

As the Bandit Will I Confess You:  
Luke 23.39–43 in Early Christian Interpretation

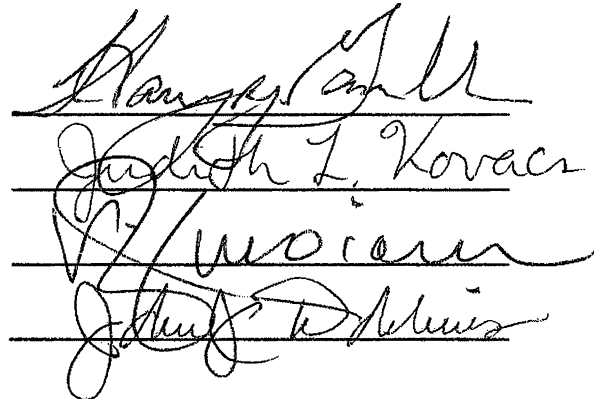
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A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Religious Studies

University of Virginia  
May, 2012

  
The block contains four handwritten signatures, each written on a horizontal line. From top to bottom, the signatures are: 1. A signature that appears to be 'Hampy' or similar. 2. A signature that appears to be 'Judith L. Kovacs'. 3. A signature that appears to be 'W. Morrison'. 4. A signature that appears to be 'John D. Lewis'.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation comprises the first thorough, critical analysis of the early Christian interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 (up to 450 CE). Tatian's *Diatessaron* is its earliest plausible reception, while the *Gospel of Peter* does not depend on Luke here but instead attests to an earlier, simpler apologetic narrative used by Luke. Contrary to the implication of modern commentaries, harmonization of Luke's divergent criminals with the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits is not a major concern, nor do ancient views fit neatly into chronological vs. sylleptical positions. Several find intentional cooperation among the Evangelists, while early Syriac interpreters, starting with the *Diatessaron* itself, dismiss or ignore the Markan/Matthean tradition altogether.

Eschatological dissonance proves a far more prevalent concern. Origen's interpretation—which provokes considerable criticism late in his own life—makes this apparent. Origen remains pivotal in eschatological debates for the next two centuries, though he is criticized for very different reasons.

By far the most common mode of interpretation finds in the second criminal a self-representative figure who models many Christian practices, beliefs and virtues, including prayer, beatitude, supersession, Nicene orthodoxy, faith, justification by faith without works, conversion, catechesis, confession, martyrdom, asceticism, simple speech, and penitence.

Augustine is the first on record to gainsay the traditional idea of the bandit as a martyr—an interpretation perhaps embedded in the original Lucan story—, though he

reverses his position late in 419 CE. This shift calls for late dates for *Sermons* 53A, 285, 327, and 335C. Ephrem emerges as the most creative and influential purveyor of devotional, liturgical and typological readings. On the other hand, Chrysostom's two Good Friday sermons on the bandit are the most influential texts in the early history of interpretation as they inspire Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian and Latin imitations. By the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, Luke 23.39–43 appears as a standard lection (or part of a lection) during Good Friday noon services in the East. Despite the exclusive use of Matthew's passion in the West, the influence of Eastern homilies helps carve out a place for the Lucan story in Western homilies during Holy Week and Easter Octave.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people played a role in the research and writing of this dissertation. It would not have come into existence without them. My heartfelt thanks go first to my adviser, Harry Gamble, as well as Robert Wilken, my adviser until his retirement. I am honored to have had two such *Doctorväter*. Both of them pushed me to develop a serious and compelling topic, to make an obsession of academic excellence, and to master the topic on which I was writing. Judith Kovacs expertly guided me throughout the process, from the focusing of the proposal to the polishing of the final product. Vigen Guroian wisely pointed me to the importance of liturgy in the history of interpretation, and his Armenian heritage motivated me to bring Eastern and Western traditions into conversation. Though a late addition to the committee, John Dobbins was the source of much encouragement and opened up new insights into the history of the Bible in art.

Friends and scholars outside of the University of Virginia also helped me considerably. As one just getting his bearings in Syriac language and traditions, I benefited enormously from the guidance of Sebastian Brock, who not only made available his own bibliography on the bandits in Syriac tradition, but also corrected my Syriac transcriptions and translations. Adam Lehto helped me especially with Aphrahat and the use of Syriac sources in the *Diatessaron*. Kristian Heal answered several emails and was kind enough to run text searches for me in BYU's Electronic Syriac Corpus. Rob Phenix, Kathleen McVey, and Robin Darling Young were also helpful at important moments. I also thank my Syriac grammarian, Malfono Abdul Saadi, for teaching me not only to read, but also to hear and to cherish the *suryoyo* language.

Stefanos Alexopoulos served as an expert guide to liturgical history. Living in Athens, he even helped me obtain photocopies of a Greek sermon attributed to Ephrem and held in the Docheiariou monastery. Daniel Galadza, assistant to Robert Taft, also helped me with liturgical research.

Among my colleagues, Tom Phillips is to be thanked the most. He brought me up to speed on Lucan scholarship, encouraged my early ideas in the direction of this dissertation, and was a valuable conversation partner throughout. Thanks to Tom's meditation, François Bovon was kind enough to send me an advance copy of the section on Luke 23.39–43 in the 4<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Evangelische-Katholischer Kommentar*. John Wright, formerly my professor and now my colleague, has been a source of encouragement to me for over fifteen years. John went out of his way to make copies from an Italian dissertation in the British Library unavailable in any North American libraries. Linda Hasper, who oversees Interlibrary Loans at Point Loma Nazarene University, did the same. She also mediated my borrowing of thousands of volumes from libraries around the country. Persistent encouragement also came from my other colleagues: Ron Benefiel, Rob Thompson, Sam Powell, Mike Lodahl, Heather Ross, Kara Lyons-Pardue, Brad Kelle, Mark Mann, Steve Rodeheaver, Mark Wright, Bob Smith, Jamie Gates, and Sharon Bowles. The administrators here at PLNU also cheered me on. This includes Joe Watkins, Kerry Fulcher, John Hawthorne, and Maggie Bailey, who even allowed me to use her guest home as a writing retreat.

I also thank my dear friend Matt Jenson, not only for his prayers and encouragement, but also for making his home available as a writing retreat on many occasions. I do not deserve such a friend.

Most of all I thank my beautiful wife Tamara, who is the most loving person I know. I started my Ph.D. program shortly after we were married, and her constant love has sustained me and enabled me to finish. I also thank my three beautiful children, Samuel, Elijah and Simone, who also gave me strength with their love and joy with their antics. I thank my parents, Tom and Jane, who supported me in more ways than I could ever count, as well as my two brothers, Dave and Matt, for their friendship.

I thank you all.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
<i>AM</i>	<i>Augustinus Magister, Congrès international augustinien</i>
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
Arb	Arabic
Arm	Armenian
<i>AW</i>	H. G. Opitz, et al, <i>Athanasius Werke</i>
BADLD	Bibliothek der Ältesten Deutschen Literatur-Denkmäler
<i>BC</i>	<i>Biblia Casinensis</i>
BGL	Bibliothek der Griechischen Literatur
<i>BHG</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i>
BPM	Biblia Polyglotta Maritima
Brunellus	H. Brunellus, <i>Sanctorum Patrum orationes et epistolae selectae I</i>
<i>CANT</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti</i>
CBM	Chester Beatty Monographs
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
Cpt	Coptic
<i>CPGNT</i>	J. Cramer, <i>Catenae Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>CPG</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
<i>CPL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSSNMA	Corpus Sacrae Scripturae Neerlandicae Medii Aevi, Series Minor
CWS	Classics of Western Spirituality
<i>DACL</i>	<i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>DS</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de spiritualité</i>
<i>EA</i>	C. Tischendorf, <i>Evangelia Apocrypha</i> , rev. ed.
<i>EAC</i>	<i>Écrits apocryphes chrétiens</i>
ECF	Early Church Fathers
EKK	Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar
<i>ESO</i>	J. Assemani, <i>Sancti Patris nostri Ephraem Syri Opera omnis</i>
ET	English translation
FC	Fontes Christiani
FOC	Fathers of the Church
Fontaine	J. Fontaine et al, <i>Ambroise de Milan: Hymnes</i>
FT	French translation
GCS	Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Jahrhunderte
Glaue	P. Glaue, <i>Ein Bruchstück des Origenes über Genesis 1,28</i>
Grg	Georgic
GLB	Aus der Geschichte der Lateinischen Bibel
<i>GNO</i>	<i>Gregorii Nysseni Opera</i>

GT	German translation
Heinrici	D. C. F. G. Heinrici, <i>Des Petrus von Laodicea</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JSNTSS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplemental Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JW</i>	Josephus, <i>Jewish War</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
Lampe	G. W. H. Lampe, <i>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</i>
LPNF	Library of Post-Nicene Fathers
LT	Latin translation
McCarthy	C. McCarthy, <i>Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron</i>
McKendrick	N. McKendrick, "Quod Christus sit Deus of John Chrysostom"
Morin	D. G. Morin, <i>Miscellanea Agostiniana</i>
Musurillo	H. Musurillo, <i>The Acts of the Christian Martyrs</i>
N-A <sup>27</sup>	Nestle-Aland, <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , 27 <sup>th</sup> ed
Nautin	P. Nautin, <i>Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre</i>
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichean Studies
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NPB</i>	Novae Patrum Bibliothecae
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
ns	New Series
<i>NTA</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>New Testament Apocrypha</i> , E. Hennecke, ed. (1963)
<i>NTA</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>New Testament Apocrypha</i> , rev. ed., W. Schneemelcher, ed. (1993)
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquis
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
<i>OF</i>	<i>Orate Fratres</i>
<i>OTP</i>	J. Charlesworth, ed., <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i>
Payne Smith	R. Payne Smith, <i>S. Cyrilli Alexandriae... Commentarii in Lucae Evangelium</i>
PG	Patrologia Graeca
Pitra	Pitra, <i>Analecta Sacra</i>
P-K	A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, <i>Varia Graeca sacra</i>
Phrantzolas	K. G. Phrantzolas, Ὁσίου Ἐφραίμ τοῦ Σύρου ἔργα
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLS	Patrologia Latina Supplementum
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
Prs	Persian
PS	Patrologia Syriaca
PTA	Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen (Bonn)

PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
Quasten	J. Quasten and A. di Bernardino, <i>Patrology</i>
Ramsbotham	A. Ramsbotham, "Documents: The commentary of Origen on ... Romans"
RB	Revue bénédictine
RDSO	<i>Rivisti degli studi orientali</i>
R-R	W. C. Reischel and J. Rupp, <i>Cyrilli Hierosolymarum archiepiscopi opera</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
Scherer	J. Scherer, ed., <i>Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III.5–V.7</i>
SOFS	Symbolae Osloenses Fasc. Supplet.
SS	Supplemental Series
SCS	Syrian Churches Series
SVC	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
Syr	Syriac
TLG	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
UBS <sup>4</sup>	United Bible Societies, <i>The Greek New Testament</i> , 4 <sup>th</sup> ed.
WGRW	Society of Biblical Literature, Writings from the Greco-Roman World
WSA	Works of Saint Augustine
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

## CHAPTER 1. EMERGENCE

Luke 23.39–43

<sup>39</sup> Then one of the hanging criminals blasphemed him, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

<sup>40</sup> Then the other answered. Rebuking him, he said, “Do you not fear God, since you are in the same judgment?”

<sup>41</sup> “And we justly so, for we are getting back what is worthy of what we have done. But he has done nothing out of place.”

<sup>42</sup> And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

<sup>43</sup> And he said to him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

<sup>39</sup> Εἷς δὲ τῶν κρεμασθέντων κακούργων ἐβλασφήμει αὐτὸν λέγων, Οὐχὶ σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός; σῶσον σεαυτὸν καὶ ἡμᾶς.

<sup>40</sup> ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ ἕτερος ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτῷ ἔφη, Οὐδὲ φοβῆ σὺ τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματι εἶ;

<sup>41</sup> καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν δικαίως, ἄξια γὰρ ὧν ἐπράξαμεν ἀπολαμβάνομεν· οὗτος δὲ οὐδὲν ἄτοπον ἔπραξεν.

<sup>42</sup> καὶ ἔλεγεν, Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου.

<sup>43</sup> καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἀμήν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> P75 (ca. 200–25), the earliest manuscript that includes Luke 23.39–43, supplemented here with accents, punctuation marks, verse divisions, and expansion of its *nomina sacra* (χς in v. 39; θν in v. 40; ιυ in v. 42). Transcriptions of this text in P75 appear in V. Martin and R. Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XIV: Évangile de Luc, chap. 3–24* (Cologne-Geneva: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1961), 142, and also in P. Comfort and D. Barrett, eds., *The Complete Text of the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 552–3. The major critical editions (UBS<sup>4</sup> and NA<sup>27</sup>) follow P75 here.

### *1A. Introduction*

“[T]raditional stories have a life of their own within a culture ... [S]tories shift and change in relation to shifts in a culture’s values, intellectual temper, institutions and concerns,” notes Devora Steinmetz.<sup>2</sup> As stories multiply and change across Rabbinic literature, so also do early Christian stories in and through the interpretations intertwined with them. A most fascinating example of such a shifting story in early Christianity is that of the two bandits crucified alongside Jesus of Nazareth. Embedded in the canonical passion narratives, thus in the dramatic heart of Christian faith and self-understanding, these literary (historical?) characters take on a life of their own, as it were. One can already see their story changing and multiplying across the canonical passion narratives even as it first emerges.

### *1B. Emergence*

The two so-called thieves first make their first appearance in the earliest extant gospel, Mark, written ca. 70. Here (15.27) two “brigands” or “bandits” / λησται are executed at either side of Jesus. The author has both characters join in a chorus of mockery against Jesus (15.32b). In keeping with the narrative attempt to describe Jesus’ death as the redemptive fulfillment of prophecy, as the bandits “were reviling” / ὠνείδιζον they

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<sup>2</sup> “Agada Unbound: Inter-Agadic Characterization of Sages in the Bavli and Implications for Reading Agada,” in *Creation and Composition: The Contribution of the Bavli Redactors (Stammaim) to the Aggadah*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 114, ed. J. L. Rubenstein (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 335.

allude to Psalm 22.6–7 (LXX 21.7–8),<sup>3</sup> Psalm 69.19–20 (LXX 68.20–1),<sup>4</sup> and perhaps Isaiah 53.3 as well.<sup>5</sup> The presence of bandits may also recall Isaiah 53.12,<sup>6</sup> a prophetic intertext explicitly inscribed into later manuscripts and quotations of Mark 15.28.<sup>7</sup> The arrangement, one at the right and one at the left, paints the picture of a king surrounded by scornful subjects and illustrates the excessive irony of the execution of Israel’s anointed. That bandits join in the reviling in the midst of their own execution reveals the utter humiliation of the Markan servant.

The term λησται may also here allude to Barabbas, though he is only explicitly labeled a ληστής in John 18.40. Still, the term pins this Markan pair as insurrectionists, not petty robbers.<sup>8</sup> It suggests that their arrest stems from a recent, perhaps seasonal zealot Passover raid against Romans or their Jewish sympathizers. The term may point

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<sup>3</sup> The LXX Psalmist calls himself “reviled” / ὄνειδος in 22.7 and says that all who see him “ridicule” / ἐχεμυκτήρισάν in 22.8.

<sup>4</sup> Again, a variation on the same root term of “reviling” / ὀνειδισμόν appears twice, once in 68.20 and again in 68.21.

<sup>5</sup> “But his form was without honor, forsaken beyond all people” / ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον ἐκλείπον παρὰ πάντας ἀνθρώπους.

<sup>6</sup> “He was reckoned among the lawless ones” / ἐν τοῖς ἀνόμοις ἐλογίσθη.

<sup>7</sup> “And the scripture was fulfilled that said, ‘And he was reckoned among the lawless ones’” / καὶ ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφὴ ἣ λέγουσα, Καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη; see UBS 4:186n4. This prophetic proof text is absent from the earliest manuscripts (⋈ A B C D) but quite prevalent elsewhere.

<sup>8</sup> On the socio-political significance of the Greek (ληστής) and Latin (*latro*) terms and the prevalence of “social banditry” in Palestine in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, see T. Grünewald, *Bandits in the Roman Empire: Myth and Reality*, trans. J. Drinkwater (London: Routledge, 2004); R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest and Alienation in the Empire* (London: Routledge, 1992), appendix B; R. Horsley and J. Hanson, eds., *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1985); B. D. Shaw, “Bandits in the Roman Empire,” *Past and Present* 105 (1984): 3–52. Josephus refers to such figures several times as he sets the stage for the Jewish War; see *JW* 1.311 (Herod assaults bandit caves); 2.253–4 (Felix captures Eleazar the “bandit chief”); 2.585–638 (John son of Levi gathers a force of 400 bandits and repeatedly conspires against Josephus).



back to the Gethsemane arrest of Jesus as a “bandit” / ληστήν.<sup>9</sup> It may even respond to the accusation of corruption that Jesus made of temple officials a few days prior, “but you all have made it a cave for bandits” / ὑμεῖς δὲ πεποιθήκατε αὐτὸν σπήλαιον ληστῶν.<sup>10</sup> This saying, of course, recalls Jeremiah’s indictment of the temple theology of his day: “Is not my house, where it is called by my name upon it, a cave of bandits there in your presence” / μὴ σπήλαιον ληστῶν ὁ οἶκός μου οὗ ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἐκεῖ ἐνώπιον ὑμῶν;<sup>11</sup> The temple rulers allow for open corruption but conspire to accuse and execute Jesus as if a bandit. Thus the cumulative language of banditry accentuates the stunning irony of Mark’s pioneering and paradoxical account of the crucified Messiah. That zealots join the temple leaders to revile Jesus suggests that both anti-Roman revolution and pro-Roman capitulation are equally indicted as futile strategies of survival. Accusations of *latrocinium* (i.e., banditry as a metaphor for sedition) also saturate senatorial discourse in times of state crisis, particularly 68–69 CE (the Year of the Four Emperors, including a brief civil war), which is the approximate date of Mark according to scholars.<sup>12</sup> If Mark was written in Rome, as tradition and many scholars hold, then the language of banditry in this pioneering Gospel may indict Rome’s political chaos as the cause of the death of Jesus together with the destruction of

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<sup>9</sup> Mark 14.48 // Matt 26.55, Luke 22.52. F. Bovon calls the arrest and execution of the Nazarene as a political criminal the best established fact regarding the historical Jesus. See *The Last Days of Jesus*, trans. K. Hennessey, (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 2006), 26. As early as 1941, E. E. Jensen noted that the contextual use of the term ληστής meant that Jesus was killed as a “revolutionist”, and that the Gospels were designed to counter this perception; see “The First Century Controversy over Jesus as a Revolutionary Figure,” *JBL* 60.3 (Sep. 1941): 264–5.

<sup>10</sup> Mark 11.17 // Matt 21.13, Luke 19.46.

<sup>11</sup> LXX Jeremiah 7.11.

<sup>12</sup> Shaw, “Bandits,” 23.

Jerusalem. In view of this historical-political context, Mark shows Jesus' death as profoundly unjust, but also prescient and wise as the embodiment of a third way.

The Gospel of Matthew, composed ca. 80–90, reproduces the Markan description nearly verbatim (27.38, 44).<sup>13</sup> One brief transitional phrase, “In the same way” / Τὸ δ' αὐτὸ, adds significant meaning, connecting the bandits' reviling to a more involved litany of ridicule against Jesus. In particular it includes the bandits in the echoing of the Devil's taunt (Matt 27.40), “if you are the Son of God” / εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, heard previously in the temptation narrative, which was apparently borrowed from Q.<sup>14</sup>

Q in turn echoes Wisdom of Solomon 2.18. This Alexandrian text (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE or CE) uses a near-identical phrase in the midst of an involved description of a righteous person who is ridiculed for his hope in divine vindication in the afterlife: “[I]f this is the righteous son of God” / εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ.<sup>15</sup> The ridicule serves to indict those—perhaps Sadducees are in mind—who believe that this life is all there is. The use of this Q / Wisdom of Solomon phrase in Matthew points to the proximity of the

<sup>13</sup> Compare:

Mark 15.27 And with him they crucify two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

Καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ σταυροῦσιν δύο ληστές, ἓνα ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ ἓνα ἐξ εὐωνύμων αὐτοῦ.

Matt 27.38 Then were crucified with him two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.

Τότε σταυροῦνται σὺν αὐτῷ δύο λησταί, εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν καὶ εἷς ἐξ εὐωνύμων

αὐτοῦ.

Mark 15.32 And those co-crucified with him were reviling him.

καὶ οἱ συνεσταυρωμένοι σὺν αὐτῷ ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν.

Matt 27.44 In the same way even the bandits co-crucified with him were reviling him.

Τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ οἱ λησται οἱ συσταυρωθέντες αὐτῷ ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν.

<sup>14</sup> Q 4.3, 9 (= Matt 4.3, 6 // Luke 4.3, 9). See J. Robinson, P. Hoffmann and J. Kloppenborg, eds., *The Critical Edition of Q*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000), 24–5, 28–9.

<sup>15</sup> The idea of the righteous person as a son of God also appears in Wisdom 2.13 (“he calls himself a child of God” / παῖδα κυρίου ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζει) and 2.16 (“he boasts God as his Father” / ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν).

Matthean Jesus to Pharisaic commitments<sup>16</sup> and their common cause against the Sadducees. Torah fidelity, rather than the revolutionary tactics of the zealots and the capitulation of the chief priests, offers the optimal strategy for survival. The echoing of the Q temptation narrative here on the cross further demonizes the two zealots together with the wicked Jewish leaders responsible for the death of Jesus the righteous. In terms of reader-response, the narrative expects its readers to see themselves as the truly righteous, following the Righteous One, and suffering unjust persecution with him. Along with Jesus' blood, they see their own blood on the hands of their intra-Jewish rivals of a later generation. Spiritual warfare continues even after Jerusalem is destroyed, and the zealot-bandits are on the wrong side of that struggle.

The Gospel of John (ca. 90–125) alludes to this synoptic tradition (19.18), but minimizes, even reverses its significance as illustrating the humiliation and suffering of Jesus, quite in keeping with the triumphalist character of the Johannine passion. The two alongside Jesus do not impugn him with their words nor shame him with their presence as zealots, but instead simply accompany him as nondescript “others” / ἄλλους. Their legs are crushed so as to speed their death before the soon-approaching Sabbath (19.31–2). In contrast, Jesus' unbroken legs (19.33–6) explicitly illustrate the fulfillment of Exod 12.46, Num 9.12 and perhaps Ps 34.20, contributing to the involved Johannine portrait of Jesus as the passover lamb. Thus the Gospel of John retells the bandits' story as yet another instance of scripture's fulfillment. In terms of socio-political concerns, the

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<sup>16</sup> E.g., Matt 5.18; 23.3.

removal of zealotry and the accentuating of Jesus' sacrificial death sidesteps potential imperial conflict, augmenting the Johannine rhetorical strategy of engaging the Jewish and Roman powers through lofty philosophical dialogue and symbol-laden discourse.

Finally, the Gospel of Luke, whose final redaction dates between 80 and 150 CE,<sup>17</sup> recalls yet drastically alters the Markan/Matthean tradition (23.32–3, 39–43). Those previously called “bandits” now become more generic “evildoers” or “criminals” / κακούργοι. This may offer an allusion to the “lawless ones” / ἀνόμοις of Isaiah 53.12, even while subduing the zealot overtones for more cultured Roman ears sensitive to hints of sedition. In a striking departure from Markan/Matthean tradition, the Lucan narrative accentuates divergent responses to Jesus, even by his companions in execution. Only one criminal mocks. More precisely, he “was blaspheming” / ἐβλασφήμει. The alternate term may suggest a Christological heightening, the ultimate injustice of mocking a divine

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<sup>17</sup> Most scholars in recent decades have maintained a date in the 80s. Several have recently pushed for a date well into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Retrieving the earlier work of Baur, the early Harnack, and J. Knox, J. Tyson has recently argued for a thoroughgoing anti-Marcionite recension of Luke in concert with the creation of Acts, likely in the 120s, that drew upon an earlier recension of Luke's Gospel (perhaps 80s); see Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006). S. Matthews, *Perfect Martyr: The Stoning of Stephen and the Construction of Christian Identity* (Oxford: University Press, 2010), has also recently voiced agreement with Tyson's thesis. M. Klinghardt, working separately from Tyson, arrives at a similar conclusion, positing a mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century, joint redaction of Luke-Acts; see “Markion vs. Lukas: Plädoyer für die Wiederaufnahme eines alten Falles,” *NTS* 52.4 (Oct. 2006): 484–513. Klinghardt works mainly from the observations of D. Trobisch, who contends that the prologues of Luke and Acts are a single, late and thoughtfully composed redaction; see *Die Endredaktion des Neuen Testaments*, NTOA 31 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag u.a., 1995), 40ff, cited in Klinghardt, 500. Both Tyson and Klinghardt build on R. Pervo's earlier case for an early 2<sup>nd</sup> century date for Acts, which he attributes to the usage of an early collection of Paul's letters, as well as Josephus' *Antiquities*; see R. I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2006). M. Parsons' recent commentary has added another voice to this growing chorus calling for a 2<sup>nd</sup> century date for Acts (ca. 110), though he keeps Luke in the 80s or 90s; see *Acts*, PCNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), 3. In an SBL presentation in Nov. 2009, I argued the dependence of Acts on Pliny's *ep.* 10.96–7 (published 109–111 CE), leading me to a *terminus post quem* of 111. Nevertheless, here I give a cautious and wide range of dates for Luke, since a precise theory regarding the date is largely immaterial to an analysis of the reception-history of Luke 23.39–43.

Messiah in the moment of his noble and wrongful death. Otherwise, the term simply intensifies the drama. His is the third taunt of Jesus, the last of the wrongful accusations that brings his humiliation to a climax.<sup>18</sup>

The second criminal acts in clear didactic contrast to the first, quite in keeping with the Lucan penchant for pairings and parenetic character contrast.<sup>19</sup> In the midst of his execution, this surprising character makes a brief *apologia* of Jesus, directed at his criminal companion. The first criminal's wicked obstinacy places in stark relief the second's pious confession of a life of criminality and deserved punishment. In a narrative framed by Plutarchian *synkrisis* (didactic character contrast), the divergent pair undercuts the zealot pursuit of independence in defiance of Roman Law.<sup>20</sup> The Lucan account had previously removed the charge of Jesus destroying and rebuilding the temple (Mark 15.29 // Matt 27.39) and substituted "rulers" (Luke 23.35) for the Markan/Matthean "chief priests" and "scribes" (Mark 15.31 // Matt 27.41), removing any trace of anti-temple thought that would suggest impiety to Roman ears. The second criminal's claim that Jesus has done "nothing out of place" / οὐδὲν ἄτοπον adds to the pounding insistence of the Lucan passion on the innocence of Jesus.<sup>21</sup> He is the second of three

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<sup>18</sup> The leaders scoff at Jesus in v. 35, as do the soldiers in v. 36.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., Zechariah and Mary (Luke 1.5–79); Mary and Martha (10.38–42); the Prodigal Father and the Envious Son (15.2); the Rich Man and Lazarus (16.1); the Pharisee and the Publican (18.9–14).

<sup>20</sup> This critique of and distancing from zealotry implicitly carries over to Jesus, who in the earliest manuscripts implicitly shares their criminal identity, albeit mistaken. See Luke 23.32, "Now they also led two other criminals with him to be executed" / Ἦγοντο δὲ καὶ ἕτεροι κακούργοι δύο σὺν αὐτῷ ἀναireθῆναι.

<sup>21</sup> Asserted three distinct times by Pilate: 23.4, "I find no cause" / οὐδὲν εὕρισκω αἴτιον; 23.15, "Nothing has been done by him worthy of death" / οὐδὲν ἄξιον θανάτου ἐστὶν πεπραγμένον αὐτῷ; 23.22, "I found in him no cause for death" / οὐδὲν αἴτιον θανάτου εὕρον ἐν αὐτῷ. The words of the

witnesses (Pilate previously and the centurion subsequently) who expressly rebut the threefold chorus of accusations. As a vehicle of reader-response, the model criminal lends a face and voice to sympathetic hearers who identify with and vicariously participate in the confession of wrongdoing as well as the declaration of Jesus' innocence. By confronting the undeserved shaming of their Lord as a seditious criminal, the narrative expresses early Christians' own sense of unjust persecution as wrongly perceived threats to Roman peace.

As if this contrast and addition of a defense speech were not enough, the Lucan account includes an intimate exchange between the second criminal and Christ (23.42–3). Again, this points to the particular and insistent Lucan concern for the participation of the faithful in the final, pregnant moments of Jesus' passion.<sup>22</sup> Yet another occasion presents itself for hearers to self-identify with a character and thus find themselves represented. This otherwise unknown criminal calls Jesus by name and begs a place in his royal domain. This brief plea may antiphonally respond to the Lord's prayer.<sup>23</sup> It certainly exemplifies the centrality of remembrance in Jewish worship.

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attending centurion (23.47), as well as the grief of the women (23.27) and the departing crowds (23.48) confirm the same.

<sup>22</sup> The scripted participation of hearers in Luke's passion narrative is suggested by various uniquely Lucan features. "A large crowd of the people followed him, including women who were pounding their breasts and mourning him" / Ηκολούθει δὲ αὐτῷ πολὺ πλῆθος τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ γυναικῶν αἱ ἐκόπτοντο καὶ ἐθρήνουν αὐτόν (23.27) *en route* to the crucifixion. These faithful followers are directly addressed, consoled and prophetically warned by Jesus himself about the impending doom of the Jewish War (23.28–31). In contrast to the disciples' faithless desertion of the servant in Mark and Matthew, Luke says "all his acquaintances" / πάντες οἱ γνωστοὶ (23.49) watched the crucifixion, while "all the crowds gathering together" / πάντες οἱ συμπαραγεγόμενοι ὄχλοι mourned this travesty of justice (23.48).

<sup>23</sup> Compare:

Matt 6.10 // Luke 11.2 (Jesus)

Let your kingdom come  
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου

Finally, in a climactic pronouncement, Jesus outdoes the request by making an astounding promise to this criminal, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise” / Ἀμήν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ. Within the context of Luke itself, “today” echoes again, as in other decisive moments of eschatological fulfillment and sudden repentance.<sup>24</sup> This beatific pledge stamps parenetic approval upon this second criminal’s words. That the promise is to happen “today” adds to the eschatological complexity, even dissonance of Luke.

The refrain “with me” stands in a long line of Septuagintal references to divine fidelity.<sup>25</sup> It may recall one of various sayings attributed to Samuel in the Deuteronomic History that combine “with me” / μετ’ ἐμοῦ and a temporal reference. In LXX 1 Sam 9.19, Samuel says to Saul: “Eat with me today” / φάγε μετ’ ἐμοῦ σήμερον. In LXX 1 Sam 16.5, Samuel says to Jesse’s clan, “Peace! I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Be sanctified and be jubilant with me today” / εἰρήνη θυσαί τῷ κυρίῳ ἤκω ἀγιάσθητε καὶ εὐφράνθητε μετ’ ἐμοῦ σήμερον. Finally, in LXX 1 Sam 28.19 the deceased Samuel, conjured by Endor’s “belly-myther” / ἐγγαστρίμυθος, predicts Israel’s military doom

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Luke 23.42 (criminal)

when you come into your kingdom  
ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου

Less likely, but still possible, is an echo of the *kerygma* of the Baptizer (Matt 3.2), Jesus himself (Mark 1.15 // Matt 4.17; Matt 12.28 // Luke 11.20), and/or Jesus’ disciples (Matt 10.7 // Luke 10.9, 10.11).

<sup>24</sup> Esp. in Jesus’ inaugural hometown sermon (Luke 4.21) and the repentance of Zacchaeus (19.9). Luke’s “today” draws in turn on the Deuteronomist’s iteration of the trope “this day” / הַיּוֹם as summons to covenant fidelity. See, for example, Deut. 4.19, 40; 5.1; 6.6; 9.3; etc. See also Jos 22.18 and the Deuteronomic refrain in Ps 95.7ff.

<sup>25</sup> God is described as being or dealing favorably “with me” / μετ’ ἐμοῦ in LXX Gen 28.20, 31.5, 35.3; Jos 14.12. In Dt 5.31 God invites Moses to stand on Sinai μετ’ ἐμοῦ to receive God’s teachings for the people. For expressions of μετ’ ἐμοῦ involving human fidelity and solidarity, see LXX Gen 21.23, 24.5, 24.9, 29.19; Jos 8.5, 14.8; Jdg 1.3, 4.8, 7.18, 16.15, 17.10; Ruth 1.8, 1.11; 1 Sam 15.25, 30, 20.14, 22.23, 26.6, 28.1, 29.6; 2 Sam 3.12, 10.2, 15.22, 33; 19.26, 34, 39; etc.

and pledges Saul, “Tomorrow you and your sons will go down” / αὐριον σὺ καὶ οἱ υἱοί σου μετὰ σοῦ πεσοῦνται.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> J. D. M. Derrett explores the fascinating potential connection between 1 Sam 28.19 and Luke 23.43 in his excellent chapter on “The Two Malefactors (Lk xxiii. 33, 39–43),” *Studies in the New Testament*, volume 3, *Midrash, Haggadah and the Character of the Community*, ed. J. Derrett and J. Duncan (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 200–14. He reads the Lucan promise of paradise as an expression of the (later attested) Rabbinic belief that 1 Sam 28.19 was a promise of beatitude given to Saul by the prophet Samuel. In other words, Luke 23.43 is both indebted to and complementary with the reading of 1 Sam 28.19 as a promise of beatitude.

By way of evaluating Derrett’s intertextual claim, it should first be noted that the MT of 1 Sam 28.19 lacks a verb in the construction (מָחָר אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ עִמִּי), a gap that would naturally be filled as: “tomorrow you and your sons *will be* with me.” On the other hand, the LXX uses πεσοῦνται / “will fall” or “will go down,” which may connote 1) a descent to hades, where Samuel’s spirit dwells, or, 2) more ominously, damnation. If Luke 23.43 makes an allusion to 1 Sam 28.19, it is much more likely in reference to the LXX reading, which casts doubt on the idea of a complementary relationship between the respective fate of the criminal and Saul.

The textual ambiguity of 1 Sam 28.19 plays out in its contested early history of interpretation. Origen interprets the verse quite in keeping with Rabbinic tradition. The *Martyrdom of Pionius* 14 (ca. 250–310; see Musurillo xxviii–xxix) makes an involved argument that presumes 1 Sam 28.19 as a pledge of beatitude, but insists that the oracle does not come from Samuel but rather from a demon impersonating Samuel (Musurillo 154–5). Soon after, Eustathius of Antioch writes *On the Bellymyther against Origen* (ca. 320–4); see CCSG 51:cccxcv and Greer and Mitchell, ix. Picking up on this idea of demonic impersonation, Eustathius reads the pledge as the sealing of Saul’s fate among the damned. While this reading is later attested in Christian interpretation, it does bear a stronger resemblance to the actual language of the LXX.

These debates point back to the ambiguity involved in 1 Sam 28.19 as a Lucan allusion. If alluding to LXX 1 Sam 28.19 as a hopeful descent to hades, then the fates of the criminal and Saul are complementary and the Lucan text likely envisions paradise itself as a realm within hades. This may seem the more plausible option in comparison with the Lucan description of Abraham’s bosom as an upper locus within hades in the Lucan tale of the rich man and Lazarus (16.19–31). On the other hand, if the Saul narrative is read as an ominous fall into doom, the Lucan allusion here infers the bandit’s heavenward beatitude in contrast to Saul’s descent into damnation—a holy reversal, as it were. In this case, the parallels between the Lucan passion and the martyrdom and dying vision of Stephen (perhaps the Lucan ascension as well) point the readers’ eyes upward to paradise.

These various intertextual reconstructions seem all too speculative, though, since it is not even clear that Luke 23.43 directly depends on 1 Sam 28.19. In terms of language proximity, 1 Sam 9.19 and 16.5 are actually more likely intertextual candidates for Luke 23.43, since they both match the expression “with me today.” If alluding to 1 Sam 9.19, then the Lucan account pictures paradise as a heavenly banquet, a lovely, final act of the Lucan Christ who eats with sinners (5.29–32 and esp. the distinctively Lucan 7.36–50) and instructs his disciples to invite the marginalized to their banquets (14.12–14, again distinctively Lucan). If alluding to 1 Sam 16.5, then the Lucan account pictures Jesus’ death as a sacrifice and an occasion of sanctification and celebration. Perhaps the allusion recalls all of these simultaneously, including 1 Sam 28.19. The very nature of allusions make it difficult to be certain. Given this uncertainty, it is best simply to mention various intertextual possibilities and trace out the potential significance of each. In that case, Derrett’s exploration of 1 Sam 28.19 as a possible intertext is valuable not as a certainty but rather a significant possibility.



The invocation of “paradise” points to a mystical place of beatitude for the righteous, and with it, to a host of potential intertexts.<sup>27</sup> LXX Genesis 2–3 is particularly important here.<sup>28</sup> Several apocalypses have involved yet varied portrayals of paradise.<sup>29</sup> Other kinds of literature also hold a storehouse of potential influences or related imagery.<sup>30</sup>

Against the background of the involved historical and otherworldly dramas within apocalyptic literature, Lucan narrative eschatology, here as elsewhere,<sup>31</sup> seems quite terse and subservient to parenetic ends. In keeping with its Roman-sympathizing sentiment of Luke-Acts,<sup>32</sup> Luke’s allusion to a present, layered cosmology undermines (dangerous)

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<sup>27</sup> P. Grelot helpfully points out a variety of possible intertexts in his article, “‘Aujourd’hui tu seras avec moi dans le Paradis’ (Luc, XXIII, 43),” *RB* 74 (1967): 199–204.

<sup>28</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE. In Greek, the second creation story uses “paradise” / παράδεισος in place of the Hebrew term “garden” / גֶּן thirteen times.

<sup>29</sup> The Book of Astronomical Writings (*I Enoch* 77.1–4; late 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE); the Book of the Watchers (*I Enoch* 32; late 3<sup>rd</sup>, early 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. BCE); the Similitudes (*I Enoch* 61.1–13, 70.3–4; late 1<sup>st</sup> BCE – 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE); *4 Ezra* (4.7–8, 6.2, chs. 7–8, esp. 7.36, 7.123, and 8.52; late 1<sup>st</sup> cent. CE); *3 Baruch* 4 (both in ca. 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE Gk and in later Slavonic); *2 Baruch* (4, 51, 59; early 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE); *2 Enoch* (8.1–5, 42.2; a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE date is plausible but uncertain; see *OTP* 1:97); *Apocalypse of Abraham* (21.6, 23; late 1<sup>st</sup> to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> cent.; see *OTP* 1:683); Revelation (2.7, 21.1–22.19, an extended conflation of new Jerusalem and paradise imagery; late 1<sup>st</sup> – early 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE).

<sup>30</sup> *Testament of Levi* 18.10–11 (1<sup>st</sup> cent. BCE; the eschatological priest here is described: “He will open the gates of paradise; he will remove the sword that has threatened since Adam, and he will grant to the saints to eat of the tree of life” (*OTP* 1:795). Such material may speak of a Maccabean priest-king, in which case a 2<sup>nd</sup>–1<sup>st</sup> cent. BCE provenance fits, or else be later Christological reflection, in which case a 1<sup>st</sup>–2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE provenance applies.); *Testament of Dan* 5.12 (1<sup>st</sup> cent. BCE); Ps-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities* (19.10–13; 1<sup>st</sup> cent. BCE – 1<sup>st</sup> cent. CE; see *OTP* 2:299); 2 Corinthians 12.2–4 (in which the Apostle Paul narrates an apocalyptic experience/vision in third person; ca. 55–56 CE). See also the *Life of Adam* 25–9, 36, 42, 45. The shorter, Latin-based recension of this complicated text reflects an earlier tradition than the extant Greek mss.; see *OTP* 2:251. How it might differ from the postulated Hebrew original (1<sup>st</sup> cent. CE) is unknown. The longer, Greek-based recension from the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE or later also has relevant material; see *Apocalypse of Moses* 1, 6–10, 13, 15–29, 37–42. See also the *Gospel of Thomas*, Logion 19, where paradise is pictured in terms similar to the *plēroma* to which gnostics will return.

