε γὰρ διὰ τῆς τοῦ Θωμᾶ ἀκριβολογίας, ἐπειπὼν αὐτῷ «μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος, ἀλλὰ πιστός». ἔδειξε γὰρ τύπον ἡλων καὶ τύπον λόγχης ... ἵνα ἐλέγξῃ σέ, ὃ θεήλατε ... ἔδειξε γὰρ καὶ ὁστά καὶ δέρμα καὶ σάρκα, ὥς εἴρηκεν ὅτι «ἴδετε ὅτι πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὁστά οὐκ ἔχει, ὥς ὁρᾷτέ με ἔχοντα». Sixth-century Byzantine theologian Gobar's remark that Epiphanius completely misrepresented Origen's thought (*ap. Phot. Bibl. cod. 232, p. 291b*) is particularly applicable in this case. *Ibid.* 72 Epiphanius joins Origen and the Origenists in the same accusation and levels against the former the charge, that will become customary, of being excessively influenced by Greek culture: ταυτησί τῆς τῶν Ὁριγενιαστῶν ... λαβόμενοι τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἀνάστασιν προπότερον ὥς εἰπεῖν, ἀποβλύσωμεν τὸ γλισχρῶδες τοῦ ἰοῦ τοῦ φρύνου καὶ ἐρπετῶδους μοχθηροῦ τὴν ἀδικίαν ... οὕτω καὶ σύ, ὃ Ὁρίγενες, ἀπὸ τῆς προειρημένης Ἑλληνικῆς παιδείας τυφλωθεὶς τὸν νοῦν ἐξήμεσας ἰὼν τοῖς πεισθεῖσί σοι καὶ γέγονας αὐτοῖς εἰς βρῶμα δηλητηρίου, δι' ὃν αὐτὸς ἠδίκησαι ἀδικήσας τοὺς πλείους.

⁷⁰ II 10.1: '*De quo et in aliis quidem libris, quos de resurrectione scripsimus, plenius disputauimus ... pauca inde repetere non uidetur absurdum.*'

⁷¹ '*Si confitentur etiam ipsi quia resurrectio sit mortuorum, respondeant nobis: quid est quod mortuum est nisi corpus? Corporis ergo resurrectio fiet ... non enim proprie resurgere dicitur nisi id quod ante ceciderit.*'

one will have at resurrection will be one's own and not another one ('*non in aliis quam in nostris corporibus*'), but transformed into a spiritual body, that is, without corruption and mortality ('*abiecta corruptione et deposita mortalitate*'). Finally, he explains in what sense these spiritual bodies will be different from one another, according to the differences listed by Paul in 1Cor. 15:39-42: they depend on the degrees of spiritual advancement of human beings.

V.9 Origenes qui et Adamantius and the summary of his ideas. Christ's human body and soul

At the end of the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, Eutropius in 866e proclaims the victory of Origen over Megethius, Droserius, Marinus, Valens, and Marcus, '*declinantes a uia recta et ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*' (the corresponding Greek has frequent interpolations⁷²). In his public disputations Origen likewise played the role of defender of Christian orthodoxy. It is at this point that in Rufinus' translation we find the explicit statement that Adamantius is none other than Origen, when Eutropius declares that '*uiae autem ueritatis idoneus satis et fidelis assertor est Origenes, qui et Adamantius.*' It seems to me probable that it is not Rufinus who added the name of Origen here, as it is commonly assumed, but rather the extant Greek that eliminated it, whereas the original text had it. For, first of all, the Cappadocians cite the *Dialogue of Adamantius* as *Dialogue of Origen*; moreover, the expression *qui et* + alternative name or byname is a translation of the formula 'ὁ καὶ + alternative name or byname', which is typically Greek (indeed, it is the same formula that Epiphanius and others use when they introduce Origen's byname, as I have shown), and in the Greek manuscripts at this point (871b) another passage is present, which in the Latin lacks any correspondence and which is badly corrupt and manifestly secondary. Here Eutropius also expresses the wish of embracing the orthodox faith himself. Likewise, in Eustathius' last remarks (871c-872a), the Greek is full of additions that find no parallel in the Latin and that the editor himself considered to be later interpolations.⁷³

In this concluding passage, Eutropius summarizes Adamantius' positions, as they have been defended in the *Dialogue* and as an expression of orthodoxy: *qui nobis quoque ostendit rectae fidei indeclinabilem, euidētissimam lineam.* This is his summary:

unum et solum deum nobis euidenter ostendit, non aduentitium, non alienum, non ignotum, non nouum et incolam uel hospitem alienae creaturae, sed eum qui propriae conditionis et facturae sit dominus, cui subiecta sint omnia, cui non materia coaeterna, nec aliud aliquid aequale illi, qui ex nullis exstantibus iuxta rationem uniuersa creauerit, cuius uerbum ac filius, assumens hominis naturam, id est animam et carnem, dispensa-

⁷² These are recognized also by the editor, W.H. van de Sande Bakhuyzen (1901), 236.

⁷³ W.H. van de Sande Bakhuyzen (1901), 240.

tionem humanae salutis expleuerit, non erubescens assumere quod ipse creauerit, ut et salutem his quos esse fecerat largiretur. Qui pro sua pietate etiam resuscitaturum se hominem repromisit, cum corpore pariter immortalitatem positurum et beatitudinis gloria creatoris liberalitate donandum, qui et secundum arbitrii libertatem iuste omnes asseritur ad iudicium uocaturus, cui nihil obsistere potest, cui omnis potestas subiecta est.

It is notable that all these were also Origen's ideas. What is more, the thesis that Christ assumed both a human body and a human soul is typical of Origen (against almost all other early Christian authors; he will be followed by few theologians, such as Gregory Nazianzen), just as the joint assertion of both the judgment, grounded in each rational creature's free will, and salvation, grounded in divine providence and Christ's assumption of humanity.

The idea that Christ assumed not only a human body, but also a human soul is indeed supported by Origen, in *Princ.* II 8.2, in which, once more against any docetism, he declares that Christ, '*sicut uere carnem habuit, ita uere et animam habuit*'. In *Princ.* IV 4.3 Origen insists on this,⁷⁴ and in II 6.5 he affirms that '*rationabilem animam esse in Christo*'.⁷⁵ This soul took up a body from Mary ('*de Maria corpus adsumit*', *Princ.* IV 4.5). In *Princ.* II 8.4 Origen considers Christ to be a compound of a body, a soul, and a spirit, where the soul is described as the intermediate element between the two others ('*medium quiddam esse animam inter "carnem infirmam" et "spiritum promptum"*'). In *Princ.* II 6.4 he says that it is the union of Christ's soul with the Logos to constitute Christ: '*anima cum uerbo Dei Christus efficitur*';⁷⁶ likewise in *Princ.* IV 4.4: '*cum uerbo Dei immaculate foederatione (anima) coniuncta est, et per hoc, sola omnium animarum, peccati incapax fuit*' (see also II 6.6). Christ's soul had adhered to the Logos and Wisdom since the beginning, and thus became one and the same spirit (*unus spiritus*) with it; here Origen also returns to the mediatory function of Christ's soul (*Princ.* II 6.3),⁷⁷ which performed all of Christ's works and movements (*Princ.* II 6.7).

The last passage in the *Dialogue*, coming soon after the above-quoted reference to the final judgment, is an allusion to 1Cor. 15:24-8. There are further discrepancies between the Latin and the extant Greek: whereas the former has

⁷⁴ '*Suscepit non solum corpus humanum, ut quidam putant, sed et animam, nostrarum quidem animarum similem per naturam ... qualis omnes uoluntates et dispensationes uerbi ac sapientiae indeclinabiliter posset implere*'.

⁷⁵ See also II 6.5: '*Fuisse quidem in Christo humana et rationabilis anima credenda est, et nullum sensum uel possibilitatem eam putandum est habuisse peccati*'.

⁷⁶ The conceptual distinction between Christ and the divine Logos was already present in Clement (the unity of the Logos in his thought is questioned, but I think it should be maintained). See my 'Clement's Notion of the Logos "All Things as One"', in Zlatko Pleše, Rainer Hirsch-Luipold (eds), *Alexandrian Personae: Scholarly Culture and Religious Traditions in Ancient Alexandria (1st ct. BCE-4ct. CE)* (Tübingen, 2013).

⁷⁷ '*Hac ergo substantia animae inter Deum carnemque mediante ... nascitur Deus-homo, illa substantia media existente cui utique contra naturam non erat corpus assumere*'.

that it would be right that all kings and princes and all humanity submit to Christ (*'cui obtemperare reges terrae et principes populorum atque omne conuenit humanum genus'*), the latter speaks of this submission as a matter of fact, and moreover adds the mention of bishops, who are altogether absent in the Latin, and of a gathering of kings and princes in the church and their obedience to the bishops.⁷⁸ Also, the key notion that Christ's assumption of human nature is indispensable to human salvation is repeated here in the Latin, and I have shown that it is crucial to Origen's Christology and soteriology (as it will be to Athanasius').

V.10 Adamantius' debate with the Valentinians: creation, matter, evil, and free will

Adamantius' discussion with the Valentinians also reveals telling details in respect to my present argument. It takes place in Book IV and begins precisely with the problem of God, evil, creation, and matter, the same that were interesting to Maximus, Origen, and Eusebius.

V.10.1 Evil, matter, qualities, creation, and theodicy

Droserius, a Valentinian, in order to free God from the accusation of being responsible for evil, claims that evil derives from matter, which he conceives as coeternal with God and not created by God (841b-d).⁷⁹ The same concern for theodicy is displayed by Droserius in 844a: *'Valentinus, ut ostenderet deum non esse mali causam, propterea materiae ascribit mala, ut non ex deo sed ex materia esse uiderentur.'* Adamantius' refutation is the selfsame as Origen's. Indeed, just as Adamantius in 842cd bases himself on *Gen.* 1:1-2 to affirm that God created everything and there exists nothing that is said by Scripture not to have been created by God, in the same way Origen in his *Homilies on Genesis* – what is extant of his exegesis of the Hexaëmeron after the unfortunate loss of his *Commentary on Genesis* –, at the very beginning (1.1) remarks that *Gen.* 1:1 (*'in principium fecit deus caelum et terram'*) proves that God is the principle of all, *principium omnium*, so that it is utterly excluded that there is another principle coeternal with God and independent of God. The words that Adamantius' opponent in the *Dialogue* takes as a proof of the existence of an uncreated matter (*'terra autem erat inuisibilis et incompressa'*) and that

⁷⁸ ὃ δὲ δικαίως λατρεῖται ἡ οἰκουμένη πᾶσα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐπισκόπων στίφος, ἔτι μὴν καὶ τὸ τούτων διδασκαλεῖον, οἷς εὐσεβῶς περιθόμενοι συναγελάζονται βασιλεῖς καὶ πάντες ἄρχοντες (871f-872a).