<sup>31</sup> Especially 16.19–31; perhaps also 12.15–21.

<sup>32</sup> The angelic summons to stop “looking up toward heaven” (Acts 1.10–11) encapsulates this concern quite well. Pro-Roman tendencies appear throughout Luke-Acts. Especially notable are the Baptizer’s positive guidance for soldiers (3.14), Pilate’s insistent proclamation of innocence (23.4, 15, 22), the absence of the Markan/Matthean description of soldiers beating Jesus during the passion, and the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10).

notions of a radical, apocalyptic destruction of the powers of this world.<sup>33</sup> The promise of paradise to the one criminal parenetically paints the two figures as inheriting different fates. Such an afterlife divergence fits well with Lucan storytelling, especially the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (16.19–31). There two patterns of behavior lead to two different places, one in Abraham’s bosom, the other in a place of unbearable heat. The resonance between these two stories might position the difficult Lucan *hapax legomenon* of “paradise” as a blessed realm within hades. On the other hand, the drama of the ascension (Acts 1.9–11) and the connections between the death of Jesus and that of Stephen (Luke 23.32–43 and Acts 7.55–60)<sup>34</sup> suggest a heavenly site. Given the myriad ways paradise is described in apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature, coupled with the diversity of Lucan eschatologies, it is difficult to be certain about where Luke 23.43 locates paradise and whether it points to an interim or final destiny. Perhaps the best we can say is that it refers to a place of afterlife beatitude for the righteous.

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<sup>33</sup> Jensen, “First Century Controversy,” 267.

<sup>34</sup> Two obvious parallels include the forgiveness of their persecutors (Luke 23.34a // Acts 7.60) and the committal of spirit to God (Luke 23.46 // Acts 7.59; both “with loud voice” / φωνῇ μεγάλῃ). This careful echoing invites an intertext between the Lucan paradise logion (23.43) and Stephen’s vision of the ascended Lord (Acts 7.55–6): “Staring into heaven he saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at God’s right side”<sup>56</sup> and said: ‘Look! I am seeing the heavens opening and the son of man standing at God’s right side’” / ἀτενίσας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶδεν δόξαν θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦν ἑστῶτα ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ<sup>56</sup> καὶ εἶπεν· ἰδοὺ θεωρῶ τοὺς οὐρανούς διηνοιγμένους καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν ἑστῶτα τοῦ θεοῦ.

### *1C. Canonization and Issues for Reception*

Within roughly fifty to seventy years of the writing of Luke, this narrative-to-outdo-all-previous-narratives gains acceptance in the four gospel canon (ca. 150–175).<sup>35</sup> At that point the joining of Luke’s passion to its predecessors (rivals?) evokes considerable dissonance for proto-orthodox interpreters. The obvious disparity between the Markan/Matthean pair of reviling bandits and the Lucan opposites soon raises the specter of scripture contradicting itself and pushes interpreters to reconcile divergent canonical accounts. Additionally, the inconsistency of Lucan eschatology comes into starker relief alongside its canonical companions. Jesus’ presence in paradise *today* conflicts with the shared witness to the resurrection happening on Sunday, as well as with other, early canonical traditions of Christ’s descent among the dead.<sup>36</sup>

But far beyond matters of conflict and coherence, Lucan novelty and creative storytelling throws open the proverbial door on the relatively narrow interpretive potential of earlier gospels. Its Plutarchian *synkrisis* invites reflection on the moral modeling within the episode and places both figures in representative roles. The sympathetic characters within the Lucan passion (the mourning women addressed by Jesus, the second criminal, and “all his acquaintances” who lament the unjust death of Jesus) invite readers, preachers and congregations to see themselves in this story and to self-identify with its protagonists. Hearers are summoned especially to embrace the

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<sup>35</sup> Irenaeus, *AH* 3.7, is the earliest extant witness to this tradition (ca. 180).

<sup>36</sup> E.g., Eph 4.9–10, 1 Pet 3.18–20.

dramatic conversion and confession of the one criminal at the very climax of the crucifixion narrative. The implicitly contrasting destinies of the two criminals proffer the hope of forgiveness and beatitude as well as a warning of damnation.

As interpreters read, consider and discuss the episode alongside others, subtle and implicit gaps also begin to reveal themselves. Such gaps invite attempts to fill and explain, and this speculation takes on a life of its own. Which was the criminal on Jesus' right, which on the left? At what precise time did this episode take place, and how did this relate chronologically to the other sayings of Jesus on the cross? How did the one criminal recognize Jesus as a king? Why did his confession sound so particularly *Christian*? How did he know that Jesus was innocent? How could justice be served by Jesus' own last minute pardon of a criminal? Had he encountered Jesus previously? Did the criminals have any association with Barabbas? What were their names? Did the criminal enter paradise before or after the saints? What happened when he went to paradise? Whom did he meet? What words were spoken? How exactly did he gain entry into paradise? Questions multiply ever faster than the speculative answers given them. Yet the source of all the questions is a story. By transforming what were (in Mark and Matthew) mere background characters into more vivid participants in their own drama with Jesus, the Gospel of Luke gives birth to a narrative that would grow, adapt and move, not in a single direction, but in many. In essence, this dissertation is the story of that story.

### 1D. History of Scholarship

Given the location of this Lucan story (Luke 23.39–43) in the climactic moments of the passion of Jesus, the dramatic heart of Christian faith, it is surprising that scholarship lacks a sustained, critical treatment of its reception-history. One monograph on the topic appeared in Italian more than sixty-five years ago, the 1945 doctoral thesis of Fidele Pasquero.<sup>37</sup> While impressive in many ways, Pasquero's work was and is at best a stepping stone to a critical treatment of the early reception of Luke 23.39–43.<sup>38</sup> Several brief scholarly summaries have appeared in recent decades.<sup>39</sup> Newer reception-historical

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<sup>37</sup> F. Pasquero, "Il paradiso promesso al buon ladrone: Studio storico-esegetico" (PhD diss., Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1945); republished as *Il buon ladrone e la promessa di Gesù: Studio storico-esegetico* (Rome: Pia Società San Paolo, 1947). Many thanks are due to John Wright and Linda Hasper for their gracious help to make photocopies from this book in the British Library. Unfortunately, the thesis and its republished version do not currently exist in any libraries in North America.

<sup>38</sup> Pasquero highlights several of the key issues, questions and themes taken up in the early reception of the passage, cites an impressively wide range of patristic materials in their original languages, is often able to delineate between authentic and inauthentic texts, and occasionally notes differences and debates in interpretation (e.g., Augustine's rejection of Cyprian's notion of the bandit's baptism in blood; p 70). Still, he often presumes the historicity and early provenance of legendary materials, seldom quotes non-Latin texts, attends to Latin texts (even medieval ones) far more than Greek, gives no attention to Syriac texts and traditions, does not set patristic interpreters within their respective contexts nor look for developments within their interpretation, tends to compile rather than analyze and nuance patristic ideas, etc. While impressive and erudite in many ways, the work is not analytically or historically rigorous.

<sup>39</sup> Quoting generously from Latin texts, R. Courtray provides an excellent summary of Jerome's interpretation and occasionally notes connections to others, including Ambrose, Augustine and even Chrysostom (once); see "La Figure des Deux Larrons chez Jérôme," in *Jerome of Stridon: His Life, Writings, and Legacy*, ed. A. Cain and J. Lössl, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 105–16. H. Hornik and M. Parsons weave together early and medieval reception history and renaissance crucifixion art in *Illuminating Luke: The Passion and Resurrection Narratives in Italian Renaissance and Baroque Painting* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 86–117. H. J. Sieben gives the best critical summary to date of early reception-history. See *DS* s.v. "Larron" (9:307–13; with thanks to Sebastian Brock for calling my attention to this reference). Other brief, but servicable scholarly summaries may be found in P. Grelot, "'Aujourd'hui tu seras'"; reproduced as "De la mort à la vie éternelle," *Lectio divina* 67 (1971): 201–22. See also *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, s.v. "Buon ladroni" (by G. M. Fusconi, 1963, pp. 596–600). See also L. Leloir, "Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso," *Verbum Domini* 28 (1950): 372–80. Before establishing himself as a leading scholar on Ephrem, the Benedictine monk wrote this piece in Latin. In 1959 he translated it into French, apparently for his home diocese of Namur, Belgium: "Hodie, mecum eris in Paradiso (Lc., XXIII,

commentaries have not yet moved beyond attempts to gather quotations (*florilegia*), and thus they lack careful comparative analysis.<sup>40</sup> The names of the bandits in apocrypha and Gospel manuscripts have occasioned some critical interest.<sup>41</sup> A few hagiographical volumes of recent vintage casually summarize several themes of patristic interpretation and apocryphal legends.<sup>42</sup> Most of the substantive works on the bandit are outdated and

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43),” *Revue Diocésaine de Namur* 13 (1959): 471–83. Here we will pass over the critical editions of the myriad early works that mention this passage, which occasionally offer helpful but brief analysis in the notes or introductions. M. van Esbroeck notably summarizes several trajectories found among homilies on the bandit; see “Une Homélie Inédite Éphrémienne sur le Bon Larron en Grec, Géorgien et Arabe,” *AB* 101 (1983): 327–37.

<sup>40</sup> F. Bovon, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*, EKK NT 3.4 (Zürich: Neukirchener Verlag, 2009), 472–7 is by far the best among such commentaries. References appear across many of the volumes of the Ancient Christian Commentary series: OT 1:62; 2:257, 300–1; 8:326–7; 9:306; 10:201–2; 10:208; 11:165; NT 4b:310–11; 5:137; 6:104; 7:303. The sections on the crucifixion line up more exempla, but lack anything substantive in the way of comparative analysis or synthetic conclusions: 1b:110, 288–94 (6 examples); 2:231 (5 examples); 3:359–67, 380 (22 examples). The final EKK NT volume on Matthew briefly notes the distinction between sylleptical (Augustine) and chronological (Jerome) harmonization; see its ET in U. Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary*, Hermeneia, trans. J. Couch (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005), 539n26. M. Edwards, *John*, Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 180, mentions one example. The other notable reception-history commentary series, *Novum Testamentum Patristicum* (German), *The Church’s Bible and the Blackwell Bible Commentary*, have yet to publish their respective volumes on Luke. S. Kealy provides something of an annotated bibliography of a vast number of historical interpreters, but he only mentions one pre-450 interpretation of this passage: Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 74. See *The Interpretation of the Gospel of Luke*, 2 vols., *Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity* 63–64 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen, 2005), 1:90.

<sup>41</sup> See especially B. Metzger, “Names for the Nameless in the New Testament: a Study in the Growth of Christian Tradition,” in *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, ed. P. Granfield and J. A. Jungmann (Münster/Westf.: Verlag Aschendorf, 1970), 1:79–99; published later in *New Testament Studies: Philological, Versional, and Patristic*, ed. B. Metzger (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 23–45. Hornik and Parsons reproduce Metzger’s two lists of the names: see *Illuminating Luke*, 93. The tradition of the names in the *Acta Pilati* / *Evangelium Nicodemi* is briefly mentioned by J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke (X–XXIV)*, Anchor Bible 28A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 1509. A. Plummer had previously referred to the traditions about the names of the criminals in the *Acta Pilati*, the *Gesta Pilati*, and the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy*; see *The Gospel according to S. Luke*, *International Critical Commentary*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 534.

<sup>42</sup> The French-Canadian A. Daigneault devoted such a book to the Good Bandit as one of his patron saints: *Le bon larron: mystère de miséricorde* (Sillery, Québec: Anne Sigier, 1999). His second chapter is essentially a running list of patristic excerpts, often prefaced by headings that summarize prominent themes. H. Adams, *Thief who Stole Heaven* (n.p.: printed by author, 1982), 19–72, takes a similar approach, providing excerpts from patristic interpretation (ch. 3), canonical statements (ch. 4), and apocryphal legends (ch. 5). Lacking in treatments of original language texts and drawing often from out of date and devotional sources, both books are far from critical.

dominated by an uncritical, hagiographical approach, drawing on a wide variety of (often spuriously attributed) texts.<sup>43</sup> While early commentators focused considerable attention and energy on this passage among the canonical passion accounts, recent scholarship has yet to yield a thorough and critical exploration of their reflections.

### *1E. Thesis*

This dissertation comprises the first thorough, critical analysis of the early Christian interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 (up to 450 CE). Tatian's *Diatessaron* is its earliest plausible reception, while the *Gospel of Peter* does not depend on Luke here but instead attests to an earlier, simpler apologetic narrative used by Luke. Contrary to the implication of modern commentaries, harmonization of Luke's divergent criminals with

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<sup>43</sup> See A. Bessières, *Le bon larron: saint Dismas: sa vie, sa mission, d'après les Évangiles, les Apocryphes, les Pères et les Docteurs de l'Église* (Paris: Editions Spes, 1939); J. J. Gaume, *Histoire du bon larron* (Paris: printed by author, 1868); J. Rauchenbichler, *Der heilige Dismas, oder der gute Schächer am Kreuze* (Augsburg, 1834); F. Schauenburg, *Der getreueste Gesell Jesu am Kreuz, oder der heilige gute Schächer Dismas den Sündern zum Trost, den Gerechten zur Nachfolg, allen zur Verehrung in zweien Theilen vorgestellt*. (Augsburg: Dornner, 1768); G. Marangoni, *L'ammirabile conversione de S. Disma ... spiegata con i sentimenti de' SS. Padri e Dottori* (Rome, 1741); F. Orilia, *Riflessioni istoriche sulla vita del glorioso S. Disma* (Naples, 1714); T. Raynaud, *De metamorphosi latronis in apostolum commutati*, in *Opera omnia* volume 10 (Lyon, 1665), 455–594. Msgr. Gaume's edition, translated into English in 1882 (London: Burns and Oates), was apparently quite popular in its generation. This ET was recently reprinted in paperback in 2003 by Loreto Publications (Fitzwilliam, NH). Interestingly, the ET leaves out the introductory chapter of the French edition. In it Gaume likened the Good Bandit to the 19<sup>th</sup> century itself, with its blatant robbery of ecclesiastical and intellectual authority and its disruption of stable economies and governments. The Good Bandit's repentance calls the century itself to repent, echoing the tone and concern of Vatican I, called the same year as this book was published.

On a sidenote, in more recent French history, *le bon larron* has been invoked in the campaign to canonize Jacques Fesch, a young man who accidentally killed another man in a failed bank robbery. He later repented in prison before being subjected to the death penalty. Fesch's prison journal reveals his strong identification with the Good Thief, an identification that intensified as death approached. Fesch's supporters have also connected the two, invoking the *de facto* canonization of the Good Thief as ecclesiastical precedent for the canonization of this repentant criminal.

the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits is not a major concern, nor do ancient views fit neatly into chronological vs. sylleptical positions. Several find intentional cooperation among the Evangelists, while early Syriac interpreters, starting with the *Diatessaron* itself, dismiss or ignore the Markan/Matthean tradition altogether.

Eschatological dissonance proves a far more prevalent concern. Origen's interpretation—which provokes considerable criticism late in his own life—makes this apparent. Origen remains pivotal in eschatological debates for the next two centuries, though he is criticized for very different reasons.

By far the most common mode of interpretation finds in the second criminal a self-representative figure who models many Christian practices, beliefs and virtues, including prayer, beatitude, supersession, Nicene orthodoxy, faith, justification by faith without works, conversion, catechesis, confession, martyrdom, asceticism, simple speech, and penitence.

Augustine is the first on record to gainsay the traditional idea of the bandit as a martyr—an interpretation perhaps embedded in the original Lucan story—, though he reverses his position late in 419 CE. This shift calls for late dates for *Sermons* 53A, 285, 327, and 335C. Ephrem emerges as the most creative and influential purveyor of devotional, liturgical and typological readings. On the other hand, Chrysostom's two Good Friday sermons on the bandit are the most influential texts in the early history of interpretation as they inspire Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian and Latin imitations. By the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, Luke 23.39–43 appears as a standard lection (or part of a lection) during Good Friday noon services in the East. Despite the exclusive use of Matthew's



passion in the West, the influence of Eastern homilies helps carve out a place for the Lucan story in Western homilies during Holy Week and Easter Octave.

### *1F. Scope and Sources*

My research initially focused on the quite pervasive early Christian claim that Luke's second criminal became a martyr on the cross. But that theme, significant as it is, only represents a fraction of the creativity of early interpreters and the generative power of the Lucan text in its early history of reception. This realization led to the adventurous goal to track down and analyze as many references as possible, from the first reception of the passage until 450 CE. To date this research has led to the discovery and analysis of references in over 600 distinct texts by over a hundred ancient authors (authentic, anonymous or pseudonymous). For the sake of scholarly rigor and accountability, the arguments below will refer to critical editions (when available) of primary source texts. Greek, Latin and most Syriac texts are included along with my fresh translations, unless otherwise noted. Coptic, Armenian, Arabic and Georgic primary source texts are omitted, and translations of the same are borrowed from others, or else rendered by derivative translation (e.g., my English translation of van Esbroeck's French translation of an Arabic or Georgic text). Three years of research has yielded many insights, though there are certainly many more to be found. Still, this effort will allow for an unprecedented critical account of the emergence and spread of the prevalent trajectories that the Lucan drama takes in early Christianity.

In this quest, some helpful guidance is available, but it is quite diffuse. The *Biblia Patristica* (1975–2000, now online) helped early on as a primer for this project.<sup>44</sup> Still, more thorough research showed that this excellent index still lacks most patristic references to Luke 23.39–43 and claims a number of citations that refer to other Gospel traditions and not uniquely Lucan material.<sup>45</sup> Bovon’s initial Hermeneia commentary on Luke (2002) provides a list of major historical commentaries, though only a few (by Origen, Ambrose, Titus of Bostra, Cyril of Alexandria and Philoxenus of Mabbug) belong to late antiquity.<sup>46</sup> Wiles’ 1995 index of Augustine’s scripture citations points out only about thirty of the more than sixty relevant examples to be found in his writings.<sup>47</sup> Sieben’s 1991 *Kirchenväterhomilien* catalogs thirteen distinct, late antique sermons on the pericope.<sup>48</sup> Drobner’s 1988 *Bibelindex* is quite helpful for Nyssen’s literary corpus.<sup>49</sup> In 1983 M. van Esbroeck compiled a list of nineteen late antique sermons that focus on the so-called Good Thief.<sup>50</sup> Word searches in the online Thesaurus Linguae Graecae and the Library of Latin Texts proved to be the quickest and best means of finding new references, though even these tools often do not cite the precise location of citations in newer critical editions. Together with these indices, the Clavis Patrum Graecorum, Clavis

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<sup>44</sup> Centre d’Analyse et de Documentation Patristiques, *Biblia Patristica* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975–2000), esp. 1:375, 2:320, 3:307–8, 4:255, 5:301, 6:241–2.

<sup>45</sup> Its recent rebirth as an online database ([www.bibelindex.mom.fr](http://www.bibelindex.mom.fr)) has expanded the citations and will allow for the easy correction of erroneous references.

<sup>46</sup> F. Bovon, *Luke I*, Hermeneia, trans. C. M. Thomas (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress), xxxi–xxxvi.

<sup>47</sup> J. Wiles, *A Scripture Index of the Works of Saint Augustine in English Translation* (New York: University Press of America), 123.

<sup>48</sup> H. J. Sieben, *Kirchenväterhomilien zum Neuen Testament*, Instrumenta Patristica 22 (Steenburg: Abbatia S. Petri), 84–5.

<sup>49</sup> H. Drobner, *Bibelindex zu den Werken Gregors von Nyssa* (Paderborn: Selbstverlag), 83.

<sup>50</sup> Esbroeck, “Une Homélie Inédite,” *AB* 101:328–9.

Patrum Latinorum, and Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti have proven indispensable, both to identify the best and most recent critical editions of early Christian texts and also to find various texts whose titles include the Lucan bandit.

Even with these many indices and online tools, it was still ultimately necessary and quite fruitful to consult the indices of relevant volumes in the major series of patristic texts, notably Sources Chrétiennes, Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, and Patrologia Syriaca/Orientalis, as well as smaller series and other critical editions of late antique Christian writings. Ephrem’s self-description as one who “gathers the crumbs... of the symbols of your wealth”<sup>51</sup> comes to mind as a fitting description of this sometimes tedious, sometimes delightful work.

### *1G. Methodology and Approach*

In the years prior to 450 CE, our Lucan passage receives sustained reflection only occasionally, almost always in homilies. These include notable Greek sermons by Chrysostom, Severian of Gabala, Hescyhius of Jerusalem, and Proclus of Constantinople, as well as Latin sermons by Maximus of Turin, Augustine, and Leo.<sup>52</sup> Besides these, there are several anonymous sermons, as well as many sermons falsely attributed (e.g., to Ephrem, Chrysostom, Theophilus of Alexandria and Augustine) that may fit our time

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<sup>51</sup> *cruc.* 6.20 (CSCO 248:68).

<sup>52</sup> See the chart in section 9B for a more complete list.

frame. If writers of the narratives we call apocrypha may also be considered interpreters (as they must), then the corpus of pre-450 CE texts prominently featuring the Lucan criminals may also include the *Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea* (CANT 76) and the original Syriac version of the *Arabic Life of Jesus* (CANT 58).<sup>53</sup> Two famous Syriac dispute poems (*sughyotho*), *On the Two Bandits*<sup>54</sup> and *On the Cherub and the Bandit*,<sup>55</sup> both likely composed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>56</sup> also offer sustained speculation on and expansion of the Lucan episode. The great sermons, stories and poems of the bandit(s) are often very creative and sometimes quite influential on later interpretation. Yet they all reflect numerous interpretations that had been developing for centuries. A summary of patristic interpretation might focus on a survey of substantial 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century texts, but that would not fill the scholarly gap of a critical analysis that explains when, where, why and how many of their interpretations came into existence.

A person-by-person account provides one possible and viable way into a critical analysis of the patristic interpretation of Luke 23.39–43. Centering on more well-known and prolific figures, such an approach allows for strong synchronic analysis, explaining interpretation against the backdrop of those persons' respective literary influences, philosophical views, theological concerns, social networks, and political desires. At the same time, it has significant disadvantages, for what it offers in particularity and safety, it

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<sup>53</sup> Ch. 23, also called the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy*. See EAC 1:221.

<sup>54</sup> S. Brock, "The Dialogue between the Two Thieves," *Harp* 20 (2006): 151–70.

<sup>55</sup> S. Brock, "The Dispute between the Cherub and the Thief," *Hugoye* 5.2 (2002): 169–93; also in Brock, SCS 11:28–35. FT in Graffin, "La soghitha du chérubin et du larron," *L'Orient syrien* 12 (1967): 481–90.

<sup>56</sup> See Brock, "Dispute," 171, and SCS 11:3.

takes away in diversity of sources and freshness of research. The tendency to focus on the famous figures of early interpretation can prejudicially narrow and leave out much of the life and texture of interpretation. Some of most fascinating and creative interpretation appears in apocryphal texts and pseudonymous sermons. In recent decades, both in historical and religious studies, the concern to explore popular phenomena has become more prevalent, exemplified in the recent series, *A People's History of Christianity*. Intertextual approaches in literary, biblical and rabbinic studies have also gained significant followings. Their advocates often see texts and interpretations as ongoing, lively conversations. Such conversations are certainly not limited to a privileged few participants, or confined to a few predictable directions or media.<sup>57</sup> Conversations take on a life of their own.

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<sup>57</sup> The history of music and art also figures significantly in the popular reception and intertextuality of the Bible. However, in the scope of this analysis (pre-450 CE), these media convey no clear references to Luke 23.39–43. The one possible exception is the wooden relief of the crucifixion in the doors of St. Sabina in Rome, a relief perhaps created as early as 430 CE. It depicts Christ nearly twice the size of the two bandits. This apparently conveys the view that the two bandits were young men or boys. See *DACL* 3.2, s.v. “Croix et crucifix” (by H. Leclercq, 1914, pp. 3069–70). On this note, it is fascinating that Eustathius of Antioch explicitly refers to the courageous bandit as a “young man” / νεανίας; see 6E. While Leclercq notes that Jerusalem is pictured in the background, he offers no explanation for the placement of a square window above the head of the bandit on Jesus’ right. Perhaps this indicates his blessed destiny and departure to a heavenly paradise. I also find it potentially significant that Christ’s right hand protrudes into the frame of the bandit on the right and is slightly lower than his left hand. This slight difference may convey the theme of Christ as judge, whose arms are the scales of justice. This theme saturates later iconography, but it also appears early and often in the history of interpretation. For example, see Ps-Cyprian, *mont.* 7.2–8.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12, quoted in 5B), Eustathius, *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:90–1, quoted in 8D), Chrysostom, *cruc. latr.* 1.3 // 2.3 (PG 49:402–3, 411–12; quoted in 5D), Augustine, *Jo. ev. tr.* 31.11 (CCSL 36:300, quoted in a note in 3H). It would then also convey the idea that the blessed bandit was on the right side of Jesus, a notion that apparently registers first in Aphrahat (*Dem.* 14.22, PS 1.1:626–7) and is highlighted and dramatized by Ephrem (*c. Nis.* 45.16, CSCO 240:51,53; *eccl.* 24.9, CSCO 198:53; *h. fid.* 7.7, CSCO 154:33–4; *h. fid.* 54.12–13, CSCO 154:170; *Nicom.* 10.75ff, PO 37:198–9) before becoming widespread.

While the bandits are not clearly present in earlier art, it is interesting that two of the earliest representations of the crucifixion have the head of Jesus turned to the right: the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (blasphemous) Palatine graffiti (*DACL* 3.2 fig. 3359) and the 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century Costanza Cornaline (*DACL* 3.2 fig. 3357).

A history of trajectories approach certainly has disadvantages. Ideas can appear, multiply and echo without much sense of coherence. As Wittgenstein explained, the same idea, even the same phrase can mean something completely different in a different moment and context depending on the “language-game” being played. A diachronic analysis may miss the differing nuances of similar sounding comments. Compiling cross-generational exempla befits medieval catenae as sourcebooks for systematic theology and homilies, but such compilations often push against close, contextual and critical analysis.

At the same time, a history of trajectories approach offers a potential framework for a coherent analysis of a wide variety of texts and traditions. It can more easily illustrate the continuities among interpreters, even across space and time. By establishing common themes and norms of interpretation, it has the advantage of more clearly highlighting discontinuities, divergences and departures from common conventions. Thus an overarching diachronic frame may even allow for sharper synchronic analysis at points. Such an approach also lends itself to take less prominent voices (at least retrospectively so) seriously, opening up contended spaces rather than running through an apparent

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The 586 CE Rabula Gospel, created in Armenia, contains an illustration that is certainly the most important early piece of art depicting the bandits. The illustration conveys the theme of opposing destinies (grouping the blessed bandit on the right together with the Holy Mother and Beloved Disciple and placing them underneath the sun, whereas the other bandit is on the left underneath the moon). It also makes a direct, visual connection between Jesus and the bandit (their heads are turned to face each other), an exegetical theme first generated by Chrysostom before becoming immensely popular in the East and West (see 5D and 5E). That the centurion (Longinus) spears Jesus on his right side may also imply the idea of the bandit’s direct baptism, a popular notion in Syriac and Armenian interpretation (see 6G). For a very partial list of notable artistic depictions of the co-crucified bandits, see L. Réau, *Iconographie de l’art chrétien* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 2.2:494. Other treatments of the bandits in medieval and post-Reformation art may be found in Hornik and Parsons, *Illuminating Luke*, 86–117, and M. Merback, *The Thief, the Cross, and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University Chicago Press, 1998), passim.

consensus of victors. Thus, a history of trajectories allows for a more compelling account of the diverse and unpredictable paths that interpretation may take. In other words, it allows a story to have a life of its own.

At the same time, diachronic and synchronic analysis are both necessary for careful historical work. Thus, while the overall frame will be diachronic, synchronic analysis will also play an occasional role. Though this broad treatment cannot and will not do justice to the complexity of any interpreter's life or theology, it is hoped that it can illumine the role of Luke 23.39–43 in the lives and theologies of many interpreters, both as individuals and as participants in networks of friendship and contention across place and time.

## CHAPTER 2. FINDING THE FIRST RECEPTION

## 2A. Marcion

Recently scholars have brought intense critical focus to the effort to pin down the first certain reception of Luke's Gospel. Attempting to correct the overly generous parallels found by Massaux and working carefully through a wide variety of potential candidates,<sup>58</sup> A. Gregory in 2003 found in Justin Martyr (ca. 150s) the first clear evidence of literary dependence on unique Lucan material.<sup>59</sup> F. Bovon in a 2005 chapter notes a wide variety of references that may pre-date Justin, but most of these references were already mentioned and doubted by Gregory as providing evidence of literary dependence.<sup>60</sup> Responding to Bovon in that same 2005 volume, Gregory called for caution about claims to literary dependence during a period characterized by oral tradition and considerable

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<sup>58</sup> É. Massaux, *The Influence of the Gospel of Matthew on Christian Literature before Saint Irenaeus*, 3 vols., trans. N. J. Belval and S. Hecht (Leuven: Peeters; Macon, GA: Mercer, 1990); originally published as *Influence de l'Évangile de saint Matthieu sur la littérature chrétienne avant saint Irénée*, 3 vols. (Louvain: University Press, 1950).

<sup>59</sup> A. Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus: Looking for Luke in the Second Century*, WUNT 2.169 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

<sup>60</sup> F. Bovon, "The Reception and Use of the Gospel of Luke in the Second Century," in *The New Testament and Christian Apocrypha: Collected Studies II*, ed. G. E. Snyder, WUNT 237 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 289–306. The *Gospel of the Ebionites* (in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.6) apparently shared the Lucan tradition of the priestly family of John the Baptist (Luke 1.4ff), while the *Gospel of the Nazarenes* apparently shared the Lucan sweating drops of blood (*Hist. pass. Dom.* fol. 32<sup>r</sup> // Luke 22.44) and forgiveness logion (in Jerome, *Epist.* 120.8, PL 116:934 // Luke 23.34); see Bovon, "Reception," 293. Bovon finds echoes of Lucan language in Papyrus Egerton 2 (fol. 1<sup>r-v</sup> // Luke 5.12–14, 17.14), as well as parallels in the *Gospel of Thomas*; see 294. Bovon sees a common oral tradition behind parallels with the *Gospel of Peter*, including Herod's involvement in Jesus' trial (*Ev. Pet.* 1.1–2.5 // Luke 23.5–12, Acts 4.27–28) and the crucified criminal's defense (see 293–4 and below). Other receptions that may pre-date Justin appear in the *Traditions of Matthias* (as quoted by Clement of Alexandria), *Papyrus Cairensis* 10735, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Questions of Bartholomew*, the *Epistula Apostolorum*, and the longer ending of Mark; see Bovon, "Reception," 295–6.



textual fluidity, and he noted that some of Bovon's claims of dependence could just as easily be explained by sources shared in common between Luke and various apocryphal texts.<sup>61</sup>

In regard to the reception of Luke 23.39–43 in particular, Marcion is probably the earliest potential candidate. The claim reported by Epiphanius, that Marcion (ca. 130–150) removed this episode from his Gospel, is doubtful. Specifically, Epiphanius claims that Marcion “cut out” / παρέκοψε the quotation of Jesus in Luke 23.43 (σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ),<sup>62</sup> probably an allusion to the whole Lucan pericope (23.39–43), as Harnack and Tyson have maintained.<sup>63</sup> However, Marcion had no reason to remove the passage. Moreover, Epiphanius’ charge is not corroborated in the extant works of Marcion’s earlier detractors. Neither Justin, Irenaeus, nor Tertullian mentions this as one of the many passages that Marcion removed from Luke. If these arguments from silence are not compelling enough, Eustathius of Antioch, in three fragments of a work written well before Epiphanius’ treatise, criticizes Marcionites by name for their interpretation of this very passage, which they are using constructively to support a docetic doctrine of Christ’s resurrection.<sup>64</sup> In short, while it is possible that Epiphanius possessed a Marcionite *Gospel* without this episode, or that there was a diversity of textual traditions among Marcionites, all of the evidence outside of Epiphanius raises

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<sup>61</sup> A. Gregory, “Looking for Luke in the Second Century: A Dialogue with François Bovon,” in *Reading Luke*, 401–15.

<sup>62</sup> *Pan.* A 42.11.6 (Sch. 72; GCS 31:116). The claim is repeated and expanded in *Pan.* A 42.11.17 (Elench. 72; GCS 31:153).

<sup>63</sup> Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 117.

<sup>64</sup> *frag.* 23–5 (CCSG 51:87–8), taken from his treatise *On the Soul against the Arians* (probably written ca. 327–337). See 3D for further discussion of its provenance.

serious doubts about his claim here. It is far more plausible that Epiphanius exaggerates his case.

## 2B. *Gospel of Peter*

The pseudonymous *Gospel of Peter*, usually dated to the mid- to late-2<sup>nd</sup> century,<sup>65</sup> may draw upon this Lucan episode, but the evidence is quite ambiguous. A careful comparative analysis is necessary.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> A vigorous debate is currently underway about whether the *Gospel of Peter* as we have it in the Akhmim fragment does indeed, as scholars a hundred years ago thought, faithfully represent an originally mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century text. Nicklas, Kraus, van Minnen, Karlmann, and Meiser have all recently argued, directly or tangentially, against a 2<sup>nd</sup> century provenance, while Luhrmann, Kirk, Jones, Greschat, Myllykoski either defend or presume a mid- to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century provenance; see M. Bilby, Review of *Das Evangelium nach Petrus: Text, Kontexte, Intertexte*, TU 158, ed. T. Kraus and T. Nicklas, *Vigiliae Christianae* 63.1 (2009), 93–8. P. Foster, *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), notes that “150–190 CE seems the most sensible” range. Still, he cautions about the speculative nature of this conclusion, which rests on “the assumption” the *Gospel of Peter* encountered by Serapion in Rhossos is “a close approximation” to the text found in the Akhmim codex. Foster also argues against the correlation of the Akhmim fragments with possible early fragments (pp. 57–90; e.g., P.Oxy. 2949, 4009; P. Vindob. G. 2326; etc.) and the earliest patristic testimony (pp. 97–115).

<sup>66</sup> The Greek text below comes from Foster, *The Gospel of Peter*, 181. It varies from Mara’s text in SC 201:46 mostly in minor ways (in 4.10, ἡνεγκον instead of ἔνεγκον; in 4.13, ὠνείδησεν, which Mara corrected as ὠνείδισεν; in 4.14, ἀποθάνοι instead of ἀποθάνη), not to mention Foster’s retention of *nomina sacra* (in 4.10, κυ rather than Κύριον; in 4.13, ανων instead of ἀνθρώπων). The one variation of potential significance appears in 4.13, where Foster reads οὕτως instead of οὗτος. Foster agrees with Vaganay’s assertion that οὕτως represents an orthographic error, and that οὗτος is the intended reading and meaning: see Foster, *Gospel of Peter*, 288; cf. Vaganay, *L’Évangile de Pierre*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1930), 241. The text below is reproduced with οὗτος as the corrected reading.

Luke 23.32–33, 39–43	Ev. Pet. 4.10, 13–14
<p>32 Then <u>two other criminals</u> were led with him to be put to death.</p> <p>33 And when they came upon the place called Skull, there <u>they crucified</u> him and the <u>criminals</u>, one on the right and one on the left...</p> <p>39 <u>Then one of the hanging criminals blasphemed</u> him, <u>saying</u>, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!”</p> <p>40 Then the other answered; rebuking him, he said, “Do you not fear God, since you are facing the same judgment?”</p> <p>41 And <u>we justly so, for we are getting back what is worthy of what we have done. But this one has done nothing out of place.</u>”</p> <p>42 And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”</p> <p>43 And he said to him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”</p>	<p>10 Then they brought <u>two criminals</u>, and <u>they crucified</u> the Lord up between them. He was quiet as one who felt no pain...</p> <p>13 <u>Then one of those criminals reviled</u> them, <u>saying</u>,</p> <p>“<u>We have suffered in this way because of the evil things we did, but this one who is the savior of men—how did he wrong you?</u>”</p> <p>(14 Annoyed by him, they called for his legs not to be broken, so that he might die tortured.)</p>
<p>32 Ἦγοντο δὲ καὶ ἕτεροι <u>κακούργοι</u> δύο σὺν αὐτῷ ἀναireθῆναι.</p> <p>33 Καὶ ὅτε ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον τὸν καλούμενον Κρανίον, ἐκεῖ <u>εσταύρωσαν αὐτὸν καὶ τοὺς κακούργους</u>, ὃν μὲν ἐκ δεξιῶν ὃν δὲ ἐξ ἀριστερῶν...</p> <p>39 <u>Εἷς δὲ τῶν κρεμασθέντων κακούργων ἐβλασφήμει αὐτὸν λέγων</u>, Οὐχὶ σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός; σῶσον σεαυτὸν καὶ ἡμᾶς.</p> <p>40 ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ ἕτερος ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτῷ ἔφη, Οὐδὲ φοβῆ σὺ τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματι εἶ;</p> <p>41 καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν δικαίως, ἄξια γὰρ ὧν ἐπράξαμεν ἀπολαμβάνομεν· οὗτος δὲ οὐδὲν ἄτοπον ἐπραξεν.</p> <p>42 καὶ ἔλεγεν, Ἰησοῦ, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου.</p> <p>43 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἀμὴν σοι λέγω, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.</p>	<p>10 καὶ ἦνεγκον δύο κακούργους καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν ἀνὰ μέσον αὐτῶν τὸν κν. αὐτὸς δὲ εἰώπα ὥς μηδὲν πόνον ἔχων...</p> <p>13 εἷς δὲ τις τῶν κακούργων ἐκείνων ὠνεῖδισεν αὐτοὺς λέγων·</p> <p>Ἡμεῖς διὰ τὰ κακὰ ἃ ἐποιήσαμεν οὕτω πεπόνθαμεν, οὗτος δὲ σωτὴρ γενόμενος τῶν ἀνθρώπων τί ἠδίκησεν ἡμᾶς;</p> <p>(14 καὶ ἀγανακτήσαντες ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἐκέλευσαν ἵνα μὴ σκελοκοπηθῇ ὅπως βασανιζόμενος ἀποθάνοι.)</p>

In terms of similarities, both texts call the two co-crucified “evildoers” or “criminals” / κακούργους, a term distinct from the accounts of Mark, Matthew and John (see 1B). Both episodes center on a brief defense speech by “one of the criminals” / εἷς... τῶν κακούργων. In both, the apologist-criminal admits the wicked deeds and deserved punishment for himself and his criminal companion. In both, he defends Jesus’ innocence and implicitly confesses him in the process: the Lucan criminal refers to Jesus’ messianic kingdom, and the criminal in the *Gospel of Peter* calls him “the savior of men.” Both texts even have an identical progression of transitional terms: “now one ... of the criminals ... we ... now this one” / εἷς δε ... τῶν κακούργων ... ἡμεῖς ... οὗτος δε. These similarities clearly establish some relationship between the two texts.

Yet, in terms of differences, “one of the criminals” in Luke refers to a criminal who blasphemes Jesus, not to one who defends him. In fact, the *Gospel of Peter* has no wicked criminal at all. It draws no explicit contrast between the apologist-criminal and his companion. Furthermore, its apology is made to the executioners, rather than the other criminal. In the *Gospel of Peter*, the Lord is never taunted. Rather, the apology itself is *the taunt*, but here directed at the executioners, using the Markan/Matthean term “was reviling” / ὠνείδιζον (here, ὠνείδισεν) rather than Luke’s “was blaspheming” / ἐβλασφήμει.<sup>67</sup> Besides the term “criminal,” all other uniquely Lucan language is absent. Finally, only Luke’s criminal makes a direct plea to Jesus and gets a response. In other

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<sup>67</sup> Foster’s translation of ὠνείδισεν as “rebuked” (200) clouds the Markan/Matthean linguistic connection here and may lend a false impression of a connection with Luke’s distinctive term “rebuking” / ἐπιτιμῶν; see Foster, *Gospel of Peter*, 200.

words, the *Gospel of Peter* lacks any narrated dialogue between the apologist-criminal and Jesus. Such profound differences seriously complicate the nature of the relationship established by the similarities.

In the history of scholarship on the *Gospel of Peter*, many scholars have presumed or defended its literary dependence on Luke here.<sup>68</sup> P. Foster's recent critical edition and commentary lists the distinctive term "criminals" / κακούργους as the first and foremost datum for its literary dependence on Luke.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, several scholars have argued against literary dependence. P. Gardner-Smith was the first to do so (1926), based on his assessment of an early date for *Peter* and the independence of its content.<sup>70</sup> Dismissals of literary dependence have greatly multiplied in recent scholarship, including A. Gregory's excellent monograph on the earliest reception of Luke.<sup>71</sup> Dibelius, Vielhauer,<sup>72</sup> and R. Brown<sup>73</sup> find oral dependence running from Luke to *Peter*, while F. Bovon claims that *Peter* "shares with it [Luke] a common oral tradition."<sup>74</sup> These theories befit recent assessments by A. Kirk and I. Czachesz of the mnemonic and oral-

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<sup>68</sup> This was essentially consensus among the earliest scholars writing on the *Gospel of Peter* (Swete, Robinson, Harris, Harnack, Stanton, Turner); see Foster, *Gospel of Peter*, 8–27. Regarding the story of the good thief, Vaganay said that *Peter* "à n'en pas douter, emprunte son anecdote an troisième évangile"; see L. Vaganay *L'Évangile de Pierre*, Études bibliques, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1930), 240.

<sup>69</sup> Foster, *Gospel of Peter*, 142, 155.

<sup>70</sup> Foster, *Gospel of Peter*, 27–30.

<sup>71</sup> Gregory finds the idea of its literary dependence on Luke "less than compelling;" see *Reception of Luke and Acts*, 229.

<sup>72</sup> Both cited in *NTA*<sup>2</sup> 1:219.

<sup>73</sup> R. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1334–5.

<sup>74</sup> F. Bovon, "The Reception and Use of the Gospel of Luke in the Second Century," in *The New Testament and Christian Apocrypha: Collected Studies II*, WUNT 237, ed. G. E. Snyder (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 293–4.

performative character of the *Gospel of Peter*.<sup>75</sup> Denker rules out literary dependence in favor of independent oral tradition as the source behind the *Gospel of Peter*,<sup>76</sup> which he dates early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Köster argues along similar lines and finds *Peter* as reflective of an older version of the passion and resurrection than those found in the canonical gospels.<sup>77</sup> Taking *Ev. Pet.* 4.10–14 as a faithful representative of a pre-synoptic crucifixion account (the *Cross Gospel*), Crossan sees literary dependence running in a single direction, opposite to the traditional view—from *Peter* to all four canonical Gospels.<sup>78</sup>

Crossan's claim that Mark and Matthew are dependent on *Peter* for their account of the bandits is implausible, and his analysis also hinges too much on purely literary categories and does not leave room for the fluidity involved in oral transmission. However, his analysis has some merit, particularly his assessment of the relationship of *Peter* to Luke. In my view, the deep ambiguity between Luke and *Peter* seen above (clear

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<sup>75</sup> Drawing on the theories of J. Assmann, Kirk sees the *Gospel of Peter* as a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> generation oral performance akin to the canonical gospels themselves, all of which define distinct communities; see A. Kirk, "Tradition and Memory in the *Gospel of Peter*," *Das Evangelium nach Petrus*, TU 158, ed. T. Kraus and T. Nicklas (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2007), 135–58. Czachesz similarly describes it an oral performance with significant improvisation, quite similar to the Apocryphal Acts in its delivery and thus also its loose similarities to the Gospels and Acts; see "The Gospel of Peter and the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: Using Cognitive Science to Reconstruct Gospel Traditions," in *Das Evangelium nach Petrus*, 255ff.

<sup>76</sup> As quoted and summarized in *NTA*<sup>2</sup> 1:219.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> J. D. Crossan, *The Cross that Spoke: the Origins of the Passion Narrative* (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1988). Crossan claims that Mark and Matthew changed *Peter*'s focus on the thieves to a focus on Jesus himself (166–7), that John borrowed the term "between" / μέσον and creatively adapted *Peter*'s tradition about the nonbreaking of legs (167–9), and that Luke not only borrows the term "criminals" but also recapitulates its four sequential events ("bringing, crucifying, speaking and responding"), while also incorporating the Markan language of "right and left" and reference to Jesus being insulted by thieves (169–73). He notes the implausibility of literary dependence in the opposite direction, from John and Luke to *Peter*, which would entail very radical examples of "textual dismemberment" (173).

parallels alongside major differences in content, framing and purpose) is best explained in terms of a common source (whether oral or written), but one unused by (unknown to?) Mark and Matthew. Reflecting a simple apologetic narrative, the criminal in the *Gospel of Peter* blames himself for his own suffering, insults the soldiers who put the innocent Jesus to death, and confesses Jesus in the process (perhaps substituting for the confession of the Markan/Matthean centurion, which is absent from the crucifixion scene in *Peter*). Customized for a more sophisticated and pro-Roman audience in Asia Minor, the Lucan narrative takes this brief mention of a repentant-apologist criminal, removes its insult and blame laid on the executioners, doubles its self-indictment of zealotry by means of *synkrisis*, and doubles the defense speeches at the crucifixion by recasting the Markan/Matthean centurion's confession. Combining the simple tradition in *Peter* and the Markan/Matthean tradition of the reviling bandits, Luke sets forth a parenetic drama complete with dialogue, the use of a question, character contrast, exemplary behavior, minor characters made prominent, and a pronouncement story climax.<sup>79</sup> This reconstruction resonates with a fairly common conclusion in Lucan scholarship, namely, that this pericope represents the use and editing of a distinct Lucan source.<sup>80</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>79</sup> In her reconstruction of the Lucan *Sondergut*, K. Paffenroth does not include this episode, or indeed any passion materials; see *The Story of Jesus according to L* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 29, 159–65. However, this pericope exhibits several of the features Paffenroth describes as typical of and peculiar to L stories: dialogue/monologue, the use of a question, contrasting characters, exemplary behavior, pronouncement, minor characters made prominent, and perhaps even crisis (and resolution); see *Story of Jesus*, 96–116. I find it significant that these features are mostly absent from *Peter* but almost all present in Luke.

<sup>80</sup> There is near universal acknowledgement among scholars that the episode represents some form of special Lucan material; see M. Soards, *The Passion According to Luke: The Special Material of Luke 22*, JSNTSS 14 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 15–16. Yet there are varied explanations of its provenance. Some see only L source material; see Fitzmyer, *Gospel*, 1507. Some see L source material

*Gospel of Peter* is not the first reception of Luke 23.39–43 but is instead a witness to its pre-history.

## 2C. *Acts of Andrew*

The Lucan bandit makes a brief appearance in the martyr story of Andrew, at least as the *Acts of Andrew* has been translated in the standard compendia.<sup>81</sup> At first glance, given the plausibility of a late second century provenance for the primitive text,<sup>82</sup> this reference would seem to be a viable candidate for the first reception of Luke 23.39–43. Yet, on closer inspection, the reference appears first in the *Martyrium Andreae prius* (BHG 96), a text which Prieur, following Flamion, situates in the mid-8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>83</sup> Found within a subsection labeled the Discourse to the Cross, this reference falls within a litany of praises made directly to the cross of Christ.<sup>84</sup>

Well done, O cross, who has put on the master and borne as fruit the bandit and called the apostle to repentance and not disdained us from being received.

εὖ γε, ὦ σταυρέ, τὸν δεσπότην ἐνδυσάμενος καὶ τὸν ληστὴν καρποφορήσας  
καὶ τὸν ἀπόστολον εἰς μετάνοιαν καλέσας καὶ ἡμᾶς εἰσδέξασθαι μὴ  
ἀπαξιώσας.

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significantly edited by Luke; see J. B. Green, *The Death of Jesus: Tradition and Interpretation in the Passion Narrative*, WUNT 2.33 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 95. Others see only free Lucan composition; see R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. J. Marsh (Blackwell, 1972), 282–3.

<sup>81</sup> M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924), 360. *NTA*<sup>1</sup> 2:419 (trans. M. Hornschuh).

<sup>82</sup> Prieur places it in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, as does Hornschuh, while Flamion and Dvornik set it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century; see CCSA 5:409–14.

<sup>83</sup> CCSA 5:14.

<sup>84</sup> *Mart. pr.* 14 (lines 139–51; CCSA 6:699; also presented in a synopsis of parallel texts in CCSA 6:742–4).



A longer, revised version of this interpretation appears in the *Laudatio* (BHG 100),<sup>85</sup> a text which Prieur established as the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> century work of Nicetas the Paphlagonian.<sup>86</sup>

In his critical edition, Prieur closely compares *Mart. pr.* and *Laud.* and finds a common source behind them.<sup>87</sup> This source is a “precious” witness to certain missing parts of the primitive *Acts of Andrew*,<sup>88</sup> but also contains much that was added later, including the reference to the bandit.<sup>89</sup> This conclusion is further confirmed by the absence of this text from the *Armenian Passion of Andrew*,<sup>90</sup> which provides important corroboration for the primitive *Acts*.<sup>91</sup> Thus, the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century *Acts of Andrew* contains no mention of the Lucan bandit. While Prieur offers no date for the common source behind *Mart. pr.* and *Laud.*, it likely belongs somewhere between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *Laud.* 46 (lines 139–51); French translation in CCSA 6:742–4, which uses and reproduces the critical edition of the Greek text by M. Bonnet, “Acta Andreae apostoli cum laudatione contexta,” *AB* 13 (1894): 346–7.

<sup>86</sup> CCSA 5:15.

<sup>87</sup> CCSA 5:15–17, 236, 242; 6:675, 707, 746.

<sup>88</sup> CCSA 5:239, 6:675.

<sup>89</sup> CCSA 5:242.

<sup>90</sup> CCSA 3:242–4. At the same time, the Armenian passion has a different, yet clear allusion in the Discourse to the Cross (3:242–43). Leloir’s translation reads: “Dans quelle mesure te révèles-tu à cause de la clameur de ton compagnon [de gibe]?”

<sup>91</sup> *Pass. Arm.* 9 (translation in CCSA 6:739–45). For discussion regarding its fidelity to the primitive martyrdom of Andrew, see CCSA 5:236ff. Regarding its greater fidelity in the relevant section of the martyrdom (the Discourse to the Cross), see CCSA 6:746.

<sup>92</sup> Its interpretation of the Lucan episode fits such a context; see especially chs. 7–8. This context also takes into account that the first extant reception of the *Acts of Andrew* appears in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century *Manichean Psalter*; see CCSA 5:414.

## 2D. Apocalypse of Sedrach

The *Apocalypse of Sedrach* clearly refers to the Lucan bandit twice in chapter fifteen.

The text as a whole has a complicated history of composition, a mix of 15<sup>th</sup> century Greek expressions and cluster of late 1<sup>st</sup> / early 2<sup>nd</sup> century influences, particularly 1 Peter and 4 Ezra.<sup>93</sup> Agourides sets the range of its earliest stratum (including chapter fifteen) quite broadly, between “A.D. 150 and 500,” after which it was joined to “the sermon on love and received its final form shortly after A.D. 1000.”<sup>94</sup>

(15.1) Sedrach says to God: “Lord, you alone are sinless and very compassionate, you have mercy and pity sinners.” (2) But your divinity said: “**I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**”<sup>95</sup> (3) And the Lord said to Sedrach: “Do you not know, Sedrach, that the bandit in one move was saved by changing his mind? (4) Do you not know that my apostle and evangelist and the same [bandit] in one move were saved? (5) [But sinners will not be saved,] because their hearts are as cracked stone. They are going along wicked ways and are being destroyed with the antichrist.” (6) Sedrach says: “My Lord, you also say, ‘My divine spirit entered into the nations which did not have the law [and] do [the things] of the law.’”<sup>96</sup> (7) Just as the bandit and the apostle and the evangelist and the others who stumbled upon your kingdom, my Lord, (8) so also excuse those who sin against you at the last,<sup>97</sup> Lord, because life is very toilsome and unrepenting.”

(15.1) Λέγει Σεδράχ πρὸς τὸν θεόν· Κύριε, σὺ μόνος εἶ ἀναμάρτητος καὶ πολὺ εὐσπλαγχνος, ὁ ἁμαρτωλοὺς ἐλεῶν καὶ οἰκτεῖρων· (2) ἀλλ’ ἡ σὴ θεότης εἶπεν· **Οὐκ ἦλθον δικαίους καλέσαι, ἀλλὰ ἁμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν.** (3) Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος τὸν Σεδράχ· Οὐκ οἶδας, Σεδράχ, τὸν

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<sup>93</sup> Agourides is in full agreement here with Stone and Charlesworth about its use of early sources (*OTP* 1:606).

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. The Greek text is from PVTG 4:45–6.

<sup>95</sup> Luke 5.32 // Mark 2.17, Matt 9.13.

<sup>96</sup> Paraphrasing Rom 2.14.

<sup>97</sup> ἐπ’ ἐσχάτων could mean “in the last days,” as Agourides has in the footnote (*OTP* 1:613), but his main translation of “recent days” does not fit the logic of the passage at all.

λήστην, μιᾶ ῥοπῇ ἐσώθη μεταγνῶναι; (4) Οὐκ οἶδας, ὅτι ὁ ἀπόστολος<sup>98</sup> μου καὶ εὐαγγελιστὴς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν μιᾶ ῥοπῇ ἐσώθη; (5) [Οἱ δὲ ἁμαρτωλοὶ οὐ σωθήσονται,] ὅτι εἰσὶν αἱ καρδίαι αὐτῶν ὡς λίθος σαθρός· οὕτοί εἰσιν οἱ πορεύοντες ἀσεβέσιν ὁδοῖς καὶ ἀπολύμενοι μετὰ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου. (6) Λέγει Σεδράχ· Κύριέ μου, καὶ εἶπας, ὅτι τὸ θεῖόν μου πνεῦμα ἐνέβη εἰς τὰ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα [καὶ τὰ] τοῦ νόμου ποιοῦσιν· (7) ὁμῶς δὲ καὶ ὁ λήστης καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος καὶ εὐαγγελιστὴς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ οἱ πταίσαντες<sup>99</sup> τὴν βασίλειάν σου, κύριέ μου· (8) οὕτως καὶ τοὺς ἐπ' ἐσχάτων ἁμαρτήσαντάς σοι συγχώρησον, κύριε, ὅτι ὁ βίος πολυμοχθός ἐστίν καὶ ἀμετανόητος.

To summarize, the passage pictures the Lucan criminal 1) changing his mind on the cross, 2) being saved in “one move” and 3) as a member of a set cast of converts with notorious histories.

There is a case to be made that the themes in *Sedrach* reflect a very creative, quite early appropriation of the Lucan episode specifically geared to address the issues of theodicy raised by *4 Ezra*, particularly chapter seven.<sup>100</sup> There, Ezra is described as complaining to God and trying to intercede on behalf of the disobedient. God is searching for precious jewels (7.49–57), but Ezra sees himself, Israel and all humanity as all too caught up in this world of clay and iniquity (7.62–9). Like Job, he curses the injustice of creation and life itself, if it indeed it leads to judgment for most (7.62–9, 116–26). Akin to Ecclesiastes (5.18), he complains that this world is all too “toilsome” (7.12); compare here, “very toilsome” / πολύμοχθός. The divine answer is that final judgment is

<sup>98</sup> Here following the corrected reading given by M. R. James, *Apocrypha anecdota*, Texts & Studies 2.3 (Cambridge, 1893), 136, rather than ἀπόστολοι.

<sup>99</sup> James here reads φθάσαντες εἰς, “coming first into” paradise; *ibid.*, 136. The variant may reflect speculation about the order of entry into paradise, a preoccupation characteristic of mid- to late 4<sup>th</sup> century (or subsequent) interpretation.

<sup>100</sup> *OTP* 1:536–42.

individual and not an occasion for intercession, and that the life of the world to come is a choice (7.127–31).

In 4 *Ezra* 8.4–19, the visionary seems to acquiesce to some extent to the rigorous standard of the divine answers, but Sedrach’s logic of the Gospel (particularly as inherited from Paul and the pro-Pauline Gospels, i.e., Mark and Luke) could not abide such a response. Here, God answers Godself: Sedrach’s “divinity” and “divine spirit” respond to the divine interlocutor of 4 *Ezra*, and the Lucan bandit is the exception that makes a new rule. He becomes a new pattern of salvation, a person saved at the last moment simply by changing his mind. His sinful past is mirrored by and redeemed together with the shameful past of the persecutor Paul (“the apostle”) and, apparently in a conflation of Mark and John, the cowardly flight of the beloved disciple as well (“the evangelist”).

However dependent upon these early texts, the cluster of interpretations of Luke 23.39–43 in *Sedrach* most closely resembles homiletical conventions that emerge in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, as the analysis below will show. A peculiar similarity with a recurring expression in Chrysostom’s sermons reflects a relationship and temporal proximity between the two.<sup>101</sup> *Sedrach* may be a late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century text that borrows from

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<sup>101</sup> Cf. *Sedr.* 15.3 (PVTG 4:45) “Sedrach, do you not know that the bandit was saved in one move” / Οὐκ οἶδας, Σεδράχ, τὸν λήστην, μιᾷ ῥοπῇ ἐσώθη μεταγνῶναι; and Chrysostom, *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483), “Do you see the supreme change? Do you see the unspeakable upheaval? So also the bandit [was changed] ... in one moment’s move” / Εἶδες ἄκραν τὴν μεταβολήν; εἶδες ἄφατον τὴν μετάστασιν; Οὕτω καὶ ὁ ληστής ... ἐν μιᾷ καιροῦ ῥοπῇ. *Io hom* 1 (PG 59:28) has a similar expression: “But yet he went ahead to the pinnacle of virtue and went forth into paradise itself. He did not need days, or half a day, but just a brief move” / Ἀλλ’ ὅμως εἰς τὸ ἄκρον τῆς ἀρετῆς εὐθέως ἔφθασε, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐχώρησε τὸν παράδεισον· οὐχ ἡμερῶν δεηθεὶς, οὐχ ἡμίσους ἡμέρας, ἀλλὰ βραχείας ῥοπῆς. A *TLG* search

Chrysostom, or Chrysostom may draw upon *Sedrach* as a mid- to late 4<sup>th</sup> century text. Set against this broader background, the *Apocalypse of Sedrach* is not a plausible candidate for the earliest interpretation of Luke.

## 2E. Tatian's Harmony

Tatian's Gospel *Harmony*, the so-called *Diatessaron*, or what Syriac tradition calls the *Gospel of the Mixed*, is a strong candidate for the first reception of Luke 23.39–43. This passage is universally present in *Diatessaron* witnesses.<sup>102</sup> At the same time, the customary reconstructions of *Diatessaron* 51.44–47 (= Luke 23.39–42) do not cite any Syriac textual evidence, but only the Armenian version of the *Diatessaron Commentary* traditionally attributed to Ephrem.<sup>103</sup> The present analysis of Ephrem's authentic interpretation shows this Armenian section to be inauthentic as a matter of certainty and instead reflective of a late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century (whether originally Syriac or Armenian) text.<sup>104</sup> This overlaps with the case of Beck, later supported by Boismard and Lange,

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shows that the dative phrase, “in one move” / *μιᾷ ῥοπῇ*, is fairly rare before the fourth century. The only possible 2<sup>nd</sup> century examples are Ps-Clementine *Recognitions* 9.28 (GCS 51:312, used of a decree of King Abgar!), Galen, *usu partium* 14 (K. G. Kühn and F. W. Assmann, *Medicorum Graecorum opera quae exstant* (Lipsius: C. Knobloch, 1821–33), 4:147), and Melito, *pasch.* 21 line 145 (SC 123:70). In the third century it appears only in *Test. Sol.* 70.2 (C. C. McCown, *The Testament of Solomon* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922), 70\*). The expression appears frequently across the works of Eusebius, Chrysostom, as well as Greek works attributed (falsely for the most part) to Ephrem.

<sup>102</sup> See the discussion and chart in 3B.

<sup>103</sup> See Leloir in CSCO 227:67 and de Urbina in BPM 6:194, #2493–5, both relying on Leloir's earlier Armenian edition (CSCO 137:296–9) and more specifically his Latin translation (CSCO 145:212–13). For other translations of *Diat. com.* 20.22–6, see FC 54.2:563–7 (GT), SC 121:359–62 (FT), and McCarthy, 305–7 (ET).

<sup>104</sup> See below and esp. 3E and 5D.

regarding the inauthenticity of significant portions of that commentary.<sup>105</sup> Thus *Diat. com.* 20.22–6 should be used tentatively and cautiously in the attempt to establish a distinctive, Syriac *Diatessaron* text that corresponds to Luke 23.39–43.

Still, there is solid evidence elsewhere in regard to the *Diatessaron* text (51.48) of Jesus' logion in Luke 23.43. Here de Urbina cites three examples, including two from Aphrahat's *Demonstrations* and one from Ephrem's *Hymns on the Crucifixion*.<sup>106</sup> The first example from Aphrahat is a clear, extended quotation, preserving all but the first three words of the verse:<sup>107</sup> **"Truly I tell you: Today you will be with me in the garden of Eden"** / ܐܡܢܝܢ ܐܬܢ ܐܝܢܐ ܚܝܒ: ܝܬܡܢܢܐ ܚܝܒ ܠܡܢܐ ܚܝܒ ܕܢܝܢ. The second is briefer, but equally clear in regard to the distinctive ending:<sup>108</sup> **"You will be with me in the garden of Eden"** / ܚܝܒ, ܠܡܢܐ ܚܝܒ. The example from Ephrem, found in a clearly authentic, Nisibene text (ca. 350s), is at best a loose, elided reference to this ending: **"in Eden"** / ܚܝܒ.<sup>109</sup>

Curetonianus perfectly matches the ending of Aphrahat's two quotations: **"in the garden of Eden"** / ܚܝܒ ܕܢܝܢ.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, the Syriac of Sinaiticus, Peshitta, and Harclean all conclude the verse with a Greek loan-word (**"in paradise"** / ܦܪܕܝܝܝܫܐ), which

<sup>105</sup> See E. Beck, "Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu Jo. I 1–5," *Oriens Christianus* 67 (1983): 1–31; "Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu der unvergebbaren Sünde wider den Heiligen Geist übersetzt und erklärt," *Oriens Christianus* 73 (1989): 1–37; "Der syrische Diatessaronkommentar zu der Perikope von der Samariterin am Brunnen übersetzt und erklärt," *Oriens Christianus* 74 (1990): 1–24; and M. E. Boismard, *Le Diatessaron: De Tatien à Justin*, Etudes bibliques, ns 15 (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1992), 103–4. These references appear in McCarthy, 33n2–5. See also Lange, FC 54.1:69–73, 436n945.

<sup>106</sup> BPM 6:194n2496–8. The same three references appear in Burkitt's *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904), 1:410–11.

<sup>107</sup> *Dem.* 14.22 (PS 1:628).

<sup>108</sup> *Dem.* 22.24 (PS 1:1037).

<sup>109</sup> *cruc.* 8.5 (CSCO 248:73); see also CSCO 249:59 (GT), SC 502:263 (FT). This same reference appears in Leloir's reconstructed Syriac text of Ephrem's Gospel (CSCO 180:96).

<sup>110</sup> G. A. Kiraz, *Comparative Edition of the Syriac Gospels*, volume 3 (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1996), 486.

matches the Arabic,<sup>111</sup> Persian,<sup>112</sup> and Western versions of the *Diatessaron*,<sup>113</sup> not to mention almost all Greek manuscripts of Luke.<sup>114</sup> The cumulative evidence favors the conclusion that Tatian's *Harmony* was the source of a distinctive, semitic version of Luke 23.43, mirroring earlier semitic counterparts in Gen 2–3. This early *Diatessaron* tradition was eventually (around the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century) made to conform to Greek manuscripts of Luke. This distinctive, early Syriac text in turn confirms the universal testimony of *Diatessaron* witnesses that Luke 23.39–43 was present in Tatian's original *Harmony*. Its composition ca. 172 makes it the strongest candidate for the earliest reception of this pericope.

#### 2F. Three Close Candidates: Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Origen

After Tatian's *Harmony*, the competition, so to speak, for the passage's earliest clear (i.e., extant, dependent and datable) interpretation includes Tertullian, Hippolytus of Rome and Origen.<sup>115</sup> Tertullian briefly but clearly alludes to it in one of his late, Montanist-period

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<sup>111</sup> Arb and FT in A. S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tatien* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1935), 494–5. See also the following (based on Ciasca's older Arabic edition): GT in E. Preuschen, *Diatessaron Arabice* (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1926), 227; ET in J. H. Hill, *The Earliest Life of Christ*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910), 208, and in ANF 9:123.

<sup>112</sup> G. Messina, *Diatessaron Persiano* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951), 356.

<sup>113</sup> BADLD 5:267 (Latin and old German); Liège / CSSNMA SM 1.1:266 (Old Dutch); Haarense / CSSNMA SM 1.2:115 (Old Dutch); Cantabrigense / CSSNMA SM 1.3 56 (Old Dutch).

<sup>114</sup> See R. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: Luke* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 400.

<sup>115</sup> Around the same time, Novatian does make mention of the synoptic tradition that Jesus “was crucified between two bandits” / *inter duos latrones crucifigitur* (*Trin.* 30.6; CCSL 4:73), but this citation does not reference any uniquely Lucan material.

works, *de Pudicitia* (213 CE): “In his [i.e., Christ’s] own passion he freed a bandit” / *in ipsa passione liberauit latronem*.<sup>116</sup>

Hippolytus of Rome has his name attached to what would seem to be the earliest sermon on the passage: *On the Two Bandits / de duobus latronibus*.<sup>117</sup> The sermon title is attested by Theodoret of Cyrus,<sup>118</sup> making it likely that the original sermon did refer to the bandits in general and the Lucan passage in particular, though the few fragments that remain mention neither. Even more problematic is that the sermon is misattributed. G. Visona has produced numerous, substantial and verbatim parallels that definitively show that the sermon belongs not to Hippolytus but rather to Apollinaris.<sup>119</sup>

While Hippolytus does not, then, hold the honor of having the earliest extant sermon on the two bandits, he apparently cites the episode elsewhere and in so doing is probably the author of the first extant allegorical reading of the passage.<sup>120</sup> The relevant passage (*Prov. frag. 70*) exists within a series of excerpts falsely ascribed to Athanasius, and it differs significantly from a parallel exegetical catena tradition.<sup>121</sup> Here the Lucan bandit

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<sup>116</sup> *Pud.* 22.4 (CCSL 2:1328–9).

<sup>117</sup> *In Ioh.* 19.34 (GCS 1.2:211).

<sup>118</sup> *Eranistes* 3 schol. 7 has the title as *Discourse on the Two Bandits*; see G. Ettlinger, *Theodoret of Cyrus. Eranistes: Critical Text and Prolegomena* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 231. See also FOC 106:224.

<sup>119</sup> “Ippolito o Apollinare? Nuovi frammenti dell’opera ‘Sui due ladroni’ attribuita a Ippolito di Roma,” *Augustinianum* 21 (1981): 451–90.

<sup>120</sup> Thus H. J. Sieben was incorrect in his claim that Origen “inaugure l’exégèse allégorique de *Luc* 23, 42–43” in *Matt com* A 133 (ca. 248); cp. *DS* s.v. “Larron” (9:307).

<sup>121</sup> M. Richard, “Les fragments du Commentaire de S. Hippolyte sur les Prouerbes de Salomon. Édition provisoire,” *Muséon* 79 (1966): 91–2. In Achelis (GCS 1.2:177–8) the fragment (Ps-Athanasius only, not the catena fragment tradition) is numbered as 54. Richard’s critical text here differs from that of Achelis in two notable ways, both corrections to pious emendations: reading “two kings” / δύο βασιλέων in place of “three kings” / τριῶν βασιλέων, and leaving out the Trinitarian phrase that immediately follows in many mss, “of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” / πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος.



appears within a running allegorical explanation of LXX Prov 30.24–8 and its “four small things.”

Ps-Athanasius	Catena
A spotted lizard that sticks with its hands and is easy to catch dwells in the strongholds of kings. The bandit who by the extension of his hands was stuck to the cross of Christ dwells in paradise in the stronghold of the two kings.	Even a spotted lizard that sticks with its hands and is easy to catch [dwells] in the strongholds of kings. We formerly lived in infidelity like spotted lizards and venomous beasts. But now, after being easily caught in the world, we are stuck by the extension of our hands, dwelling upon a wall in his church.
Ἀσκαλαβώτης χερσὶν ἔρειδόμενος καὶ εὐάλωτος ὢν, οὗτος οἰκεῖ ἐν ὀχυρώμασι βασιλέων. Ὁ ληστής ἐν τῇ ἐκτάσει τῶν χειρῶν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπεριδόμενος, οἰκεῖ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, τῷ ὀχυρώματι τῶν δύο βασιλέων.	Καὶ ἄσκαλαβώτης χερσὶν ἔρειδόμενος τοίχῳ καὶ εὐάλωτος ὢν, <κατοικεῖ> ἐν ὀχυρώμασι βασιλέων. Οἱ ποτὲ μὲν ἡμεῖς ὡς ἄσκαλαβῶται καὶ ἰοβόλα θηρία διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν ὑπάρχοντες, νῦν εὐάλωτοι ἐν κόσμῳ ὄντες, ἐπεριδομεθα διὰ τῆς ἐκτάσεως τῶν χειρῶν, ἐπὶ τὴν ἁγίαν σάρκα τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὡς ἐπὶ τοῖχον ἐνοικούντες, ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ αὐτοῦ.

The exegetical catena has greater thematic coherence, since its reading of the Lucan passage as symbolic of the conversion of Gentiles fits the three surrounding examples. Even so, such consistency is best explained as evidence of a later redactor’s desire to create such where it had not existed. Richard notes in the introduction to this provisional critical edition that the Ps-Athanasius excerpts ring true of Hippolytus in many ways, and also that the exegetical catena tradition clearly adapts the wording and concepts to a later

context and later concerns.<sup>122</sup> The ps-Athanasius reading here is likely original and authentic to Hippolytus. To my knowledge, scholars have yet to postulate a precise date for this text.<sup>123</sup>

Origen travelled to Rome ca. 215 to hear Hippolytus, the last great Greek preacher in Rome. Origen's earliest comment on the Lucan story takes an allegorical approach somewhat similar to that of Hippolytus. The comment only exists in a fragment.<sup>124</sup>

For as we receive today according to the image, so may we become what he was, and may we partake of food in paradise, being taken up into his land, according to what was said, **“You will be with me in paradise.”**

ὥς γάρ ἡμεῖς σήμερον τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα ἀναλαμβάνομεν ἵ[ν]α γενώμεθα ὅπερ ἦν ἐκεῖνος κα[ὶ] τῆς ἐν παραδείσῳ τροφῆς μεταλαμβάνωμεν εἰς τὸ ἐκείνου ἥ[ρ]ιον μετατιθέμενοι κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ π[α]ραδείσῳ.

Glaue dated this fragment to 203 or 204 as part of a homily or lecture in Origen's capacities as head of the Alexandrian catechetical school.<sup>125</sup> Nautin, on the other hand, dated Origen's first writings on Genesis to ca. 229–230,<sup>126</sup> his last peaceful years in Alexandria. Trigg essentially follows suit.<sup>127</sup> While Glaue's assessment puts Origen's interpretation earlier than that of Tertullian and perhaps Hippolytus as well, it seems best to defer to the expertise of Nautin and more recent scholarship and date this fragment

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 63–4.

<sup>123</sup> Hippolytus composed his *Commentary on Daniel* in 204 CE, a text that Quasten calls the “earliest known exegetical treatise of the Christian church that we possess” (2:176), which offers a loose *terminus post quem*. His death in 235 CE is, at this point in time, the only solid *terminus ante quem* one might postulate for this fragmentary text.

<sup>124</sup> *Gen fr. pap.* (CPG 1410.6; Glaue 10).

<sup>125</sup> Glaue 29.

<sup>126</sup> Nautin 409.

<sup>127</sup> J. Trigg, *Origen*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), 86.

later. Even by Nautin's chronology, this fragment still stands as the earliest reference to Luke 23.39–43 within Origen's corpus, and the earliest quotation of Luke 23.43 on record. Thus, while Tertullian provides the first securely dated reference to the passage, to Origen belongs the honor of being the first clear witness to quote from it.

## 2G. Two Pseudonymous Candidates

There are two other uncertain candidates for the earliest comment on the Lucan passage. The first is a paschal homily falsely attributed to Hippolytus.<sup>128</sup> References to the Lucan episode appear clearly both in an internal summary of contents and again toward the end of the sermon.<sup>129</sup> While Nautin says it incontrovertibly dates after Arius and responds against the views of Apollinaris,<sup>130</sup> Cantalamessa sees it nearest to Melito.<sup>131</sup> Yet, a late 2<sup>nd</sup> century provenance is ruled out by Richard, who convincingly situates it as a 3<sup>rd</sup> century monarchianist text.<sup>132</sup>

The second is the pseudo-Cyprianic *de duobus montibus Sina et Sion*.<sup>133</sup> Laato follows Harnack's view that the text reflects an especially intense period of Jewish-Christian debate and posits 220–248 CE as a plausible setting. The text clearly

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<sup>128</sup> CPG 4611.

<sup>129</sup> *pasch.* 7, 54 (SC 27:133, 181).

<sup>130</sup> SC 27:46–8.

<sup>131</sup> See CPG 4611, citing R. Cantalamessa, *L'omelia "In S. Pascha" dello PS. Ippolito di Roma* (Milan, 1967).

<sup>132</sup> See CPG 4611, citing TU 78 (Studia Patristica 3), 273ff.

<sup>133</sup> A. M. Laato, "Jews and Christians in *De duobus montibus Sina et Sion*: An Approach to Early Latin *Adversus Iudaeos* Literature" (PhD diss., Abo Akademi University, 1998), 19–21, specifically positing a range between ca. 220–248.

paraphrases the Lucan pericope, even using the Latinized term for the Lucan “evildoers” / κακοῦργοι, i.e. *malefactores*.<sup>134</sup> While neither text is a strong candidate for the earliest reception of the Lucan passage, both illustrate it as a well-known and imagination-provoking story around the early to mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century.

## *2H. Origen's Interpolation*

Only a few decades after the first comments on Luke 23.43 begin to appear, Origen notes (ostensibly in two different texts) that some of his opponents are claiming that Jesus' saying in Luke 23.43 is an interpolation. As in other references to Luke 23.43, this apparently serves as a shorthand reference for the entire episode of 23.39–43.<sup>135</sup> The charge is sufficiently important as to merit a closer look at both texts, which, as it turns out, overlap significantly.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> *mont.* 7.2–8.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12). Note that this early Latin reading is more precise than the later Vulgate, which does not account for the term κακοῦργοι in Luke 23.32, renders it as *latrones* in v 33 and *latronibus* in v 39, thus conflating Luke's “criminals” with the Markan/Matthean “bandits”.

<sup>135</sup> See 2A.

<sup>136</sup> *Io com.* 32.32.395 (SC 385:356) and *Luc cat.* f248 (GCS 49:332).

<i>Io com.</i> 32.32.395	<i>Luc cat.</i> f248
<p><u>For how will he be three days and nights in the heart of the earth—[he who] at the very time of his departure was about to be in the paradise of God, in keeping with what [he said], “<b>Today you will be with me in the paradise</b> of God”? Now what was said has so troubled some as dissonant that they have ventured to suspect that the very saying, “<b>Today you will be with me in the paradise</b> of God,” was added into the gospel by some literary frauds.</u></p>	<p><u>Now what was said has so troubled some as dissonant that they have ventured to suspect that the very saying, “<b>Today you will be with me in paradise</b>,” was added into the gospel by some literary frauds.</u></p>
<p>Πῶς γὰρ τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας ποιήσει ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς, &lt;ὅς&gt; ἅμα τῇ ἐξόδῳ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ ἐμελλεν ἕσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ, κατὰ τὸ <b>Σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ</b> τοῦ θεοῦ; οὕτω δὲ ἐτάραξεν τινὰς ὥς ἀσύμφωνον τὸ εἰρημένον, ὥστε τολμήσαι αὐτοὺς ὑπονοῆσαι προστεθῆσθαι τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἀπὸ τινων ῥαδιουργῶν αὐτὸ τὸ <b>Σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ</b> τοῦ θεοῦ.</p>	<p>Οὕτως δὲ τινὰς ἐτάραξεν ὥς ἀσύμφωνον τὸ εἰρημένον, ὥστε αὐτοὺς τολμήσαι ὑπονοῆσαι προστεθῆσθαι τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ὑπὸ τινων ῥαδιουργούντων αὐτὸ τὸ <b>σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ</b>.</p>

Besides a few minor, stylistic variations in the fragmentary text,<sup>137</sup> the two align perfectly. Two reconstructions of their relationship suggest themselves. In the first, the fragment ascribed to *Luc cat.* is misattributed and actually comes from *Io com.* The second reconstruction maintains the assignment of the fragmentary text to Origen’s non-extant *Commentary on Luke*, written shortly after finishing his arduous and lengthy

<sup>137</sup> I.e., putting οὕτως in place of οὕτω, προστεθῆσθαι in place of προστεθῆσθαι, ῥαδιουργούντων in place of ῥαδιουργῶν; twice reversing the order of subject and verb; and absenting the phrase “of God” after “paradise.”

*Commentary on John* around 248.<sup>138</sup> In this case, Origen (or one of his scribes) simply copies a relevant and recent comment into his new commentary. Either scenario (identity or historical proximity) is reasonable. While the second would give greater stress to the matter, even the first scenario is enough to suggest that the charge of interpolation was a serious issue for Origen in Caesarea around the year 248.

As it happens, the charge of forgery is obscured in a recent English translation of *Luc cat.* In an otherwise excellent translation, J. Lienhard here opts to translate τινων ῥαδιουργούντων as “those who lived an easy life.”<sup>139</sup> Heine translates the almost identical phrase of *Io com.* 32.32.395, τινων ῥαδιουργῶν, “by forgers,”<sup>140</sup> which is the better translation for *Luc cat.* as well.<sup>141</sup> Interestingly, Lienhard acknowledges the charge of forgery in his preface,<sup>142</sup> but goes on to speculate that the concern of Origen’s opponents is that the Lucan pericope might undermine moral rigor. In view of the relatively late appearance elsewhere of the concern about its potential moral problems,<sup>143</sup> this is a highly unlikely theory. Moreover, both excerpts quite clearly explain the background for the charge of interpolation as dissonant eschatology. Speculation about a

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<sup>138</sup> Nautin maintains that Origen started *Io com.* book 32 between 238–244 CE (p. 411) but finished it in 248 CE (p. 412).

<sup>139</sup> FOC 94:224.

<sup>140</sup> FOC 89:416.

<sup>141</sup> Lienhard’s translation is certainly consistent with the classical usage of the term as primarily signifying ease or laziness. See Liddell-Scott, s.v. “ῥαδιουργέω.” Yet the term takes on a technical, even apologetic significance in late antique and patristic literature. See Lampe, s.v. “ῥαδιουργέω” (p. 1214), who lists the two following options: 1) practice fraud; 2) falsify, tamper with (a text). Lampe also notes that Origen uses the term of literary tampering in *Cels.* 2.27 (PG 11:848A) and *ep.* 1.9 (PG 11:65B). Celsus himself made the (source-critical!) charge that the *writers* of the Genesis flood account “were forging” / ῥαδιουργοῦντες an infantile version of the Greek flood story of Deucalion (*Cels.* 4.41; GCS 2:314).

<sup>142</sup> FOC 94:xxvi.