⁷⁹ *'Deum dicere horum [sc. malorum] factorem non mihi uidebatur pium, neque quod ab ipso habeant substantiam, uel quod ab ipso subsistant mala ... uidetur mihi esse aliquid ipsi coaeternum, cuius nomen sit materia [in the Greek parallel: ὕλη], ex qua omnia quae sunt creauerit ... et ex ipsa materia uidentur esse mala'.*

Adamantius demonstrates not to be such a proof at all, are the very same as Origen in *Princ.* IV 4.6 declares to be evidence of matter's original lack of form and order, and not of its coeternity with God:

inuisibilem namque et incompositam terram: non aliud eis Moyses quam informem materiam uisus est indicare ... abnuimus ingenitam uel infectam dici debere materiam secundum haec quae in prioribus prout potuimus ostendimus.

It is manifest that Origen's argument is exactly the same as Adamantius' in the *Dialogue*.

In *Princ.* I 3.3 Origen also rejects the hypothesis of the coeternity of matter with God, precisely within an argument that aims at demonstrating that God created all, just as Adamantius does in the *Dialogue*:

Quod autem a deo uniuersa creata sint nec sit ulla substantia quae non ab eo hoc ipso ut esset acceperit, ex multis totius scripturae adsertionibus conprobatur, repudiatis atque depulsis his, quae a quibusdam falso perhibentur, uel de materia deo coaeterna uel de ingenitis animabus.

Origen's argument and Adamantius' argument are identical. Origen brings about another argument in *Princ.* II 4.3 in order to demonstrate that matter was created by God.⁸⁰

That Origen maintained that God created all realities, including matter, is also attested by Rufinus in his *Apology to Anastasius* 6,⁸¹ and is clearly proved by a Greek text of Origen himself: *Comm. in Io.* 1.17 (IV 22.14), where he polemises against those – among Christians, mainly Gnostics and Marcionites,⁸² the same as Adamantius opposes in the *Dialogue* – who considered matter to be uncreated (ἀγέννητος) and contends that God created everything from non-being: ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων τὰ ὄντα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός.⁸³ Likewise in *Princ.* II 1.4 Origen attacks those Gnostics who assumed the coeternity of matter with God: he admires their mind, but rejects their doctrine.⁸⁴ His refutation is linear: 'quomodo

⁸⁰ 'Interrogabimus eos: materia facta est aut ingenita, id est infecta? Et si quidem dixerint quia infecta est ... requiremus ab eis si materiae pars quidem aliqua deus, pars autem mundus est. Si uero responderint de materia quia facta est, sine dubio consequetur ut eum, quem deum dicunt, factum esse fateantur, quod utique nec ipsorum nec nostra ratio admittit'.

⁸¹ Factas iam ... tunc cum omnia deus creauerit ex nihilo, nunc eas iudicio suo dispenset in corpore. Hoc sentit et Origenes et nonnulli alii Graecorum'.

⁸² A contemporary of Origen, Tertullian, attests this for Marcion in *Adv. Marc.* 1.15: 'Mundum ex aliqua materia subiacente molitus est, innata et infecta et contemporali Deo'.

⁸³ On *creatio ex nihilo* in Origen see Panayiotis Tzamalikos, 'Creation *ex nihilo* in Origen: Rebuttal of a Tragic Historical Bias', in *Papers in Honour of Professor Emeritus G. Nitsiotas* (Thessaloniki, 1994), 1157-1208; Gerhard May, *Creatio ex nihilo: The Doctrine of 'Creation out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought*, English tr. A.S. Worrall (Edinburgh, 1994). Justin, *1Apol.* 10,2 refers to a creation out of unformed matter (ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης); see also *1Apol.* 59.

⁸⁴ 'Nescio quomodo tanti et tales uiri ingenita [materiam], id est non ab ipso Deo factam conditore omnium putauerunt, sed fortuitam quandam eius naturam uirtutemque dixerunt ... ingenitam dicentes esse materiam deoque ingenito coaeternam'.

ergo non uidebitur impium id ingenitum dicere quod, si factum a deo credatur, tale sine dubio inuenitur quale et illud est quod ingenitum dicitur?' Moreover, in 844b Adamantius claims that it is not by making matter coeternal with God and the cause of evil that one can liberate God from the charge of being responsible for evil ('*et uide quia non ex hoc ostenditur deus malorum causa non esse, quod materia subicitur quae mali posse causam suscipere uideatur*').⁸⁵ Adamantius argues that, even if God has not created matter as a substance, he has certainly created its qualities, and the problem of God's responsibility for evil remains.

Now, precisely the problem of the creation of matter's qualities by God is treated by Origen at length in his Περὶ Ἀρχῶν. In II 1.4 he, exactly like Adamantius in the *Dialogue*, holds that God created both matter and its qualities,⁸⁶ and in IV 4.7 Origen states that no substance can ever exist without qualities ('*numquam substantia sine qualitate subsistit, sed intellectu solo discernitur hoc quod subiacet corporibus et capax est qualitatis, esse materia*'), which is of basic import for his argument concerning the creation of matter *ex nihilo* against its pre-existence without qualities. Indeed, he strongly criticizes those who maintain that matter is uncreated but qualities were created by God, but at the same time assert that matter exclusively consists in qualities⁸⁷ (this point will be taken over by Gregory of Nyssa, according to whom matter consists in the union of intelligible qualities, which explains how God created it while being totally immaterial and intelligible, and rules out the pre-existence of a material substratum without qualities⁸⁸). Origen goes on to refute those who think that a pre-existent matter was subsequently given qualities ('*subiacenti cuidam materiae additas extrinsecus qualitates*'). But matter without qualities can only be contemplated by the intellect, and in IV 4.8 Origen adduces examples from Scripture, such as *Psalms* 138:16 or *Enoch* 21:1, where he envisages a reference to this kind of contemplation, by which matter is separated from qualities *sensu solo ac ratione*. His conclusion makes it clear that Origen, just as Adamantius in the *Dialogue*, engages in the discussion of qualities in relation to matter in order to support the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* by denying the pre-existence of uncreated matter (*Princ.* IV 4.8).⁸⁹ That this doctrine was

⁸⁵ The extant Greek is somewhat different: φανεροῦ γὰρ γενομένου τοῦ λόγου καθ' ὃν τρόπον ἔστι τὰ κακά, καὶ ὅτι οὐχ οἶόν τέ ἐστι εἰπεῖν ἀνάιτιον τῶν κακῶν τὸν θεὸν ἐκ τοῦ ὕλην αὐτῷ ὑποτιθέναι, τὴν τοιαύτην ὑπόνοιαν ἀναιρεῖσθαί μοι δοκεῖ.

⁸⁶ '*Hanc ergo materiam, quae tanta et talis est ut et sufficere ad omnia mundi corpora quae esse deus uoluit queat.. recipiens in se qualitates quas ipse uoluisset imponere*'.

⁸⁷ '*Omnes qui materiam infectam dicunt, qualitates a deo factas esse confitentur, inueniatur per hoc etiam secundum ipsos nec materia esse infecta, siquidem qualitates sint omnia*'.

⁸⁸ See Cinzia Arruzza, 'La matière immatérielle chez Grégoire de Nysse', *FZPhTh* 54 (2007), 215-23.

⁸⁹ '*Omnia quae sunt a Deo facta esse, et nihil esse quod factum non sit praeter naturam Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*'.

held by Origen is proved, as I have demonstrated, not only by his *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, in passages of which we only have Rufinus' translation, but also by his *Commentary on John*, and moreover, as I shall show, also in his *Contra Celsum*, both of which are extant in their original Greek.

Soon after, in *Dialogue of Adamantius* 844d Valens appears to propose an alternative theory, which Adamantius has to refute: '*mihi ita uidetur quod materia qualitates secum habeat coaeternas; ideo namque et mala ex ipsis manasse dico, ut uere in nullo malo malorum causa deo ascribatur, sed totum materiae.*' As is evident, the fundamental problem is always theodicy: it is necessary to exclude that God is responsible for evil. Adamantius' refutation is simple: to affirm that both matter and its qualities have existed *ab aeterno* together with God is tantamount to maintaining that God created nothing ('*tantum uerbo deum conditorem dicis*').⁹⁰ The Greek word for conditor is δημιουργός, the same that designates the Demiurge in Plato's *Timaeus*, and indeed Valens' defence is inspired by Plato's conception of 'creation' as 'ordination'. Valens contends that God is creator insofar as he changed matter's qualities into a better order.⁹¹ But this line of thought reveals its weakness, again, when it comes to theodicy: if God's transformation of these qualities was a change into better, the origin of evil remains obscure, and if God took only good qualities for creation, leaving the bad aside, it would seem that God could not, or did not want to, eliminate evil (845c-e).

In the *Dialogue*, the debate over matter's qualities entirely depends on the larger question of creation.⁹² In this connection, a deep similarity is to be found with Origen's extant Greek works. In his *Contra Celsum*, just as in the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, Origen has to face the doctrine of the eternity of pre-existent matter deprived of qualities and subsequently endowed with them by the demiurge. In CC 3.41-2 he refers to the Greek philosophers' teaching on this issue.⁹³ The same doctrine of the demiurge providing matter with qualities is mentioned again in 4.57, but without the pre-existence of matter, in which way it is acceptable to the Christians, too: *Περὶ δὲ τοῦ τὴν ὑποκειμένην*

⁹⁰ These words in Rufinus' version are attributed to Adamantius, whereas in the extant Greek they are ascribed to Eutropius. In both, then, it is Eutropius who explains (845a): '*Si coaeterna erat materia deo et qualitates nihilominus coaeternae materiae, superfluum est quod dicis, esse conditorem mundi deum*'; εἰ προϋπῆρχεν ἡ ὕλη, συνϋπῆρχον δὲ καὶ αἱ ποιότητες, περισσὸν τὸ λέγειν δημιουργὸν τὸν θεόν.

⁹¹ '*Permanente substantia, conuersionem quandam fecisse qualitatum, ex qua uidetur huius mundi a deo machina perornata*'; τροπήν τινα τῶν ποιότητων αὐτῆς πεποιηκέναι, καθ' ἣν τὴν τοῦδε τοῦ κόσμου γένεσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγονέναι λέγω, 845c.

⁹² See now the chapter on Origen in Charlotte Köckert, *Christliche Kosmologie und kaiserzeitliche Philosophie* (Tübingen, 2009).

⁹³ Τοῖς ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων λεγομένοις περὶ τῆς τῷ ἰδίῳ λόγῳ ἀποίου ὕλης, ποιότητος ἀμφισκομένης, ὁποίας ὁ δημιουργὸς βούλεται αὐτῇ περιτιθέναι, καὶ πολλάκις τὰς μὲν προτέρας ἀποτιθεμένης κρείττονας δὲ καὶ διαφόρους ἀναλαμβανούσης ... δυνατόν ἀμειβεῖν ποιότητας τὴν ὑποκειμένην πάσαις ποιότησιν ὕλην.

ὑλὴν δεκτικὴν εἶναι ποιότητων, ὧν ὁ δημιουργὸς βούλεται, πάντες οἱ πρόνοιαν παραδεξάμενοι κατασκευάζομεν· καὶ βουλομένου μὲν θεοῦ ποιότης τοιαδί νῦν ἐστι περὶ τήνδε τὴν ὑλὴν ἐξῆς δὲ τοιαδί, φέρ' εἰπεῖν, βελτίων καὶ διαφέρουσα.

In 4.56 the polemic focuses again upon matter's reception of qualities from God: Origen observes that, if Celsus is not willing to concede that God created anything corruptible, he cannot explain from whom matter received its qualities,⁹⁴ and in 4.57 he opposes Celsus' view that the (supposed!) spontaneous generation of insects from other animals proves that God is not the creator of all things: Origen demolishes this argument by having recourse, again, to qualities, whose transformations require an ordering mind.⁹⁵ That matter receives its qualities from the creator/demiurge is repeated by Origen in 6.77.⁹⁶ Discussion of philosophical views of matter, qualities, and their transformation in *De or.* 4.27 confirms the centrality of this issue in Origen's thought. It is no accident that Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus excerpted this section, corresponding to Eusebius' excerpt from an enigmatic 'Maximus', in their *Philocalia*.

V.10.2 Free will and the (unsubstantial) origin of evil

At this point of the debate, the next problem to be solved is the following: if evil comes neither from God nor from an original matter, where does it come from? (πόθεν τὰ κακά, *unde sint mala*, 846c). Now, once again, Adamantius' answer is exactly the same as Origen's: '*mala neque secundum naturam neque secundum substantiam, sed ex animi propositum fiunt et ex abitrui libertatem aut in actibus aut in uoluntatibus inueniuntur*'; in the extant Greek: τὰ κακά οὐδὲ κατὰ φύσιν οὐδὲ κατ' οὐσίαν, οὐδὲ καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τρώπῳ γίνονται τὰ κακά ἐκ τῆς αὐτεξουσιότητος (*ibid.*). Origen repeats everywhere in his works, from Περὶ Ἀρχῶν onward, that it is rational creatures' free will that makes them τρέπειν toward good or evil, because they do not possess the Good in a substantial and stable manner, as only God does.

What Adamantius adds ('*Non ergo quis malus est ex eo quod est, sed ex eo quod agit, et ita inueniuntur mala non esse substantiae sed substantiis accidentia ... per arbitrii libertatem*'), is typical of Origen's argument against Valentinianism, adduced by him especially in *Princ.* III and elsewhere: rational creatures are not good or evil by nature, but as a fruit of their choices. Adamantius' claim that '*nihil esse omnino natura malum, sed in solo proposito dici malum*', corresponds

⁹⁴ Τὰς ποιότητας οὐκ οἶδα κατὰ Κέλσον, τὸν μὴ θέλοντα φθαρτὸν τι ἔργον εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ, ὑπὸ τίνος λαμβάνουσα.

⁹⁵ Τὰς ποιότητας, οὐκ οἶδ' ὁπόθεν οὕτω τεταγμένας ἐκ τῶνδε τάσδε γίνεσθαι, οὐχὶ θείου τινὸς λόγου ἔργον εἶναι, τὰς ἐν τῇ ὑλῇ ποιότητας ἀμείβοντος. See also 4.75.

⁹⁶ Καὶ οὐ θαυμαστὸν τὴν φύσει τρεπτὴν καὶ ἀλλοιωτὴν καὶ εἰς πάντα ἂ βούλεται ὁ δημιουργὸς ὑλὴν μεταβλητὴν καὶ πάσης ποιότητος, ἣν ὁ τεχνίτης βούλεται, δεκτικὴν, δὲ μὲν ἔχειν ποιότητα κτλ.

again to one of the most important metaphysical tenets of Origen: the ontological non-subsistence of evil. Adamantius' contention that free will is a gift of God to human beings (848c)⁹⁷ entirely corresponds to Origen's own position – this thesis, in turn, finds a very close correspondence in Bardaisan, whose thought was known to Origen and his followers, especially Eusebius and Didymus.⁹⁸ And Adamantius' remark that freewill was given to humans in order that, '*in qua uelint parte obtemperandi sibi facultate concessa, cum sponte se subdiderint dei legibus, et non naturali necessitate constricti, sed amore eius prouocati, imitatione dei deligant meliora ... idcirco ergo concessa est eis libertas arbitrii, ut ad meliora se latius possint extendere et remunerationem obedientiae promereri*', is in complete harmony with Origen's convictions, exposed, e.g., in *Princ.* IV 4.8⁹⁹ and his insistence on the excellence of ἀγάπη over φόβος and of instruction and persuasion and voluntary adhesion to the Good over necessity. These conceptions, deriving mainly from Paul and Plato respectively, are perfectly consistent with Origen's theory of divine pedagogy and, ultimately, with his eschatology characterized by the apokatastasis and a radical metaphysical optimism.¹⁰⁰ For Origen placed in the *telos* not only the recovery of God's image (εἰκόν), but also the achievement of likeness (ὁμοίωσις) with God, which is voluntary in that it depends on each one's effort and will.¹⁰¹

Adamantius' subsequent comment that, if humans had not been gifted with free will, they would be like inanimate things, such as elements (*si enim ita factus fuisset homo rationalis ut est unum aliquod ex elementis, uerbi gratia ut est aqua uel terra, quae nihil aliud potest esse quam hoc quod est, id est quae neque in melius proficere neque in deterius labi potest, nihil utique homo uel actuum suorum uel propositi gratiae haberet ac muneris, ubi non industriae officium sed uis naturae sola subsisteret*), is remarkably similar to Bardaisan's argument in the *Liber Legum Regionum*:

God has glorified the human being over many creatures, and has made it equal to angels. Look at the sun, the moon, the starred sky... and see that *free will* is not granted them upon themselves, but they are all fixed in the command of having to do all that

⁹⁷ 'A deo quidem tales factos esse homines non dico, sed libertatem sui arbitrii ab eo consecutos'. In the extant Greek: ὑπὸ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοιοῦτους γεγονέναι οὐ φημι, αὐτεξούσιον δὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπον λέγω, τοῦτο μέγιστον ὑπὸ θεοῦ κεχαρίσθαι λέγων αὐτῶ.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ See my *Bardaisan of Edessa* (2009).

⁹⁹ 'Volens Deus, qui natura bonus est, habere quibus bene faceret, et qui adeptis suis beneficiis laetarentur, fecit se dignas creaturas, id est quae eum digne capere possent, quos et "genuisse se filios" dicit'. But a number of other texts of Origen could be mentioned.

¹⁰⁰ For the roots of the excellence of love upon fear in Philo and its relation to Origen see my 'Philosophical Allegoresis of Scripture in Philo and Its Legacy in Gregory of Nyssa', *StudPhilon* 20 (2008), 55-99. For Origen's claim that the adhesion of all rational creatures to the Good must be voluntary and that it will be completely achieved in the *telos* see my *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007), integrative essay I.

¹⁰¹ See my *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007), integrative essay II.

they are ordered to do...¹⁰² Therefore it will become clear to you that God's goodness has been great toward the human being, who has been gifted with *free will* more than all these *elements* of which we have spoken.¹⁰³

V.11 Theodicy and apokatastasis. Trimming in the extant Greek

Adamantius' argument in 843bff. that two entities that are not generated and are uncreated cannot subsist together is the same as that expounded by Maximus of Tyre (*Dialexis* 41, in connection with a broader theodicy issue on evil, matter, and God), with whom also, I suspect, Origen might have been acquainted.¹⁰⁴ And it is again the problem of theodicy that occasions and introduces Adamantius' important treatment of apokatastasis in 848e,¹⁰⁵ which certainly constitutes one of the most outstanding points of contact with Origen's thinking, including his dealing with all rational creatures, his insistence on the negation of a ultimate ἀπώλεια, and his use of the parable of the lost sheep in reference to the apokatastasis. Adamantius, in fact, offers here a real abridgment of Origen's philosophy of history and eschatology:

Si labitur quis et decidat, a diuina eius prouidentia nusquam prorsus abscedat, nec omnino aliquid sit quod illi penitus pereat. Et super omnia adhuc illud uidendum est, quod ad cunctam rationabilem naturam quanta et quam minima pars homo est, qui similiter ut ceterae omnes rationabiles naturae arbitrii uoluntate¹⁰⁶ donatus est, qui tamen uelut ouis errans per ignorantiae montes et colles boni pastoris humeris reportatus est et restitutus est ad illas nonaginta et nouem oues quae non errauerunt. Quid ergo tibi uidetur, qui hoc ita sentis? Ne una erraret ouicula, nonaginta et nouem ouium profectus et gloria debuit impediri? Impeditum namque fuerat, si naturae rationabili libertas arbitrii, per quam illae nonaginta et nouem in summis excelsis profectibus permanserunt, non fuisset indulta, quandoquidem nec eorum qui quo modo oberrauerant salutem dispensatio diuina despexerit, sed stadium quoddam praesentem hunc et

¹⁰² Examples follow at this point, concerning celestial bodies, earth, sea, winds, etc.

¹⁰³ For a methodical investigation into the close similarities between Origen and Bardaisan see I. Ramelli, 'Origen, Bardaisan, and the Origin of Universal Salvation', *HTR* 102 (2009), 135-68.

¹⁰⁴ For all this I refer to my 'Maximus on Evil', *Adamantius* 16 (2010), 230-55.

¹⁰⁵ The problem with which this section begins – in full continuity with the immediately preceding discussion – is that of God's foreknowledge of the original sin and choice not to prevent it: 'Quodsi et hoc obicias, praescisse Deum quod homo per arbitrii libertatem magis deligeret ut ad inferiora conscendere, et ideo non debuisse talem fieri eum quale sciret omnino lapsurum'. Adamantius' reply to this objection is double: first, he says that 'non est iusti iudicii ex praescientia damnari aliquid quod re et opere non sit admissum'. The second motive ('Tum deinde qui hoc ita dicit illud uult intellegi ut timore quodam prohiberi debuerit Deus ne faceret id quod metueret ne laberetur, cum utique, si labitur quis et decidat, a diuina eius prouidentia nusquam prorsus abscedat') introduces the treatment of the apokatastasis itself, which I am going to discuss.

¹⁰⁶ I suspect that this might have to be emended into *libertate*. Soon after Rufinus uses again *libertas arbitrii*, which renders the Greek αὐτεξούσιον.

uisibilem mundum posuerit, in quo, concertantium et aduersantium agone moderato, certaminis praemia proposuerit regressum ad pristinum statum, dum per arbitrii libertatem quae illuc ducunt eligi et nihilominus et respui quae non sinunt possunt.

This not only is significant in itself, but it is also all the more revealing in that this discussion is *completely lacking* in the extant Greek. It is only present in Rufinus' version, which is likely to be much closer to the original than the Greek we have today. Whereas it is generally assumed that Rufinus added this passage, I think it is far more probable that the original text did include it, and Rufinus translated it, but it was subsequently expurgated in the Greek by opponents of the apokatastasis theory. This extensive athetesis probably took place after the official condemnation of Origenism under Justinian – I have argued that the extant Greek is quite late, as is indicated by its linguistic features –, all the more in that soon after (849a) Adamantius is declared to have expressed the *orthodox* position.¹⁰⁷ Rufinus, on the contrary, had no problem in leaving the passage in its place, given that, in his view, Origen's position was indeed orthodox (for he identified Adamantius with Origen).