<sup>143</sup> I.e., in the ca. 400 *Liber Graduum*. See 7D.

potential moral dilemma is neither required nor justified. As the following chapter will show, the precise issue of a dissonant eschatology is the single most prevalent and contentious issue addressed in the early reception-history of the passage. Even though eschatological dissonance is the concern behind the charge of interpolation, this does not necessarily rule out the merits of the charge itself. In other words, it is entirely possible that Origen's opponents are raising a serious textual claim, i.e., attesting to the existence of a *Gospel of Luke* without this story.

## 2I. *A Luke without 23.39–43?*

The absence of 23.39–43 from some ancient copies of Luke has no mss attestation, but it may still find support from recent developments in scholarship. As Gregory convincingly contends, Justin Martyr (c. 150s) is the first conclusive witness to uniquely Lucan materials in reception history.<sup>144</sup> As shown above, the earliest reception of 23.39–43 in particular plots even later, ca. 172 in Tatian's *Diatessaron*.<sup>145</sup> Why so late? The theories of Tyson and Klinghardt<sup>146</sup> in defense of a late Lucan redaction may explain. An earlier version of Luke may have lacked the pericope of 23.39–43. Though Tyson doubts Epiphanius' flat claim that Marcion removed this episode, he finds in Epiphanius a witness to an early Luke without a variety of L source traditions, including 23.39–43.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> See 2A.

<sup>145</sup> See 2A–E.

<sup>146</sup> See note in 1B.

<sup>147</sup> *Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 88–9.

However, Tyson fails to note that Eustathius, writing ca. 327–337, specifically mentions Marcionites knowing and embracing this passage.<sup>148</sup> This dissonant evidence considerably complicates the picture. It may be that Marcionites always had 23.39–43 in their version of Luke (and to be fair to Tyson, this would not contradict his main argument, which is that the Lucan birth and resurrection narratives are later redactions). It could be that the pericope was originally absent in Marcionite copies but later added to conform to the more popular version of Luke. Or it could be that the Marcionites who Eustathius knows are simply using the proto-Orthodox text in the interest of their own polemic.

Origen does not name his opponents. They could be Marcionites. After all, Luke was their one and only *Gospel*, and Marcion's theology is predicated on avoiding the contradictions inherent in a plurality of traditions. But their identity is ultimately unclear, as is the issue of the relationship of 23.39–43 to Marcionite copies of Luke. The charge of interpolation by Origen's opponents may be a serious textual claim, one that lends support to recent theories of a late Lucan redaction. On the other hand, it may be a theological protest with no bearing at all on the history of the Lucan text itself. The ambiguity of the evidence at present does not provide for a clear and compelling resolution to the question of whether 23.39–43 was actually missing from some ancient copies of Luke.

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<sup>148</sup> *frag.* 23 (CCSG 51:87).



In summary, the *Gospel of Peter* does not depend on Luke but rather attests to an earlier and simpler apologetic tradition that was picked up, expanded and dramatized in Luke for various didactic reasons. The *Apocalypse of Sedrach* and the *Martyrdom of Andrew* are too late to be viable candidates for the earliest reception of Luke 23.39–43. Tatian's *Diatessaron* thus emerges as its earliest plausible reception. The writings of Hippolytus, Tertullian, Origen, and pseudonymous texts all attest to the widespread use and authority of the story by the early third century. Finally, the charge of interpolation made by Origen's opponents presents a fascinating, however unlikely claim regarding the early textual history of Luke.

## CHAPTER 3. HARMONIZING DISSONANCE

3A. *Simplistic Summaries*

Modern commentaries that treat of the early interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 have tended to summarize it as preoccupied with the dissonance between the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits and Luke’s contrasted criminals. These same commentaries tend to segregate early interpreters into two distinct camps of harmonization: chronological (both reviled, but only one persisted while the other quickly changed) or sylleptical (or synecdochal, i.e., drawing on the literary convention of substituting whole for part, according to which only one criminal actually reviled Jesus). Plummer’s initial comment on the pericope is illustrative.<sup>149</sup>

Harmonists suggest that during the first hour both robbers reviled Jesus, and that one of them (who may have heard Jesus preach in Galilee) afterwards changed his attitude and rebuked his comrade. So Origen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Theophylact, Euthymius, on Mt xxvii. But Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, and Augustine confine the reviling to one robber, who in Mt and Mk is spoken of in the plur. by *synecdoche*.

The following chart diagrams the framework into which Plummer places early (pre-450 CE) interpreters.

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<sup>149</sup> *Luke*, 533.

Chronology	Syllepsis
Origen	Cyril of Jerusalem
Chrysostom	Ambrose
Jerome	Augustine

As it happens, Plummer himself expresses agreement with the patristic idea of *syllepsis* in regard to this passage.<sup>150</sup> In a more recent commentary, Fitzmyer passingly mentions Plummer's summary.<sup>151</sup> Luz's very recent commentary on Matthew in the EKK (here quoted in its Hermeneia English translation) also follows Plummer's lead, though he adds specific references.<sup>152</sup>

The church's interpretation was aware of two possibilities of reconciling Matthew/Mark and Luke: (a) According to Augustine (*Cons. ev.* 3.16 = 340), the plural of v. 44 is to be understood as a rhetorical trope; only one of the robbers is actually meant; (b) According to Jerome (273), at first both robbers abused Jesus; later one of them repented.

As it happens, these summaries actually say very little about patristic interpretation in its own right, and, as it turns out, what little they do say is considerably inaccurate. Rather than openings into the texture of an issue in patristic interpretation, they may be telling expressions of the modern, largely Protestant stereotype of early Christian interpretation as a pre-critical, simple-minded preoccupation with historical consistency.<sup>153</sup> Certainly, several early interpreters were aware of and concerned by the

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 534.

<sup>151</sup> *Gospel of Luke*, 1509.

<sup>152</sup> U. Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 539n26.

<sup>153</sup> In such summaries, the harmonizing Fathers seem to stand in as proto-fundamentalists whose simplistic concerns are outdone entirely by the sophistication of modern, critical scholars. This makes very little sense within Catholic and/or Orthodox ecclesiology and historiography, but does fit Protestant

disparity between the two reviling thieves of Mark and Matthew, in contrast with Luke's divergent pair of criminals. Still, what stands out in a thorough and critical survey of patristic interpretation is how infrequently early interpreters occupy themselves with this obvious disparity. Moreover, in contrast to such simplistic lists and summaries, early interpreters do not always fit into two well-defined camps representing chronological or sylleptical harmonization.

### 3B. Early Harmonizers?

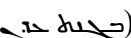
If the *Gospel of Peter* is dependent on Luke as well as Matthew, it may stand as the first example of harmonizing, or better, of eclectic borrowing. In this reconstruction, the *Gospel of Peter* places the Matthean/Markan term “reviled” / ὠνεΐδῃσεν (// Mark 15.32b, Matt 27.44) within a narrative section that emphatically alludes to and transforms the Lucan account of a particular criminal's speech (Luke 23.41–2). The end product differs significantly from Mark/Matthew as well as Luke. Only one bandit insults, but he insults the executioners rather than his fellow criminal.

While creative harmonizing is an interesting possibility, the prior assessment (2B) of the relationship between Luke and the *Gospel of Peter* (drawing on a common source)

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historiography well. It does not seem coincidental that Catholic interpreters (e.g., Gaume, Bessi res, Pasquero, Leloir, Grelot, Sieben, Daigenault) have consistently offered the most sympathetic and involved summaries of the historical interpretation (patristic and medieval) of this passage, while Protestant summaries of the last century have proved quite spartan (Plummer) until recently (Just, Parsons, Bovon). Yet even these more recent Protestant summaries never move beyond a *florilegium* genre to provide analysis and synthetic conclusions and lack the longer excerpts which are fairly typical of Catholic treatments. See 1D.

precludes the idea that *Peter* attempts to harmonize Luke 23.39–43. Even according to this assessment, *Peter* still reflects an attempt to harmonize the Markan/Matthean tradition with a fairly simple story about a criminal who defends and confesses Jesus. Thus Luke itself is—in a qualified sense—also a harmonization of the Markan/Matthean tradition and this simple story. One bandit still insults Jesus, while the other becomes his defender and confessor.

Does Tatian's *Harmony* engage in harmonizing on this issue? The response is inevitably complicated by the multilingual and multifaceted history of the *Diatessaron*. The analysis in 2E confirms the existence of a distinctive *Diatessaron* version of Luke 23.43 (“in the garden of Eden” / ) and this in turn supports the universal testimony of witnesses in regard to the presence of Luke 23.39–43 in the original *Diatessaron*. While all its witnesses reproduce this text as a self-contained pericope, the precise placement of this episode relative to other materials differs. The following chart illustrates the diversity of *Diatessaron* traditions regarding the respective order of materials related to the bandits and the last sayings of Jesus.

References	Arb <sup>154</sup>	Arm <sup>155</sup>	Prs <sup>156</sup>	Lt/OG <sup>157</sup>	OD1 <sup>158</sup>	OD2
Luke 23.32 ( <i>Then they led out two other criminals...</i> )	1	1 (20.22)	1	1	1	1
Luke 23.33 (+/or Matt 27.38, Mark 15.27–8, John 19.18) ( <i>crucified</i> )	2	2 (20.22)	2	3	2	2
Matt 27.44 ( <i>or Mark 15.32b</i> ) ( <i>two bandits reviled</i> )	3	-----	7	4	-----	-----
Luke 23.39–43	4	3 (20.22–6)	8	5	5	4
John 19.26–7 ( <i>Here is your son</i> )	5	4 (20.27)	4	6	6	5
Matt 27.45 ( <i>or Mark 15.33, Luke 23.44</i> ) ( <i>3 hours of darkness</i> )	6	-----	9	7	7	6
Luke 23.45a ( <i>eclipse</i> )	7	5 (20.28)	10	-----	8	7
Matt 27.46 ( <i>or Mark 15.34</i> ) ( <i>My God</i> )	8	6 (20.30)	11	8	3	8
John 19.28 ( <i>I thirst</i> )	9	-----	5	9	9	9
John 19.30a ( <i>It is completed</i> )	10	-----	6	10	11	10
Luke 23.34a ( <i>Forgive them</i> )	11	3 (21.3)	3	2	4	3
Luke 23.46a ( <i>Into your hands</i> )	12	7 (21.1)	12	11	10	11

<sup>154</sup> 51.24–52.7. Arb, FT in Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tattien*, 488–97; GT in Preuschen, *Diatessaron*, 226–8; ET in ANF 9:122–3 and Hill, *Earliest*, 206–9.

<sup>155</sup> Ephrem, *Diat. com.* 20.22–21.1 (Arm CSCO 137:296–311; LT CSCO 145:212–22). This section is entirely missing from the extant Syriac text (see CBM 8:208–9). Cf. Leloir (CSCO 227:67) and de Urbina (BPM 6:293–4), who both provide a comparable list. Note that both only cite Luke 23.33 in regard to a patent conflation of Luke 23.32–3: *Quando egerunt eum in crucem, egerunt cum eo adhuc alios duos malefactores*. The reference to John 19.26–7 (*Diat. com.* 20.27) is an echo rather than a quote. Luke 23.34a is quoted in 21.3 (see also 10.14), but as a retrospective explanation for the later disappearance of darkness, rather than within the running sequence of quotations and comments. Still, given the logic of the argument here, the fact that 20.22–6 represents a late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century redaction (see 2E, 3E, 5D) with overt anti-Jewish tendencies (5B), and the consistent testimony of other *Diatessaron* witnesses, it is likely that this verse was originally present and located prior to Luke 23.39–43. Note also that de Urbina incorrectly includes John 19.30a (“It is completed”) in the *Diat. com.*

<sup>156</sup> Messina, *Diatessaron Persiano*, 353–61.

<sup>157</sup> BADLD 5:267–72 (Latin and Old German).

<sup>158</sup> OD1 = Old Dutch in Leodiense/Liège (CSSNMA SM 1.1:264–9). OD2 = Old Dutch in Haarense (CSSNMA SM 1.2:113–15) and Cantabrigiense/Cambridge (CSSNMA SM 1.3:54–6), which match perfectly in order.

As the history of the *Diatessaron* itself, the chart is complicated in regard to the issue of harmonization. The sometimes useful Arabic tradition,<sup>159</sup> corroborated by the Persian, Latin and Old German, reflects an implicit chronological harmonization. In these texts, the Lucan episode follows immediately after the Markan/Matthean tradition that says both bandits reviled Jesus. At first glance, this would seem the most plausible reconstruction of the original Syriac *Diatessaron*. It would even seem to be corroborated by the *Diatessaron Commentary*, which clearly makes use of chronological harmonization.<sup>160</sup>

For it would have been easy for him to conquer anyone as a disciple by some miracle. But a more powerful miracle [was produced], in that he constrained *the scoffer of truth* to adore him.

However, the attempt to retrieve the order of the original *Diatessaron* passion is highly problematic.<sup>161</sup> Early Syriac quotations of the text, including the last words of Jesus, are piecemeal and scattered, and the *Diatessaron Commentary*, while moving in a rough progression, does not cite, quote or comment on every line of the *Diatessaron*. Any attempt at reconstructing the content of the Syriac *Diatessaron* here must also take seriously that the *Diatessaron Commentary* passion account (20.22–6), extant only in

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<sup>159</sup> Its disuse in *Diatessaron* reconstructions is lamented and partially corrected in T. Baarda, “An Archaic Element in the Arabic Diatessaron? (TA 46:18 = John xv 2),” *NovT* 17.2 (1975): 151–55, and also “The Roots of the Syriac Diatessaron Tradition (TA 25:1–3),” *NovT* 28.1 (1986): 1–25.

<sup>160</sup> *Diat. com.* 20.23 (Arm CSCO 137:297; ET from McCarthy, 305–6, italics mine).

<sup>161</sup> de Urbina claims in his introduction that it is “impossible” to trace the precise sequence of materials within the *Diatessaron* passion narrative; see BPM 6:xii.

Armenian, is a late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century redaction and is thus largely (if not entirely) inauthentic to Ephrem.<sup>162</sup>

In regard to the attempt to reconstruct the content of the *Diatessaron*, it seems highly significant that both Aphrahat and Ephrem *never* positively mention the Markan/Matthean tradition of the two reviling bandits.<sup>163</sup> As shown below (3E), Ephrem rejects it! The chronological harmonization mentioned in the *Diatessaron Commentary* is almost certainly not representative of Ephrem. On the other hand, the absence of the Markan/Matthean tradition (15.32b // 27.44) from early Syriac authors, coupled with the conspicuous absence of a quotation of it in the Armenian *Diatessaron Commentary*, likely provides an accurate reflection of Ephrem's text of the *Diatessaron*. In the most compelling reconstruction of the early Syriac *Diatessaron*, the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits are absent. The unanimous Old Dutch witnesses, which at first seem to be outliers, ring truest to the ancient Syriac text. Rather than a chronological or sylleptical strategy, this tradition apparently envisions the disparity as hopelessly contradictory and demands that one (the Markan/Matthean one) be jettisoned for the sake of the other (the Lucan one). In other words, its harmonization is not predicated on reconciliation, but rather the impulse to remove an inferior or offending textual tradition.

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<sup>162</sup> See esp. 2E, 3E, and 5D.

<sup>163</sup> This is based on my survey of the works of Ephrem and Aphrahat. The finding is further confirmed by Kristian Heal, who did the kindness of searching BYU's Electronic Syriac Corpus only to find no citations in any early Syriac texts, including the writings of Aphrahat, Ephrem, John of Apamea, Cyrillona, and the *Book of Steps*. The only citation in the search results appears in Beck's *serm.* 3.4 (line 633). While Beck does mention Mark 15.32 and Matt 27.44 in the footnote (CSCO 321:65), the text itself makes no reference to the Markan/Matthean tradition here, but only the Lucan tradition. The sermon also happens to be inauthentic to Ephrem (see the note in 7D).



The history of the *Diatessaron* comes clearer once this piece of the puzzle is in place. While the original Syriac *Diatessaron* left out the Markan/Matthean tradition of the reviling bandits, this gap became increasingly problematic as the dominance of the four-gospel canon expanded even into Syrian terrain where the *Diatessaron* had long reigned. Thus the Arabic, Persian, Latin, and Old German witnesses reflect a later corrected (perhaps late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> cent. Syriac) text and insert it precisely so as to carry a more traditional and more popular appeal to chronological harmonization.

### 3C. Origen's Chronological Solution

Origen is the first in extant texts to opt expressly for chronological harmonization. At the same time, apart from catena fragments, only one passage explains this clearly, and it is only extant in the anonymous Latin translation of the *Commentary on Matthew*,<sup>164</sup> often called the *Commentariorum Series*. As Girod points out, this Latin translator, a 5<sup>th</sup> century admirer of Origen (not an Arian),<sup>165</sup> makes many translation errors along with numerous additions to and subtractions from the Greek text, takes great liberties in translation, and tends to lengthen scriptural citations to clarify more subtle allusions and connections for his audience.<sup>166</sup> Thus Girod concludes that while the essence of Origen's thought is preserved, this translation ought to be used with caution. In the GCS critical

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<sup>164</sup> *Matt com.* A 133 (CPG 1450(2); here GCS 40.2:270–1).

<sup>165</sup> R. Girod, "La Traduction Latine Anonyme du Commentaire sur Matthieu," in *Origeniana*, Quaderni di "Vetera Christianorum" 12, ed. H. Crouzel (Universita di Bari: Istituto di Letteratura Cristiana Antica, 1975), 127–32.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 134–8.

edition, Klostermann does provide one parallel Greek catena fragment (C<sup>luc</sup> 58) along with a list of other similar Greek fragments,<sup>167</sup> all of which are reproduced below for comparison.

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<sup>167</sup> Column 1 is GCS 40.2:270–1 // TU 47.2:39 = C<sup>luc</sup> 58. Column 2 is *CPGNT* 1:438–9 = C. F. Matthaei, *Anecdota Graeca ex variis codicibus* (Mosquae, 1775), 2:106. Column 3 is Heinrici 330–31. Column 4 is GCS 49:331 (= *Luc cat* f247).

<p><i>Matt com A 133</i> (GCS 40.2:270–1)</p> <p>And just as we could, we explained about the <b>two bandits</b> in John who were <b>crucified with</b> Christ, <u>who according to Matthew and also Mark both <b>reviled him</b> on the cross, but according to Luke it says that <b>one of the hanging bandits was blaspheming him, saying: “Are you Christ? Save yourself and us.” But, responding, the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, that you are in the same condemnation? And we justly indeed, for we are receiving what is deserving of [our] deeds; but this one did nothing bad. And he was saying to Jesus: “Remember me when you come into your kingdom.” But, responding, Jesus said to him who rebuked the blasphemer: “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”</b></u></p> <p>Therefore, it is harmonious, so that indeed at first both bandits are understood to have blasphemed the Lord, but after this, one of them was converted and believed, having been drawn to him by these miracles which he heard were done by him, perhaps even seeing the conversion of the air and unusual darkness happening, not just as was frequently accustomed to happen. Nor [was this] by chance, just as we said over there; and the others were those two bandits, who both blasphemed. But that bandit who was saved may be a symbol of those who after many iniquities believed in Christ and said: <u>we were <b>crucified with Christ</b> (Gal 2.19) and <b>conformed to the death</b> (Phil 3.10) of Christ, and always say to the Son of God: “Remember” us “<b>when you come into your kingdom</b>” and therefore in <b>paradise</b> they are with him.</u></p>	<p><sup>Luc</sup> 58 (TU 47.2:39) (=GCS 40.2:270–1)</p> <p>On the one hand, <u>Matthew, skimming over, said that those <b>crucified with him reviled him</b>. But this one is more precise—just as he promised to explain—he said that <b>one blasphemed, but the other rebuked him</b>.</u></p> <p><u>It appears that at first both had <b>reviled him</b>. But later, the other one was moved over to believe in him, recalling the signs he did and seeing the sky starting to darken. But see that the saved bandit is a symbol of those who after sins believed in Jesus and said, <b>I have been crucified with Christ</b>, who are <b>conformed to his death</b>, who even are deemed worthy of passing time in paradise because of what the Lord said, “<b>Today you will be with me in paradise.</b>”</u></p>	<p><i>CPGNT</i> 1:438–9</p> <p>Now <u>Luke</u> more carefully laid out [the story] concerning the <b>bandits</b>. For, on the one hand, <u>Matthew and Mark, skimming over, said that <b>even those crucified with [him] reviled him</b>. But Luke, on the other hand, [has] one blaspheming, <b>but the other rebukes him</b>, for which he was justly promised great honor.</u></p> <p><u>It could be that the two at first blasphemed, not knowing the reason he was condemned. But, after learning it, the one kept back from blaspheming. Yet the other, though he also learned, did not abstain, because he was unchangingly evil.</u></p>	<p>Heinrici 330–1</p> <p>Now similarly also <u>those bandits crucified with him at first equally <b>reviled him—the two—, but later, one repented, seeing the darkness. Now it seems that the one who repented was indeed a Jew, because, thinking of something else than his earthly kingdom he said, “Remember me in your kingdom.”</b></u></p>	<p><i>Luc cat</i> 1247 (GCS 49:331)</p> <p>On the one hand, <u>Matthew, skimming over, said</u></p>
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<p><i>Matt com A 133</i> (GCS 40.2:270-1)</p> <p><i>Et apud Iohannem sicut potuimus exposuimus de duobus latronibus, qui fuerunt crucifixi cum Christo, qui secundum Matthaeum quidem et Marcum inproperaverunt ei ambo in cruce, secundum Lucam autem dicentem quoniam unus de pendentibus latronibus blasphemabat eum dicens: tu es Christus; salva te ipsum et nos. respondens autem alter increpabat eum dicens: non times tu deum, quod in eadem damnatione es? et nos quidem iuste, nam condigna factis recipimus; iste autem nihil mali fecit. et dicebat ad Iesum: memor esto mei cum veneris in regnum tuum. respondens autem Iesus dixit ad eum, qui increpaverat blasphemantem: amen dico tibi: hodie mecum eris in paradiso.</i></p> <p><i>Conveniens ergo est, ut in primis quidem ambo latrones intellegantur dominum blasphemasse, post hoc autem unum ex eis conversum esse et credidisse tractantem apud seipsum et de his miraculis, quae audiebat facta ab eo, forsitan autem et videns conversionem aeris et tenebras fieri insolitas, et non sicut fieri frequenter solebant. aut ne forte, sicut et illic diximus, alii sunt hi duo latrones, ex quibus unus blasphemabat eum alius autem increpabat blasphemantem, et alii fuerunt illi duo latrones, qui ambo blasphemaverunt. sed ille latro, qui salvatus est, potest esse mysterium eorum, qui post multas iniquitates crediderunt in Christum et dixerunt: Christo confixi sumus et configurati in morte Christi, et semper dicunt filio dei: memor esto nostri cum veneris in regnum tuum et ideo in paradiso sunt cum ipso.</i></p>	<p><i>C<sup>luc</sup> 58 (TU 47.2:39)</i> (=GCS 40.2:270-1)</p> <p>ὁ μὲν <u>Ματθαῖος</u> παρατρέχων εἶπεν ὅτι καὶ οἱ <u>συσταυρωθέντες ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν</u>· ἀκριβέστερον δὲ οὗτος ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπηγγέλato ἐξηγούμενος ἓνα φησὶν εἶναι <u>τον βλασφημῶσαντα, τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτῷ</u>. εἰκὸς δὲ καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀμφοτέρους ὠνειδικέναι, ὕστερον δὲ τὸν ἕτερον μεταβελήκεναι ἐπὶ τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτῷ, ὑπομνησθέντα τε ὧν ἐποίει σημειῶν καὶ <u>ιδόντα</u> ἀρχόμενον σκυτίζεσθαι τὸν ἄερα. ὅρα δὲ εἰ ὁ σωζόμενος ληστής σύμβολόν ἐστιν τῶν μετὰ ἀμαρτίας εἰς Ἰησοῦν πιστευσάντων καὶ λεγόντων· <b>Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι, συμμορφιζομένων τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ</b>, οἱ καὶ τῆς ἐν παραδείσῳ καταξιοῦνται διατριβῆς διὰ τὸ εἰρηκέναι τὸν κύριον τὸ σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσθ' ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.</p>	<p><i>CPGNT 1:438-9</i></p> <p>ἀκριβέστερον δὲ ὁ Λουκᾶς περὶ τῶν <u>ληστῶν</u> ἐκτίθεται. ὁ μὲν γὰρ <u>Ματθαῖος</u> καὶ <u>Μάρκος</u> παρατρέχοντες εἶπον· ὅτι καὶ οἱ <u>συσταυρωθέντες ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν</u>. ὁ δὲ Λουκᾶς ἕνα μὲν τὸν <u>βλασφημῶσαντα</u>, <u>τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτῷ</u>, καὶ δικαίως ἐπηγγέλθη μεγάλη τιμὴ. ἤδυναντο δὲ καὶ οἱ <u>δυο</u> πρότερον <u>βλασφημεῖν</u>, οὐκ εἰδότες ἐφ' ᾧ καρεκρίθη· μαθόντες δὲ, τὸν μὲν ἕτερον παραιτήσασθαι βλασφημεῖν, τὸν δὲ ἕτερον καὶ μαθὼντα μὴ ἀποσχέσθαι, ἀμετάθετον ἔχοντα τὴν πονηρίαν.</p>	<p>Heimirci 330-1</p> <p>ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ οἱ <u>συσταυρωθέντες αὐτῷ λησταί</u> τὴν ἀρχὴν μὲν ἐξ ὀμότητος ὠνείδιζον αὐτόν· οἱ δὲ ὅσοι, ὕστερον δὲ ὁ εἷς μετενοήσεν ἑωρακώς τὸ σκότος. εἰκὸς δὲ ὅτι ὁ μετανοήσας καὶ <u>λουδαῖος</u> ἦν, διὸ καὶ ἄλλην τινὰ ἑνῶσιν παρα τὴν ἐπιγειον τὴν αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν εἶπε τὸ μνήσθητί μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.</p>	<p><i>Luc cat f247</i> (GCS 49:331)</p> <p>Ὁ μὲν <u>Ματθαῖος</u> παρατρέχων εἶπεν</p>
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None of the Greek excerpts used by Klostermann provides a clear match to the Latin text. The incongruity may be easily explained both by the eclectic character of catenae as well as the loose translation and improvisation of the anonymous Latin translator. Still, the connections between these texts corroborate Origen's use of chronological harmonization. Though not stated explicitly elsewhere, this idea is also implied in Origen's descriptions of the bandit's repentance while on the cross.<sup>168</sup>

The connections above also yield two other ideas, both of which Origen apparently pioneers. Two Greek texts confirm the Latin text's claim that the darkness provoked the bandit's repentance.<sup>169</sup> Three Greek excerpts share the term "skimming over" / παρατρέχων (alt παρατρέχοντες), a term that highlights the authorial method of Matthew in order to explain its differences with Luke.<sup>170</sup> One Greek text develops the other side of this argument, describing the authorial method of Luke as narrating events "more carefully" / ἀκριβέστερον (cf. Luke 1.3, ἀκριβῶς).<sup>171</sup>

As we will see, later interpreters appeal in similar (though not identical) ways to authorial method to explain the disparities. Still, it is Origen's chronological solution to the issue of synoptic dissonance that has the most significant afterlife. Whether implicitly or explicitly, the idea appears in Chrysostom,<sup>172</sup> Chromatius of Aquileia,<sup>173</sup> a ca. 5<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> *Io cat.* f3 (GCS 10:487), f112 (GCS 10:565), both quoted in 6A.

<sup>169</sup> *Matt com* A 133 (GCS 40.2:270–1); C<sup>luc</sup> 58 (TU 47.2:39); Heinrici 330–1.

<sup>170</sup> C<sup>luc</sup> 58 (TU 47.2:39); *CPGNT* 1:438–9; *Luc cat* f247 (GCS 49:331).

<sup>171</sup> *CPGNT* 1:438–9.

<sup>172</sup> *I Cor. hom.* 32.14 (PG 61:276). "He brought into paradise the bandit who before was reproaching him" / Τὸν δὲ πρὸ τούτου κατηγοροῦντα ληστήν καὶ εἰς παράδεισον εἰσήγαγε.

<sup>173</sup> For Chromatius of Aquileia, see *serm.* 2.6 (lines 104–26; SC 154:142), quoted in 6E. Chromatius helps the harmonization by using the Lucan "blasphemy" of the bandit who repents.

century Coptic sermon falsely attributed to Euodius of Rome,<sup>174</sup> and a late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century redaction in the passion section of the *Diatessaron Commentary*, a section extant only in Armenian.<sup>175</sup> Augustine's apologist, Prosper of Aquitaine, stands out here for his adamant support of a chronological harmonization in his debate with John Cassian. So as to refute Augustine's anti-Pelagian theology of grace and the will, Cassian had cited the Egyptian master Chaeremon for the idea that, while grace is always the basis of salvation, some individuals take hold of salvation unbidden while others come because invited.<sup>176</sup> Prosper's retort hinges on the use of chronological harmonization and stands out in antiquity for its theologically potent use of the idea.<sup>177</sup>

### 3D. Eustathius' Dramatic Solution

One of Origen's earliest and most vitriolic detractors, Eustathius of Antioch, elaborately addresses this synoptic tension in two roughly continuous fragments (26 and 27)<sup>178</sup> from his treatise *On the Soul against the Arians* (CPG 3151, 3153),<sup>179</sup> written after the Council

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<sup>174</sup> *pass. res.* 64 (CSCO 524:97), "Indeed, the Jew and the Gentile had both blasphemed him before the signs were revealed, as Matthew and Mark have told us. I too am a witness of that which they say. When the Gentile saw that the elements had changed, he understood. He said, 'Truly this one who is crucified with me is the Son of God.' And at that (very) moment he repented for that which he had said" (ET from CSCO 525:103).

<sup>175</sup> *Diat. com.* 20.23 (CSCO 137:297, quoted in 3B).

<sup>176</sup> *Conl.* 13.11.1–2 (CSEL 13:375–6).

<sup>177</sup> *Coll.* 7.3 (PL 51:231B–3A, quoted in 5F).

<sup>178</sup> CCSG 51:88–94.

<sup>179</sup> Extracts from which were collated and published in the late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century under the name of Gregory of Nyssa and under the title *Contra Ariomanitas et de anima*; see CCSG 51:cxviii, cxlvii, clxxiv, 63.

of Nicea and during his time in exile (after 327 CE).<sup>180</sup> The first fragment highly dramatizes the disparity.<sup>181</sup>

It is worth tying together the story of both, since there is the greatest difference of understanding in the interpretation of the holy evangelists. John said absolutely nothing about them, except that a certain two were crucified with Christ, leaving to the others the narrative concerning them. Both Matthew and Mark say that those nearby, like the chief priests and scribes, blasphemed the Lord. In the same way, they said that both bandits cried out together with impieties. In contrast, Luke said that one insulted, but the other at first rebuked the maddened bandit. After this he says, **“Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.”** Hence from this much contradiction is supposed between them who seem to differ widely by making use of interpretation. For, in regard to the bandit’s identical character, they claim blasphemous sounds were breaking forth, but also, in contrast, words pleasant and agreeable to God. If the evangelists were contending sharply, conjecturing customs in order to contradict one another, it would be necessary to cling to a most mysterious and steep elevation where there is no other path of freedom. As much as dealing with the reality necessarily hold tests for the body, it still welcomes more mysterious references in the mind in order to assign correctly the proper character to them.

”Αξιον δὲ τὴν ἑκατέρων ἐπιθεῖν ἱστορίαν, ἐπειδὴ μάλιστα καὶ διάφορος περὶ αὐτῶν ἔγκειται νοῦς ἐν τῇ τῶν ἁγίων εὐαγγελιστῶν ἐκδοχῇ. Ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἰωάννης οὐδὲν ὅλως ἐλάλησε περὶ τούτων, πλὴν ὅτι καὶ δύο τινὰς ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ, τοῖς ἄλλοις τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν ἐκχωρήσας διήγησιν. Ματθαῖος δὲ καὶ Μάρκος φασὶν ὡς οἱ μὲν παριόντες, ὁμοίως τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι καὶ γραμματεῦσιν, ἐβλασφήμουν τὸν κύριον· τὸ δ’ αὐτὸ καὶ τοὺς ληστὰς ἀμφοτέρους ἅμα τοῖς ἀσεβέσιν ἔφασαν ἐκφωνεῖν. Λουκᾶς δὲ τουναντίον τὸν μὲν ἕνα δυσφημεῖν ἔφη τὸν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν δὲ ἕτερον ἐπιπλήττειν μὲν ἐν πρώτοις τῷ μεμνηνῷτι ληστῇ, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο φῆσαι· **Μνήσθητί μου, κύριε, ὅτ’ ἂν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.** Πολλὴ τοίνυν ἐντεῦθεν ἀντιδοξία νομίζεται παρὰ τισιν, μακρῶς δὲ φαίνονται δια<λ>λάττοντες οἱ χρώντες τῆς ἐκδοχῆς, ὅποτε ταυτὸ τοῦ ληστοῦ πρόσωπον οἱ μὲν ἔφασαν βλασφήμους ῥῆξαι φωνάς, οἱ δ’ ἐκ τῶν ἐναντίων εὐφήμους καὶ τῷ θεῷ προσφιλεῖς. Πλὴν οὐ διαμάχεσθαι τοὺς εὐαγγελιστὰς θέμις ὑπονοεῖν ἀντιδοξοῦντας ἀλλήλοις, ἀλλ’ ἐνταῦθα δεῖ τῇ

<sup>180</sup> CCSG 51:88–9. Declerck does not offer a specific guess at the year of his death, but he does give many arguments against the traditional date of 337 (CCSG 51:clxxxiv–cclxxxiv) as well as many arguments for the authenticity of the fragments in his critical edition (cxix–xxv). Regarding the date of his deposition, see cclxxxvii–cclxxxix. Regarding the date of the fragments, see cix, ccxcvi–ccxcvii.

<sup>181</sup> CCSG 51:88–9.

μυστικωτέρᾳ προσέχειν ἀναγωγῇ δριμέως, ἔνθα μὴ ἔστιν ἄλλός τις λύσεως τρόπος· καὶ ὅσα <μέν> ἐπὶ τοῦ σώματος τὰς ἀποδείξεις ἔχει, ταῦτ' ἐπ' αὐτοῦ χρὴ λαμβάνειν τοῦ πράγματος, ὅσα δὲ ἐπὶ ἐννοίας μυστικωτέρας ἐπιδέχεται τὰς ἀναφοράς, τούτοις τὸ οἰκεῖον ὀρθῶς ἀπονέμειν ἦθος.

While the dramatic reference to “a most mysterious and steep elevation” could evoke the scenery of Eustathius’ rural exile, his subsequent, contrastive appeal to “the body” and “the reality” is intent on slighting Origen’s spiritual exegesis. Eustathius reads Origen’s admission of contradiction as highly problematic, even if it is placed at the heart of the bandit’s character, which Eustathius maintains should be self-consistent during the crucifixion.

Though merely tacit in the previous fragment, the following one shows that Eustathius has a different reconstruction in mind.

When Matthew and Mark distinguish both bandits blaspheming, they are speaking darkly about an express meaning. They want to show to those capable of thinking more subtly that it was none other than the one shooting off godless slanders from the height, the devil, who was slipping in from inside. He was joining together with the criminal, rousing him. Since they were exposing the multitude of the deeds of the warring beast, they were saying nothing about the other one, leaving to Luke the narrative about him and the story of his perceptive deeds. Now Luke, taking out the net of contemplation, shows the one bandit being mercilessly impious, even as the one with him turns to think in silence. After this, he details the provisions of this other one. Stirred by divine love, he both takes counsel of Christ’s kingdom and confesses his power.

“Ὅτι οἱ ἀμφὶ τὸν Ματθαῖον καὶ Μάρκον, ἀμφοτέρους βλασφημῶν ὀρισάμενοι τοὺς ληστάς, ἐμφαντικὴν αἰνίττονται σημασίαν, δηλῶσαι βουλόμενοι τοῖς λεπτότερον δυναμένοις νοεῖν, ὅτι μὴ μόνος ἦν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ μετεώρου τὰς ἀσεβεῖς ἀποτοξεύων δυσφημίας, ἔνδοθεν δ’ ὑποδύς ὁ διάβολος συνεξεφώνει τῷ κακούργῳ, διεγείρων αὐτόν, ἐπειδὴ τὰς τοῦ πολεμίου θηρὸς τὸ πλεον ἐκτιθέμενοι πράξεις, οὐδὲν περὶ τοῦ ἄλλου διελάλησαν, τῷ Λουκᾷ τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ διήγησιν ἐκχωρήσαντες καὶ τὴν τῶν αἰσθητῶν πραγμάτων ἱστορίαν. Ὁ δὲ Λουκᾶς ἐκδεξάμενος τὸ τῆς θεωρίας ὕψος, τὸν μὲν ἕνα δεικνύει ληστὴν ἀφειδῶς ἡσεβηκέναι, κατὰ ἀποσιώπησιν ἐπιτρέψας νοεῖν καὶ τὸν σὺν αὐτῷ. Μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τὰς



τοῦ ἄλλου διέξεισιν οἰκονομίας, θεοφιλῶς ἀνακινουμένου καὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλείας ἀνακ<ο>ινούντος τὲ καὶ ὁμολογούντος τὸ κράτος.

Eustathius is quite similar to Origen in that he contrasts the authorial methods of Matthew (here including Mark) and Luke. But where Origen contrasted brevity with the historian's rigor, Eustathius finds a difference in focus and intent. Matthew and Mark were attempting to picture a spiritual war in which the devil takes on manifold disguises and speaks through many characters. Eustathius asserts that these two authors actually “were saying nothing about the other (bandit)” / οὐδὲν περὶ τοῦ ἄλλου διελάλησαν. Rather than the evangelists fighting with each other (perhaps a jab at Marcion or even Tatian), they were cooperating with each other. Matthew and Mark were accentuating spiritual warfare and left it to Luke to furnish the second bandit's proper story. Furthermore, Luke's account provides an occasion for contemplation, both capturing the attention of the listener and illustrating a morally and spiritually powerful dichotomy between the two bandits. Eustathius' interpretation does not ever call upon syllepsis as a solution, though he may have something similar in mind. While obviously drawing on the four-gospel tradition, Eustathius may well be influenced here by the Syrian *Diatessaron* which simply rejected (i.e., removed) the Markan/Matthean tradition of two reviling bandits. Perhaps this Syriac tradition explains why Mark and Matthew “were saying nothing” about the character in Luke's narrative.

### 3E. Atypical Answers: Hilary, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Ephrem

While some interpreters show knowledge of a clear problem and reflection on a clear solution, others are more complex and elliptical. For example, Cyril of Jerusalem in his ca. 350 *Catecheses* enigmatically asserts that “while the two were lawless before this, now one was (lawless) no longer” / καὶ οἱ δύο μὲν ἦσαν πρὸ τούτου ἄνομοι, ὁ δὲ εἷς οὐκέτι.<sup>182</sup> This might appear to be an outline of chronological harmonization, but the broader context does not sustain this reading. For, while the Jews shook their heads and mocked Jesus, “that one slandered together with them, while the other was rebuking the one who slandered” / ἐκείνος μετ’ αὐτῶν ἐδυσφήμει, ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ἐπετίμα τῷ δυσφημοῦντι.<sup>183</sup> Cyril only appeals to the Lucan tradition, only has one bandit slandering Jesus, not two. Apparently *none* of Cyril’s extant works refer to the reviling bandits of Matt 27.44 // Mark 15.32b.<sup>184</sup> Cyril quite possibly has in mind a picture close to those of Tatian and Ephrem (see below), who simply reject the Markan/Matthean tradition.

Hilary of Poitiers is also enigmatic. His most significant passage on the issue appears in his *Commentary on Matthew*, written between the Synod of Arles (353 CE) and his exile to Phrygia (356 CE).<sup>185</sup>

Yet on account of the difference between the faithful and unfaithful a universal division comes about between the right and left. Of the two, the one positioned to the right is saved by the justification of faith. ... Nevertheless, that both bandits

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<sup>182</sup> *Cat.* 13.30 (R-R 2:88).