That Rufinus' Latin is a translation from an original Greek text is suggested by the presence of Greek loanwords such as *stadium* and *agon*, which moreover represent extremely common metaphors in Origen,¹⁰⁸ and by the expression '*regressum ad pristinum statum*', which is the translation of ἡ εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀποκατάστασις. This phrase and conception is typical of Origen, and of Nys-sen, who took it over from Origen, in many places and especially in *De anima*, where he defines twice the ἀνάστασις as ἡ εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀποκατάστασις of our (*i.e.*, human) nature. Origen's use of the phrase εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀποκαθίστημι is well attested by Jerome, *Ep. ad Avit.* 3: '*per genus hominum reuertantur ad pristinum statum*', which clearly translates the above-mentioned Greek phrase. What is more, in *Princ.* II 1.1 Rufinus' translation '*restituere in statum initii sui*' surely renders ἀποκαθίστημι εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον. The whole sentence is, '*praecipue si intueamur illum finem per quem omnia restituenda*

¹⁰⁷ Immediately after the conclusion of Adamantius' exposition of the apokatastasis as a response to an objection originating from the problem of theodicy (see above), Eutropius, the judge, states: '*Haec non solum ignorantes docere, uerum et stultos ac sine sensu homines informare ad intelligentiam possunt, tam recti et integri dogmatis explanatio est. Et ideo superfluum puto, cum haec tam euidentia tamque perspicua apparent, ipsis diutius immorari. Uidentur etenim mihi dogma ueritatis et catholicae ecclesiae assertores uelut fons quidam esse fluentis perennibus lauans*'. Eutropius goes on to proclaim the defeat of Drosierius and Valens, who are invited '*a dogmatum peruersitate desistere*'. It is patent that the 'assertors of the true doctrine and of the catholic church' are to be identified with Adamantius. It is meaningful that this declaration is present also in the extant Greek, where, according to the text as we have it now, it cannot refer to Adamantius' refutation of the theodicy objection that the divinity in its prescience should have abstained from letting the human being freely choose between Good and evil, lest it choose evil. It ought to refer back to Adamantius' defence of human freewill as a gift from God that differentiates humans from inanimate objects.

¹⁰⁸ See Leonardo Lugaresi, *Il teatro di Dio. Il problema degli spettacoli nel Cristianesimo antico* (Brescia, 2008), 518-22.

in statum initii sui libro superiore dissertum est.’ Soon after, Origen explains how τὸ ἀρχαῖον is to be understood: ‘*illa initii unitate atque concordia in qua a deo primitus procreati sunt ... illo bonitatis statum.*’ The same concept returns in *Princ.* III 6.6,¹⁰⁹ and there is also an attestation directly in Origen’s Greek, in *Co. Io.* 13.3.13: εἰς ὅμοιον τῷ ἀρχῆθεν ἀποκαταστάς, which closely corresponds to the aforementioned expression in the *Dialogue*.

Furthermore, Adamantius’ phrase ‘*in statum initii sui*’ suggests that the original condition, exempt from sin, belonged to the human being as its proper state: Origen characterizes the apokatastasis as a return to what is one’s own and familiar (εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα) in *Hom. in Jer.* 14.18.¹¹⁰ A comparison can be drawn with *Princ.* I 3.8, where the apokatastasis is described (in Rufinus’ translation) as a ‘*redire ad statum suum ac rursum statuere id quod per negligentiam fuerat elapsus.*’ Now, ‘*rursum statuere*’ translates a form of ἀποκαθίστημι, and ‘*ad statum suum*’ renders εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖον, which expresses the same concept as in Origen’s *Homilies on Jeremiah*: the apokatastasis will be a return to the state that was proper to the human being at the beginning, a return to one’s true nature, as it was in God’s plan. Likewise, the original state characterized by beatitude, to which at the apokatastasis all will be brought back, is described by Origen in *Princ.* I 6.2 as ‘proper’ and ‘properly belonging to’ the human being: *redire et restitui* [*sc.* ἀποκαθίστημι] ‘*ad statum suae beatitudinis.*’ Indeed, *suae* very probably renders a form of οἰκεῖος.

Also, ‘*restitutus est*’ in the *Dialogue* undoubtedly renders ἀποκατεστάθη or another passive form of ἀποκαθίστημι, as well as ‘*restitutio*’ perfectly corresponds to ἀποκατάστασις. This is the case also with *Princ.* III 5.7, where Origen is describing the universal apokatastasis as a result of the submission of all to Christ:¹¹¹

inimicorum quae dicitur Filio Dei esse subiectio salutaris quaedam intellegatur et utilis, ut, sicut cum dicitur Filius Patri subiectus, perfecta uniuersae creaturae restitutio declaratur, ita cum Filio Dei inimici dicuntur esse subiecti, subiectorum salus in eo intellegatur et reparatio peccatorum.

A parallel instance is also to be found in *Princ.* III 6.9, where Christ’s reign bringing about universal apokatastasis, *i.e.*, the perfecting and restoration of all, is described as a period of illumination and instruction.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ ‘*Tunc cum omnia restituentur ut unum sint, et cum Deus fuerit omnia in omnibus, infinitis et immensis labentibus saeculis ... restituae fuerint omnes rationabiles animae in huiusmodi statum.*’

¹¹⁰ Διὰ τοῦτο τάδε λέγει Κύριος: ἔὰν ἐπιστρέψῃς, καὶ ἀποκαταστήσω σε. ταῦτα πάλιν λέγεται πρὸς ἕκαστον, ὃν παρακαλέσει ὁ θεὸς ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς αὐτόν. μυστήριον δέ μοι δοκεῖ ἐνταῦθα δηλοῦσθαι ἐν τῷ ἀποκαταστήσω σε. οὐδεὶς ἀποκαθίσταται εἰς τίνα τόπον μηδ’ αὖ ποτε γενόμενος ἐκεῖ, ἀλλ’ ἡ ἀποκατάστασις ἐστὶν εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα.

¹¹¹ See my ‘Christian Soteriology’ (2007).

¹¹² ‘*In consummatione et restitutione omnium ... Christus dominus, qui est rex omnium, regnum ipse suscipiet, id est post eruditionem sanctarum uirtutum, eos qui eum capere possunt*

Adamantius' statement that the apokatastasis is the reward for the agonistic effort of virtue ('*certaminis praemia ... regressum ad pristinum statum*') perfectly corresponds to Origen's statement in *Comm. in Io.* 13.46.299: τὸν μισθὸν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ὑπολαμβάνει εἶναι τὴν τῶν θεριζομένων σωτηρίαν καὶ ἀποκατάστασιν τῷ ἀναπαύεσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. What is more, the association of the terms 'agon' and 'certamina' for the description of the present world as a place of exercise and trial in view of the ultimate end in Adamantius' piece on the apokatastasis finds a stunningly precise correspondence in Origen, *Hom. Gen.* 16.7, where he is allegorizing Jacob's descent into Egypt as the descent of the rational creature into this world, he uses the very same terms in an identical context (of course, here too in Rufinus' translation): '*in carne positi agones mundi huius et certamina sustinemus*'. And the homilies, too, like the dialogues, reflect Origen's oral, initially impromptu, performances.

In Adamantius' discussion of the apokatastasis there is also a reference to the parable of the lost sheep (*Luke* 15:3-7) and to Jesus' action of restoration. This is a parable on which Origen particularly insists, and which he refers precisely to the apokatastasis, which in his thought proves to be grounded primarily in Christ.¹¹³ Only in his extant Greek works, there are many passages in which the soteriological value of this parable is highlighted, for instance, fr. 58b-c on *Luke*, where he cites *John* 10:11 joint to *Matth.* 18:12 and *Luke* 15:3-7.¹¹⁴ Even more explicit about the connection between the parable of the lost sheep and the doctrine of universal salvation is *Fr. in Ps.* 118.176.¹¹⁵ In *Fr. in Jer.* fr. 28, too, the parable is related to Jesus' action of saving what is lost or has perished and to his unifying action (unity is one of the essential traits of the apokatastasis according to Origen):

Πρόβατόν φησιν ὡς ἑνὸς πεπλανημένου. καὶ ἐν εὐαγγελίῳ δέ φησιν· ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἦλθεν ἐκζητῆσαι καὶ σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός. καὶ ἐν τῇ παραβολῇ δὲ ἐν ἐκ τῶν ἑκατὸν ἀπώλετο μόνον, ὅπερ ἦλθεν εὑρεῖν ὁ ἐπιδημήσας ποιμήν, ὃς καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὧμων ἀναλαβὼν ἀπέδωκε τῷ ἀριθμῷ τῶν ἐνενήκοντα καὶ ἑννέα. οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐν σώμα ἔσμεν καὶ ἐν πρόβατον. ὁ μὲν τίς ἐστι πούς, ὁ δὲ κεφαλὴ, ὁ δὲ

secundum quod Sapientia est, ipse instruens, regnans in eis tamdiu usquequo eos etiam Patri subiciat, qui sibi subdidit omnia, cum capaces Dei fuerint effecti'. See the chapter on Origen in my *Apokatastasis* (2013).

¹¹³ For the strong Christological basis of the apokatastasis in Origen see, with many arguments, my 'Origen and the Apokatastasis: A Reassessment', in Henryk Pietras (ed.), *Origeniana Decima* (Leuven, 2011), 649-70.

¹¹⁴ Τὸ δὲ τῶν ποιμένων πρόσωπον καὶ ἡ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως αὐτοῖς γενομένη χαρὰ σημαίνει σαφῶς, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλανώμενον πρόβατον ἦλθεν ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός. ποιμένας γὰρ οὐδὲν οὕτως εὐφραίνει, ὡς ἡ τοῦ ἀπολωλότης βοσκήματος εὑρεσις, ὅπερ οὐκ ἦν ἑτέρου τινὸς εὑρεῖν ἢ τοῦ ἀρχιποιμένου Χριστοῦ (1*Peter* 5:4).

¹¹⁵ Τετύχθηκε δὲ ἅπανα τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἢ φύσις τῆς σωτηρίας. Ἐδραμε γὰρ ὁ καλὸς Ποιμὴν ἐπὶ τὸ πλανώμενον πρόβατον, καὶ περιελθὼν τὰ ὄρη καὶ τοὺς βουνούς – παρὰ ταῦτα γὰρ ἐπλανᾷ διὰ τὸ λατρεῦσαι τοῖς δαίμοσιν –, εὔρε, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ὧμων λαβὼν ἐπάνηγαγε, καὶ ἠφράνθη μᾶλλον ἢ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐνενήκοντα ἑννέα τοῖς μὴ πεπλανημένοις.

ἄλλο τι, ὁ δὲ ποιμὴν ἐλθὼν συνήγαγεν ὁστέον πρὸς ὁστέον καὶ ἁρμονίαν πρὸς ἁρμονίαν καὶ ἐνώσας ἀνέλαβεν ἐπὶ τὴν χώραν αὐτοῦ. ἡ δὲ ἐνότης γίνεται δι' ἀγάπης καὶ ἀληθείας καὶ προαιρέσεως ἀγαθῆς.