<sup>183</sup> *Cat.* 13.30 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>184</sup> The online *Bibindex* lists only one reference in *Cat.* 15.22 (R-R 2:184), but closer inspection shows it to be inaccurate.

<sup>185</sup> *Matt com.* A 33.5 (SC 258:254).

reproach the condition of his passion signifies that even among all the faithful the scandal of the cross will take place.

*Sed quia per diuersitatem fidelium atque infidelium fit omnium secundum dexteram sinistramque diuisio, unus ex duobus ad dexteram situs fidei iustificatione saluatur. ... Quod autem latrones ambo condicionem ei passionis exprobrant, uniuersis etiam fidelibus scandalum crucis futurum esse significat.*

At first glance, Hilary's statements taken together imply chronological harmonization: only the one is "saved by the justification of faith," yet "both bandits reproach the condition of his passion." But Hilary's argument and his concern are not really about harmonization at all. Rather than reconstructing a plausible historical scenario, Hilary apparently attempts to mine multiple, symbolic meanings. First, he finds a picture of universal judgment, and the bandits are contrasted here in terms of salvation. Next, he sees a scandal happening within the church, likely an allusion to the Arian conflict. The common reviling of the bandits points to the participation of "all the faithful" in the humiliation of Christ brought about by such a scandal. His exegesis is concerned with the episode's theological potential and its relevance for his own day, rather than attempting to reconstruct events. Here as elsewhere,<sup>186</sup> Hilary never directly acknowledges the disparity.

Ephrem the Syrian, during his later years in Edessa (363–373 CE), briefly but forcefully speaks to the issue.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> *Const.* 4 (SC 334:174); *Ps* 1.14–15 (SC 515:192).

<sup>187</sup> *h. fid.* 7.7 (CSCO 154:33–4).

Also the bandit did not dispute;  
 he believed while not examining.  
 The left one, he did dispute;  
 his disputing cut him off from hope.

ܐܢܬܐ ܕܥܡܝܢܐ ܠܐ ܕܝܠܥܩ  
 ܕܥܡܝܢܐ ܠܐ ܕܝܠܥܩ  
 ܕܥܡܝܢܐ ܠܐ ܕܝܠܥܩ  
 ܕܥܡܝܢܐ ܠܐ ܕܝܠܥܩ

The hymn in which this quotation appears gives a sustained warning against investigating divine and human mysteries. Given the poetic genre (*madrashê*) and Ephrem's general suspicion of questioning God and explaining theological mysteries,<sup>188</sup> a clear acknowledgement of the issue of scripture's self-contradiction would not fit his purpose. It would also not fit within his poetic effort to accentuate typological contrast, for example how the left side (and thus the left bandit) represents evil and the penchant to test and question Christ, while the right side (and right bandit) stands for unquestioning faith.<sup>189</sup> Rhetorical purposes could overshadow any concerns about harmonization.

On the other hand, in diachronic perspective, the claim that the second criminal "did not dispute" sounds quite similar to Ephrem's Syrian precursors, particularly Eustathius. While Ephrem could imply a sylleptical harmonization, it is more likely that Ephrem simply reflects the absence of the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits from the original Syriac *Diatessaron*. He may even intend to rebuke those who insist on Origen's chronological solution. Ephrem was almost certainly not the source of the reference to

<sup>188</sup> A theme stressed throughout this hymn (*h. fid.* 7; CSCO 154:31–5), as well as in *h. fid.* 54.12–13 (CSCO 154:170, quoted in 5C) and *par.* 8.3 (CSCO 174:33–4), among other places.

<sup>189</sup> *h. fid.* 54.12–13 (CSCO 154:170, quoted in 5C).

chronological harmonization in the *Diatessaron* passion preserved only in Armenian.<sup>190</sup>

On the other hand, the lack of any reference to Mark 15.32b // Matt 27.44 anywhere else in Ephrem's authentic literary corpus confirms its absence in his original *Diatessaron Commentary*. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Ephrem leaves out the Markan/Matthean tradition.

### 3F. Epiphanius' Sylleptical Solution

Where Cyril, Hilary and Ephrem seem hesitant either to mention the synoptic dilemma or to commit clearly to a solution, Epiphanius of Salamis does so emphatically. In a technical manner and defensive tone, Epiphanius gives two distinct solutions in his polemical *Panarion* (written ca. 374/5–378),<sup>191</sup> specifically in a section devoted to the Manicheans.<sup>192</sup>

40. Why do they spy out controversies? Wherever they attain them and do not grasp the clarity of the expression, they hesitate, pondering contradictions for themselves instead of searching out what is beneficial for themselves. For Matthew speaks of two demoniacs, but Luke tells about one. (2) For one of the evangelists says that the co-crucified bandits blasphemed him, but another does not say that both blasphemed him, but instead portrays the one's defense. (3) For **he rebuked the other and said, "Do you not fear God, for we are in the same condemnation, but this holy one did nothing."** On top of this he says, **"Remember me, Jesus, when you come in your kingdom."** To him the Savior said, **"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."** (4) It seems that these things convey discordance in the scripture. But all is plain. (5) For even though in Matthew there are two demoniacs, the same exist in Luke. But it is

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<sup>190</sup> *Diat. com.* 20.23 (CSCO 137:297; McCarthy, 305–6). For the argument against Ephrem's authorship of *Diat. com.* 20.22–6, see 2E and 5D.

<sup>191</sup> NHMS 63:xx.

<sup>192</sup> *Pan.* B 66.40.1–41.6 (GCS 37:77–8).

because the scripture is accustomed to provide reasons for what transpires that Luke does not remember two but one. (6) There were two healed of demons, but one perseveres in faith while the other runs aground. Because of such perseverance of faith he followed Jesus—as the Gospel maintains—into whatever place he departed. For this reason he omitted the one and remembered the one who is in the kingdom of the heavens. So nothing contradicts the discovery of truth.

41. The Gospel narrates yet another reason, similar to this principle of (speaking) about one. The Lord cleansed ten lepers and the nine, while leaving, did not give glory to God. But the one who turned back remained. He was praised by the Lord, just as he said, **“Ten lepers were cleansed. Why did none of them return to give glory to God, but only this foreigner?”** (2) You see that it is because of excellent perception and a prudent deed that he remembers the one in place of the ten. In a similar way the one evangelist remembered the bandits. (3) For we are accustomed to speak of individuals as plurals and plurals as individuals. For we claim that “We’ve told you!” and “We’ve found you!” and “We’ve come to you!” Yet, two are not speaking, but only the one who is present. According to the custom of speech one speaks plurally of the presence of many. (4) Thus one gospel’s principle involves (speaking) plurally, while the other tells that there was one blasphemer, but one confessed and alighted upon salvation. (5) You see that everything about truth is clear and no contradiction exists in the scripture. (6) But, as I consider this discourse, we have pressed on through all this (long enough), detailing the scripture at length. Still, so be it that we toil in a long speech, both to reprove those who are against the truth and to cheer its sons with the healing medicines of truth.

40. Τί δὲ οἱ τὰ ζητήματα κατοπτρεύοντες; ἐπὶ πᾶν φθάσωσι καὶ μὴ καταλάβωσι τοῦ ῥητοῦ τὴν σαφήνειαν, ἀσχάλλουσιν <μᾶλλον> ἀντίθετα ἑαυτοῖς διανοούμενοι ἢ περὶ χρήσιμα ἑαυτοῖς θηρώμενοι, ἐπεὶ δὲ γὰρ ὁ Ματθαῖος φησι δύο δαιμονιζόμενοι, ὁ δὲ Λουκᾶς περὶ ἑνὸς διηγείται. καὶ γὰρ <καὶ> εἰς τῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν λέγει ὅτι οἱ λησταὶ οἱ συνεσταυρωμένοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτόν, ὁ δὲ ἄλλος οὐχί, ὅτι <οὐ> μόνον οὐκ ἐβλασφήμουν οἱ ἀμφότεροι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπολογία τοῦ ἑνὸς σημαίνει. καὶ γὰρ ἐπετίμα τῷ ἑτέρῳ, καὶ ἔλεγεν ὅτι οὐ φοβῆσθαι τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματι ἐσμέν, οὗτος δὲ ὁ ἅγιος οὐδὲν <ἄτοπον> ἐποίησε. καὶ πρὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐπεφώνει λέγων μνήσθητί μου, Ἰησοῦ, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, [καὶ] τοῦ σωτῆρος πρὸς αὐτόν εἰπόντος ὅτι ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ. ἔοικε δὲ ταῦτα ὡς διαφωνίαν ἔχοντα ἐν τῇ γραφῇ. ἀλλὰ πάντα λεῖα ὑπάρχει. κἂν τε γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ματθαίῳ δύο εἰσὶ δαιμονιζόμενοι, παρὰ τῷ Λουκᾷ οἱ αὐτοὶ ὑπάρχουσιν. ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ δὲ εἴωθεν ἡ γραφή προφάσεις διδόναι τῶν εἰργασμένων, τούτου ἕνεκα οὐ μνημονεύει Λουκᾶς τῶν δύο, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἑνός. δύο μὲν γὰρ ἦσαν οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν δαιμονίων τεθεραπευμένοι, εἷς δὲ παρέμεινε τῇ πίστει, ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ἐξώκειλε. διὰ τοίνυν τὴν παραμυθίαν τῆς πίστεως ἠκολούθει τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὡς ἔχει τὸ

εὐαγγέλιον, εἰς οἶον ἀπήρχετο τόπον. τούτου ἕνεκα τὸν ἕνα παρέλιπε καὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς τοῦ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐπεμνήσθη. καὶ οὐδὲν ἐναντιοῦται πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εὐρεσιν.

41. Ἦδη δὲ καὶ ἑτέραν πρόφασιν ὁμοίαν ταύτης τῆς ὑποθέσεως τὸ εὐαγγέλιον διηγείται ὡς περὶ ἑνός. ὁ κύριος δέκα λεπρούς ἐκαθάρισε καὶ οἱ ἑννέα ἀπελθόντες οὐκ ἔδωκαν δόξαν τῷ θεῷ, ὁ δὲ εἷς ὑποστρέψας ἔμεινεν, ὁ καὶ ὑπὸ κυρίου ἐγκωμιαζόμενος, καθὼς ἔφη **δέκα λεπροὶ ἐκαθαρίσθησαν. διὰ τί οὐδὲ εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν ὑπέστρεψε δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ θεῷ, ἀλλὰ μόνος οὗτος ὁ ἀλλογενής;** καὶ ὁρᾷς ὅτι διὰ τὸ εὐαίσθητον καὶ <τὸ> τῆς εὐγνωμοσύνης ἔργον τοῦ ἑνός ἀντὶ τῶν δέκα μνημονεύει. ὡσαύτως δὲ ἐπειδὴ ὁ εἷς εὐαγγελιστὴς περὶ ληστῶν ἐμνημόνευσεν. εἰώθαμεν γὰρ τὰ ἐνικὰ πληθυντικὰ λέγειν καὶ τὰ πληθυντικὰ ἐνικά. φάσκομεν γὰρ ὅτι διηγησάμεθα ὑμῖν καὶ ἐωράκαμεν ὑμᾶς καὶ ἤκαμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ οὐ δύο οἱ λέγοντες, ἀλλὰ εἷς ὁ παρών, ὁ δὲ εἷς κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν τῆς χρήσεως ἐκ προσώπου πολλῶν πληθυντικῶς διηγείται. οὕτω πληθυντικῶς περιεῖληφεν ἡ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ὑπόθεσις, ὁ δὲ ἕτερος διηγείται ὅτι εἷς μὲν ἦν ὁ βλάσφημος, ὁ δὲ εἷς ἐξωμολογεῖτο καὶ ἔτυχε σωτηρίας. καὶ ὁρᾷς ὡς πάντα τὰ τῆς ἀληθείας σαφῆ ὑπάρχει καὶ οὐδὲν ἐναντίον ἐν τῇ γραφῇ. ἀλλὰ πάντα ταῦτα <κατὰ> τὴν γραφὴν διεξιόντες εἰς πλάτος ἠλάσαμεν ὡς οἶμαι τοῦ λόγου τὸ διήγημα. καὶ γένοιτο μὲν ἡμᾶς κάμνειν τῷ πλάτει τοῦ λόγου, ἐλέγχειν δὲ τοὺς κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας, εὐφραίνειν δὲ τοὺς υἱοὺς ταύτης διὰ τῶν τῆς ἀληθείας ἱατικῶν φαρμάκων.

While Epiphanius lends a semblance of credence to the charge, he roundly asserts that scripture is without contradiction.<sup>193</sup> In the first part of his response, Epiphanius turns to the disparity between the two demoniacs in Matt 8.28–34 and the single demoniac in Luke 8.26–39. He notes the uniquely Lucan mention of the demoniac wishing to follow Jesus (8.38) and even connects this figure to the devout questioner in the next chapter who offers to follow Jesus “to whatever place he travels” / εἰς οἶον ἀπήρχετο τόπον (9.57). Epiphanius essentially claims that Luke’s focus on narratives of conversion

<sup>193</sup> *Pan.* B 66.40.2 (GCS 37:77). Note here that Epiphanius is imprecise when claiming that only “one” of the Evangelists recounts two reviling bandits, as well as his use of “blasphemed” / ἐβλασφήμουν here instead of “reviled” / ὠνειδίζον in regard to the verb ascribed to both bandits in the Markan and Matthean accounts. This conflation of terms certainly, albeit subtly facilitates Epiphanius’ effort at harmonizing the texts.

(perhaps the upshot of his phrase “the finding of truth” / τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εὑρεσιν) accounts for his expanded narrative about a single demoniac. This ostensibly explains the difference in Luke’s account of the bandits as well.<sup>194</sup> Epiphanius thus shares with Origen and Eustathius an appeal to authorial method or intent to explain the difference, though all stress distinct facets of the same. Yet, while Eustathius’ appeal to Luke’s narratives of conversion explains some of the difference, it does not directly address the key issue of whether the second criminal actually participated in the reviling of Jesus.

In the second part of the response, Epiphanius does offer a clear solution to the key issue, though not with the most compelling of evidence. He is the first in extant texts to appeal explicitly to the literary technique of syllepsis, though he does not use the technical term. In support of his solution, he first notes how in Luke 17.12–19 Jesus complains about the ten lepers as a group, even though he immediately singles out the grateful one. Because Jesus speaks of a part (the nine) as the whole (the ten), scripture sets its own precedent for the use of syllepsis. Perhaps realizing the weakness of this single example from scripture, Epiphanius also appeals to popular custom, noting how people often use the plural (“we”) when they are really only speaking about themselves as individuals. Despite his inability to find more and clearer proof texts, Epiphanius’ clear sylleptical solution ends up inspiring a significant following.

The structure of the arguments of Eustathius and Epiphanius are quite similar (appeal to authorial method, followed by an attempted reconstruction), raising the possibility of

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<sup>194</sup> *Pan.* B 66.40.6 (GCS 37:78). NHS 36:259 lacks the preposition “in” in its translation here: “This is why Luke omitted the one bandit and mentioned the one who is [sic] the kingdom of heaven.”



dependence. Eustathius and Epiphanius may even share a common desire to distance themselves from Origen. The idea of chronological harmonization travelled in texts bearing Origen's name, most notably in his *Commentary on Matthew*, and perhaps in his *Commentary on Luke* as well. That two of Origen's most intense critics pushed for reconstructions different from his is probably not unintentional, even in two arguments that never mention Origen by name.

### *3G. Ambiguous Heirs: Ambrose and Jerome*

While Epiphanius charted a clear alternative to the chronological position first pioneered by Origen, those influenced by Epiphanius did not always cleanly adopt his new approach. Nor did they feel the need to choose between chronological and sylleptical solutions. While Plummer's commentary, for example, locates Ambrose in the sylleptical camp and Jerome in the chronological camp,<sup>195</sup> closer inspection shows both assessments to be inaccurate. Both Ambrose and Jerome actually espouse both positions.

In his *Commentary on Luke*, published in 389 CE but based on sermons given in Milan ca. 377–378,<sup>196</sup> Ambrose first explains the idea of chronological harmonization, tying it to the quick conversion of the bandit. Notably, both were ideas pioneered by

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<sup>195</sup> See above.

<sup>196</sup> So Adriaen in CCSL 14:vii. Ramsey flattens Adriaen's reconstruction into a range of dates, between 377 and 389 CE, "most likely toward the end of that period." See B. Ramsey, *Ambrose*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), 60.

Origen.<sup>197</sup> Ambrose's listing of examples of the literary technique of syllepsis mirrors Epiphanius, revealing Ambrose's dependence on his Eastern predecessor. At the same time, by offering his own set of (far more compelling) proof texts for syllepsis, Ambrose also appears intent on improving upon the case of Epiphanius.<sup>198</sup>

The Lord pardons quickly, because he was converted quickly. Therefore, the matter appears to be solved, that while others introduce two reviling bandits, this one (introduces) one reviling, another pleading. Perhaps this one did at first revile but was suddenly converted. It is not surprising that he who extended pardon to those who insulted him also pardoned the convert's guilt. Nevertheless, it is possible to speak about a single in the plural, just as it says: "**The kings of the earth took a stand, and the rulers gathered as one.**"<sup>199</sup> Indeed, only king Herod and ruler Pilate are brought forth in Peter's speech in the Acts of the Apostles as having conspired against Christ. So also you have (the Epistle) to the Hebrews: **They wandered around in goatskins, they were severed,**<sup>200</sup> and **they blocked off the lions' mill.**<sup>201</sup> Yet Elijah alone wore a sheepskin, Isaiah alone was severed, and Daniel alone was shown to have remained untouched by the lions.

*Cito igitur ignoscit dominus, quia cito ille conuertitur. Vnde et illud solui uidetur, quia alii duos conuicantes inducunt latrones, iste unum conuicantem, unum rogantem. Fortasse et iste prius conuiciatus est, sed repente conuersus est. Nec mirum si conuerso culpam ignoscebat qui insultantibus ueniam relaxabat. Potuit etiam pluraliter de uno dicere, sicut illud est: **adstiterunt reges terrae et principes conuenerunt in unum**; solus enim rex Herodes et princeps Pilatus in apostolorum actibus conspirasse aduersus Christum Petri uoce produntur. Sic et ad Hebraeos habes: **in caprinis pellibus ambulabant, secti sunt et leonum molas obstruxerunt**, cum solus Helias melotidem habuisse, Esaias sectus esse, Danihel a leonibus intactus mansisse doceatur.*

The qualifying expressions at the outset ("it seems to solve" / *solui uidetur*; "perhaps" / *fortasse*) and the sharp transition ("nevertheless" / *etiam*) might suggest that Ambrose is

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<sup>197</sup> See 3F and 6A.

<sup>198</sup> *Luc* 10.122 (CCSL 14:379–80).

<sup>199</sup> Vul Ps 2.2.

<sup>200</sup> Heb 11.37.

<sup>201</sup> Heb 11.33. All three examples from Hebrews are presented in reverse order to the text itself. This may suggest that the final reference (here first) to "goatskins" was the starting point of the argument.

making an argument *a minori ad maius*. But this ignores Origen's profound influence on Ambrose, the controversy around Origen and Epiphanius' role in that controversy (admittedly at its most intense more than a decade after Ambrose's *Luke*), not to mention Ambrose's astounding political savvy. Whether intending to recount the historical progression of the conversation, or to maintain his fealty to Origen while paying homage to Epiphanius, Ambrose simultaneously takes both positions on the issue.<sup>202</sup>

Jerome deals with this issue in two different texts written just two to three years apart from each other, and a fascinating progression is apparent even in this short span. In 395/6 CE he writes to Marcella, a wealthy woman of the Aventine with whom Jerome cultivated a long epistolary friendship.<sup>203</sup> In *ep.* 59, he answers five exegetical questions that Marcella had about the New Testament.<sup>204</sup> Marcella's fourth question asks why the Johannine Jesus told the Magdalene that she could not hold him when the Matthean resurrection says that a group of women "took hold of his feet."<sup>205</sup> Jerome explains that the Magdalene's unbelief in the resurrected Lord occasioned the rebuke and that her

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<sup>202</sup> Ambrose's interpretation just after this also shows the influence of Hilary of Poitiers and his elusive discussion of the synoptic disparity. Compare Hilary, *Matt com.* A 33.5 (SC 258:254, quoted in 3E) with Ambrose, *Luc* 4.123 (CCSL 14:380). "Yet, mystically, two bandits signify that two sinful peoples will be crucified with Christ through baptism. Their quarrel likewise represents the diversity of believers. Even so one was on the right and the other on the left. The reproof also reveals the future stumbling stone of the cross even among believers" / *Mystice tamen latrones duo duos populos peccatores significant per baptismum crucifigendos esse cum Christo, quorum dissensio diuersitatem pariter credentium signat. Denique unus a sinistris, alter a dextris erat. Increpatio quoque futurum crucis scandalum etiam circa credentes reuelat.*

<sup>203</sup> For further background on his friendship with Marcella, see A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity*, OECs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 68ff.

<sup>204</sup> In regard to the purpose of this letter, see Cain, *Letters*, 84, 170, 180, 183.

<sup>205</sup> *ep.* 59.4 (CSEL 54:544). Cf. John 20.17 and Matt 28.9.

confession explained the change.<sup>206</sup> He next appeals to the divergent stories of the bandits as an analogous dilemma with a clear solution.<sup>207</sup>

One can even understand this from the bandits. While one evangelist has both blaspheming, the other says the second confessed.

*et de latronibus intellegi potest, cum alius euangelista utrumque blasphemasse, alius narret alterum esse confessum.*

Jerome's chronological harmonization hinges on a moment of confession and transformation from unbelief to belief. Presuming this Origenist position as the standard solution, he easily applies it to reconcile a particular disparity in the resurrection stories.

Only a few years later (398 CE), Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew* suddenly shows a newfound deference to Epiphanius. He quickly adds literary sophistication to Epiphanius' case by using the technical Greek term *syllipsis* / σύλληψις. Yet, what begins as a clarification of Epiphanius' sylleptical solution becomes an appeal to chronological harmonization!<sup>208</sup>

**Moreover, in the same way even the bandits transfigured with him were reproaching him.**<sup>209</sup> Here, through a trope which is called σύλληψις, both rather than one bandit are introduced as having blasphemed.<sup>210</sup> Luke indeed alleges that, while the one blasphemed, the other confessed and rebuked the one blaspheming on the opposite side. It is not that the Gospels have discrepancies. Rather, while at first both had blasphemed, after the sun fled, the earth shook, the rocks split and the shadows threatened, one believed in Jesus and changed his denial by a subsequent confession. In the two bandits both peoples, that of the Gentiles and that of Jews, at first blasphemed the Lord. Afterwards, one, terrified by the

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<sup>206</sup> *ep.* 59.4 (CSEL 54:545).

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> *Matt com.* 4.44 (CCSL 77:272–3).

<sup>209</sup> *Vul Matt* 27.44.

<sup>210</sup> Like Epiphanius, Jerome imprecisely claims that Matthew uses “blaspheming” rather than “reviling.”

greatness of the signs, did penance and to this day continues to rebuke the blaspheming Jews.

*Id ipsum autem et latrones qui fixi erant cum eo inproperabant ei. Hic per tropum qui appellatur σύλληψις pro uno latrone uterque inducitur blasphemasse. Lucas uero adserit quod, altero blasphemante, alter confessus sit et e contrario increpauerit blasphemantem; non quod discrepent euangelia sed quo primum uterque blasphemauerit, dehinc sole fugiente terra commota saxis que disruptis et ingruentibus tenebris, unus crediderit in iesum et priorem negationem sequenti confessione emendauerit. In duobus latronibus uterque populus et gentilium et Iudaeorum primum Dominum blasphemauit, postea signorum magnitudine alter exterritus egit paenitentiam et usque hodie Iudaeos increpat blasphemantes.*

Like ships passing in the night, Jerome's response to Matthew's narrative is sylleptical harmonization, while his answer to Luke's drama is chronological harmonization, which he blends into a supersessionist account of salvation history. In essence, Jerome mirrors Ambrose by articulating both ideas, though unlike Ambrose he seems to conflate them rather than presenting them as distinct options.

Part of the fascination of this passage is whether Jerome intentionally or unintentionally conflates the two harmonizing strategies. If intentionally, Jerome may attempt to blend the two in a way that deliberately mimics the ambiguity of Ambrose. Perhaps the explanation is given grudgingly, first paying deference to Epiphanius but then showing his preference for a real exegetical master (Origen). On the other hand, the conflation could be unintentional. This seems unlikely, but it has in its favor Jerome's confused timeline of events. The bandit's conversion stems from the Lucan eclipse (23.46), which is described as starting at noon (// Mark 15.33 and Matt 27.45) and thus could be plausibly construed as prompting the bandit's conversion. But Jerome adds that the bandit also converted due to the Matthean earthquake (27.51), which is part of the death sequence assigned to the "ninth hour" (i.e., 3:00pm; see Mark 15.34 // Matt 27.46).

This seems to be an overreach on Origen's brief mention of the bandit converting because of darkening of the sky.<sup>211</sup> In any case, Jerome's harmonized Jesus should already be dead when he promises paradise. In a similar way, his ambiguity may reflect confusion more than caution. Then again, it may reflect Jerome's personal conflict over Origen. The one who had promoted himself a Latin Origen among his patrons and translated several of Origen's commentaries only a few years prior now found himself emmeshed in Epiphanius' fevered persecution of Origenists throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Jerome wrote his *Commentary on Matthew* right around the time that he signed a profession of faith denying Origen's errors.<sup>212</sup> The dust of the political moment may well cloud his exegetical judgments.<sup>213</sup>

### *3H. Epiphanius' Apologetical Heir: Augustine*

Just a year or two later, though hundreds of miles away, Augustine of Hippo may show himself just as conscious of the controversy surrounding Origen when he defends Epiphanius' case with vigor. Settling the specter of contradiction by appealing to syllepsis (though not by name, as Jerome had done), Augustine's interpretation of this passage closely resembles that of Epiphanius, as well as the second part of Ambrose's

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<sup>211</sup> *Matt com.* A 133 (GCS 38:271; see above).

<sup>212</sup> SC 494:12–13.

<sup>213</sup> In his summary of Jerome's interpretation of the bandits, Courtray notes and summarizes both of these passages (*ep.* 59.4 and *Matt com.* 4.44), but does not seem to notice either that there is a substantive difference between them, that the second text makes use of two mutually exclusive harmonizing strategies, or that Epiphanius' influence and campaign against Origenists accounts for this ambiguity; see, "La figure," 106.

comment. The key passage appears in Augustine's early (ca. 399–400)<sup>214</sup> treatise *On the Harmony of the Gospels*.<sup>215</sup> Augustine notes the Gospel of John's irrelevance on this matter, since it only speaks generically of “two others” / *alios duos* who were crucified with Jesus.<sup>216</sup> Regarding the synoptic disparity, an elaborate explanation of syllepsis follows, drawing clearly on the proof texts developed by Ambrose, as well as Epiphanius' appeal to popular custom.<sup>217</sup>

Matthew follows and says: **“Still in the same way even the bandits who were transfixed with him were reproaching him.”** Nor does Mark disagree with this, saying the same with different words. Yet Luke can be thought to conflict, unless we forget a very common type of speech. Luke indeed says: **“Yet one of these bandits who were hanging was blaspheming him, saying, ‘If you are Christ, save your own self and us.’”** This writer follows the same pattern until he weaves it in this way: **“Yet the other, responding, rebuked him, saying: ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what our deeds deserve. But this one has done nothing evil.’ And he said to Jesus: ‘Lord, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Today you will be with me in paradise.’”** So how is it that Matthew says, **“bandits, who were transfixed with him, were reproaching him,”** and that Mark says, **“and those who were crucified with him taunted him,”** when according to Luke's testimony just one of them taunted and the other checked him and believed in the Lord, unless we understand Matthew and Mark quickly skirting past this place, positing a plural number in place of a singular? Even so we read a plural statement in the Epistle to the Hebrews, **“They shut the mouths of lions,”** when Daniel alone is understood to be signified, and a plural statement, **“they were cut in half,”** when it relates to Isaiah alone. Even what was said in the Psalm, **“The kings of earth took a stand, and the rulers gathered together as one,”** is cited in the Acts of the Apostles,<sup>218</sup> which uses a plural number for a singular. For those who appealed to the

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<sup>214</sup> CCSL 57:xix.

<sup>215</sup> *cons. ev.* 3.14.51–16.54 (CSEL 43:338–41).

<sup>216</sup> *cons. ev.* 3.14.51 (CSEL 43:338): “Nor does John pose any question, even if he did not call them bandits” / *nec Iohannes aliquam facit quaestionem quamvis latrones eos non dixerit*. Though probably not an influence on Augustine, Eustathius also notes John's silence in this regard; see 3D.

<sup>217</sup> *cons. ev.* 3.14.53 (CSEL 43:339–40). Courtray did well to note Augustine's dependence on Ambrose here, but he does not mention the influence of Epiphanius on Ambrose or Augustine; see “La figure,” 106n4.

<sup>218</sup> Acts 4.26.

testimony of this very Psalm understood the **kings** as meaning Herod and the **rulers** as meaning Pilate.<sup>219</sup> Since even pagans are accustomed to misrepresent the gospel, let them look at the way their own authors have spoken of Phaedrus, Medeus and Clytemnestra, when they were single persons. Yet what custom of speech is more common than that someone says: “and the rustics are insulting me,” even if only one is insulting? So then, it would have been contradiction for Luke to bring forth only one, had the others said that both bandits insulted the Lord. In that case it would not have been possible to understand one under a plural number. Indeed, the wording is **bandits**, or **those who were crucified with him**, nor was (the word) “both” added. Thus, it would not only be possible to say this if both did it, but it would also be possible to signify—by a common mode of speech using a plural number—that only one did this.

*Sequitur Mattheus et dicit: id ipsum autem et latrones, qui fixi erant cum eo, improperabant ei. nec Marcus discrepat hoc idem dicens aliis uerbis. Lucas autem potest putari repugnare, nisi genus locutionis satis usitatum non obliuiscamur. ait enim Lucas: unus autem de his qui pendebant latronibus blasphemabat eum dicens: si tu es Christus, saluum fac te ipsum et nos. sequitur idem ipse adque ita contextit: respondens autem alter increpabat illum dicens: neque tu times deum, quod in eadem damnatione es? et nos quidem iuste, nam digna factis recipimus; hic uero nihil mali gessit. et dicebat ad Iesum: domine, memento mei, cum ueneris in regnum tuum. et dixit illi Iesus: amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso. quomodo ergo, sicut Mattheus dicit, latrones, qui fixi erant cum eo,<sup>220</sup> improperabant ei, uel, sicut Marcus dicit, et qui cum eo crucifixi erant conuiciabantur ei, quando quidem unus eorum conuiciatus est secundum Lucae testimonium, alter et conpescuit eum et in dominum credidit, nisi intellegamus Mattheum et Marcum breuiter perstringentes hunc locum pluralem numerum pro singulari posuisse, sicut in epistula ad Hebraeos legimus pluraliter dictum: cluserunt ora leonum, cum solus Danihel significari intellegatur, et pluraliter dictum: secti sunt, cum de solo Esaia tradatur? in psalmo etiam quod dictum est: adstiterunt reges terrae et principes conuenerunt in unum, pluralem numerum pro singulari positum in actibus apostolorum ponitur. nam reges propter Herodem, principes propter Pilatum intellexerunt qui testimonium eiusdem psalmi adhibuerunt. sed quia et pagani solent calumniari euangelio, uideant, quemadmodum locuti sint auctores eorum Faedras, Medeus et Clytemestras, cum singulae fuerint. quid autem usitatus uerbi gratia, quam ut dicat aliquis: ‘et rustici mihi insultant’, etiam si unus*

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<sup>219</sup> Acts 4.27. Peter’s sermon, after citing Psalm 2.2, immediately uses it as a prophetic witness of the crucifixion of Jesus under the authority of Herod and Pilate as figures acting jointly. The trial of Peter in this chapter actually begins by stating that “the rulers gathered together” / *congregarentur principes* (4.5), alluding to Psalm 2.2 and thus suggesting that Peter’s trial is a recapitulation of that of Jesus.

<sup>220</sup> CSEL 43:340 line 3 mistakenly reads *eum eo* rather than *cum eo*.



*insultet? tunc enim esset contrarium quod Lucas de uno manifestavit, si illi dixissent ambos latrones conuictos Domino; ita enim non posset sub numero plurali unus intellegi. cum uero dictum est **latrones uel qui cum eo crucifixi erant** nec additum est “ambo”, non solum, si ambo fecissent, posset hoc dici, sed etiam, quia unus hoc fecit, potuit usitato locutionis modo per pluralem numerum significari.*

Here Augustine’s intensity and effort outdo even that of his source(s), which certainly include Ambrose and may well include (even if indirectly) Epiphanius and even Origen.<sup>221</sup> Given that he had but recently left the Manicheans to return to the Catholic Church of his youth, his disdain for his prior companions may account for some of this energy. But unlike Epiphanius, Augustine does not mention the Manicheans here. Instead, he uniquely turns his ire on “pagans” / *pagani* who “are accustomed to misrepresent the Gospel” / *solent calumniari euangelio*. While this generic reference may point to straw-men or even to real, though unnamed contemporary opponents, it is also a distinct possibility that Augustine has in mind the Neo-Platonist philosopher Porphyry and his infamous treatise *Against the Christians*.

Much as Ammelius and Porphyry had already done in their writings against the Zoroastrians, in this polemical piece Porphyry seeks to debunk Christianity by exposing the contradictions within its own sacred writings. He specifically dismisses the idea that the Gospels are eyewitness accounts, which is disproved by their blatant contradictions regarding the last sayings of the crucified Jesus and even regarding the simple matter of

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<sup>221</sup> Augustine’s claim here that “Matthew and Mark [were] quickly skirting past this place” / *Mattheum et Marcum breuiter perstringentes hunc locum* sounds very similar to Origen’s use of the term “skimming over” / παρατρέχων (alt παρατρέχοντες; see above), though Augustine uses it here as the reason for their use of syllepsis.

whether Jesus drank vinegar or not.<sup>222</sup> While the extant fragments do not reference the contradictory accounts of the bandits, the original text of this oft-burned book may well have included something about this, and Augustine certainly had Porphyry's polemic in mind when writing his *Harmony*.<sup>223</sup> Though the theory that Porphyry himself noted this particular synoptic disparity cannot be maintained with any degree of certainty, it is certainly an interesting possibility given the overall framing of Augustine's argument.

Augustine's later writings presume a sylleptical solution, but no overt statement or defense of the idea appears after his *Harmony*.<sup>224</sup> Given the anti-Pelagian potential of chronological harmonization, it seems somewhat surprising that Augustine did not take

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<sup>222</sup> Macarius Magnes, *Apocrit.* II.12–15, quoted in R. J. Hoffman, ed., *Julian's Against the Galileans* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2004), 32–3.

<sup>223</sup> See R. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale, 1984), 144–6.

<sup>224</sup> Augustine elsewhere presumes a sylleptical harmonization, routinely, even formulaically describing one bandit as insulting Jesus, but the other one as believing in him. See esp. *en Ps* 33(2).24 (ca. 392–422; CCSL 38:297–8), *en Ps* 68(1).9 (ca. 408–417; CCSL 39:909), *Jo. ev. tr.* 31.11 (ca. 414; CCSL 36:300), and *serm.* 232.6 (ca. 412–413; SC 116:270). *en Ps* 33(2).24: “The Lord was crucified in the middle; two bandits were near him. One insulted; the other believed” / *Dominus erat in medio crucifixus; iuxta illum duo latrones erant: unus insultauit, alter credidit. en Ps* 68(1).9: “Finally, notice the voice of that bandit hanging on the cross with the Lord, when on the other side one of the two bandits was insulting the crucified Lord, and was saying, **“If you are the Son of God, free yourself;” the other checked that one, and said: “Do you not fear God, since you are placed in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for our deeds”** / *denique uide uocem illius latronis cum domino in cruce pendentis, cum insultaret ex alia parte unus duorum latronum domino crucifixo, et diceret: si filius dei es, libera te, compescuit illum alter, et dixit: tu non times deum, uel quia in eadem damnatione positus es? et nos quidem recte pro factis nostris. Jo. ev. tr.* 31.11: “Yet the cross itself, if you pay attention, was a tribunal. In the middle a judge is positioned, a bandit who believed is freed, while the other who insulted was damned” / *tamen et ipsa crux, si adtendas, tribunal fuit: in medio enim iudice constituto, unus latro qui credidit liberatus, alter qui insultauit damnatus est. serm.* 232.6: “That two bandits were crucified with Christ, Matthew also says. But that one of those bandits insulted the Lord and the other believed in Christ, Matthew did not say, but Luke said... Christ was hanging on a cross; the bandit was also hanging. He was in the middle; they to the sides. One insults; the other believes” / *Quia duo latrones crucifixi sunt cum Christo, dixit hoc et Matthaeus, sed unus eorum latronum quia insultauit domino et alter eorum quia credidit in Christum, Matthaeus non dixit, Lucas dixit... Pendebat in cruce Christus, pendebat et latro. In medio ille, illi a lateribus. Insultat unus, credit alius.*

advantage of this idea. Perhaps his early, adamant attempt to settle on a single solution to the problem prevented him.

### *3I. Summary*

In sum, the issue of the disparity between Luke and Mark/Matthew accounts for a very small proportion of early interpretation, nor did interpreters consistently choose between two clear and divergent options. Tatian and Ephrem apparently reject the Markan/Matthean tradition altogether, and Eustathius and Cyril of Jerusalem may be influenced by this Syriac tradition. The shadow of Origen looms over much of this history of interpretation. His chronological position is certainly the most frequently adopted. Jerome even presumes it as the standard solution, only later (in the midst of Epiphanius' crusade against Origenists throughout the Eastern Mediterranean) to waver between it and Epiphanius' novel, sylleptical strategy.

Whether owing to his political savvy or an intent to recount various options, Ambrose, writing a decade earlier than Jerome, also wavers between these two solutions. Even when Eustathius and Epiphanius disagree with Origen, they make appeals to authorial intent just as he had. While often joined to other ideas, the appeal to authorial intent serves as a harmonizing strategy in its own right, one that fashions the relationship among the evangelists as cooperative rather than competitive. Because texts were understood as testimonies from persons, apostles presumed to know Christ (whether first- or second-hand) and each other, harmonization involved sorting through relationships,

not just aligning ideas. In short, on this single issue early readers prove far more complicated than the facile summaries found in modern commentaries. The following chart summarizes this section and provides a revised and expanded version of the chart given at its beginning.

Date (CE)	Intent	Chronology	Syllepsis	Rejection
172				Tatian (Syr <i>Diat.</i> ; OD)
248	Origen ( <i>Matt com.</i> A 133)	Origen ( <i>Matt com.</i> A 133)		
326–337	Eustathius ( <i>frag.</i> 27)		Eustathius ( <i>frag.</i> 27)	
350			Cyril ( <i>Cat.</i> 13.30)	
353–356		Hilary ( <i>Matt com.</i> A 33.5)		
363–373				Ephrem (Syr; <i>h. fid.</i> 7.7)
374/5–378	Epiphanius ( <i>Pan.</i> B 66.40)		Epiphanius ( <i>Pan.</i> B 66.40)	
389		Ambrose ( <i>Luc</i> 10.122)	Ambrose ( <i>Luc</i> 10.122)	
392–393		Chrysostom ( <i>1 Cor hom.</i> 32.14)		
389–400		Chromatius ( <i>serm.</i> 2.6)		
395/6		Jerome ( <i>ep.</i> 59.4)		
398		Jerome ( <i>Matt com.</i> 4.44)	Jerome ( <i>Matt com.</i> 4.44)	
399–400			Augustine ( <i>cons. ev.</i> 3.14.53)	
433		Prosper ( <i>Coll.</i> 7.3)		
late 4 <sup>th</sup> / 5 <sup>th</sup>		<i>Diat. rev.</i> (Arb <i>Diat.</i> 51 // Prs OG)		
late 4 <sup>th</sup> / 5 <sup>th</sup>		ps-Ephrem (Arm <i>Diat. com.</i> 20.23)		
5 <sup>th</sup>		ps-Euodius (Cpt <i>pass. res.</i> 64)		

## CHAPTER 4. HARMONIZING ESCHATOLOGIES

### 4A. *The Problem of Paradise*

While Luke's divergent account of the behavior of the criminals generates some controversy in early Christianity, far more intense controversies center on Jesus' saying in Luke 23.43, "Today you will be with me in paradise." How could Jesus speak of being in paradise "today,"—that is, on Friday—when even according to Luke itself, Jesus' resurrection would not occur until Sunday? Comparisons with other authoritative texts and traditions further complicate matters. How could Jesus be in paradise when "the son of man" would follow Jonah's timeline and "be," according to the Matthean addition to Q's Jonah saying (Matt 12.40),<sup>225</sup> "in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights" / ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας? How could Jesus go to paradise on Friday when a Deutero-Pauline tradition (Eph 4.9) held that "He descended into the earth's lowest parts" / κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα τῆς γῆς, or when an ostensibly Petrine tradition (1 Pet 3.19) asserted that Jesus "preached when going even among the spirits in prison" / καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν? How could Jesus be in paradise and hades at the same time?

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<sup>225</sup> Q 11.29–30. The text appears in J. Robinson, et al, *Critical Edition of Q*, 248–51.

For that matter, how are these two places related to each other? Is paradise a subsection within hades, an earthly place long hidden, a heavenly domain, or a spiritual reality that transcends human ideas of location? What about the relationship between the “kingdom” of verse 42 and the “paradise” of verse 43? Are these synonymous terms or distinct realms, and if distinct, how so? Jewish and Christian literature already held an enormous storehouse of paradise imagery and conceptuality. This diverse literature multiplies questions and positions all too quickly for early interpreters, and Luke’s diverse range of eschatological scenes and sayings only adds to the discordance.

#### *4B. Counting with Origen*

Origen of Alexandria is the first on record to deal with the eschatological discordance in connection to Luke 23.43. Including the Latin translations, Origen discusses this issue in connection with Luke 23.43 in no fewer than nine distinct passages across eight different writings over some fifteen years.<sup>226</sup> His preoccupation quickly demonstrates that eschatological discordance, rather than the synoptic dissonance discussed in the previous chapter, presented the most persistent exegetical problem for early interpreters.

Origen’s authentic Greek writings must stand at the outset of a critical and diachronic investigation of his interpretation. Though there is a strong possibility that his two

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<sup>226</sup> In approximate chronological order: *Io com.* 10.37.245 (ca. 234); *Gen hom.* 15.5 (ca. 239–242; Rufinus, ca. 403–404); *Ezek hom.* 13.2 (ca. 239–242; Jerome, ca. 379–81); *Lev hom.* 9.5.2–3 (ca. 239–242; Rufinus, ca. 403–404); *Num hom.* 26.4.1 (ca. 239–242; Rufinus, ca. 410); *Rom com. A* 5.9 (ca. 243–244; Rufinus, ca. 405–406); *Matt com.* 12.3 (ca. 248–249); *Io com.* 32.32.395–7 (ca. 248); *Luc cat.* f248–49 (ca. 249).

volume treatise *De resurrectionis* (ca. 222–229) mentioned the Lucan episode in this regard, the remaining fragments do not. Thus, his earliest relevant passage appears in book 10 of his *Commentary on John*, a commentary that took Origen nearly twenty years to complete (ca. 230–248).<sup>227</sup> After fleeing from Alexandria and settling in Caesarea, Origen recommences his commentary with this very book. Its passage may reflect something of his earlier thinking, perhaps even something of the conflict with Demetrius that led him away from Alexandria. It is certainly one of the most defining passages for his later writings and reputation on the matter.

Here the Lucan episode appears at the climax of an involved section on resurrection. The section begins with an acknowledgement of the difficulty of understanding the “mystery of the resurrection” / τὸ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ... μυστήριον (10.36.233). Ezekiel’s passage of the dry bones (37.1ff), together with Paul’s metaphor of the church as a body with many inter-dependent members (1 Cor 12.13–27), lead Origen to speak of the connection between Christ’s resurrection and that of believers (10.36.233–8). Yet, the tuning fork used to calibrate the eschatological dissonance between a Friday and Sunday denouement is John 2.19, “**Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it!**” / λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ (10.37.242). Origen here notes a precise distinction between saying “on the third day” / τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ and “in three days” / ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις. The scriptural use of a cardinal rather than an ordinal number

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<sup>227</sup> Heine dates *Io com.* 1–4 to 230–231 CE (FOC 80:4). He expresses caution over Nautin’s dating of the completion of the final book (32) to 248 CE, though he does assign it to a period “late in Origen’s life,” that is, after 244 CE (FOC 80:5).



shows that Christ's resurrection is an unfolding process. As it turns out, the Lucan criminal's promise of paradise is the first stage in this process.<sup>228</sup>

For even what happened on the first day in the paradise of God was of the resurrection. It was of the resurrection when appearing he said: “**Do not touch me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father.**”<sup>229</sup> The completion of the resurrection happened when he went to the Father.

Ἀναστάσεως γὰρ ἦν καὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ γενέσθαι ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀναστάσεως δὲ ὅτε φαινόμενός φησι· Μὴ μου ἅπτου, οὐπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· τὸ δὲ τέλειον τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἦν, ὅτε γίνεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.

The allusions are quick but clear. Friday's Lucan promise marks the beginning of the resurrection, the “first day” of the coming age, the first moment of an eschatological shift. Sunday's appearance to Mary Magdalene is the second stage in the resurrection. Finally, the Lucan ascension completes the process. Origen effectively closes the gap between Friday's promise of “today” and Sunday's resurrection by making resurrection into a temporally extended event. The resurrection encompasses the whole *triduum*, indeed, every day from the crucifixion until the ascension.

Later still (ca. 244–249) appears an important passage in a section of his *Commentary on Matthew* still extant in Greek.<sup>230</sup> The Gospel of Matthew had already transposed Q's Jonah saying onto the Markan Jesus' refusal to offer a sign (Matt 12.38–42), and (in a typical Matthean doublet) it essentially repeated the conflation a second time (Matt 16.1–4), yet here without the distinctive Matthean reference to “three days and three nights.” While the first episode mentions “scribes and Pharisees,” only the second names the

<sup>228</sup> *Io com.* 10.37.245 (SC 157:528).

<sup>229</sup> John 20.17.

<sup>230</sup> *Matt com.* 12.3 (GCS 40.1:72–3).

opponents as “Pharisees and Sadducees.” Also, while the first describes them asking for “a sign,” only the second retains the Markan language of “a sign from heaven.”<sup>231</sup> Such details, while seemingly minor, do play an important role in Origen’s thinking as he conflates the Matthean doublet into a single narrative that raises and resolves issues of eschatological dissonance.<sup>232</sup>

After these things, let us contemplate in what way he, when asked for a sign, would demonstrate one **from heaven** to the questioning Pharisees and Sadducees.<sup>233</sup> He responds and says: “**An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and a sign will not be given it except the sign of Jonah** the prophet.” Then, **leaving them, he went away.**<sup>234</sup> So, in keeping with their inquiry, **the sign of Jonah** was not simply **a sign**, but one **from heaven**. Therefore, even to those testing and seeking a **sign from heaven**, it was not at all beneath him, in keeping with his great goodness, to give the **sign**. For Jonah “**spent three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster, so also will the Son of Man in the heart of the earth.**”<sup>235</sup> And after this he rose from it. If this is so, from what place shall we say that the **sign** of the resurrection of Jesus came but **from heaven**? Especially so, since during the time of the passion it happened concurrently that the bandit was kindly granted to enter the paradise of God. I think it was after this that he descended into hades with the dead as **a free man among the dead.**<sup>236</sup> It seems to me that the Savior joins together the **sign** from himself with the word of the **sign** according to Jonah. He does not say that a similar **sign** will be given by him, but it itself is the sign. Give attention to it: “**a sign will not be given it except the sign of Jonah** the prophet.”

Μετὰ ταῦτα κατανοήσωμεν τίνα τρόπον, ἐπερωτηθεὶς περὶ σημείου ἑνός, ἵν' ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπιδείξῃ τοῖς ἐπερωτήσασιν Φαρισαίοις καὶ Σαδδουκαίοις, ἀποκρίνεται καὶ λέγει· γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου, ὅτε καὶ καταλιπὼν αὐτοὺς ἀπῆλθε. τὸ σημεῖον δὲ ἄρα τοῦ Ἰωνᾶ κατὰ τὴν ἐρώτησιν αὐτῶν οὐχ ἀπλῶς σημεῖον ἦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ·

<sup>231</sup> Matt 16.1 // Mark 8.11; Luke 11.16 has the same phrase, but in a different context. Matt 24.30 lacks the precise phrase but expresses a similar idea.

<sup>232</sup> *Matt com.* 12.3 (GCS 40.1:72–3).

<sup>233</sup> Matt 16.1.

<sup>234</sup> Matt 16.3–4.

<sup>235</sup> Matt 12.40.

<sup>236</sup> LXX Ps 87.5, “I became as a helpless man, free among the dead” / ἐγενήθην ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀβοήθητος ἐν νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος.

ὥστε αὐτὸν καὶ τοῖς πειράζουσι καὶ ἐπιζητοῦσι σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ οὐδὲν ἦττον κατὰ τὴν πολλὴν αὐτοῦ ἀγαθότητα δεδωκέναι τὸ σημεῖον. εἰ γὰρ ὡς Ἰωνᾶς ἐποίησεν ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας, οὕτως ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἀνέστη ἀπ’ αὐτῆς, πόθεν ἂν λεγοίμεν τὸ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Ἰησοῦ γεγονέναι σημεῖον ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; καὶ μάλιστα ἐπεὶ παρὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ πάθους γέγονεν ἅμα τῷ εὐεργετουμένῳ ληστῇ εἰς τὸν παράδεισον τοῦ θεοῦ, μετὰ τοῦτο οἰμαί καταβαίνων εἰς ᾄδου πρὸς τοὺς νεκροὺς ὡς ἐν νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος. καὶ δοκεῖ μοι συνάπτειν τὸ ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ σημεῖον ὁ σωτὴρ τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Ἰωνᾶν σημείου, λέγων οὐχ ὅμοιον ἐκείνῳ μόνον δίδοσθαι σημεῖον ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸ ἐκεῖνο. πρόσχες γὰρ τῷ καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου.

At the opening of book twelve, Origen notes at length how historically odd yet prophetically fitting it is to find the Pharisees and Sadducees, given their conflicting eschatologies, paired up in opposition against Jesus.<sup>237</sup> This bizarre alliance foreshadows the eschatological dissonance that Origen soon seeks to resolve. The following section (*Matt com.* 12.2) chastises both groups for not recognizing the signs Jesus had already done and warns them that a heavenly source is no guarantee of a divine stamp, since Job had been afflicted by Satanic fire *from heaven*, while God’s wonders were evident in the deeds of Moses *on earth*.

The section quoted above (12.3) brings the passage to a resolution. Both Pharisees and Sadducees demand a “sign from heaven,” and Jesus generously provides it in his resurrection. Of course, this particular resurrection is not without eschatological issues, and “from heaven” now provides a clue to resolve them. Origen envisions Jesus

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<sup>237</sup> He turns the reference into a midrash on the subject of enemies joining to oppose Christ and his disciples. The alliance of Pharisees and Sadducees here is mirrored in the Lucan friendship between Herod and Pilate, as well as in contemporary disputing philosophical schools who hold in common a hatred of Christians. He seals the midrash with a reference to LXX Ps 2.2, “The kings of the earth take a stand and the rulers gather as one against the Lord and against his Christ” / παρέστησαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ.

accompanying the bandit heavenward to paradise before descending into hades as a sign “from heaven.” Again, the resurrection begins on the cross. Jesus’ own words offer chronological cues and geographical signs which point the path to harmony.<sup>238</sup>

#### 4C. Origen against Origen

At the tail end of his writing career (ca. 248–249) two Greek passages raise questions about what Origen had previously written. These passages happen to be the same ones in which the charge of interpolation appears.<sup>239</sup> As noted before, *Luc cat.* f248 may reflect Origen’s own intent to copy a comment from his *Io com.* into his slightly later *Luc com.*, or it may represent a fragment that was misattributed after its inclusion in a catena. In either case, one passage will suffice here, namely the involved and non-fragmentary account from *Io com.* 32.32.<sup>240</sup>

(392) And if the saying, “**just as I said to the Jews,**”<sup>241</sup> had not been placed before the saying, “**where I am going you are not able to go,**”<sup>242</sup> we would have thought that these sayings were spoken on a simpler level, referring to the departure of the soul of Jesus from this life. Yet the Jews who would die, as well as the dying Jesus, would descend into hades. (393) How could they not depart to where Jesus was leading? Someone says that it was because he was about to be in paradise, where those who die in their sins are not going to go, while the disciples were not able to go there at that time, but only later. For this reason he said to the

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<sup>238</sup> Resolution also comes from Origen’s use of typology. For Origen, the **sign from heaven** of Jonah’s “three days and three nights” is first and foremost a reference to Christ’s own resurrection rather than to Jonah himself. Jonah’s sojourn in the belly of death is a type whose archetype is Christ’s own defining *triduum*. Since Christ is the center and fulfillment of history, the earlier *signum* answers to the latter *res*.

<sup>239</sup> See 2H.

<sup>240</sup> *Io com.* 32.32.392–97 (SC 385:354–8). For dating, see Nautin 411–12 and Quasten 2:49.

<sup>241</sup> John 13.33.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

Jews who were dying in their sins, “**where I am going, you are not able to go,**”<sup>243</sup> but to his disciples, “**Where I am going, you are not able to go now.**” (394) For the order of the reading is such: “**Just as I said to the Jews, I also say to you. Where I am going, you are not able to go now.**” And thus the topic holds no little interest on account of the saying, “**the Son of Man will spend three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**”<sup>244</sup> (395) For how will he **spend three days and nights in the heart of the earth**—[he who] at the very time of his departure was about to be in the paradise of God, in keeping with the saying, “**Today you will be with me in the paradise of God**”? Now what was said has so troubled some as dissonant that they have ventured to suspect that the very saying, “**Today with | me you will be in the paradise of God,**”<sup>245</sup> was added into the Gospel by some literary frauds. (396) However, on a simpler level we say that quickly, before leaving for the so-called heart of the earth, he restored to the paradise of God the one who said to him, “**Remember me when you come in your kingdom.**” But on a deeper level, [we note] that today [appears] in many places in the scripture, and in all [of them] it pertains to the present age. Thus it is in the saying, “**this word has been spoken by the Jews until today,**”<sup>246</sup> and “**he is the father of the Moabites until the present day,**”<sup>247</sup> and “**today if you hear his voice,**”<sup>248</sup> and “**do not stand apart from the Lord today.**”<sup>249</sup> (397) Therefore, it was promised to | the one who thought it worthwhile to be remembered in the kingdom of God, that in the present age, before the coming age, he would make him to be with him in the kingdom of God.

(392) Καὶ εἰ μὲν μὴ προτέτακτο τοῦ Ὁπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν τὸ καθὼς εἶπον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ ἀπλούστερον ἐδοκοῦμεν ταῦτα εἰρησθαι, ἀναφερόμενα ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ βίου ἔξοδον τῆς Ἰησοῦ ψυχῆς· νυνὶ δὲ <ἐπεὶ> καὶ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποθνήσκουν ἐμελλον, καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀποθανὼν καταβαίνειν εἰς ἄδου. (393) πῶς ὅπου ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὑπῆγεν ἐκεῖνοι οὐκ ἐδύναντο ἀπελθεῖν; Ἀλλ’ ἐρεῖ τις, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ ἐμελλεν γίνεσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐνθα οἱ μὲν ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις αὐτῶν ἀποθανοῦμενοι γίνεσθαι οὐκ ἐμελλον, οἱ δὲ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μαθηταὶ τότε μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἐδύναντο ἐκεῖ γενέσθαι, ὕστερον δὲ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις αὐτῶν ἀποθανομένους Ἰουδαίους λέλεκται τὸ Ὁπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω, ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν· πρὸς δὲ τοὺς μαθητάς· Ὁπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω, ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν ἄρτι. (394) Τὸ γὰρ ἐξῆς τῆς λέξεώς ἐστιν τοιοῦτον· Καθὼς

<sup>243</sup> John 8.21.

<sup>244</sup> Matt 12.40.

<sup>245</sup> The syntax is rendered woodenly so as to show precisely where the manuscript corruption begins. See the note below.

<sup>246</sup> Matt 28.15.

<sup>247</sup> Gen 19.37.

<sup>248</sup> Ps 94(95).7.

<sup>249</sup> Jos 22.29.

εἶπον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ ὑμῖν λέγω· Ὃπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω, ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἔλθειν ἄρτι. Καὶ οὕτω δὲ οὐκ ὀλίγην ἔχει ζήτησιν ὁ τόπος, διὰ τὸ Ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς ποιήσῃ τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας. (395) Πῶς γὰρ τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας ποιήσῃ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς, [ὅς] ἅμα τῇ ἐξόδῳ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ ἔμελλεν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ, κατὰ τὸ Σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ; οὕτω δὲ ἐτάραξέν τινες ὡς ἀσύμφωνον τὸ εἰρημένον, ὥστε τολμῆσαι αὐτοὺς ὑπονοῆσαι προστεθῆσθαι τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἀπὸ τινων ῥαδιουργῶν αὐτὸ τὸ Σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ θεοῦ. (396) Ἡμεῖς δὲ φάμεν ἀπλούστερον μὲν ὅτι τάχα πρὶν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν λεγομένην καρδίαν τῆς γῆς ἀπεκατέστησεν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν εἰπόντα αὐτῷ· **Μνησθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου·** βαθύτερον δὲ ὅτι πολλαχοῦ τὸ σήμερον ἐν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ ἐπὶ ὅλον παρατείνει τὸν ἐνεστηκότα αἰῶνα· ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ **Ἐφημίσθη ὁ λόγος οὗτος παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις μέχρι τῆς σήμερον καὶ Οὗτος πατὴρ Μωαβιτῶν μέχρι τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας καὶ Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε καὶ Μὴ ἀπόστητε ἀπὸ κυρίου ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ.** (397) Ἐπαγγέλλεται οὖν<sup>250</sup> τῷ ἀξιῶσαντι μνησθῆναι αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἐν τῷ ἐνεστηκότι αἰῶνι πρὸ τοῦ μέλλοντος ποιῆσαι αὐτὸν γενέσθαι σὺν αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.

The passage reads quite like a Rabbinic dialogue in which a conversation is narrated as it proceeds: “someone says,” “thus the topic holds no little interest,” “what was said has so troubled some,” “however, we say.” The prose reveals a considerable debate happening over eschatology, so intense as even to occasion a charge of interpolation. As

<sup>250</sup> There is a manuscript lacuna here (\*\* τω). SC (385:358; οὖν τῷ) opts for a different reading than GCS (10:479–80; αὐτῷ). This disparity also leads to significantly different sentence divisions; GCS starts the sentence much earlier (after *Μὴ ἀπόστητε ἀπὸ κυρίου*, rather than before *ἐπαγγέλλεται*). Henne’s FOC translation (89:416) follows the reading and sentence division of SC, as does this translation. The sentence division hinges in part on whether *ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ* is part of Origen’s quotation of Jos 22.29 here, which it appears to be. Apparently unknown to the editors of these critical editions and translations, Titus of Bostra (or an anonymous catena compiler wrongly attributing a quotation to Titus) mirrors the SC corrected reading in his inclusion of this passage in his catena on Luke. See *Luc schol.* 23.43 (TU 21:245), reproduced here for comparison: **βαθύτερον δὲ τὸ σήμερον πολλακίς ἐν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ ἐπὶ ὅλον τὸν ἐνεστηκότα παρατείνει αἰῶνα· ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ ἐφημίσθη ὁ λόγος οὗτος παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις μέχρι τῆς σήμερον καὶ οὗτος πατὴρ Μωαβιτῶν μέχρι τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας καὶ σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε καὶ μὴ ἀπόστητε ἀπὸ κυρίου ἐν ταῖς σήμερον ἡμέραις.** ἐπαγγέλλεται οὖν τῷ ἀξιῶσαντι μνησθῆναι αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἐν τῷ ἐνεστηκότι αἰῶνι πρὸ τοῦ μέλλοντος ποιῆσαι αὐτὸν γενέσθαι σὺν αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ.

in Alexandria in his early career, Origen remains under suspicion in Caesarea late in his career for overly allegorizing matters relating to the afterlife.

What is especially fascinating here is that Origen describes one of his own long-established interpretations—that Christ escorted the bandit to paradise chronologically prior to his descent into hades—as a “simpler” or “more literal” / ἀπλούστερον reading. The same, somewhat denigrating term used in *Io com.* 32.32.392 is applied to Origen’s own, oft-repeated solution in *Io com.* 32.32.396 and *Luc cat.* f248. The “deeper” / βαθύτερον alternative is set up with a scripture catena based on the catch-word “today.” Origen cites numerous examples that reinforce the idea that *today* often refers to a contemporaneous reality in the “present age” / ἐνεστηκότι αἰῶνι, rather than an event of the “coming [age]” / τοῦ μέλλοντος that must wait for Sunday’s resurrection or the second coming itself. In this reading, *today* may simply recall Pauline eschatology, dividing time between this world/age and the world/age to come. Alternately, it may recall the Lucan use of *today* as signifying a more realized eschatology in which the kingdom is made present in decisive moments. It may even nod to Platonism, using *today* as a marker of the transcendence of linear time. In favor of this last reading is that Origen here conflates “the kingdom of God” / τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ of Luke 23.42 with the promise in 23.43, even asserting that this inheriting of “the kingdom of God” happens to the bandit in “the present age.”

What is so puzzling is the way that Origen downplays the chronological solution he had so consistently maintained for some two decades. On the one hand, this may have represented a new turn in his thinking, one occasioned by a recent rash of eschatological

criticism. The charge of interpolation in this passage certainly lends support to this initial reconstruction. On the other hand, perhaps his oft-repeated chronological solution had been a long-standing concession to his hearers who presumed the categories of finite space and time and yearned for scripture to make sense within this framework. In this case, this late-life comment reveals the Platonic depths of his thinking and more advanced and philosophically adept training for his students. Either case makes sense. His Latin comments may offer additional evidence and clarification.

#### *4D. Greek Origen and Latin Origen*

The previous analysis of his Greek comments provides some basis for a critical evaluation of the relevant passages extant only in Latin translation. Jerome's rendition of Origen's *Commentary on Ezekiel* (ca. 239–42)<sup>251</sup> provides the first relevant passage to find its way into Latin. Well before he was caught up in Epiphanius' anti-Origenist campaign, Jerome likely translated this commentary in Constantinople ca. 379–81, perhaps even under the direct influence of Gregory of Nazianzus.<sup>252</sup> At least one eschatological motif resonates with Origen's Greek comments. Here, the bandit "entered paradise with Jesus at the first hour" / *prima hora cum Jesu ingressus est paradisum*.<sup>253</sup> "First hour" is reminiscent of the phrase "first day" in *Io com.* 10.37.245. Its conflation of

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<sup>251</sup> SC 352:15.

<sup>252</sup> SC 352:19.

<sup>253</sup> *Ezek hom.* 13.2 (SC 352:422). Shortly later, the passage includes a similar comment put in the mouth of an interlocutor: "Perhaps you will say, because he entered at the first hour" / *dicas forsitan quia prima hora ingressus sit paradisum*.



the “paradise of delights” / *paradiso deliciarum*<sup>254</sup> with the paradise of Luke 23.43 is somewhat similar to his Greek conflation of the “kingdom” and “paradise.” Its description of the bandit actually eating from the tree of life and the other trees of paradise, though, finds no precedent in his Greek interpretations.<sup>255</sup> Still, it may resonate with Origen’s idea in other Greek passages of a “sensible paradise” on earth for the soul after death,<sup>256</sup> a place where the first stage of the soul’s post-mortem education takes place.<sup>257</sup> As Borret notes, Jerome’s contemporaneous translation of Origen’s *Jer hom.* has proven, by comparison with its Greek remains, quite faithful.<sup>258</sup> The cumulative evidence favors authenticity.

Among the relevant passages translated by Rufinus, *Lev hom.* 9 (composed ca. 239–242) stands among the first (ca. 403–405).<sup>259</sup> Here, in an allegorical reading of Lev. 16.7–10, the Latin translation reads the bandits into the two lots cast over the two goats. The

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<sup>254</sup> The LXX has a wide diversity of language applied to Eden as a paradise / παράδεισος. For example, note “paradise of God” / παράδεισος τοῦ θεοῦ (Gen 13.10; Ezek 28.13, 31.8 bis; see also Rev 2.7); “paradise of the Lord” / παράδεισος κυρίου (Isa 51.3; PsSol 14.3); “paradise of delight” / παράδεισος τρυφῆς (Gen 3.23–4 bis; Joel 2.3) and the related “paradise of the delight of God” / παραδείσου τῆς τρυφῆς τοῦ θεοῦ (Ezek 31.9) and “in the delight of the paradise of God” / ἐν τῇ τρυφῇ τοῦ παραδείσου τοῦ θεοῦ (Ezek 28.13). The last example is the passage that prompts Origen’s speculation here about different aspects or levels of paradise. He ends up basically dismissing the idea of different layers of paradise in favor of a simple conflation of the Lucan paradise with the kingdom.

<sup>255</sup> *Ezek hom.* 13.2 (SC 352:422–4). “But nevertheless now you see him taking hold of **the tree of life**, and of other trees, which God did not forbid, so that he may feed on every tree of paradise” / *Sin autem iam videris eum accipientem de ligno vitae, et de cunctis arboribus, quas non interdixit Deus, ita ut de omni ligno paradisi vescentem.*

<sup>256</sup> *Princ.* 2.11.6; see also 2.9.1 and SC 352:205.

<sup>257</sup> *Princ.* 2.10–11; see also SC 253:224–5.

<sup>258</sup> SC 352:19.

<sup>259</sup> For a discussion of the basic consensus around these dates, see FOC 83:20.

idea that the bandit was taken to paradise “without delay”<sup>260</sup> would seem to match his chronological resolutions to eschatological disparities. However, the next paragraph paints a picture quite unlike anything found in Origen’s Greek references: that Jesus “opened the doors of paradise.”<sup>261</sup> This brief reference may reflect later speculation about the specific details of the shared return to paradise. Rufinus admitted to having adapted Origen’s *Homilies on Leviticus* even more than those on *Genesis* and *Exodus*.<sup>262</sup> On the other hand, this sentiment, in evidence at least as early as the *Testament of Levi*,<sup>263</sup> may have been familiar to Origen and represent his thinking. Thus it is unclear whether the phrase reflects the thought of Origen or Rufinus.

Rufinus translated *Gen hom.* around the same time, and here too appears a distinct eschatological picture.<sup>264</sup>

But what he says: “**I will call you back from there at last**”<sup>265</sup>—I think this means, as we said above, that at the last of the ages the only-begotten Son descended all the way into **infernal regions**<sup>266</sup> for the salvation of the world and called back the **first-formed man**.<sup>267</sup> Indeed, understand that what he said to the bandit, “**Today you will be with me in paradise**,” was said not only to him, but also to all the saints, for whom he descended into infernal regions. In this way, therefore, more truly than in the case of Jacob, will what was said be fulfilled: “**I will call you back from there at last**.”

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<sup>260</sup> *Lev hom.* 9.5.2 (SC 287:88): “and behold that one, who was confessing the Lord, has become **a lot of the Lord** and has been taken away without delay to **paradise**” / *qui confitebatur Dominum, sortem factum esse Domini et abductum esse sine mora ad paradisum*.

<sup>261</sup> *Lev hom.* 9.5.3 (SC 287:90): “to that one who confessed, he opened the doors of paradise” / *illi, qui confessus est, aperuit paradisi ianuas*.

<sup>262</sup> LPNF 3:567, “The Peroration of Rufinus Appended to His Translation of Origen’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,” trans. W. H. Fremantle; cited in FOC 83:21.

<sup>263</sup> 18.10–11 (OTP 1:795), dated sometime between 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. BCE and 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE. See the note in 1B.

<sup>264</sup> *Gen hom.* 15.5 (ca. 403–404; GCS 29:134).

<sup>265</sup> Gen 46.4 LXX: ἐγὼ ἀναβιβάσω σε εἰς τέλος.

<sup>266</sup> Eph 4.9: κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς.

<sup>267</sup> Wis 7.1: πρωτοπλάστου.

*Quod autem dicit: **revocabo te inde in finem**, hoc esse arbitror, sicut superius diximus, quod in fine saeculorum unigenitus filius suus pro salute mundi usque in **inferna descendit** et inde **protoplastum** revocavit. Quod enim dixit ad latronem: **hodie me cum eris in paradiso**, hoc non illi soli dictum, sed et omnibus sanctis intellige, pro quibus in inferna descenderat. In hoc ergo verius quam in Iacob adimplebitur, quod dictum est quia: **revocabo te inde in finem**.*

As does Greek Origen, Latin Origen appeals to the representative significance of the bandit. Yet, now his representative role applies not merely to those who believe, but also to all deceased saints, to the whole population of the blessed who dwelt in hades before the coming of Christ. That Origen could transition easily into cosmic imagery comes as no surprise. This expansion also fits his concern to find harmony among disparate eschatological traditions, adeptly combining the Lucan paradise logion with the tradition of the *descensus inferni*. The picture also resonates well with Origen's idea of Jesus first taking the bandit to paradise, only later to descend to hades. Both the didactic voice and eschatological motifs are Origen's.

Shortly thereafter (ca. 405–406) Rufinus translated the *Commentary on Romans* (ca. 243–244), which has an especially vivid passage.<sup>268</sup>

Yet what it would be to be **planted together into the likeness of his resurrection**,<sup>269</sup> the apostle John teaches: “**Little sons, we do not yet know what we will be. Yet when he is revealed to us, we will be like him.**”<sup>270</sup> And again the Savior himself says: “**Father, I want them to be with me where I am;**”<sup>271</sup> and again, “**Just as I am in you and you are in me, so let them be one in us.**”<sup>272</sup> He certainly says this about those who in the present life have been **planted**

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<sup>268</sup> *Rom com. A* 5.9, on Rom 6.5–6 (FC 2.3:158). For dates, see FC 2.1:11–12, BGL 18:316, and Quasten 2:50.

<sup>269</sup> Rom 6.5.

<sup>270</sup> 1 John 3.2.

<sup>271</sup> John 17.24.

<sup>272</sup> John 17.21.

**together in the likeness of his death.**<sup>273</sup> Yet I think it could agreeably be said even of that bandit who hung on the cross at the same time with Jesus. He would appear to be **planted into the likeness of his death** in these ways: through his confession, by which he said, “**Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom;**” and [when] he rebuked the other who blasphemed. But he was also **planted together** in his resurrection through what was said to him: “**Today you will be with me in paradise.**” For what was joined to the tree of life was a sprout worthy of paradise.

*Quid sit autem similitudini resurrectionis eius esse complantatum, Ioannes apostolus docet: Filioli, nondum scimus, quid futuri sumus. Si autem reuelatus nobis fuerit, similes illi erimus.*<sup>274</sup> *Et iterum ipse saluator dicit: Pater, uolo, ut ubi ego sum et isti sint mecum; et iterum: Sicut ego in te et tu in me, ut et isti in nobis unum sint.*<sup>275</sup> *Quod utique de illis dicit, qui in praesenti uita complantati fuerint similitudini mortis eius. Puto autem, quod grate hoc et de illo latrone dici possit, qui simul in cruce pependit cum Iesu; et per confessionem suam, qua dixit: Memento mei Domine cum ueneris in regnum tuum; et alium blasphemantem corripuit, complantari per haec uisus sit similitudini mortis eius; sed et resurrectioni eius complantatus sit per hoc, quod ei dicitur: Hodie me cum eris in paradiso. Digna namque erat planta paradisi, quae arbori uitae sociata est.*

The overall trope of the bandit participating in Christ’s resurrection fits the Greek models quite well. The Lucan figure, through his last minute confession and apology, is “planted together in his resurrection.” More difficult are the lines about how it “could agreeably be said” that those “in the present life” are also “planted together in the likeness of his death.” Is this Origen’s theology of persecution and discipleship as voluntary suffering, or is it Rufinus adapting Origen’s symbolism of the bandit to a more popular audience? It is difficult to say. In either case, the key idea of the bandit participating in Christ’s resurrection is indeed Origen’s. This is corroborated by the way

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<sup>273</sup> Rom 6.5.

<sup>274</sup> Cf. Vul 1 John 3.2: *carissimi nunc filii Dei sumus et nondum apparuit quid erimus scimus quoniam cum apparuerit similes ei erimus quoniam uidebimus eum sicuti est.*

<sup>275</sup> The doubling of “one” / *unum* in Vul John 17.21, here matched, helps emphasize this shared destiny. Cf. ἵνα πάντες ἐν ᾧσιν, καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ᾧσιν and *ut omnes unum sint sicut tu Pater in me et ego in te et ipsi in nobis unum sint.*

that Origen's imitators recall and adapt his horticultural typology of the bandit as a transplant into paradise.<sup>276</sup>

The last relevant passage translated by Rufinus (ca. 410), *Num hom.* 26, though originally belonging to Origen's five year season of liturgical preaching in Caesarea (ca. 238–243), reflects a reading of the passage far more Platonic than anything else in Origen's Greek or Latin interpretation. Here the flight from Egypt describes the post-mortem flight of the soul through various spiritual realities, several of which are conflated.<sup>277</sup>

But we have spoken of another figure of leaving Egypt, when the soul abandons the shadows of this world and the blindness of nature's body and is transported to another world. This is revealed either as the **bosom of Abraham**, as in [the story of] **Lazarus**,<sup>278</sup> or as **paradise**, as in [the story of] the bandit, who believed from the cross, or even in other places or other **dwelling**s<sup>279</sup> if God knows them to exist. Through such places the soul that believes and perseveres traverses, all the way to that **river which gladdens the city of God**,<sup>280</sup> and takes hold within the very **lot of the inheritance promised to the fathers**.<sup>281</sup>

*Sed et illam figuram esse diximus exeundi de Aegypto, cum relinquit anima mundi huius tenebras ac naturae corporeae caecitatem et transfertur ad aliud saeculum, quod vel sinus Abrahae, ut in Lazaro, vel paradisus, ut in latrone, qui de cruce creditur, indicatur; uel etiam si qua nouit esse Deus alia loca uel alias mansiones, per quae transiens anima Deo credens et perueniens usque ad flumen illud, quod laetificat civitatem Dei, intra ipsum sortem promissae patribus hereditatis accipiat.*

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<sup>276</sup> Ps-Origen, *Ps cat.* (PG 12:1088–9); Eusebius, *Ps Com.* (PG 23:80); Didymus, *Zac com.* 5.45 (368; SC 85:992). See 8A for a more extended discussion of this horticultural typology.

<sup>277</sup> *Num hom.* 26.4.1 (SC 461:246).

<sup>278</sup> Luke 16.22.

<sup>279</sup> Probably a reference to John 14.2, 23, but passages such as Exod 17.1, 40.36, Num 33.1, or 2 Cor 5.1–2 could be in mind.

<sup>280</sup> Vul Ps 45.5 (46.4).

<sup>281</sup> Probably a reference to Rom 15.8, but perhaps to Gen 31.14, Num 27.10, or even Eph 1.18.

To summarize, the flight from Egypt leads to “another world,” which is identical to the Lucan “the bosom of Abraham,” the Lucan bandit’s “paradise,” and the (Johannine?) “dwellings.” Akin to Platonic and Plotinian notions of the post-mortem flight of the soul, the journey continues from there to higher realms. The interpretation dismisses a static notion of the afterlife and plots the diverse eschatological references in scripture so as to map out the soul’s continuous, contemplative journey. The oddity of this comment among Origen’s Greek interpretations may point to Rufinus as its source. Yet, in view of the brevity of the prose, the density of references, and Origen’s broader inclinations toward Platonism, it is more plausible that this comment is authentic to Origen.

Thus, this text sheds light on the difficulty inherent in the late-life, Greek text of *Io com.* 32.32.392–7. In his *Homilies on Numbers*, preached several years before his *Commentary on John*, a Platonized reading of Luke 23.43 already appears. Thus, Origen did not change positions late in life, but instead appealed to the Platonic depths of his thinking. Criticism did not bring forth a novel reading, but it seems to have occasioned Origen’s late-life contrast between his usual, “simpler” chronological harmonization, and his own “deeper,” Platonized harmonization. It also prompted Origen to defend his Platonic interpretation by setting it within a catchword litany of scriptures using the term “today.”

The criticism so apparent late in Origen’s own life only continued and multiplied in the years and centuries to come. It is often said that Origen is father to both sides of the Council of Nicea. In terms of eschatology and the interpretation of Luke’s paradise logion, it seems Origen was destined to be both enemy and patron to many persons and

parties. Eschatological criticisms prompted Origen to reframe his interpretation towards the end of his life. Now they followed his ghost and travelled up the Mediterranean seaboard to settle in Syria and its surroundings.

#### *4E. Eustathius' Simultaneous Soul*

Eustathius seems to be the first in extant literature to express both awareness of and disagreement with Origen's eschatological interpretation of the Lucan passage. The main cause of offense was a sermon given eighty years prior, when in 240 Origen preached on 1 Kingdoms 28 (=1 Samuel 28) in the presence of Alexander, Jerusalem's bishop.<sup>282</sup> In this sermon Origen cites Christ's descent into hades as support for the idea that the righteous soul of Samuel, along with the souls of all the prophets and all the righteous, was in hades prior to Christ's advent.<sup>283</sup> Origen also claims that the souls of Samuel and the righteous dead, "while they were able to be below in place, were not below by intention" / ἐν τῷ κάτω μὲν δύνανται εἶναι τόπῳ, οὐ κάτω δὲ εἰσι τῇ προαιρέσει. Eustathius, while still bishop of Berea and before becoming bishop of Antioch and attending the Council of Nicea in 325, responded to this sermon with an involved and vituperative polemic, *de engastrimytho contra Origenem*.<sup>284</sup> Eustathius pronounces blasphemy on Origen grouping Christ and the righteous together with all the wicked in

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<sup>282</sup> WGRW 16:viii.

<sup>283</sup> *Sam hom.* 5.3–10.

<sup>284</sup> WGRW 16:ix.

hell.<sup>285</sup> He also finds in Origen's reference to "intention" / προαίρεσις a serious misrepresentation of Christ's divinity.<sup>286</sup> The polemic eventually turns to the Lucan passage.<sup>287</sup>

Yet in this way he ignorantly honks his voice, not realizing that the Word, being God, is present everywhere all at once, not by intention but rather by the excellence of divinity. (9) Now if he allowed even his own especially eminent temple to be destroyed, then on the third day raised it again in a new way, as the soul of this human tabernacle was **descending into the lowest parts of earth**, there he opened the gates all in one motion and raised the souls imprisoned on the spot.<sup>288</sup> (10) Thus he was strengthened by divine power because he existed together with God the Word, so that he had all-encompassing authority. (18.1) I myself am convinced that there is clear proof of this. At whatever time he was reaching into the underground places, at that [time] on the same day he brought the bandit's soul into paradise. (2) For if through one man salvation belonged to all men, it is evident that his soul redeemed souls of the same kind. At the same time he was descending to the underground parts of chaos and at the same time restoring again to the most ancient pasture of paradise one who slipped in by the power of an unconquerable kingdom. (3) How fitting that before these things God's child testified, saying in advance, "**No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the son of man,**"<sup>289</sup> who is in heaven. (4) Therefore, if indeed [scripture] asserts that the one who originated from the human race, that he alone of all people ascended into heaven and from there descended here again, and a second time left to spring up in heaven, it has confirmed that by excellence of soul the man eminently accomplished these things. (5) For the holy soul of Christ, living together with God the Word, travels everywhere collectively. It went into the very highest heaven, into which no other man has ascended. But these things have been fastened upon the same human appearance which God the Word bears. (6) Of the fact that God's child is present everywhere at once, John stands not least as a witness. Hearing Christ himself with his own ears, with a cry he became [a witness] with his own words: "**No one**

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<sup>285</sup> *engast.* 17.3. The numbering of subsections in *engast.* is missing from the critical edition in CCSG 51 and thus comes from WGRW 16, following Klostermann.