In *Fr. in Ps.* 18.6 Origen offers an allegorical exegesis of the parable: Jesus went to rescue the lost sheep when he descended onto the earth and into the underworld.¹¹⁶ Finally, in *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1628), which is very likely to reflect Origen's thought, Origen connects the parable of the lost sheep with the apokatastasis performed by Christ first qua Justice and then qua Wisdom; in this way, he will remove from the soul both evilness and ignorance (the close connection between which will be especially emphasised by Evagrius):

Ἐπλανήθην ὡς πρόβατον ἀπολωλός ... Πρῶτον μὲν τὴν πλανηθεῖσαν ψυχὴν ὡς Δικαιοσύνη ἐπιστρέφει ὁ Κύριος, ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ ὡς Σοφία, εἴπερ πλάνη ἐστὶ ψυχῆς κακία καὶ ἀγνωσία.

V.12 *The restoration of the image of God. Again trimming in the Greek*

It seems to me revealing that a further remarkable discrepancy between Rufinus' Latin version of the *Dialogue* and the extant Greek is to be found in another passage (856e) concerning, again, precisely the apokatastasis. In particular, there are nine lines in the Latin that have *no correspondence* in Greek; it is likely that they were deleted in the Greek redaction available to us, since Adamantius in these lines, on the basis of two quotations from Paul and from Genesis that are absent in the Greek (1Cor. 15:47 and Gen. 2:7), expounds the doctrine of apokatastasis in the form of the restoration of God's image in human beings. Moreover, his present argument is absolutely coherent with what he has previously said, and it is rather in the Greek that there is a logical gap. After saying, '*Per Adam mors, per Christum resurrectio incohata est*', which is the last sentence that finds a correspondence in the Greek, Adamantius goes on to say what has *no* correspondence in the extant Greek:

Uterque tamen homo designatur. Denique dicit quia, Primus homo de terra terrenum, secundus homo de coelo. Sed sicut iste qui terrenus dicitur non potuisset homo dici, nisi fuisset coelitus inspiratus, insufflauit enim deus in faciem eius spiritum uitae, et factus est homo in animam uiuentem, ita et iste, qui de coelo dicitur, homo dici non posset, nisi uerbo coelesti caro sociaretur humana, ut, sicut tunc ille terrenus suscepit imaginem deitatis, ita et nunc iste coelestis susciperet humanitatis imaginem, ut, cum in eo nostra fuisset imago reparata, ita demum et ipsius imago restitueretur in nobis.

¹¹⁶ Εἶασε γὰρ τὰ ἐννεμήκοντα ἐννέα πρόβατα τὰ μὴ πλανηθέντα, τουτέστι τὰς ἀγγελικὰς δυνάμεις, ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη, τουτέστιν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ πεπλανημένον πρόβατον, καὶ εὐρὼν αὐτὸ ἠγαλλιάσατο· ἡ ἔδραμε τὴν ἐπ' οὐρανοῦς ὁδὸν ἀγαλλιῶν, εἴτε ἀπὸ γῆς εἰς τὰ καταχθόνια ἔδραμε.

Now, it is noteworthy that Origen was a convinced assertor of this notion (the theology of the image associated with the theory of apokatastasis) and very much reflected on the Adam-Christ parallel, in his *Commentary on Romans* and in many other places. God's image in human beings was blurred by sin, but it will be restored in all its splendour, and this thanks to the incarnation of Christ.¹¹⁷ Here these themes, very dear to Origen, are used in support of Adamantius' argument, and, what is more, the last lines of the passage lacking in the Greek take over the key-notion that God had to become fully human so that the human being might be divinized. This notion, as I shall show in a moment, was central to Origen's thought, from which Athanasius drew it, and is used by Adamantius in his argument against docetism. There is full continuity in Adamantius' train of thought, in the Latin text, and there is a very close and conspicuous correspondence between this thought and Origen's. What is more, from this passage too it is clear that apokatastasis depends on Christ's incarnation, which is, once again, a conviction held by Origen himself with much decision.

V.13 The argument against docetism, incarnation, and impromptu Biblical quotations

Adamantius' attack upon docetism – one of the three tenets of Marinus' 'Bardaisanite' doctrine, repeated in 849b¹¹⁸ – in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* closely reflects Origen's view concerning Jesus Christ's full humanity and assumption of a human body and soul. Already at the commencement of the debate, Adamantius' solemn profession of faith excludes docetism (804d).¹¹⁹ From 849c onward we find an entire session devoted to this discussion, where Adamantius sets out to state (849c) that Christ had a body made of the same substance as Adam's and all humans' body.¹²⁰ The subsequent debate with Marinus focuses around the impossibility that the Logos may suffer anything from incarnation and birth, and then on scriptural passages, of which Adamantius heaps up an impressive number in just a brief intervention (850cd), in order to demonstrate that it is God who fashions the human being in the bosom. He quotes 1Cor. 1:24; John 1:3; Jer. 1:5; Ps. 118:73; Gen. 2:7, and Gal. 1:15.

¹¹⁷ See my first integrative essay in Gregorio di Nissa (2007).

¹¹⁸ 'De Christo uolo requirere si, ut uos dicitis, carnem ex substantia nostrae naturae suscepit ... sed et ipsae scripturae de coelo eum corpus habere testantur'.

¹¹⁹ Λόγον ὁμοούσιον αἰεὶ ὄντα καὶ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων καιρῶν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ Μαρίας ἀναλαβόντα, καὶ τοῦτον σταυρωθέντα καὶ ἀναστάντα ἐκ νεκρῶν; in Rufinus' version: 'uerbum eius consubstantium ei et coaeternum, quod uerbum in nouissimis temporibus, humana natura ex Maria uirgine assumpta, homo natus est, crucifixus est, et resurrexit a mortuis'.

¹²⁰ 'Ex substantia eius hominis qui primus a deo plasmatus est, unde et nos omnes'. In the extant Greek: ἐξ ἐκείνης τῆς ὑποστάσεως τῆς τοῦ πρωτοπλάστου Ἀδάμ, ἐξ ἧς καὶ ἡμεῖς.

Anyone familiar with Origen's exegesis and knowledge of Scripture knows that it is typical of Origen to adduce, even *impromptu*, many Biblical quotations from many books of the Old and the New Testament in support of a given thesis, for he knew Scripture by heart and was continually engaged in its interpretation. Likewise, the *Dialogue with Heraclides* testifies to Origen's habit of adducing many scriptural quotations, from everywhere in the Bible, in an extemporaneous manner; the same is the case, of course, also with his homilies, and – even though this is not a registration of an *impromptu* performance – his commentaries and his *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, where every single philosophical argument is supported by Biblical quotations.

Likewise, Adamantius' recourse to typology and even a theorization of typology in 853bc¹²¹ closely correspond to Origen's own theorization and use of typology. For Origen this was also fundamental in order to support the unity of the Old Testament and the New, to the demonstration of which Adamantius too, like Origen, is committed in the *Dialogue*.

As for the doctrinal content of the passage under examination, Adamantius' anti-docetic position in the *Dialogue of Adamantius* fully corresponds to Origen's own ideas. In the *Dialogue with Heraclides* 5 Origen insists that Jesus' earthly body was neither apparent nor spiritual (πνευματικόν), because such a body could not have died. *Ibid.* 6 he states that heretics eliminate the salvation of the human body in declaring that the Saviour's body is spiritual: ἄθετοῦσι τὴν σωτηρίαν τοῦ σώματος ἀνθρωπίνου πνευματικὸν λέγοντες τὸ σῶμα τοῦ σωτῆρος. For, as Athanasius too will insist, in the footsteps of Origen, humanity would not be saved if Christ had not taken up the wholeness of humanity (*ibid.*). Elsewhere, too, Origen is adamant in denying docetism, for instance in *Comm. in Rom.* 9.2 he criticizes those 'qui negant Christum in carne venisse et natum esse ex virgine, sed caeleste ei corpus assignant'. Similarly, in *Hom. in Luc.* 14 he refutes those who 'negant Dominum nostrum humanum habuisse corpus, sed de caelestibus et spiritalibus fuisse contextum.' And in *Comm. in Gal.* (PG 14, 1296A-B) he analogously rebukes docetism.¹²² Origen in *Princ. I praef.* 4 declares that Christ 'corpus assumpsit' and 'natus et passus est in ueritate, et non per phantasiam, commune hanc mortem uere mortuus; uere enim et a mortuis resurrexit et, post resurrectionem conuersatus cum discipulis suis, assumptus est.' Origen too, precisely like Adamantius, denies that Christ's birth, death, and resurrection took place δοκῆσει, not only in the aforementioned passage, where *per*

¹²¹ 'Ante aduentum Christi fiebant huiusmodi uisiones, in quibus figurae et formae futurorum signarentur. Cum autem uenit ueritas figurae cessarunt, secundum apostolum dicentem: Lex enim umbram habens futurorum bonorum ... haec omnia in figura illis contingebant, scripta sunt autem ad commonitionem nostram, in quos finem saeculorum deuenerunt.' Eutropius also confirms that 'Adamantius hoc mihi uidetur asserere, quod ea quae prius gesta sunt figuram continerent et formam futurae ueritatis'.

¹²² 'Si autem quis uolentius uelit asserere, ideo haec dicta esse, quia per phantasiam manducabat ... spiritalem enim naturam, sicut quidam de eius corpore sentiunt'.

phantasiam probably renders δοκήσει, but also, e.g., in *Fr. in Io.* 53, where he contests the view that δοκήσει αὐτὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀληθεία αὐτὸν γεγονέναι. Likewise, in *CC* 2.16 he attacks the idea that δοκήσει τὸν Ἰησοῦν ταῦτα πεπονθέναι οὐ πεπονθότα.

What is more, Adamantius' main argument against docetism is identical to Origen's anti-docetic argument par excellence: if Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection are only apparent, then human salvation is challenged. This is a fundamental argument, which Athanasius especially in his *De incarnatione* and Gregory of Nyssa in, e.g., his *In illud: Tunc et ipse Filius* and in his *Oratio catechetica* 32 will take over precisely from Origen: Christ's real incarnation (and real passion) is crucial to human salvation. This pivotal idea of Origen is clearly expressed by Adamantius in the *Dialogue*, 850f-851a. Here, to Marinus' claim that Christ suffered δοκήσει, he objects:

Si putatus est pati et non uere passus est, ergo ... putabatur et sanguis eius effusus et non est effusus ... et ipse putabatur uenisse de coelis sed non uenit, et putabatur resurrexisse a mortuis et non resurrexit, putabatur et salus hominibus data et non est data [δοκήσει δὲ καὶ ἡ σωτηρία τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ οὐκ ἀληθεία].

And shortly after, in 852b:

Quid ergo uenit nos docere ueritatem is in quo quod uidebatur ueritas non erat? Et quomodo nobis salutem praestitit? Per mendacium nos uocauit ad uitam?

This argument is so important that it is repeated in 853d-854e by Adamantius and Eutropius;¹²³ it is again Origen's argument based on salvation, against docetism. Similarly, Adamantius insists on this concept in 857a: '*nisi uerbum de coelo descenderit, et non homo in coelum ascenderit ... antequam uerbum dei descenderet et carnem assumeret humanae naturae, nemo ascendit in coelum*'; in the extant Greek: εἰ μὴ ὁ Λόγος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ κατήλθε, οὐκ ἂν ἄνθρωπος εἰς οὐρανοῦς ἀνῆλθεν ... πρὶν οὖν τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ Λόγον κατελθεῖν καὶ ἀναλαβεῖν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ μήτρας, οὐδεὶς ἀνῆλθε. Athanasius will take over precisely from Origen the idea that God had to become a human being for the human being to be divinized. This notion is so crucial that it is repeated again in 855c: '*Uerbum didicimus descendisse de coelo et assumpsisse carnem ex immaculata uirgine, natum et ex spiritu sancto. Hic sustinuit omnes humanas passiones, ut homines saluaret.*' Salvation depends

¹²³ '*Ueritas autem, hoc est Christus ... carnem et ossa et sanguinem habuit, sicut scriptum est ... si neque carnem neque sanguinem habuit, cuius carnis et cuius sanguinis similitudinem nobis in sacramentorum obseruatione tradebat? ... Uerum est enim quod passus est Christus, et uere uenit in carne, et uere ab eo missi sunt omnes apostoli ad praedicandum ... si per mortem et sanguinem saluatoris salutem hominibus scripturae dicunt esse collatam, ille autem neque sanguinem suum fudisse pro hominibus, neque mortem uere asseritur pertulisse, manifestum est non esse uerum quod dicitur, nec uere salutem consecutos eos qui per hanc fidem credunt se saluandos*'.

upon Christ's incarnation and passion. Adamantius buttresses his argument in 854ef by means of two major quotations from 1*Corinthians*, which are precisely among the main and favourite Biblical pillars of Origen's own doctrine of resurrection and apokatastasis, together with 1*Cor.* 15:24-8, and they all belong to the same chapter: '*Si autem Christus non resurrexit a mortuis, inanis est praedicatio nostra, et uacua est fides uestra ... sicut per Adam omnes moriuntur, ita et in Christo omnes uiuificabuntur*' (1*Cor.* 15:14 and 22-3).

This is why it is crucial for Adamantius to argue that Christ was born from Mary – that is, taking from her his humanity –, not simply *through* Mary, against Marinus' claim that Christ '*per Mariam natus est, sed non de Maria, sicut aqua per fistulam transit, nihil ex ea accipiens*' (855e, notably the same contention reported in some heresiological accounts, from Hippolytus onward, against Bardaisan's purported docetism).¹²⁴ Now, Origen in *Princ.* IV 4.5 maintains, exactly like Adamantius, that Christ '*de Maria corpus adsumit*', 'from Mary', and not 'through Mary'; likewise, '*nasceretur ex Maria*', again 'from Mary', is the formula that Jerome reports from Origen (*Apol.* 2.2). Origen is adamant that Christ did take up a human body, and to support this he has again recourse to the argument from our salvation (es. *Princ.* IV 4.4; *Hom. Luc.* 17: '*tale quale nos corpus habuisse ut per similitudinem corporis etiam nostra corpora redimeret a peccatis*').

It is very interesting that, in order to refute the Bardaisanite Marinus' statement, Adamantius cites the angel's words to Mary in *Luke* 1:35, the same words that appear in Hippolytus' account in the Ὑλεγχος concerning this precise claim of the Bardaisanites (6.35).¹²⁵ And Hippolytus – even though there are well-known problems concerning his double identity – was a contemporary of Origen: the Ὑλεγχος was written probably after the year 222, which was also the year of Bardaisan's death, and was significantly handed down under Origen's name.

Indeed, it is remarkable that Origen used this very Scriptural passage to *oppose* docetism, and the author of the Ὑλεγχος probably knew this. The most important passage in this regard is *Princ.* I *praef.* 4, where first he declares Christ's birth to have been *from* Mary (again, not *through* Mary) and the Holy Spirit, and thence he refutes docetism:

Corpus assumpsit nostro corpori simile, eo solo differens, quod natum ex uirgine et spiritu sancto est. Et his Iesus Christus natus et passus est in ueritate, et non per phantasiam, communem hanc mortem uere mortuus.

¹²⁴ See I. Ramelli, *Bardaisan of Edessa* (2009); Jean-Daniel Kaestli, 'Valentinisme italien et valentinisme oriental. Leurs divergences à propos de la nature du corps de Jésus', in Bentley Layton (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, 1. *The School of Valentinus* (Leiden, 1980), 391-403; Einar Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed: The Church of the Valentinians* (Leiden, 2006), 503; Joel Kalvesmaki, 'Italian versus Eastern Valentinianism?', *VC* 62 (2008), 79-89, 86.

¹²⁵ Οἱ δ' αὖ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνατολῆς λέγουσιν, ὃν ἔστιν Ἀξιόνικος καὶ Ἀρδησιάνης, ὅτι πνευματικὸν ἦν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Σωτῆρος· Πνεῦμα γὰρ ἅγιον ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Μαρίαν – τοῦτέστιν ἡ Σοφία –, καὶ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ ὑψίστου – τοῦτέστιν ἡ δημιουργικὴ τέχνη –, ἵνα διαπλασθῇ τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος τῇ Μαρίᾳ δοθέν.

Also, in his extant Greek works Origen repeatedly cites precisely *Luke* 1:35, or alludes to it, in reference to Christ's true incarnation. In *Comm. in Io.* 32.16 he states that Christ ἐκ παρθένου τῆς Μαρίας καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος τὴν γένεσιν ἀνείληφεν. In *Comm. in Io.* 6.11.67 Origen distinguishes the prophetic spirit and power given to John the Baptist as a gift from God, the new Elijah, from those which were active at the conception of Jesus in humanity and divinity:

ὀνομάσαντος ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰωάννου γενέσεως ἀλλὰ πνεῦμα καὶ δύναμιν διὰ τοῦ Καὶ αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἡλίου, ... διὰ μυρίων δυνάμενος ἀποδεικνύει γραφῶν ἕτερον εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ τὴν ὀνομαζομένην δύναμιν τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς; ... Ἀρκεσθήσεται δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος πρὸς μὲν τὸ διαφέρειν δύναμιν πνεύματος τὸ Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ δύναιμι ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι· πρὸς δὲ τὰ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις πνεύματα, ἅτε δεδωρημένα αὐτοῖς ὑπὸ θεοῦ οἰοῖται ἐκείνων ὀνομάζεσθαι κτήματα τὸ Πνεῦμα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται.

In *Hom. in Jer.* 1.8 Origen notes the identity between the pre-existent Logos and the incarnated Christ, in whom he believes against docetic tendencies and whose conception he cites.¹²⁶ In *Comm. in Matth.* 10.17 Origen quotes *Luke* 1:35 in the context of a discussion on Mary's perpetual virginity.¹²⁷ Moreover, in *Princ.* I 3.2 Origen cites *Luke* 1:35 in support of the existence of the Holy Spirit and its relation to Jesus Christ:

Spiritus sanctus super Christum descendisse perscribitur ... ipse dominus insufflauit in apostolos post resurrectionem, dicens: 'Accipite spiritum sanctum', et ad Mariam dicitur: 'Spiritus Sanctus ueniet super te'. Paulus uero docet quia 'nemo potest dicere dominum Iesum, nisi in spiritu sancto'. Ex quibus omnibus didicimus tantae esse et auctoritatis et dignitatis substantiam spiritus sancti.

¹²⁶ Ἀληθεύεσθαι περὶ αὐτοῦ τὸ πρὶν ἢ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καλὸν ἢ πονηρὸν ἐκλέξεται τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἀπειθεῖ πονηρία ... Ἄλλ' ἔρει τις· εἰ καὶ δύνασαι ἐπὶ τὸν σωτῆρα ἀναγαγεῖν τὸ οὐκ οἶδεν, καὶ δύνασαι λέγειν ἐπὶ τὸν σωτῆρα τὸ τοιοῦτο καὶ παιδίον αὐτὸν λαμβάνειν, οὐ προσκόπτει σοι ταῦτα λέγειν περὶ τοῦ μονογενοῦς, περὶ τοῦ πρωτοτόκου πάσης κτίσεως, περὶ τοῦ πρὶν συλλήψεως εὐαγγελισθέντος κατὰ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σέ, καὶ δύναιμι ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι;

¹²⁷ Καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωσήφ καὶ Σίμων καὶ Ἰούδας· Καὶ αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ οὐχὶ πᾶσαι πρὸς ἡμᾶς εἰσιν; Ὡς οὖν αὐτὸν εἶναι Ἰωσήφ καὶ Μαρίας υἱόν. Τοὺς δὲ ἀδελφοὺς Ἰησοῦ φασὶ τινες εἶναι, ἐκ παραδόσεως ὀρμώμενοι τοῦ ἐπιγεγραμμένου κατὰ Πέτρον εὐαγγελίου ἢ τῆς βίβλου Ἰακώβου, υἱοὺς Ἰωσήφ ἐκ προτέρας γυναικὸς συνωκηκυίας αὐτῷ πρὸ τῆς Μαρίας. Οἱ δὲ ταῦτα λέγοντες τὸ ἀξίωμα τῆς Μαρίας ἐν παρθενίᾳ τηρεῖν μέχρι τέλους βούλονται, ἵνα μὴ τὸ κριθὲν ἐκεῖνο σῶμα διακονήσασθαι τῷ εἰπόντι λόγῳ· Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σε καὶ δύναιμι ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι, γινῶ κοίτην ἀνδρὸς μετὰ τὸ ἐπελθεῖν ἐν αὐτῇ πνεῦμα ἅγιον καὶ τὴν ἐπεσκιακυῖαν αὐτῇ δύναμιν ἐξ ὕψους. Καὶ οἶμαι λόγον ἔχειν ἀνδρῶν μὲν καθαρότητος τῆς ἐν ἀγνεΐᾳ ἀπαρχὴν γεγονέναι τὸν Ἰησοῦν, γυναικῶν δὲ τὴν Μαρίαν· οὐ γὰρ εὐφημον ἄλλη παρ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τῆς παρθενίας ἐπιγράψασθαι.

In II 6.7 the quotation of *Luke* 1:35 with Gabriel's words to Mary¹²⁸ is inserted in the context of a reflection precisely '*de incarnatione et de deitate Christi*'.

In order to demonstrate that Christ truly assumed our human nature, and in full, Adamantius in 852b-853a observes that Jesus calls himself 'son of the human being', not 'Son of God', because he was really born from a human being. Now, the insistence on Jesus' title 'son of the human being' is typical of Origen: not only does it occur 123 times only in his extant Greek works,¹²⁹ but it is also explained by Origen in the very same way as it is commented on by Adamantius in the *Dialogue*. Adamantius insists on the importance of this title, which means that Jesus, differently from Adam and Eve, was generated by a human being. Likewise, in *Exh. ad mart.* 35 Origen explains that Jesus is the 'son of the human being' because he was born from Mary (again 'from', and not 'through') and is a descendant of David:

ὁ δὲ γενόμενος ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα καὶ διὰ τοῦτο υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου τυγχάνων καὶ γενόμενος ἐκ γυναικὸς καὶ αὐτῆς οὕσης ἀνθρώπου καὶ διὰ τοῦτο χρηματίζων.