<sup>286</sup> *engast.* 17.5.

<sup>287</sup> *engast.* 17.8–18.5 (CCSG 51:38–9).

<sup>288</sup> Essentially conflating the traditions of Christ's descent to hades (1 Pet 3.18–20; Eph 4.9–10) with the Matthean earthquake and resurrection (27.51–3).

<sup>289</sup> Quoting John 3.13, but apparently combining it with the idea of the Son of Man appearing in heaven (Matt 24.30, 26.64, Mark 14.62, John 1.51); these synoptic passages in turn invoke Dan 7.13.



**has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son who is in the Father's bosom—he has described [God].**<sup>290</sup>

Ἄλλ' οὕτως ἀμαθῶς ἐξήχησε τὴν φωνήν, οὐκ ἐννοήσας ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, οὐ προαίρεσει μᾶλλον, ἀλλ' ἀρετῇ τῆς θεότητος ἀπανταχοῦ πάρεστιν ἀθρώως. (9) Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα τὸν ἑκκριτον ἑαυτοῦ ναὸν ἐπέτρεψε λυθῆναι, τριήμερον μὲν αὐτίκα πάλιν ἀνήγειρε καινοπρεπῶς, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῦδε τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου σκηνώματος **εἰς τὰ κατώτατα κατελθούσα μέρη τῆς γῆς**, ἀνεπέτασε τὰς ἐκεῖσε πύλας ἀθρώα ῥοπῇ καὶ τὰς αὐτόθι καθειργμένας ἀνήκε ψυχάς· (10) οὕτω δὲ θεσπεσίᾳ κεκραταίωται δυνάμει διὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ λόγου συνουσίαν, ὥστε καὶ παντέφορον ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν. (18.1) Ἀλλὰ μὴν ἔγωγε πείθομαι καὶ τούτου τεκμήριον εἶναι σαφές, ὀπηνίκα μὲν εἰς τοὺς καταχθονίους ἀφικνεῖτο τόπους, ἐν ταύτῳ δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ ληστοῦ ψυχὴν αὐθήμερον εἰσήγεν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον. (2) Εἰ γὰρ δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου τοῖς ἅπασιν ὑπῆρξεν ἀνθρώποις ἡ σωτηρία, πρόδηλον ὡς ἡ ψυχὴ τὰς ὁμογενεῖς ἀναλυτροῦται ψυχάς, ἅμα μὲν εἰς τὰ καταχθόνια κατιούσα μέρη τοῦ χάους, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῇ ἀρχαιοτάτῃ τοῦ παραδείσου πάλιν ἀποκαθιστώσα νομῇ τὸν ὑπεισδύντα τῷ κράτει τῆς ἀηττήτου βασιλείας. (3) Ἀκόλουθα δὲ καὶ πρὸ τούτων ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς ἐμαρτύρετο, προλέγων ὅτι **Καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ**. (4) Τοιγαροῦν εἴπερ ἔφασκε τὸν ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου γένους ὀρμώμενον εἰς οὐρανὸν μὲν ἀναβεβηκέναι μονώτατον ἐκ πάντων, ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἐκεῖσε πάλιν καταβεβηκέναι ἐνθάδε, καὶ δεῦρο βεβηκότα φοιτᾶν ἐν οὐρανῷ, συνέστηκεν ὅτι ψυχῆς ἀρετῇ ταῦτα ἔπραττεν ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἑκκρίτως· (5) ἡ γὰρ ἁγία τοῦ Χριστοῦ ψυχὴ, τῷ θεῷ συνδιαιτωμένη καὶ λόγῳ, πάντα μὲν ἐκπεριπολεῖ συλλήβδην, εἰς αὐτὸν δὲ βέβηκεν τὸν ἀνώτατον οὐρανόν, εἰς ὃν οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἀνῆλθε τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα <μὲν> εἰς αὐτὴν ἀνήρηται τὴν ἀνθρωπίαν εἰδέαν, ἣν ὁ θεὸς ἐφόρεσε καὶ λόγος. (6) Ὅτι δὲ πανταχοῦ πάρεστιν ἀθρώως ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς, οὐχ' ἥκιστα καὶ περὶ τούτου μάρτυς ἔστηκεν Ἰωάννης, αὐτήκοος μὲν ὑπάρχων αὐτοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, βοᾷ δὲ γεγωνότως αὐτολεξεῖ· **Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο**.

Greer and Mitchell misread the passage here when they assess *engast.* 18.4

(essentially a recounting of the diversity of phrases in scripture) as a summary of

Eustathius' chronological reconstruction of Christ's afterlife feats: "Eustathius appears to imagine that the human Christ at his ascension took the penitent bandit's soul to paradise,

<sup>290</sup> John 1.18.

then descended in order to harrow hell, and finally returned to heaven.”<sup>291</sup> Against the background of Origen’s body of work on Luke 23.43, the whole passage reads much more plausibly as a rebuttal of Origen’s chronological solution to eschatological dissonance. It must be stressed how often Eustathius makes reference in this passage to simultaneity and ubiquity in regard to Christ’s afterlife feats.<sup>292</sup> Christ’s ubiquitous and powerful divinity, which makes his humanity uniquely capable of performing simultaneous actions in various places, is solution enough. For Eustathius, Christology rather than chronology points the way of coherence.

This assessment is corroborated by several fragments in Declerck’s 2002 edition of the *opera* of Eustathius,<sup>293</sup> published five years before Greer and Mitchell’s translation of the treatise *de engastrimytho*.<sup>294</sup> Across these roughly continuous fragments, Eustathius criticizes an unnamed opponent (i.e., Origen) for a chronological attempt at eschatological harmonization. As in *engast.* 17–18, Eustathius defends Christ’s simultaneous and ubiquitous accomplishment of afterlife feats in keeping with the unique capacities of his soul as sharing in the divine life of the Word. Two excerpts are especially poignant and similar to the text from *engast.* (17.8–18.5) quoted above.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> WGRW 16:121n58.

<sup>292</sup> 17.8, “all at once” / ἀθρόως; 17.9, “all in one motion” / ἀθρόα ῥοπῇ; 18.1, “at that time... in that [moment]... the same day” / ὁπηνίκα ... ἐν ταύτῳ ... αὐθήμερον; 18.2, “at the same time... at the same time” / ἅμα ... ἅμα; 18.5, “travels everywhere collectively” / πάντα μὲν ἐκπεριπολεῖ συλλήβδην; 18.6, “present everywhere at once” / πανταχοῦ πάρεστιν ἀθρόως.

<sup>293</sup> *frag.* 21 (CCSG 51:83–4), 22 (51:85–6), 26 (51:88), and 28 (51:95). The last fragment only briefly alludes to Luke 23.43 (51:95), but it continues as an elaborate explanation of the immediate and synchronous work of Christ’s soul to open paradise and harrow hell.

<sup>294</sup> WGRW 16 (2007).

<sup>295</sup> *frag.* 22 (CCSG 51:86), 28 (51:95).

Now if through the theophany of Christ he brought the human race into paradise, at the time he was crucified, on the same day he beckoned to bring in the bandit on the spot, while his body was still being wrapped for the tomb. This confirms that the lordly soul of Christ has a life together with the Word and God. While embracing at the same time every creature of those born, he brought into paradise the fellow-born soul of a man.

Εἰ δὲ διὰ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεοφανείας εἰς τὸν παράδεισον τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰσάγει γένος, ὁπηνίκα δὲ ἐσταυρώθη τὸν ληστὴν αὐθημερὸν εἰσάξειν αὐτόθι προηγόρευσε, τοῦ σώματος ἔτι περιβεβλημένου τῷ μνήματι, συνέστηκεν | ὅτι συνδιαιτωμένη κυρίως ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ τῷ λόγῳ καὶ θεῷ, τῷ πᾶσαν ὁμοῦ τὴν τῶν γεννητῶν περιέχοντι κτίσιν, τὴν ὁμογενὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσήγαγεν.

It was explained by the incontrovertible omens that through his soul the Lord entered into paradise on the same day as his body died. It was also explained that he entered into the authority of heaven and descended into the depths of the earth, in an immediate motion freeing the souls from captivity.

οὐ μόνον δέδεικται ἐξ ἀναντιρρήτων συμβόλων ὅτι διὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ὁ κύριος εἰς τὸν παράδεισον αὐθημερὸν εἰσῆει νεκρωμένου τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐξουσίαν εἶχεν ἐπιβαίνειν, καὶ εἰς τὰ κατώτατα κατιέναι τῆς γῆς, λυτηρίους μὲν ποιούμενος ἀφέσεις τοῖς ἐκεῖσε καθειργμένοις, ἄθροα δὲ ῥοπῇ τὰς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ψυχὰς ἀνιείς.

#### *4F. Eustathius' Heirs*

Athanasius was both Eustathius' ally at Nicea and a debtor to Origen's exegesis and theological language as preserved and imitated in Alexandria in the early to mid-4<sup>th</sup> century. While Alexandria's bishop does not engage this debate directly, his brief comments on the passage sound much more like Origen's later opponent than his

Alexandrian forebear. Depicting the Incarnation as an encompassing moment, Athanasius fashions the opening of paradise and harrowing of hell as immediate and simultaneous.<sup>296</sup>

Therefore, as all things were given to him, and he became human, immediately the whole was righted and perfected. The earth was blessed in place of a curse. Paradise was opened to the bandit. Hades was afraid, and the tombs were opened. The dead were raised. The gates of heaven were lifted up, so that the one from Edom may draw near.

Ὡς γοῦν παρεδόθη αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, καὶ γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος, εὐθὺς διορθώθη καὶ ἐτελειώθη τὰ ὅλα· ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ κατάρας εὐλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἡνοίγη τῷ ληστῇ, ὁ ᾗδης ἔπτηξε, καὶ τὰ μνημεῖα ἡνοίγη, ἐγειρομένων τῶν νεκρῶν, αἱ πύλαι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπῆρθησαν, ἵν' ὁ ἐξ' Ἐδῶμ παραγένηται.

Another pro-Nicene figure, Hilary of Poitiers, does not mention Origen, but his argument against certain people (i.e., Homoians) who assert that Christ feared hell on the cross shares much in common with the criticism of Eustathius.<sup>297</sup>

Bodily fear does not hold him who penetrated even the depths, but who extends everywhere by the power of his nature. The chaos of Gehenna does not claim it with fear of death. This nature is the world's mistress, immeasurable in spiritual power, from which the delights of paradise cannot be absent. Indeed, the Lord about to be in the depths is also to be in paradise. Cut off from Christ a portion of his inseparable nature to fear punishment, and place what suffers in the depths, and leave behind in paradise what reigns! Even the bandit asks that he remember him in his kingdom. And I believe that hearing the groan from the nail piercing his palms roused him to this blessed confession, and through the pain of a body weakened, in Christ he learned the kingdom of Christ. This one demands the dignity of remembrance in the kingdom. You relegate the cross' death to fear. The Lord promises him paradise's communion soon. You limit Christ in the depths under punishing fear. This faith is of a different hope. A bandit deserves paradise under the cross who confesses in the kingdom the hanging Christ. Truly, one who

<sup>296</sup> *omn. mih. trad.* (CPG 2099; PG 25:212; ca. 340).

<sup>297</sup> *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:487–8). In a rhetorical litany of scripture's potential self-contradictions, Hilary elsewhere (*Synod* 85; PL 538A) shows a keen understanding of the eschatological dissonance between the Lucan paradise logion and the tradition of the *descensus inferni*: "Does he not descend to the depths who would be with the bandit in paradise?" / *ne ad inferos descensurus, in paradiso sit cum latrone*.

relegates Christ in the pain of punishment and in the fear of death will necessarily be without paradise and the kingdom.

*Non habet hunc metus corporalis, penetrantem quidem inferos, sed ubique naturae suae uirtute distentum. Et naturam hanc mundi dominam ac libertate spiritalis uirtutis inmensam, non sibi terrore mortis gehennae chaos uindicat, qua paradisi deliciae carere non possunt. Futurus enim in inferis Dominus, et in paradiso est futurus. Deseca ad metum poenae naturae indesecabilis portionem, et de Christo et apud inferos pone quod doleat, et in paradiso relinque quod regnet. Latro enim rogat, ut sui in regno suo meminerit. Et, credo, eum ad hanc beatae confessionis fidem auditus transeunte palmas clauo gemitus accendit, et regnum Christi per dolorem infirmati in Christo corporis didicit! Ille dignationem reminiscens in regno postulat, tu crucis mortem ad metum deputas. Dominus communionem ei paradisi mox pollicetur, tu Christum in inferis sub poenali terrore concludis. Diuersae spei fides ista est. Paradisum meruit sub cruce latro, pendentem Christum confessus in regno; in poenae uero dolore et metu mortis Christum deputans, et paradiso necesse est sit cariturus et regno.*

Hilary repeats many of these same points later in the same work, in *Trin.* 10.61–2.<sup>298</sup>

While he opts for the language of nature rather than soul, Hilary shares with Eustathius a dogged emphasis on the ubiquity and omnipotence of an undivided Christ. Moreover, he deplores the idea that Origen so often preached, that the human soul of Christ was geographically bound by a sojourn to hell. One wonders whether Hilary's neo-Arian opponents had inherited this idea from Origen himself.

In one of his *Homilies on Mark* given on a Sunday ca. 397–402,<sup>299</sup> Jerome also apparently echoes Eustathius. Preached during the height of the anti-Origenist campaign of Epiphanius, Jerome defends himself from an accusation that smacks of Origenism, that he was dividing Christ into two persons. While Origen is not explicitly named in the

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<sup>298</sup> CCSL 62A:515–7.

<sup>299</sup> SC 494:14.

sermon, Jerome finds the geographical and chronological issues resolved by a familiar, anti-Origenist appeal to the ubiquity and simultaneity of Christ's afterlife feats.<sup>300</sup>

Whatever is great refers to the Son of God. Whatever is small refers to the Son of Man. Nevertheless, there is only one Son of God. By what necessity am I being forced to speak? Because I have heard some—who perhaps have an Arian soul—are misrepresenting me. My unwillingness to ascribe human injury to God does not divide Christ. The same one is in hell and in heaven. At one and the same time he both descended into hell and entered into paradise with the bandit.

*Quidquid magnum est, refer ad Filium Dei: quidquid paruum est, refer ad Filium hominis: et tamen unus Filius Dei est. Hoc qua necessitate compulsus sum dicere? Quoniam audiui quosdam calumniari, qui forsitan habent animam arrianam. Quoniam et iniuriam humanitatis ad Deum referre nolui, non diuido Christum. Ipse enim et in inferno est, et in caelo est: uno atque eodem tempore et descendit ad infernos, et cum latrone intrauit in paradysum.*

#### 4G. Epiphanius vs. the Platonist

Epiphanius certainly does mention Origen and not in a favorable light, quite in keeping with his penchant for polemics. In the citations of Luke 23.39–43 in the *Panarion* of ca. 374/5–378, the Marcionites and the Manicheans are the specific parties targeted.<sup>301</sup> While Origen is catalogued as a heresiarch in the *Panarion*, and while Epiphanius spent the final years of his life crusading against Origenists throughout Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor, it is in his earliest substantive work, the *Ancoratus* (ca. 374), where Origen's eschatological reading of Luke's paradise logion comes to the fore. And while it was

<sup>300</sup> *Mark tr.* 7.11.1–10 lines 97–104 (CCSL 78:487 // SC 494:182).

<sup>301</sup> Marcion and his followers in *Pan.* A 42.11.6 (GCS 31:116), 42.11.17 (GCS 31:153), 42.16.1–3 (GCS 31:184–5); the Manicheans in *Pan.* B 66.40.1–41.6 (GCS 37:77–8). As shown in chapter two, Epiphanius' anti-Manichean argument for sylleptical harmonization of the synoptic bandits' behavior does chart a significant alternative to Origen's chronological solution, which suggests an anti-Origenist basis for his thinking even here.

Origen's attempt to bring eschatological harmony through chronology that raised objections for earlier interpreters, for Epiphanius Origen's Platonisms offend.<sup>302</sup>

Thus many allegorize regarding paradise, as that God-sent plague Origen desired illusion more than contributing truth in life. And he says, "Paradise is not upon the earth." (3) In truth it was said in the word of the holy apostle, "**I know a man who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, whether out of the body I do not know; God knows—such a one was snatched up to the third heaven.**"<sup>303</sup> But he did not comment and say that [it means] the third [part] of air. For saying, "**up to the third heaven,**" speaks not of a third part, but of three numbers. And he says, "**I know such a man who was snatched up into paradise and heard sayings that are not permitted a man to speak.**"<sup>304</sup> (5) Glory to the Almighty God, who in every way clarifies and speaks precisely, lest the faithful stumble. For heaven and paradise were not collapsed in a single brief space. Instead, "**I know a man,**" he says, "**who was snatched up to the third heaven,**" and again, "**who was snatched up into paradise.**" There is a distinction with the transition to a different scene and movement from a different place. (6) It is as if one had a mountain and a valley—the valley encircling the mountain—, and one in that valley wanted to go to the mountain beyond. If one wanted, one could make a journey through the valley to that place, and could then leave the mountain. Yet, if one wants to go to the mountain and then from the mountain back again to a place in the valley which is far away from the mountain, this is also possible. (7) So it seems to me was said by the apostle: first to have ascended into heaven, [and then to have descended into paradise,] according to what was said, "**My nephew went down to his garden.**"<sup>305</sup> The Savior also says, "**Today you will be with me in paradise.**" (55.1) Now if paradise is not on earth, then the things written in Genesis are not true, but it is allegorized. Then nothing that follows holds true, but everything is allegorized. (2) "**In the beginning,**" it says, "**God created the heaven and the earth.**" And these are not allegorizable, but rather visible.

οὕτως καὶ περὶ παραδείσου πολλοὶ ἀλληγοροῦσιν, ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἠθέλησε φαντασίαν μᾶλλον ἢ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν τῷ βίῳ συνεισενέγκασθαι. καὶ φησιν· οὐκ ἔστι παράδεισος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς· (3) δὴθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ῥητοῦ τοῦ παρὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ἀποστόλου εἰρημένου ὅτι οἶδα ἄνθρωπον πρὸ ἑτῶν δεκατεσσάρων, εἴτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἴτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν, ἀρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου

<sup>302</sup> *Ancor.* 54.2–55.2 (GCS 25:63–4).

<sup>303</sup> 2 Cor 12.2.

<sup>304</sup> 2 Cor 12.4.

<sup>305</sup> Song 4.16.

οὐρανοῦ. ἀλλὰ μὴ παρα<να>γίνωσκε καὶ λέγε ὅτι τὸ τρίτον τοῦ ἀέρος <σημαίνει>· οὐ γὰρ εἰπὼν ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ περὶ μέρους τρίτου λέγει, ἀλλὰ περὶ τριῶν ἀριθμῶν. (4) καὶ φησιν οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον ἄρπαγέντα εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἀκούσαντα ῥήματα ἃ οὐκ ἔξον ἄνθρώπῳ εἰπεῖν. (5) δόξα τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ, τῷ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον διατρανοῦντι καὶ λεπτολογούντι, ἵνα οἱ ἀληθινοὶ μὴ σφάλλονται. οὐ γὰρ ἐν μιᾷ συντομίᾳ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὸν παράδεισον συνῆψεν, ἀλλὰ οἶδα ἄνθρωπον φησὶν ἄρπαγέντα ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ καὶ πάλιν ἄρπαγέντα εἰς τὸν παράδεισον. τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ ἄρθρου ἑτέρου προσώπου ἐστὶ διαληπτικὸν καὶ ἑτέρου τόπου μεταστατικόν. (6) ὥς εἴ τις ἔχει ὄρος καὶ πεδιάδα, τὴν δὲ πεδιάδα ἐγκυκλεύουσιν τὸ ὄρος, βουλευθεὶς δὲ εἰς τὸ πέραν τοῦ ὄρους ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ πεδιάδι παραγενέσθαι, καὶ ὅτε μὲν θελήσει διὰ τῆς πεδιάδος τὴν ὁδοιπορίαν ποιήσασθαι εἰς τὸν τόπον, ὅπου δὲν ἐθέλοι <ἐπέκεινα> τοῦ ὄρους ἀπελθεῖν, δυνατόν ἐστι αὐτῷ τοῦτο· εἰ δὲ θελήσει πρῶτον μὲν ἐμβῆναι εἰς τὸ ὄρος καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους πάλιν εἰς τὸν τόπον τῆς πεδιάδος τῆς ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ὄρους γενέσθαι, καὶ οὕτως αὐτῷ δυνατόν. (7) οὕτω μοι νόει καὶ τὸ παρὰ τοῦ ἀποστόλου εἰρημένον· πρῶτον μὲν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναβεβηκέναι, <ἔπειτα δὲ εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καταβεβηκέναι>, κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον κατέβη ὁ ἀδελφιδούς μου εἰς κῆπον αὐτοῦ.<sup>306</sup> καὶ ὁ σωτὴρ φησι σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ. (55.1) Εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπὶ γῆς ὁ παράδεισος καὶ οὐκ ἀληθινὰ τὰ ἐν Γενέσει γεγραμμένα, ἀλλὰ ἀλληγορεῖται, οὐδὲν ἀληθεύει τῆς ἀκολουθίας, ἀλλὰ πάντα ἀλληγοροῦνται. (2) ἐν ἀρχῇ, γὰρ φησι, ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν· καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλληγορούμενα, ἀλλ' ὁρατά.

2 Cor 12.2–5 is obviously the central passage in Epiphanius' comments here, yet he reads this passage together with Luke 23.39–43, and his objections certainly pertain to some of Origen's comments on this second passage.<sup>307</sup> Epiphanius' picture of paradise as a mountain shares much in common with earlier Syriac interpreters, particularly Ephrem.<sup>308</sup> To be sure, he grossly oversimplifies and misrepresents (whether intentionally

<sup>306</sup> Cf. Song 4.16 LXX: καταβήτω ἀδελφιδός μου εἰς κῆπον αὐτοῦ.

<sup>307</sup> See above, esp. *Io com.* 32.32.396, *Num hom.* 26.4.1, and *Ezek hom.* 13.2.

<sup>308</sup> Ephrem, *par.* (passim); see also G. Anderson, "The Cosmic Mountain: Eden and Its Early Interpreters in Syriac Christianity," in *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis: Intrigue in the Garden*, Studies in Women and Religion 27, ed. G. A. Robbins (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1998), 187–224. It should be said that Ephrem, along with Gregory of Nyssa, pictures paradise beyond normal space and time,



or not) Origen's interpretation here. Still, his criticisms have some basis in the conflation of the "kingdom of heaven" and "paradise" in *Io com.* 32.32.396–7 and his conflation of "the bosom of Abraham," "paradise," and "dwellings" in *Num hom.* 26.4. In contrast, Epiphanius reads the diverse eschatological language of scripture as precise blueprints of a layered cosmos.

#### *4H. Origen's Sympathizers: Titus and Didymus*

Not everyone felt the need to disavow Origen, even in the wake of Epiphanius' campaign. One interesting passage of an unknown date that shows the positive reception of Origen's interpretation is a catena fragment attributed to Titus of Bostra. This fragment consists in a nearly verbatim reproduction of Origen's *Io com.* 32.32.396–7.<sup>309</sup> If the attribution to Titus of Bostra is accurate, then this mid-4<sup>th</sup> century Syrian, living on the Roman road to Arabia, is shown to be an admirer of one of Origen's most Platonic and allegorical comments on the passage. If misattributed unintentionally, the fragment shows the power of Origen's exegetical work, even when uncredited. If misattributed intentionally, it may reveal Origen's enduring influence even in spite of the campaigns against him and his followers. One wonders whether the ascription to Titus of this passage provided an intentional way to sanitize for Greek-Syrian use one of Origen's most Platonic interpretations.

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as does Origen. See S. Brock, *Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 51.

<sup>309</sup> *Luc schol.* 23.43 (TU 21:245, quoted in a footnote in 4C).

Writing in Origen's hometown around the 370s,<sup>310</sup> Didymus presents a particularly interesting case. He shares Origen's grouping of this passage with the Matthean Jonah tradition and the Lucan Lazarus tradition as key intertexts for eschatological harmonization. Didymus presumes geographical strictures similar to those presumed in many of Origen's comments, and also shares with Origen the idea that Christ went to a higher place before going to a lower place. But while Origen envisions paradise as a realm other than hades, Didymus sees it as an upper level within hades.<sup>311</sup>

Further, therefore, the rich man and Lazarus both left this life and were outside the body. And the rich man, filled with lead, was taken down to the place of punishment, while Lazarus journeyed above, where Abraham is. For even in hades there are different regions. There is even there a place of rest and another of judgment. This is shown in the apocalypse of Elijah. For this reason even the repenting bandit—who was not brought down into hades but into paradise—followed the savior at that time when the savior was about to depart to the underground place **in the heart of the earth**.<sup>312</sup> **“Today you will be with me in paradise”**—he approached the paradise that co-exists with hades, but he journeyed above.

αὐτίκα γοῦν ὁ πλούσιος καὶ ὁ Λάζαρος ἀμφότεροι γεγονάσιν ἐκ τοῦ βίου, ἔξω τοῦ σώματος γεγέννηται· καὶ ὁ μὲν πλούσιος, ἅτε δὴ μολίβδου πεπληρωμένος, κάτω ἤνεχθη εἰς τὸν τόπον τῆς κολάσεως, ὁ δὲ Λάζαρος ἄνω ἐχώρησεν, ἔνθα ὁ Ἀβραάμ· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ ἅδῃ διάφορα χωρία ἐστίν· καὶ ἐστὶν ἀναπαύσεως ἐκεῖ τόπος καὶ ἄλλος καταδίκης. τοῦτο ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει Ἡλίας φέρεται. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ μετανοῶν ληστής, καίτοι οὐκ ἐν τῷ ἅδῃ καταφερόμενος ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, τότε ἠκολούθησεν τῷ σωτῆρι, ὅτε ὁ σωτὴρ ἤμελλεν εἰς τὸν καταχθόνιον τόπον ἀπιέναι, ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς· σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ· ὥς καὶ τοῦ παραδείσου παρακειμένου τῷ ἅδῃ ἐνήγγιζεν, ἄνωτέρω δὲ χωρήσας.

<sup>310</sup> B. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria* (Urbana, Chicago: University Illinois Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>311</sup> *Ecc com. A* 92.2–10 (PTA 22:130–2).

<sup>312</sup> Matt 12.40.

#### 4I. Origen's Platonic Hope: Augustine

Though Augustine elsewhere is cautious not to be pinned an Origenist, his eschatological assessments of Luke 23.39–43 sound like Origen at his most Platonic. Origen's influence on Augustine comes as no surprise, given Augustine's indebtedness to Ambrose (himself as the center of a network of Platonists/Origenists), as well as his own journey back to the Catholic Church and orthodox faith via Greek philosophy, especially Neo-Platonism. In various passages written across decades, Augustine interprets the Lucan paradise as a realm of the soul identical with "Abraham's bosom" / *sinus Abrahae* and/or the Father's "hidden place" / *secretum patris*.<sup>313</sup> In these same passages, among others,<sup>314</sup> Augustine consistently appeals to Christ's divinity, his transcendent existence as the Word and Wisdom of God, to resolve the paradox of his being in paradise and hades on the same day. Augustine throughout maintains and defends the limited bodily presence of Christ in the tomb and the confined presence of his soul in hades during the *triduum*. In other words, an Origen-like Platonism helps Augustine preserve the full humanity of Jesus and the saving significance of his afterlife feats. Occasionally in these passages, Augustine

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<sup>313</sup> *qu. ev.* 2.38.5 (ca. 399–400; CCSL 44B:91–2); *ep.* 164.3.8 (ca. 414; CSEL 44:527–8); *Gen. litt.* 12.34.65–7 (ca. 401–16; CSEL 28.1:430–1).

<sup>314</sup> *Jo. ev. tr.* 111.2.3 (CCSL 36:629–30); *serm.* 285.2 (PL 38:1294). In *serm.* 53A.13 (Morin 634) he similarly maintains that Jesus speaks the promise of 23.43 "in the person of the Word" / *secundum Verbi personam* and "in his divinity" / *secundum divinitatem*. In the same passage, Augustine also appeals to Christ as "Word" / *verbum* (John 1.1 intertext), and as "the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God" / *dei virtutem et dei sapientiam*, rhetorically asking where Wisdom is absent.

even pushes back against Origen's critics, along with any others who make claims of precise knowledge about spiritual realms.<sup>315</sup>

We do not rashly affirm whether paradise is in the third heaven, or even that he was snatched up into the third heaven and from there back to paradise. Perhaps there is some special, well-wooded place. Yet, by cross-referencing the word every spiritual quasi-region where a soul lives well can deservedly be called paradise. This includes the third heaven, wherever that is (which certainly is very lofty and splendid). In truth, paradise is the joy of a good conscience in one's own person. Therefore, even the Church is temperately and justly and piously called a paradise for saints living upright. ... How much more, therefore, after this life can that bosom of Abraham be called paradise. There already no temptation exists. There all is rest after all the pains of this life. ... Yet again, our Savior, after dying for us, did not disdain visiting that certain part of reality. He did so in order to unbind from there those who were to be unbound. In keeping with his divinity and hidden justice, he could not have been ignorant of this place. For this reason to that bandit's soul (to whom he said, "**Today you will be with me in paradise**") he certainly did not furnish the lower regions (where sins' punishments are), but instead the rest of Abraham's bosom. For indeed there is not anywhere where Christ is not, since he himself is the **wisdom of God**<sup>316</sup> **touching everywhere because of her elegance**.<sup>317</sup> This includes paradise or the third heaven or wherever else the apostle was snatched up after the third heaven, if that certain place where the souls of the blessed are may be called by many names.

*non temere adfirmamus, utrum in tertio caelo sit paradisos, an et in tertium caelum et inde rursus in paradisum raptus sit. si enim proprie quidem nemorosus locus, translato autem uerbo omnis etiam spiritalis quasi regio, ubi animae bene est, merito paradisos dici potest, non solum tertium caelum, quidquid illud est, quod profecto magnum sublimiter que praeclarum est, uerum etiam in ipso homine laetitia quaedam bonae conscientiae paradisos est. unde et ecclesia sanctis temperanter et iuste et pie uiuentibus paradisos recte dicitur ... quanto magis ergo post hanc uitam etiam sinus ille abrahamae paradisos dici potest, ubi iam nulla temtatio, ubi tanta requies post omnes dolores uitae huius ... nec ipsam tamen rerum partem noster saluator mortuus pro nobis uisitare comtemsit, ut inde solueret. quos esse soluendos secundum diuinam secretamque iustitiam ignorare non potuit. quapropter animae illius latronis, cui dixit: **hodie me cum eris in paradiso**, non utique inferos praestitit, ubi poenae sunt peccatorum, sed aut illam requiem sinus Abrahamae – non enim alicubi non est Christus, cum ipse sit **sapientia***

<sup>315</sup> *Gen litt.* 12.34.65–7 (ca. 401–416; CSEL 28.1:430–1).

<sup>316</sup> 1 Cor 1.24, 30.

<sup>317</sup> Wis. 7.24; Cf. Vul, *adtingit... ubique et capit propter suam munditiam*.

*dei adtingens ubique propter suam munditiam – aut illum paradisum siue in tertio caelo siue ubicumque alibi est, quo post tertium caelum est raptus apostolus, si tamen non aliquid unum est diuersis nominibus appellatum, ubi sunt animae beatorum.*

The rash notions mentioned and dismissed here have much in common with the interpretation of Epiphanius and his anti-Origenist effort to delineate distinct realms of paradise. Another revealing passage appears in *ep.* 187, which Augustine writes in mid-417 CE to Dardanus, prefect of Gaul. Dardanus had asked specifically about the location of paradise and how Christ could be in multiple places at the same time.<sup>318</sup> His questions include presuppositions quite similar to those of Eustathius and Hilary, and like them he appeals to the omnipresence of Christ as divinized man.<sup>319</sup> As in the passages above, Augustine raises concerns about attempts to locate paradise, and he finally appeals to Christ's transcendent deity rather than his divinized humanity in order to resolve the matter of simultaneous presence in paradise and hell.<sup>320</sup> While the eschatological issues surrounding the Lucan paradise logion would continue to be debated, Augustine's Platonic interpretation shows that the concerted efforts of Origen's posthumous enemies would not go completely unchallenged.

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<sup>318</sup> FOC 30:221n1. Augustine later gives a name to this letter: *On the Presence of God* (*retr.* 2.49).

<sup>319</sup> *ep.* 187.3 (CSEL 57:83).

<sup>320</sup> *ep.* 187.4–9 (CSEL 57:83–9).

## CHAPTER 5. ONE OF THE FAITHFUL

*5A. From Participation to Prayer*

By far the most common way of reading Luke 23.39–43 in antiquity was to call upon the second bandit as representing Christians and offering a didactic model of Christian practices, beliefs and virtues. The representative and didactic significance of the episode is so pervasive, broad and multifaceted that it will occupy chapters five through eight under numerous sub-headings. Indeed, this representative significance underlies much of the logic and many of the texts featured in chapters two and three.

As with so many trajectories, Origen of Alexandria is the first interpreter to attest to this one. He consistently reads the Lucan episode as representing the faithful, their hopeful future and promise of beatitude. It even appears in what may be his earliest extant comment on the passage.<sup>321</sup> Other examples, both Greek and Latin, make the same point.<sup>322</sup> The clearest appears in Rufinus' translation of *Gen hom.*<sup>323</sup>

Indeed, understand that what he said to the bandit, “**Today you will be with me in paradise,**” was said not only to him, but also to all the saints, for whom **he descended into the depths.**<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> *Gen Fr. Pap.* (Glaue 10, quoted in 2F). On a sidenote, this fragment illustrates some of the basic features of the understanding of original sin as developed by Ambrose and his student Augustine. Tracing out and evaluating the conceptual relations here would make for an interesting project.

<sup>322</sup> *Lev hom.* 9.5.2–3 (SC 287:88–90), *Matt com.* A 133 (GCS 38:270–1), *Num hom* 26.4.1 (GCS 30:249).

<sup>323</sup> *Gen hom.* 15.5 (GCS 29:134).

<sup>324</sup> Eph 4.9.

*Quod enim dixit ad latronem: hodie me cum eris in paradiso, hoc non illi soli dictum, sed et omnibus sanctis intellige, pro quibus in inferna descenderat.*

Many later interpreters presume and adapt the trajectory of the bandit as representing the future beatitude of the faithful.<sup>325</sup> Yet, it is in the poetry of Ephrem the Syrian that the bandit's representative significance finds its most intense, creative, and personal expression. Here the bandit and his dialogue with Jesus become a model of prayer and an occasion for the poet's heartfelt worship. To those who know Ephrem's cultivated habit of intense, parenetic and devotional identification with the characters of scripture, this comes as no surprise. That Ephrem begins<sup>326</sup> and concludes<sup>327</sup> several hymns with this episode illustrates the doxological power he finds in this Lucan mini-drama. For the Harp of the Spirit, this episode echoes the refrain of the whole drama of salvation that began in the primal garden.

In his earliest extant cycle, the *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem begins his eighth hymn by narrating his devotional reaction to the episode. The poet's contemplative *ecstasis*

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<sup>325</sup> See, for example: Eusebius, *Ps com.* (PG 23:80, implicit; PG 23:1265, explicit); Didymus of Alexandria, *Ps cat.* A 982 (PTS 16:233; frag. 982 on Ps 102:11–12), *Zac com* 5.45(368) (SC 85:992); Ps-Didymus, *Trin.* 1.16.50 (BKP 44:100); Ambrose, *Psalm* 39.19–20 (CSEL 64:224–5), *Psalm 118* 8.11–12 (CSEL 62:155–6); Asterius Ignotus, *hom.* 1.4–6 (hom. 1 on Ps 1) (SOFS 16:2–3); Prudentius, *Cath.* 10.161–2 (CSEL 61:62); Jerome, *ep.* 125.1 (CSEL 56.1:118–9), *Proph. min. com.* Zech. 2.9.11–12 (CCSL 76A:831–3, esp. lines 299–329); Augustine, *civ. dei* 20.30 (CCSL 48:757), *Gen Man.* 2.8.10 (PL 34:201); Leo, *serm.* 55.1–3 (CCSL 138A:323–5), *serm.* 66.4–5 (CCSL 138A:403).

<sup>326</sup> *par.* 8.1 (CSCO 174:33); *h. fid.* 84.1 (CSCO 154:257).

<sup>327</sup> *c. Nis.* 26.7 (CSCO 218:59–60, quoted in a note in 5C); *c. Nis.* 45.16 (CSCO 240:53, quoted in 7C); *cruc.* 6.20 (CSCO 248:68); *h. fid.* 54.12–13 (CSCO 154:170, quoted in 5C); *nat.* 21.19 (CSCO 186:108).

reminds one of the writings of Philo or Plotinus, as well as various apocalypses in which a visionary is taken to paradise.<sup>328</sup>

There came to my ear \* from the scripture read  
a word that caused me joy \* on the subject of the bandit.  
It gave comfort to my soul \* amidst the multitude of its vices,  
telling how he had compassion on the bandit. \* Oh may he bring me too  
into that garden at the sound of whose name \* I am overwhelmed by joy.  
My mind bursts its reins \* as it goes forth to contemplate him.

ܐܡܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ

In the twelfth hymn of the same cycle, even as Ephrem identifies with the man freed from Legion, he still draws on the Lucan episode as the desire and hope of his penitential prayer.<sup>329</sup> He concludes the sixth of his *Hymns on the Crucifixion* (c 350s) on a similar note, drawing on the bandit's dying plea as his own petition for final salvation.<sup>330</sup>

**Remember me** also along with the bandit,  
that I may enter in his shadow into **your kingdom**.

ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܕܡܢ ܬܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ

His personal identification with the bandit also appears in passages that will be discussed more fully in later sections.<sup>331</sup>

<sup>328</sup> *par.* 8.1 (CSCO 174:33; ET slightly modified from Brock, *Paradise*, 131). Brock translates the final pronoun as a reference to Jesus, “Him,” while this translation leaves it ambiguous, since the pronoun could also refer to the bandit.

<sup>329</sup> *par.* 12.9 (CSCO 174:52; quoted in 7D).

<sup>330</sup> *cruc.* 6.20 (CSCO 248:68).

<sup>331</sup> Both are given as full quotations in 7C. In *c. Nis.* 45.16 (CSCO 240:53), Ephrem personally identifies with the bandit as an apologist of Jesus against the neo-Arians and begs for a reward like the



Ephrem not only identifies with the bandit in his poetic persona, but also on behalf of the Christian faithful. The refrain in his eighth hymn *On Paradise* (whose first stanza is quoted above) cultivates this intense identification among the entire congregation: “Hold me worthy \* that we may be heirs **in your kingdom**” / ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ \* ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ

ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ.<sup>332</sup> His eighth hymn *On the Crucifixion* even speaks of all believers as “followers” of the bandit.<sup>333</sup> In one of his *Hymns on the Nativity*, Ephrem describes Christ as a Fisherman who, with his cross-shaped pole, not only catches one bandit, but “all bandits” / ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ.<sup>334</sup> So profound is his corporate identification with the bandit that Ephrem’s bandit lends his label to all believers. Similar references to the corporate representation of the bandit appear elsewhere as well.<sup>335</sup> In a late-life hymn about mending the rift between pro-Arian and pro-Nicene Christians, the poet even speaks in the voice of the Edessan Church. In the hymn’s finale, that Church itself directly addresses the bandit, expressing its desire for unity and its hope for the beatitude that accompanies: “with you may I enter the **kingdom**, \* following you!” / \* ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ ܠܗܝܬ ܠܝ ܥܠܡܐ.<sup>336</sup>

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bandit’s. In *Abr. Kid.* 5.9–10 (CSCO 322:13), he mentions the bandit speaking “one word” and then himself speaking “one sentence.”