And in *Comm. in Io.* 32.25.323 he observes again that the title 'son of the human being' is due to Jesus' being a descendant of David: ἦν καὶ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, γενόμενος ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ τὸ κατὰ σάρκα. A more complete development is granted by Origen to this issue in *Comm. in Matth.* 17.20: the formula 'son of the human being' should not induce exegetes to look for a particular human being whose son Jesus is, but the Saviour calls himself in this way for the sake of divine dispensation toward us: just as God in parables is said to be a human being, so is Christ, properly, Son of God and God, but for the sake of God's dispensation he also becomes 'son of the human being', that is to say, a human being.¹³⁰ In *Comm. in Io.* 32.25.324-5 Origen remarks that

¹²⁸ '*In euangelio secundum Lucam, cum dicit Gabrihel ad Mariam, « Spiritus domini ueniet super te, et uirtus altissimi obumbrabit tibi »*'.

¹²⁹ CC 1.48; 2.49; 8.15; *Comm. in Io.* 2.10.74; 6.59.303; 10.17.99; 19.11.68; 19.18.115-6; 20.43.402-5, 410; 28.14.109, 117; 32.19.251; 32.25.318; 32.25.319, 321, 323-4, 325, 327-8, 329; 32.28.345, 347, 354, 357; 32.29.359; 32.29.363; 32.32.394; *Fr. in Io.* fr. 71.3-24; *Exhort. ad mart.* 4; 12; 34; 35; 37; *De orat.* 11.3; 27.2-4; *De Pasch.* 104.26; 146.25; *De engastr.* 7.51; *Fr. in Ier.* fr. 28; *Fr. in Luc.* fr. 154; 199; *Schol. in Luc.* (PG 17, 340.31; 341.3-48; 344.2); *Hom. in Ier.* 12.13; *Hom. in Ez.* 450.27; *Comm. in Matth.* 10.2; 10.12; 12.3; 12.29-30; 12.43; 13.1-2; 13.8-9; 14.20; 15.23*; 16.4; 16.8; 12.31-2, 34; 15.24; 16.4; 17.20; *Comm. in Matth. Ser.* 95.23; *Fr. in Matth.* 6.23; 7.4; *Schol. in Matth.* (PG 17, 309.2); *Fr. in Ps.* 28.9; 118.176; 138.20; *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1445.48; 1532.16; 1621.36; 780.45); *Sel. in Ez.* (PG 13, 780.56); *Schol. in Luc.* (PG 17, 348-9).

¹³⁰ Τὸν σωτῆρα υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἢ υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου ἑαυτὸν ὀνομακέναι, δηλοῦντα ὅτι, ὥσπερ ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπους οἰκονομῶν ὡς ἐν παραβολαῖς ἄνθρωπος λέγεται, τάχα δὲ πῶς καὶ γίνεται, οὕτως καὶ ὁ σωτὴρ προηγουμένως μὲν υἱὸς ὦν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θεὸς ἐστι ... οὐ μένει δὲ ἐν ᾧ ἐστι προηγουμένως, ἀλλὰ γίνεται κατ' οἰκονομίαν ... υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, κατὰ τὸ μιμεῖσθαι, ὅταν ἀνθρώπους οἰκονομῇ, τὸν θεόν, λεγόμενον ἐν παραβολαῖς καὶ γινόμενόν πῶς ἄνθρωπον. καὶ οὐ χρὴ τίνα ἄνθρωπον ζητεῖν κάκεῖνον λέγειν υἱὸν εἶναι

the deep union between Jesus' divinity and humanity rendered it possible that Jesus' death on the cross, out of obedience, was also a glorification of the Father.¹³¹

The reference to the inner human being also reflects a typical conception of Origen, which goes back to Philo (e.g., *Plant.* 42; *Congr.* 97) and Paul (2*Cor.* 4:16; *Rom.* 7:22), and even to Plato himself (*Rep.* 589A, on which Plotinus, *Enn.* V 1.10 surely depends as well). It occurs many times in his writings, for example in *CC* 6.63, *Comm. in Cant.* prologue, *Comm. in Io.* 20.22, *Comm. in Rom.* 1.19 and 7.4, or *Hom. in Gen.* 1.13.¹³² A whole theorization is found in his *Dialogue with Heraclides*, where Origen of course observes that the inner human being, since it is in God's image, cannot be material, because God, differently from all creatures, is entirely non-material, but one of the most interesting occurrences is in *Princ.* IV 4.9, where the motif of the inner human being is directly related to the apokatastasis.¹³³

VI. Conclusion. Refutation of the arguments against the Adamantius-Origen identification. Some light on the mystery of the *Dialogue*?

What emerges from a careful investigation and comparison is that the reasons usually adduced to deny Origen's paternity of the dialogue, and more specifically the identification of the thought expressed by Adamantius therein with that of Origen himself, are ungrounded and seem to mainly depend upon a scarce knowledge of Origen's true thought.

Pretty summarizes the aforementioned reasons in three main points and four sub-points, as follows.¹³⁴

τὸν σωτήρα, ἀλλὰ σπάντα ἐπὶ τῆς ἐννοίας τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τῶν λεγουσῶν παραβολῶν αὐτὸν εἶναι ἄνθρωπον συνετῶς ἀκούειν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ἑαυτὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

¹³¹ Νῦν ἐδοξάσθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. τοῦτον δ', οἶμαι, καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὑπερύψωσεν, γενόμενον ὑπήκοον μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ· ὁ γὰρ Λόγος ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ὁ θεὸς Λόγος, οὐκ ἐπεδέχετο τὸ ὑπερυψωθῆναι. ἡ δὲ ὑπερύψωσις τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, γενομένη αὐτῷ δοξάσαντι τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ θανάτῳ, αὕτη ἦν, τὸ μηκέτι ἕτερον αὐτὸν εἶναι τοῦ λόγου ἀλλὰ τὸν αὐτὸν αὐτῷ. εἰ γὰρ ὁ κολλῶμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνεύμα ἔστιν, ὥς καὶ ἐπὶ τούτου καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος μηκέτι ἂν λέγεσθαι τὸ Δύο εἶσιν, πῶς οὐχὶ μᾶλλον τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μετὰ τοῦ Λόγου.

¹³² See I. Ramelli, 'Philosophical Allegoresis' (2008), 55-99; A. Lund-Jacobsen, 'Genesis 1-3' (2008), 213-32, who fails to point out Philo's strong influence, but offers a rich account anyway.

¹³³ '*Impium uidetur ut mens, quae Dei capax est, substantialem recipiat interitum, tamquam hoc ipsum, quod intellegere deum potest et sentire, non ei sufficere possit ad perpetuitatem, maxime cum, etiamsi per negligentiam decidat mens ne pure et integre in se recipiat Deum, semper tamen habeat in se uelut semina quaedam reparandi ac reuocandi melioris intellectus, cum ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, qui creauit eum, interior homo, qui et rationabilis dicitur, reuocatur*'.

¹³⁴ Robert A. Pretty, *Dialogue on the True Faith in God: De recta in Deum fide* (Leuven, 1997), 11-4 puts forward the reasons that I list below, which have all been refuted in the present study.

1) 'The style of writing is different from Origen's ... Origen's undisputed works reveal a more complex and rhetorical use of the Greek language'. This is true, but the *Dialogue of Adamantius* presents itself as the record of a debate, like the *Dialogue with Heraclides*. The latter provides a good stylistic parallel, being a transcription of an *impromptu* debate. And we know that Origen did not rework, nor even reread, such transcriptions. That he did not even reread the stenographic texts of his *διάλεκτοι* is indeed testified to by his *Letter to Friends in Alexandria* (PG 16, 625B) about his public disputation with Candidus the Valentinian: '*Ne relectum quidem vel recensitum a me antea fuerat, sed ita neglectum iacebat ut vix inveniri potuerit.*' In the same way, the editor of his *Dialogue with Heraclides* observed that 'it is so tainted with errors that it would be necessary, not to correct it, but to write it anew'.¹³⁵ Thence, we should certainly not look for Origen's refined style in the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, which is absent also from the *Dialogue with Heraclides*.

Moreover, that the *Dialogue of Adamantius* reflects Origen's ideas in the parts to be ascribed to Adamantius does not mean that the *Dialogue* is a work of Origen or was composed by Origen himself. As a consequence, one should not expect to find Origen's literary style in it.

2) 'The doctrinal teaching of the *Dialogue* is different at some points from that of Origen'. This is a more serious objection, but I have extensively argued that in fact it is not the case that what Adamantius argues in the *Dialogue* is different from Origen's ideas.

In particular, these are the supposed doctrinal discrepancies between Origen and Adamantius, the character of the *Dialogue*:

2.1) 'Origen interprets the 'garments of skin' ... as meaning humanity's liability to die, and seems to have asserted that 'this body which we wear is the cause of our sins; wherefore also he called it a fetter, as it can hinder the soul from good works'. This teaching is denied in Adamantius'. The quotation concerning the body as a cause of human sins is not from Origen, but is reported by Photius as an account given by Methodius, who criticized Origen in respect to the body and resurrection, showing a severe misunderstanding of Origen's conception of each body's εἶδος. Therefore, the quotation on the body as a cause of human sins is unreliable and cannot be considered a trustworthy expression of Origen's thought.

As for the former point, concerning the 'skin tunics' as human mortality, this is really what Origen thought, but it is not at odds with Adamantius' position in the *Dialogue*. Moreover, it has been demonstrated on the basis of his texts that Origen in fact did not equate the skin tunics to the body *tout court*.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Jean Scherer, *Entretien d'Origène avec Héraclide*, SC 67 (Paris, 1960), 49: 'Il faudrait, non le corriger, mais le récrire'.

¹³⁶ I. Ramelli, *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007). Nyssen followed Origen closely in his own conception of the 'skin tunics'.

2.2) ‘Against Origen’s view that the blood of Christ was the price paid to the Devil for the redemption of our souls, the *Dialogue* claims that we have become slaves of sin, not of the Devil, and that Christ redeemed us from the slavery of sin, not of the Devil’. First of all, there is no contradiction proper at the ethical level, because Origen equates the devil and evil or sin, in respect to their meaning and function, in more than one passage, although in others he distinguishes, at the ontological level, between the devil as a creature – a fallen angel – and evil/sin/spiritual death, which is no creature of God. It is thanks to this distinction that he can argue for the eventual apokatastasis of the devil, who will no more be ‘enemy and death’. Moreover, Origen indeed maintained that Christ redeemed humanity from enslavement to sin and evil (a motif that, not accidentally, Gregory of Nyssa took up precisely from Origen¹³⁷): Christ, who is Life, liberates rational creatures from spiritual death, that is, sin and evil.¹³⁸

2.3) ‘Adamantius questions the immortality of the soul, which Origen upheld’. In fact, in this case, too, there is no discrepancy between Adamantius’ and Origen’s positions. In his *Dialogue with Heraclides* Origen too insists that there is a sense in which the soul can be properly said to be mortal, in reference precisely to the ‘death of the soul’ caused by sin. He states that ‘the soul is mortal in respect to the real death’ (26: θνητὴ τοῦ ὄντως θανάτου ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴ).¹³⁹ Also in *Sel. in Ps.* (PG 12, 1412C) it is stated that the human soul cannot be killed κατ’ οὐσίαν, but it can be eliminated from virtue and knowledge by evilness and sin (διὰ τῆς κακίας); this is evidently the above-mentioned ‘real death’. Such a conception is in complete harmony with Adamantius’ position in the *Dialogue*.

2.4) Adamantius ‘also stands firmly for a resurrection of the very bodies we now have. The resurrection body is indeed a changed one outwardly (transfigured), but the earthly body keeps its identity, and does not become a different one. Origen, however, though believing that the present body will rise in incorruption, does not hold that it will resume its original nature, but that ‘a certain power is implanted in the body, which is not destroyed, and from which the body is raised up in incorruption’. ‘Origen therefore thinks that the same flesh will not be restored to the soul, but that the *form* of each, according to the *appearance* by which the flesh is now distinguished, shall arise stamped upon *another* spiritual body, so that everyone will again appear *the same in form*, and that this is the resurrection which is promised ... it is necessary that the resurrection should be only that of the *form*’.

¹³⁷ Greg. Nyss., *De an.* 101-4; see I. Ramelli’s commentary in *Gregorio di Nissa* (2007).

¹³⁸ See I. Ramelli, ‘Origen’s Exegesis of Jeremiah’ (2008), with documentation.

¹³⁹ Only in the eventual apokatastasis will the soul be immortal even in this meaning: τάχα τὸ θνητὸν τῆς ψυχῆς οὐκ ἀεὶ ἐστὶν θνητόν ... ἐὰν δὲ γένηται ἐν βεβαιώσει τοῦ μακαριότητος, ὥστε ἀνεπίδεκτος εἶναι τοῦ θανάτου (*ibid.* 26-7).

The latter passage, a quotation from Methodius' *De resurrectione* 12 as handed down by Photius, moreover in a summarized form, cannot possibly be considered to represent Origen's view accurately: Methodius entirely misunderstood Origen's εἶδος – the 'form' as a metaphysical principle in the Aristotelian sense – as a mere μορφή, the external shape or appearance, and in this way he practically turned Origen's view upside down and completely misrepresented it. Indeed, while Origen maintained that one's resurrected body will have the same εἶδος as one's earthly body, Methodius ascribes to him the idea that one's resurrected body will have the same shape or μορφή as one's earthly body (*Res.* 25.2).¹⁴⁰ Origen, however, not only did not think so and did not mean μορφή by εἶδος, but even refuted this assumption overtly in *Princ.* II 10.2, where he observes that an earthly body does have a σχῆμα, μορφή, and ἔξις, that is, a visible shape and *habitus*, but nothing of the sort can be said of a spiritual body.¹⁴¹ The continuity between one's earthly body and one's spiritual body lies, not possibly in a σχῆμα or μορφή, but in the metaphysical form or εἶδος of one's body, not in its shape. Therefore, Methodius' report, furthermore coming from a very indirect transmission, cannot be taken as evidence of Origen's true thought on the resurrection.

As for the former passage, from Origen's *Contra Celsum* (5.23), on the power that has the body rise in incorruptibility, it is actually not inconsistent with what Adamantius says in the *Dialogue*, as I have already shown while treating Origen's true thought on resurrection. The only difference is that in *Contra Celsum* Origen avoids using the 'omnia possibilia Deo' formula, a Gospel quote, whereas Adamantius in the *Dialogue* uses it: but in his debate against the pagan Middle-Platonist Celsus Origen won't have recourse to this Scriptural argument, whereas with Christian interlocutors he has no problem in employing it. Origen's position will be taken over by Gregory of Nyssa in his *De anima*: he will indeed use the 'omnia possibilia Deo' argument in reference to the miracle of the resurrection, but at the same time he will also try to explain the resurrection rationally and will maintain that everything is certainly possible with God, but not what is intrinsically contradictory or absurd.¹⁴²

3) 'Large use is made in this *Dialogue* of the writings of Methodius of Olympus ... This third point is perhaps the most important for the rejection of the Origenic authorship of the Adamantian dialogue ... Methodius lived at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries, but Origen died *ca.* 254 ... Methodius was frankly *anti-Origenistic* ... Even if we were to suppose that

¹⁴⁰ 'Τὸν ἕκαστος ἡμῶν καὶ κατὰ τὴν μορφήν ὃ αὐτὸς ἦ, καθάπερ ἐλέχθη καὶ Ὁριγένης.

¹⁴¹ 'Omne corpus schema aliquod habet, id est aliquo habitu deformatur ... nullus enim hoc negabit ... Requiremus ab eis, si possunt nobis spiritualis corporis habitum demonstrare atque describere, quod utique facere nullo modo poterunt'.

¹⁴² See I. Ramelli's essays and commentary on *De anima* in *ead.*, Gregorio di Nissa (2007).

it was chronologically possible for the two writers to be contemporaneous, it is highly unlikely that so great a master as Origen would have been willing to copy almost verbatim from someone else'.

Now, it is Methodius in his own dialogues who may have drawn material from the *Dialogue* in its original redaction, rather than the reverse. Also, Methodius was in fact an Origenian; his works, especially his *Symposium* and *On Free Will*, are full of Origenian ideas, and his criticism of Origen is in fact limited to the modality of the resurrection of the body, and is only due to a misunderstanding (essentially, as I have mentioned, the misunderstanding of εἶδος as μορφή).¹⁴³ Socrates in *Hist. eccl.* VI 13 even attests that he changed his mind on this point and that, after writing his *De resurrectione* as a criticism of Origen, he retracted his attack and composed a dialogue characterized by the expression of deep esteem for Origen. Socrates is indeed speaking of the first detractors of Origen, whom he calls φιλολοῖδοροι: Methodius, Eustathius of Antioch, Apolinarius, and Theophilus of Alexandria, and explains their criticism by means of their lack of understanding.¹⁴⁴ After observing that they contradicted each other in rejecting each what the others received of Origen's thought, and vice versa, Socrates devotes special attention to Methodius and testifies to his final admiration and expression of esteem for Origen: Μεθόδιος μὲν οὖν, πολλὰ καταδραμὼν τοῦ Ὠριγένους, ὕστερον ὥς ἐκ παλινωδίας θαυμάζει τὸν ἄνδρα ἐν τῷ διαλόγῳ ὃν ἐπέγραψεν Ξενῶνα.¹⁴⁵

It is impossible to overlook the fact that the *Dialogue of Adamantius* shares a good deal of material with Methodius' *Περὶ τοῦ αὐτεξουσίου* and *Περὶ ἀναστάσεως*,¹⁴⁶ and the passage taken from the former is the same as that quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* VII 22, and shortly later by the Cappadocians in *Philoc.* 24. But it is not at all certain that the *Dialogue* depends on Methodius: it may also be that Methodius borrowed from it, *i.e.*, from its original

¹⁴³ See I. Ramelli, 'L'Inno a Cristo-Logos nel Simposio di Metodio di Olimpo: alle origini della poesia filosofica cristiana', in *Motivi e forme della poesia cristiana antica tra Scrittura e tradizione classica. Incontro di studiosi dell'Antichità cristiana, Roma, Augustinianum, 3-5 Maggio 2007* (Rome, 2008), 257-80. In addition to references therein, on Methodius see also John Behr, *The Nicene Faith* (Crestwood, NY, 2004), 38-47.

¹⁴⁴ Thus, they blamed thinkers who were better than they were (τοὺς ἑαυτῶν κείττονας ψέγειν). This is the same explanation as is offered by Pamphilus, at the beginning of his *Apology for Origen, Athanasius, and Rufinus*: Origen's accusers either misunderstood him, due to the difficulty of his thought, or were in bad faith and malevolent. This is also the presupposition of Didimus the Blind's resolution to compose a commentary on Origen's *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, obviously because of its difficulty.

¹⁴⁵ In Greek ξενὼν is the guestroom. A mention of this dialogue of Methodius is to be found in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, cod. 235.

¹⁴⁶ A complete prospect of these dependences is found in van de Sande Bakhuyzen's introduction to his edition, xxxviii-xxxix. In the critical apparatus of his edition, then, all relationships between the *Dialogue* and Methodius are carefully traced and indicated, from 136 onward. Greek excerpts from both of Methodius' books are preserved in Photius, *Bibl. codd.* 236 and 234 respectively. The whole texts are only extant in a late Slavonic translation.

Greek redaction, now lost, but used by Rufinus for his translation and very probably known to the Philocalists as well.

It is perfectly understandable that, in order to defend the doctrine of freewill, Methodius should have taken over Origen's arguments against the Valentinians (in the *Dialogue* they are put forward in Book IV 840aff., where Adamantius opposes Drosierus and Valens: it is this section that closely corresponds to large parts of Methodius' *De autexusio*, not only in ideas and argument, but in several passages even in verbal expressions). Methodius, who seems to have died in or around the year 311, probably wrote his treatises between *ca.* 280 and 310. The source or the original form of the *Dialogue*, which, as I suspect, goes back to Origen's thought, is earlier. Eusebius, at the beginning of the fourth century, may have drawn his quotation either from Methodius or from the *Dialogue*. But he also knew that Origen's discourse in it concerning God, matter, evil, creation, and theodicy, was very close to that of a certain 'Maximus' (behind whom Maximus of Tyre might lie), whereas according to the Philocalists, who read both Eusebius and the *Dialogue*, that material belonged to Origen.

Indeed, I have argued elsewhere¹⁴⁷ that there are good reasons to hypothesise that Origen knew Maximus of Tyre's thought and took it over in his *Contra Celsum*. If this is the case and if Adamantius' arguments in the *Dialogue* indeed reflect Origen's ideas, as I have endeavoured to demonstrate, this would explain very well the mystery of the double attribution of the same material to 'Maximus' by Eusebius and to Origen (identified with Adamantius) by the Philocalists. This would also explain the presence of the very same material in Methodius' *On Free Will*: he drew it, not from Eusebius, but from the original Greek redaction or source of the *Dialogue of Adamantius*. This may derive from one of the many, real *dialexeis* that Origen held in his maturity, probably under Philip the Arab, in the day of Bar Yamma, Bardaisan's disciple, or more probably, given the occasional inaccuracy of the theses ascribed to Origen's opponents therein, from the reworking of genuine Origenian material into such a frame. This Greek work was later translated by Rufinus, who identified Adamantius with Origen, whereas the extant Greek is much later, contains references to a post-Constantinian state of affairs and even Byzantine linguistic elements, in addition to many strategic cuts, additions, and modifications.

¹⁴⁷ In 'Maximus on Evil' (2010).