<sup>332</sup> *par.* 8.1 (CSCO 174:33; ET from Brock, *Paradise*, 131).

<sup>333</sup> *cruc.* 8.9 (CSCO 248:75, quoted in 5B). *h. fid.* 54.12–13 (CSCO 154:170, quoted in 5C), identifies the bandit with the pro-Nicene church in Edessa, and the other bandit with the schismatic Arian church.

<sup>334</sup> *nat.* 4.37 (CSCO 186:28).

<sup>335</sup> *Diat. com.* 21.10 (CBM 8:214; Armenian in CSCO 137:318). Here the poet narrates the bandit’s voice as he claims to have entered paradise through the wound in Jesus’ side. In *res.* 2.1 (CSCO 248:82), he also takes on the first-person voice of the bandit as a representative of the cosmic redemption of humanity.

<sup>336</sup> *c. Nis.* 26.7 (CSCO 218:60, quoted in a note in 5C). *epiph.* 3.30 (CSCO 186:153) pictures the bandit as an epiphany torch that contrasts the Lucan solar eclipse. The people are thus invited to become enlightened torches. It should be said that *epiph.* 3 has been doubted by Beck among others; see CSCO 187:ix. My analysis of it against the background of Ephrem’s interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 in



Ephrem.<sup>341</sup> In terms of devotional identification, Ps-Ephrem *serm.* 1.8 is especially poignant as the bandit provokes a doxological response: “In the bandit I beheld compassion, \* the great wealth of forgiveness” / ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ.<sup>342</sup> An intense, penitent and prayerful identification, both personal and corporate, appears later in the same homily.<sup>343</sup>

[T]o our beseeching, my Lord, pour out on us \* pity as on the bandit.  
I am a sinner as he, \* a guilty man as he.  
As to him, my Lord, show, give me \* the key, that opens **paradise**.

ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ \* ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ  
ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ \* ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ  
ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ \* ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܗܝܬܝܢ

A famous, ca. 5<sup>th</sup> century Syriac dispute poem *On the Two Bandits* concludes with a similar, self-identifying prayer.<sup>344</sup>

**In your kingdom**, Lord, **have mercy on me**,  
And may I who have confessed you see your compassion too.

A number of Greek interpreters seem to benefit from Ephrem, particularly from his devotional self-identification with the bandit and his use of the Lucan episode as a pattern of prayer. For example, Macrina’s dying prayer (as narrated by her brother Nyssen, written ca. 380–383)<sup>345</sup> is quite similar to Ephrem’s prayerful identification with the bandit: “**Remember me also in your kingdom**” / καμὸν μνήσθητι ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ

<sup>341</sup> In Beck’s critical editions and numbering: 1.7, 1.8, and 3.4. These sermons are treated in more detail in 7D.

<sup>342</sup> Lines 65–6 (CSCO 305:107).

<sup>343</sup> Lines 325–30 (CSCO 305:152–3).

<sup>344</sup> ET from Brock, “Dialogue,” 16.

<sup>345</sup> SC 178:67.

σου.<sup>346</sup> Around the turn of the century, the Palestinian or Syrian Asterius Ignotus quotes several model prayers from scripture, grouping the bandit's words together with those of the Lucan publican (18.9–14) and LXX Ps 4.2.<sup>347</sup> For this interpreter, the bandit's brief, contrite prayer to Jesus exemplifies the essence of all true prayer. Greek appropriations may have even helped extend Ephrem's influence to the birthplace of Latin hymnody, Milan.<sup>348</sup>

This influence extends to Greek liturgical texts as well, including sermons and *troparia*. A pseudonymous Greek sermon (5<sup>th</sup> century?) shows Ephrem's direct influence in many ways, including the use of the episode as a subject and model for prayer.<sup>349</sup>

And groaning I said: “Save us, Lord, from **the outer darkness and the weeping and gnashing of teeth**, and remember us in the pleasure of your people to watch over us in our salvation, to look to the well-being of your chosen ones... **Remember us, Lord**, as the bandit, **when you come in your kingdom**. And raise our bodies in the graves with glory, make us worthy of the plunder of the righteous in the clouds, so that even we may inherit a little of the privileges of your holy ones on your holy mountain. Amen.

καὶ στενάξας εἶπον· ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς Κύριε ἐκ τοῦ ἐξωτέρου σκότους καὶ τοῦ κλαυθμοῦ καὶ τοῦ βρυγμοῦ τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ μνήσθητι ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ εὐδοκίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ σου· ἐπίσκεψαι ἡμᾶς ἐν σωτηρίᾳ σου· τοῦ ἰδεῖν ἐν τῇ χρηστότητι τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν σου· ... μνήσθητι ἡμῶν Κύριε ὡς τοῦ ληστοῦ ὅτ' ἂν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου· καὶ ἐξέγειρον ἡμῶν τὰ σώματα ἐκ τῆς μνημείων μετὰ δόξης ἀξιῶν ἡμᾶς τῆς ἀρπαγῆς τῶν δικαίων ἐν νεφέλαις· ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς

<sup>346</sup> *vit. Macr.* 24 (SC 178:222 // *GNO* 8.1:397–8, quoted in 7E). That same passage also recalls Ephrem's theme of Christ breaking through the barrier protecting paradise.

<sup>347</sup> *hom.* 4.12 (*hom.* 1 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:28), largely paralleled in *fr. in Ps 4* (SOFS 16:251). See also *hom.* 5.17–9 (*hom.* 2 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:40–1), “He spoke upon the cross to Christ, praying as to God” / Ἐλεγεν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τῷ Χριστῷ προσευχόμενος ὡς θεῷ.

<sup>348</sup> Though the extant, authentic hymns of Ambrose do not reference the bandit, Ambrose does explicitly and repeatedly describe the bandit's request as an exemplary “prayer.” See *Luc* 10.121 (CCSL 14:379–80), *precatio*; *Ps* 39.17 (CSEL 64:223), *precationem*; *Ps* 118 8.40 (CSEL 62:175), *supplicio*. The bandit also serves as an example of how God outdoes “our prayer” / *nostram precationem*; see *Ps* 37.18.1 (CSEL 64:149).

<sup>349</sup> Ps-Ephrem, *de Iuliano asceta* (CPG 4027; ESO Gk3:255c–d).

μικρὸν κληρονομήσωμεθα τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ ἁγίου σου πρεσβείαις τῶν ἁγίων σου, ἅμην.

Here Ephrem's "**remember me** as the bandit" expands into a corporate or intercessory prayer of confession, "**remember** us, Lord, as the bandit, **when you come into your kingdom.**"

As it happens, the common text of the liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom (CHR) has a very similar formula (which furnishes the title of this dissertation) found among its precommunion *troparia*, one of various private prayers of confession and pleas for mercy read silently by the priest just before receiving the sacrament.<sup>350</sup>

At your mystical supper today, Son of God, receive me as a communicant, for I will not tell the mystery to your enemies, nor give you a kiss as did Judas, but as the bandit will I confess you: "**Remember me, Lord, in your kingdom!**"

Τοῦ δείπνου σου τοῦ μυστικοῦ σήμερον, Υἱὲ Θεοῦ, κοινωνόν με παράλαβε· οὐ μὴ γὰρ τοῖς ἐχθροῖς σου τὸ μυστήριον εἶπω· οὐ φίλημά σοι δώσω καθάπερ ὁ Ιούδας· ἀλλί ὡς ὁ ληστής ὁμολογῶ σοι· **μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ἐν τῇ Βασιλείᾳ σου.**

The liturgical history of the Τοῦ δείπνου troparion is quite complicated and mostly falls outside the chronological scope of our analysis. Let it suffice to note that it derived from Constantinople, was established by 573/4 CE (under Justin II) as a standard hymn for Holy Thursday, and emerged as a popular element in Constantinople's regular

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<sup>350</sup> The text appears in OCA 281:145. Taft here notes that some manuscripts have this prayer "repeated more than once in the same series of communion prayers" (150). He notes that in the common Greek text today this same *troparion* "serves at the Holy Thursday eucharist (BAS) as proper Great Entrance refrain in place of the Cherubikon, as koinonikon or communion refrain, and, after communion, as apolytikion replacing the Πληρωθήτω, the concluding περισσὴ or thanksgiving troparion at what was once the doxology of the communion psalmody. It is also found in the *Office of Holy Communion*."

eucharistic ritual by the 11<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>351</sup> before spreading from there into liturgies in many languages.<sup>352</sup>

In terms of its pre-history, it is especially interesting that Taft claims that the texts of eucharistic chants originated outside of the eucharistic liturgy before being fitted into place there.<sup>353</sup> The adaptation of Luke 23.42 here likely draws on the early Byzantine text type (placing “Lord” in the middle of the request). The abbreviated form recalls Macrina’s prayer (see above), or perhaps one of its later imitators. Yet, before and behind these more immediate Greek traditions and influences, the Τοῦ δεῖπνου troparion owes its originating impulse to the devotional poetry of Ephrem.

#### *5B. Standing for Supersession: A Pseudonymous Favorite*

Identifying with the second Lucan criminal often involved disassociating from the first. Sometimes this even took the form of identifying the first criminal with one’s opponents. The Gospel of Luke itself may have aimed at something similar, drawing on Plutarchian *synkrisis* so as to demonize and renounce anti-Roman zealotry. In the history of the

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<sup>351</sup> OCA 281:178–9. See also S. Alexopoulos and A. van den Hoek, “The Endicott Scroll and Its Place in the History of Private Communion Prayer,” *DOP* 60 (2006): 162–63, who find in the 12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> century Endicott Scroll a “private, nonliturgical collection of communion prayers” that represents what Taft deemed “the first stage” of the “entrance of private communion prayers into the euchologion.” They also note that the main, early sources that attest to private pre-communion prayers come from Syria or nearby, and that there is considerable thematic continuity between these devotional instructions and later liturgies (163–6).

<sup>352</sup> Regarding the spread of this troparion (Taft’s #4) as a communion prayer, see OCA 281:180ff. It was even translated into Latin, for example, as the *Coenae tuae mirabili* and belonged to the old Milanese rite for Holy Thursday; see K. Levy, “A Hymn for Thursday in Holy Week,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 16.2 (1963): 128.

<sup>353</sup> OCA 281:163.

interpretation of this Lucan passage, the earliest examples of polemical *synkrisis* relate to Jews. As it happens, while supersessionist (Christianity replaces Judaism) readings appear among many interpreters, such interpretations are actually the most heated and overt in pseudonymous texts.

Hippolytus' early allegorical comment may imply such a reading, given that three of the four animals allegorized refer to Gentiles coming to faith.<sup>354</sup> A 3<sup>rd</sup> century monarchianist sermon falsely ascribed to Hippolytus may be the first to explore the idea.<sup>355</sup>

Then two bandits were stretched out with him, bearing in themselves the signs of two peoples.<sup>356</sup> The one rightly repays repentance, and confesses with confessions, and reverences the Master. The other is disturbed, remaining stiff-necked, wrongly repays the Master, and dwells in his old sins.

Τότε δὴ συνεκτείνονται αὐτῷ δύο λησταί, εἰς δὲ δύο λαοὺς φέροντες ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὰ σημεῖα, ὧν ὁ μὲν εἰς ἐκ μεταβολῆς εὐγνωμονεῖ καὶ μετὰ ὁμολογίας ἐξομολογεῖται καὶ πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην εὐσεβεῖ, ὁ δὲ ἕτερος κινεῖται σκληροτράχηλος ὧν καὶ ἀγνωμονεῖ πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην καὶ οὐκ εὐσεβεῖ καὶ τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν ἐμφιλοχωρεῖ.

On the other hand, the pseudo-Cyprianic *De duobus montibus Sina et Sion* may be earlier.<sup>357</sup> This Latin text, deemed by Laato an early example of *adversos Iudaeos* literature, uses the Lucan episode in order to address Jews directly and vitriolically as rhetorical opponents. At the same time, the sermon is a veritable midrash on the prophetic fulfillment of Psalm 106.4.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>354</sup> Richard, "Les fragments," 91–2 (quoted in 2F).

<sup>355</sup> *pasch.* 54.1–2 (SC 27:181). See 2G for date.

<sup>356</sup> Cf. Gen 25.23.

<sup>357</sup> See 2G for date.

<sup>358</sup> *mont.* 7.2, 8.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12).

(7.2) Look here, Jewish tempters. It is likewise written: **and they tempted the Lord in a waterless place.**<sup>359</sup> A look-out truly indicates the height of the tree, as Solomon said: “**They made me a garden’s custodian.**”<sup>360</sup> For this reason in a garden he hanged crucified on a tree between two bandits. And from the tree’s height he was watching both as a form of two evil-doing peoples: Gentiles for ages fallen into evil deeds, and Jews, killers of prophets. These are two evil-doing peoples, whose form the two bandits carry in themselves, between whom an innocent hanged. One was blaspheming, but the other actually confessed, because an innocent was suffering injury. Yet from a scouting tree Jesus was watching both a blasphemer and a confessor. He saved a confessor and he destroyed a blasphemer, just as he did for two peoples...

(8.2) Yes, during his very passion, while hanging on a tree, he was watching from a high tree, foreseeing two divisions of people. A division of people who had seen his miraculous and god-like deeds were anguishing over the injustice and weeping for this suffering one. However, the others—Jews—were laughing and beating his head with a reed, blaspheming and saying: “**Hail, king of the Jews**, where is your Father? Let him come and free you from the cross.”

(7.2) *ecce temptatores Iudaeos. item scriptum est: et temptauerunt Dominum in loco inaquoso. speculum vero altitudinem ligni declarat dicente Salomone: posuerunt me velut custodiam pomarii, eo quod in horto in ligno confixus inter duos latrones pependit. et de altitudine ligni ambos speculabatur in figura duorum populorum malefactorum, gentes in saecula mala facta iacentes et Iudaeos interfectores prophetarum. hi sunt duo populi malefactores, quorum figuram in se portabant duo latrones, inter quibus pependit innocens: unus blasphemabat, alius vero confessus est, quia innocens iniuriam patitur. Iesus autem ambos speculabatur de ligno speculatorio blasphemum et confessorem, confessorem saluavit et blasphemum perdidit, sicuti de duos populos fecit...*

(8.2) *vero in ipsa passione pendens in ligno duas partes populi prospiciens speculabatur de alto ligno, partem populi qui viderant virtutes eius mirabiles et deificas, patientem illum iniuriam dolentes plorabant: alii vero Iudaei inridentes de harundine caput ei quassabant, blasphemantes et dicentes: aue rex Iudaeorum, ubi est pater tuus? veniat et eliberet te de cruce.*

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<sup>359</sup> Laato (175–6) mistakenly translates this “a watery place,” when it means the exact opposite, a desert (see Vul Ps 106.4), presuming the layout of an ancient garden with a scouting tower set upon a high, dry spot.

<sup>360</sup> Cf. Vul Ps 78.1 (79.1), *venerunt gentes in hereditatem tuam polluerunt templum sanctum tuum posuerunt Hierusalem in pomorum custodiam.*



A century later, in two of his hymns *On the Crucifixion* written while in Nisibis (ca. 350s), Ephrem the Syrian offers similar interpretations. Here the poetic turns are both more mild and more triumphant in tone, reflecting the privileged place of Christians after the Constantinian settlement. In *Hymn 5*, Ephrem finds profound irony and poignant reversal in Jesus' crucifixion between two bandits.<sup>361</sup>

As they in their rage placed him among the bandits, they gave a reference to themselves.  
Because the bandit to the left is their symbol, in him are they abandoned.  
Because (Christ) chose the nations, they who quickly found refuge in his  
crucifixion.

ܐܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ

In hymn 8, “[t]he nation” (Israel) is contrasted with the “nations” (Gentiles), and Christ’s silent disdain for his revilers foreshadows the subordinate place that Jews will have in the Christian Roman empire.<sup>362</sup>

Symbolic was he between bandits crucified,  
of which the one reviled, the other confessed.  
A symbol, which made known,  
that today the nation mocks him, but the nations profess him.  
Silently he despised the deniers, symbolic for them;  
because they see they are despised in the world.  
To the believing (bandit) he paid honor through his word;  
and see his followers are exalted.

ܐܡܪܝܢ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ

<sup>361</sup> *cruc.* 5.7 (CSCO 248:60).

<sup>362</sup> *cruc.* 8.9 (CSCO 248:74–5).

ܐܡܝܢܝܟܝܢ ܠܝܥܠܡ ܡܝܬܝܢ ܐܡ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ  
 ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ  
 ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ  
 ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ ܠܡܕܝܢܐ

Certainly, Ephrem expresses stronger anti-Jewish rhetoric elsewhere, but this comparatively mild deployment of the supersessionist trope fits well with Shephardson's recent case that Ephrem's harsher anti-Jewish rhetoric was primarily about setting the boundaries of Nicene orthodoxy.<sup>363</sup>

In chronological order, Ambrose's *Tractates on the Psalms* next attest to this idea, though only in a brief allusion.<sup>364</sup> Jerome spreads the initial guilt for Jesus' mocking a bit more evenly in his 398 *Commentary on Matthew*, where he combines the supersessionist idea with a chronological harmonization.<sup>365</sup> Writing around the same time as Jerome, Asterius Ignotus offers a similarly mild version of this trope,<sup>366</sup> as do Maximus of Turin and Cyril of Alexandria afterwards.<sup>367</sup> One of Ephrem's 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century imitators

<sup>363</sup> See C. Shephardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy. Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria*. North American Patristics Society Monograph Series 20 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), ch. 2.

<sup>364</sup> In the laying down of his life in the crucifixion, Jesus paradoxically "drew to himself the faith of all nations, saying to a man: **'Today you will be with me in paradise.'**" / *ad se omnium gentium fidem traxit dicens homini: hodie me cum eris in paradiso* (Ps. 43.11; CSEL 64:268).

<sup>365</sup> *Matt com.* 4.44 (CCSL 77:272–3; quoted in 3G).

<sup>366</sup> Asterius Ignotus, *hom.* 5.18 (hom. 2 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:41) implies a supersessionist reading when he claims that the bandit stands "as the wild olive shoot" / ὡς ἀγριέλαιον that God engrafts (Rom 11.17ff) and thus represents "all the nations" / πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.

<sup>367</sup> Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 75.2 (CCSL 23:314): "Wherefore that bandit was justified, that while the Jews were insulting the Savior stationed on a cross and speaking as if to a criminal, **'Free yourself** if you can,' he, certain of his divinity and sure of his will requested that he himself be freed" / *Vnde ille latro iustificatus est, quod saluatore in patibulo constituto iudaeis insultantibus et uelut criminoso dicentibus: Libera te ipsum si potes; ille certus de eius diuinitate et securus de uoluntate se magis postulat liberari*. Cyril of Alexandria, *Luc com.* hom. 153 (PG 72:937), "One, he says, of the bandits was uttering the same things as the Jews" / Ὁ μὲν εἷς, φησὶ, τῶν ληστῶν τὰ αὐτὰ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἠρεῦγετο.

developed this trope with starker and cosmic contrasts.<sup>368</sup> Yet another, in an Armenian section of the *Diatessaron Commentary* redacted around the late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century, cautiously raises the idea that the Jewish and Gentile status of the bandits was not merely symbolic, but also ethnic. One wonders whether the agnostic position taken was done to refute ethnic designations or to entertain them.<sup>369</sup>

**When they had placed him on the cross, they also placed two other evil-doers with him, so that the prophecy, “He was numbered among the wicked,” would be fulfilled.**<sup>370</sup> One of them—we do not know whether he was circumcised or not—was speaking like the circumcised. The other—we do not know whether he was circumcised or not—was speaking like the uncircumcised. One was saying, **“Are you not the Messiah?”** that is, “the king,” in keeping with the words of the circumcised crucifiers. But the other was saying, **“Remember me in your kingdom,”** just as the uncircumcised ones who had written, **“This is the Messiah, the King of the Jews.”**<sup>371</sup> The uncircumcised were confessing that the Messiah was the king of the Jews, and not [proclaiming] their own [king]. But the Jews were confessing [that their king] was Caesar, whose was the king of foreign nations. The people who were confessing a decaying kingdom had a share in its decay. But those who confessing the true kingdom will enter into the garden of delights, according to the promises. The kingdom which [the Jews] confessed destroyed their city. But the kingdom of our Lord, confessed by the Gentiles, gives life to their body.

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<sup>368</sup> Ps-Ephrem, *serm. hebd.* 6.1041–112 (CSCO 412:60–1) paints the crucifixion scene against a massive cosmological and eschatological backdrop. “[T]wo worlds” are seen, the “world of the righteous and devout” opposite the “world of the wicked and criminals.” “Kingdom and Gehenna” are juxtaposed, so also God’s “people” who “hope in the crucified Son” and “the peoples/nations.” “The people of the Crucified One” belongs to the second group, joining in the mocking of its own Lord. Chronological harmonization helps the preacher here make the case for the shift in election from the Jews to the Gentiles. Beck contends for a 6<sup>th</sup> century provenance on theological grounds (CSCO 412:12\*, CSCO 413:9), but the proximity in language and conceptuality to Ephrem may suggest an earlier date.

<sup>369</sup> *Diat. com.* 20.22 (Arm, CSCO 137:296–7). ET modified from McCarthy, 305. Leloir’s Latin translation (CSCO 145:212) does differ slightly from McCarthy’s, particularly as Leloir lacks the explicit quotation of Mark 15.27–8 and favors the language of confession/confessing (*confitebantur... confitebantur... confessus est... confessi sunt*). McCarthy instead translates, “were proclaiming... were proclaiming... who proclaimed... had recognized.” The supersessionist trope repeats in *Diat. com.* 20.26 (Arm, CSCO 137:299; ET modified from McCarthy, 307): “[The Jews] had chosen a bandit and rejected him, but he chose a bandit and rejected them.”

<sup>370</sup> Mark 15.27–8.

<sup>371</sup> Matt 27:37.

Two interrelated and pseudonymous Coptic sermons of the 5<sup>th</sup> century make these ethnic claims flatly. The first is falsely ascribed to John Chrysostom.<sup>372</sup>

These are the names of the bandits. The one on the left was a Jew called Tumas; the one on the right, a heathen called Kustas. The latter is the one who confessed Christ when he saw that the air had changed.

The second, falsely attributed to Euodius of Rome, echoes its companion both in its explicit claims regarding the ethnic identities of the bandits as well as in its reference to the “changing air” as what prompted the second bandit’s conversion. This sermon uniquely pairs Dumas with Barabbas as his Jewish criminal companion, and even speaks in the voice of the second century bishop of Rome (Euodius) as if he had been an eyewitness of the events described!<sup>373</sup>

(63) It is also necessary, O Christ-loving people, not to pass over the two bandits but to speak about them. One of them was a Jew. The other was a Gentile. When the Jew saw that his people hated Christ exceedingly and that anyone who would accuse him was greatly praised, the devil entered him<sup>374</sup> and he pondered, saying, “Really, certainly, if I insult him and accuse him, I will be released from the cross and taken away.”

(64) Indeed, the Jew and the Gentile had both blasphemed him before the signs were revealed, as Matthew and Mark have told us. I too am a witness of that which they say. When the Gentile saw that the elements had changed, he understood. He said, “**Truly this one** who is crucified with me **is the Son of God.**” And at that moment he repented for what he had said...

(68) When Dumas saw that Barabbas, his fellow Jew, had been released, he thought to himself that he would be released like his comrade, “if I throw a word into the face of the Son of God.” And thus he lost on both accounts: the life of this world and (that of) the place into which his fellow bandit had entered, paradise. He inherited the inextinguishable punishment forever in hell. As for Kestas the

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<sup>372</sup> *res. apost.* 64 (CSCO 524:69); ET slightly modified from CSCO 525:72.

<sup>373</sup> *pass. res.* 7.63–4 (CSCO 524:96–7); ET slightly modified from CSCO 525:102–4.

<sup>374</sup> Cp. Luke 22.3, John 13.2.

Gentile, he asked him, “**Remember me Lord when you come to your kingdom.**”

This sermon makes Luke’s parenetic contrast into an ethnic divergence as well as a spiritual battle that starts from the very time of Jesus’ trial. It also uniquely has the repenting bandit mouth (in adapted form) the confession of the Markan/Matthean centurion.<sup>375</sup> The confession of a Gentile centurion here becomes the confession of the Gentile bandit.

On the other side of these ethnic supersessionist interpretations is a catena excerpt that may have Origen as its ultimate source.<sup>376</sup> While its precise provenance may be impossible to corroborate, it provides a fascinating counterpoint to this trajectory.

Now it seems that the one who repented was indeed a Jew. This is because he thought of besides his earthly kingdom when he said, “**Remember me in your kingdom.**”

εἰκὸς δὲ ὅτι ὁ μετανοήσας καὶ Ἰουδαῖος ἦν, διὸ καὶ ἄλλην τινὰ ἐννοῶν παρὰ τὴν ἐπίγειον τὴν αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν εἶπε τὸ μνήσθητί μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.

One wonders whether this idea was Origen’s thoughtful historicizing of the episode, or a much later counter to the claim that this bandit was a Gentile.

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<sup>375</sup> Mark 15.39 // Matt 27.54.

<sup>376</sup> Heinrici, *Petrus von Laodicea Erklärung*, 330–1. See 3C for a detailed comparison of this fragment and *Matt com.* A 133. Both share the claim that the bandit’s repentance was provoked by seeing the sign of darkness.

5C. *Nicea's Witness: Homoian Polemics in Hilary and Ephrem*

As detailed in 4E, Eustathius of Antioch, a participant at Nicea, is the first extant author to disagree with Origen's chronological solution to eschatological dissonance. Even before the council convened, he had argued for the ubiquity of "the holy soul of Christ, living together with God and the Word" / ἡ γὰρ ἁγία τοῦ Χριστοῦ ψυχὴ, τῷ θεῷ συνδιαιτωμένη καὶ λόγῳ.<sup>377</sup> This union makes Christ's soul uniquely capable of descending to the depths and simultaneously leading the bandit into paradise.<sup>378</sup> Similar appeals appear in fragments of his treatise *On the Soul against the Arians*, composed after the council and during his late-life exile (ca. 327–337).<sup>379</sup> In regard to his interpretation of the Lucan passage, his concern in this text is primarily to rebut Origen's view that Christ's soul was geographically bound to hades during the *triduum*. He also denies the idea that the bandit entered paradise without or ahead of Christ, insisting instead that Christ alone could and did open paradise. In regard to his interpretation of Luke 23.39–43, the theology of Arius is not directly in view. Though present at Nicea and supportive of its decisions, Eustathius is only a precursor to an expressly anti-Arian reading of the Lucan episode.

Athanasius is the first on record to develop an explicit anti-Arian trajectory, though the Lucan passage is used briefly and tangentially in this regard. In his *Oration against the Arians*, the first two books of which were written in the midst of his second exile (ca.

<sup>377</sup> *engast.* 18.5 (CCSG 51:39).

<sup>378</sup> *engast.* 18.1–3 (CCSG 51:39).

<sup>379</sup> *frag.* 21 (CCSG 51:83–4), 22 (51:85–6), 26 (51:88), and 28 (51:95).

339–340),<sup>380</sup> Athanasius may allude to the Lucan passage when describing Christ as the “guide into the kingdom of the heavens” / ὁδηγὸς ὁ Κύριος εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν.<sup>381</sup> If the allusion applies, it belongs within an involved pro-Nicene defense of the unique, uncreated Sonship of the Word, paradoxically distinguished from the Word’s becoming a creature in the incarnation. The Lucan episode helps illustrate the incarnation as an extended saving event culminating in humanity’s journey heavenward, led by the incarnate, resurrected Son. Later, in his ca. 350–357 letter *de decretis Nicaenae synodi*, Athanasius explicitly contrasts the bandit’s inheritance of the kingdom with the unique Sonship of the Word.<sup>382</sup> While both texts cite the Lucan bandit within expressly anti-Arian arguments, the Lucan passage is not a point of focus for Athanasius in this regard.

Thus it fell to Hilary of Poitiers to draw out the full anti-Arian potential of the Lucan story. At the beginning of his exile in Phrygia under Constantius II, Hilary mentions the Lucan promise of paradise in order to rebut the opponents of Nicea. In *de Trinitate*, book 1 (probably written late in 356 or early in 357),<sup>383</sup> Hilary chastises “foolish and impious

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<sup>380</sup> K. Anatolios, *Athanasius*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 70.

<sup>381</sup> *c. Ar.* 2.61.4 (*AW* 1.1:238). Perhaps an intertext with Wis 18.3 is in mind: “In contrast you offered a flaming pillar as guide / ὁδηγὸν of an unknown journey, and an harmless sun [as guide] of an ambitious sojourn.”

<sup>382</sup> *Decr.* 3.6.6 (*AW* 2.1:5–6). 353 is the date argued by T. D. Barnes, followed by L. Ayres et al. E. Schwartz and H. G. Opitz argue 350 or 351. H. C. Brennecke and U. Heil argue 357. See a summary of this discussion in L. Ayres, “Athanasius’ Initial Defense of the Term ὁμοούσιος: Rereading the *De Decretis*,” *JECS* 12.3 (2004): 338 and n3. In this passage, Athanasius notes the Arian penchant for conceiving Jesus’ sonship in human terms as something that came to be at a certain moment in time. Then he delineates two kinds of sonship: by procreation and by grace from moral improvement. Neither fits the unique Sonship of the Word. Even the second would problematically make the Word no different from Adam, Enoch, or Luke’s bandit as common heirs of paradise.

<sup>383</sup> *Trin.* 1.32 (CCSL 62:30–1). There is a debate over whether the first six books of Hilary’s *de Trinitate* were composed before or during his exile. Smulders (CCSL 62:1\*) follows Simonetti and others by advocating an exilic provenance. On the other side he mentions Coustant, Galtier, Burkhard, and Doignon. This analysis presumes the first (early exilic) scenario. See also SC 443:49.

men who do not think there was anything contrary in the things said by them” / *stultissimi adque inpiissimi homines, non intellegentes nihil contrarium in rebus hisdem ab eodem dictum fuisse*. The Lucan promise of paradise is mentioned alongside Jesus’ cry of dereliction: “This, ‘**God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**’ is far different from this, ‘**Truly I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise.**’” / *longeque diuersum sit Deus Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti? ab eo Amen dico tibi: Hodie mecum eris in paradiso*. While this passage caricatures his opponents as promoting contradictions (as Athanasius was previously wont to do),<sup>384</sup> it should be noted that Hilary is the one composing a litany of opposites that presumes a pro-Nicene, paradoxical logic.<sup>385</sup> His habit of dialectical exegesis mimics that found in Athanasius’ first great systematic work, *contra Gentes de incarnatione verbi* (ca. 328–335).<sup>386</sup>

A few years into his Phrygian exile (early 359 CE),<sup>387</sup> in his tenth book *On the Trinity*, Hilary begins to deepen and expand this heretofore nascent anti-Arian trajectory. Here he claims that his Homoian opponents consign a part of Christ to fear and suffering in hell. He asks rhetorically how this is at all consistent with Christ’s promise of quick, shared beatitude for the bandit.<sup>388</sup>

Is it to be believed by you that, while fearing the deep chaos and burning flames and every abyss of vengeful punishments, he said to the bandit on the cross: “**Truly I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise**”?

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<sup>384</sup> Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 208n34.

<sup>385</sup> See also *Synod* 85 (PL 10:538).

<sup>386</sup> On the date, see *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>387</sup> SC 443:48–9.

<sup>388</sup> CCSL 62A:487.



*Anne metuere tibi infernum chaos et torrentes flammās et omnem poenarum  
ultriciū abyssum credendus est, dicens latroni in cruce: Amen dico tibi: Hodie  
mecum eris in paradiso?*

Later in book ten, amidst back and forth exempla of humanity and divinity, the paradoxical logic of pro-Nicene Christology clearly rises to the surface.<sup>389</sup> The Lucan promise of paradise provides one of several clear examples of divinity, each of which is juxtaposed by a feature that bespeaks humanity.

It is obviously a triumph. He was sought for crucifixion, and the one who surrendered himself could not be withstood. He stood under the sentence of death, but he was about to be seated at the right hand of power. He was pierced by nails, but he prayed for his persecutors. He drank vinegar, but he perfected the sacrament. He was reputed among the wicked, but he granted paradise. He was lifted upon a tree, but he shook the earth. He hung on a cross, but he chased away the sun and day itself. He left a body, but he called souls back to bodies. He was buried as a corpse, but he rose as God. As man he suffered all frailty for us, but as God he triumphed in all things.

*Triumfus plane est, quaeri ad crucem, et offerentem se non sustineri; stare ad  
sententiam mortis, sed in de consessurum a dextris uirtutis; configi clauis, sed pro  
persecutoribus orare; acetum potare, sed sacramentum consummare; deputari  
inter iniquos, sed paradisum donare; eleuari in ligno, sed terram tremere;  
pendere in cruce, sed solem ac diem fugere; exire e corpore, sed reuocare animas  
in corpora; sepeliri mortuum, sed resurgere Deum; secundum hominem pro nobis  
infirmā omnia pati, sed secundum Deum in his omnibus triumphare.*

*Trin.* 10.60–2 represents Hilary’s most sustained reflection on the Lucan passage and his most intense polemical use of the same. In keeping with the logic of the passage above, here he insistently draws on the promise of 23.43, together with the word of

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<sup>389</sup> *Trin.* 10.48 (CCSL 62A:503).

committal (23.46) as testimonies of divinity dialectically contrasted with Jesus' dying expiration (23.46).<sup>390</sup>

(60) ... Jesus Christ was indeed buried, because he died. He who died spoke when he was about to die: "**God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" Yet the same one also said: "**Truly, truly I tell you, that you will be with me in paradise.**" Having promised paradise, he exclaimed with a great voice: "**Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.**" **Saying this, he expired.**

(61) ... You who now either tripartition Christ into word and soul and body, or contract the whole Christ, God the word, into a solitary man of common nature, reveal to us this mystery of great piety which was manifested in flesh. What spirit has Christ surrendered? And who has commended his Spirit into the Father's hands? And who went to paradise on that day? And who has complained that he was forsaken by God? For the complaint of the one abandoned is the weakness of a dying man. Yet, the promise of paradise is the kingdom of the living God. The committal of spirit has the assurance of the one who commits. The surrender of spirit is the departure of someone dying. ... [T]here is no doubt that that the same one who committed the spirit to the Father was also on the same day in paradise with the bandit. And I ask whether the one received in the grave stayed in paradise, or whether indeed staying in paradise, he complained that he was forsaken by God. ...

(62) In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ is one and same, **the word made flesh**,<sup>391</sup> who refers to himself in all these [sayings]. The one who refers to himself forsaken to death is man. While he is truly man, [as] God he reigns in paradise. Reigning far off in paradise, the Son of God commits his spirit. Yet the Son of Man in death surrenders the spirit committed by the Father. Why do we now make an affront of the mystery? You have him complaining that he was forsaken unto death because he is man. You have him who is dying professing himself to reign in paradise because he is God.

(60) ... *Sepultus enim est Iesus Christus, quia et mortuus est. Mortuus autem est, qui et moriturus locutus est: **Deus Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti?** Locutus autem haec est, qui et dixerit: **Amen amen dico tibi, quia tecum eris hodie in paradiso**, paradisum quoque promittens magna uoce proclamauerit: **Pater, in manus tuas commendo Spiritum meum. Et hoc dicens expirauit.***

(61) ... *Vos nunc uel tripertientes Christum in uerbum et animam et corpus, uel totum Christum Deum uerbum in solum communis generis hominem contrahentes, hoc nobis magnae pietatis sacramentum, quod in carne manifestatum est,*

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<sup>390</sup> CCSL 62A:515–7.

<sup>391</sup> John 1.14.

*reuelate: quem tradiderit Spiritum Christus, et quis in manus Patris commendauerit suum Spiritum, et quis in paradiso die eadem fuerit, et quis derelinqui se a Deo quaestus sit. Nam quaerella derelicti morientis infirmitas est, promissio autem paradisi uiuentis Dei regnum est. Commendatio Spiritus commendantis confidentia est, traditio Spiritus morientis excessio est. ... et non ambigetur quin idem commendauerit Spiritum Patri, qui et die eadem in paradiso fuerit cum latrone;—et quaero an sepulchro receptus, in paradiso manserit, an uero in paradiso manens, derelictum se a Deo quaestus sit. ...*

*(62) Vnus enim adque idem est Dominus Iesus Christus, uerbum caro factum, seipsum per haec uniuersa significans. Qui dum ad mortem derelinqui se significat, homo est; dum uero homo est, in paradiso Deus regnet; regnans porro in paradiso, Patri commendet Spiritum Dei Filius; commendatum uero Patri Spiritum hominis filius tradat ad mortem. Quid nunc de sacramento facimus contumeliam? Habes in conquaerente ad mortem relictum se esse, quia homo est; habes eum qui moritur profitentem se in paradiso regnare, quia Deus est.*

This paradoxical logic is also clearly echoed in *Trin.* 10.67<sup>392</sup> and presumed in *Synod*

85.<sup>393</sup> On the other hand, in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, written during the less

volatile, final years of his episcopacy, the anti-Arian trope almost entirely disappears.<sup>394</sup>

Still, Hilary is certainly the foremost anti-Arian interpreter of the passage in antiquity.

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<sup>392</sup> CCSL 62A:522. This echo is set up by Hilary's summons to confess Christ using the given language of scripture. Here his litany of exempla of Christ's divinity are linked by the catch-phrase, "according to the scriptures." Thus: "He complained that he was forsaken unto death, but then, **according to the scriptures**, he accepted his confessor with himself in the kingdom of paradise" / *Derelinqui se ad mortem quaestus est, sed secundum scripturas tunc confessorem suum secum in regno paradisi recepit. Trin.* 10.71 (CCSL 62A:527), as part of an argument that all of Christ's deeds were done for us (John 12.30 intertext) and only echoes the divine side of the paradox: "From the cross Christ promises paradise, because God reigns" / *Christus de cruce paradysum promittit, quia Deus regnet.*

<sup>393</sup> Quite in line with Athanasius' initial argument for *homoousios* in the 353 *de Decretis* (see Ayres, "Athanasius' Initial Defense," 337–59), Hilary's *Synod* 85, an exilic work that "forms a whole" with *de Trinitate* (SC 443:15), begins by mentioning those who denounce the term *homoousion* because it "is customary of wicked thinking" / *quia vitiose soleat intelligi* (PL 10:536B). Arguing that such logic (the use of a good idea by wicked people ruins that idea) is faulty, he shows how it would destroy the scriptures themselves, since they have often been used badly by heretics (OT exempla in PL 10:537, followed by NT exempla in PL 10:538). In this context, the Lucan bandit is mentioned alongside, and in rhetorical opposition to, the tradition of the *descensus inferni*: "Does he not descend to the depths who would be with the bandit in paradise" / *ne ad inferos descendurus, in paradiso sit cum latrone?* (PL 10:538A).

<sup>394</sup> Out of six references (*Ps.* 1.14–15; 2.24; 65(66).25–6; 134.22; 138.24; 141.5), only one (*Ps.* 2.24; CCSL 61:54) is thematically similar, but its framework is not paradoxical, nor is its tone insistent nor argumentative: "I do not understand how one could securely doubt that Christ is king, when that same bandit in the suffering of a cross confessed: '**Remember me, Lord, when you come into your kingdom.**'"

Only a few years after Hilary, Ephrem the Syrian, in his own late-life campaign against the neo-Arian Christians of Edessa,<sup>395</sup> deploys the Lucan episode in a similar yet more creative way. While Ephrem's work does not bear signs of Hilary's direct influence, contrast also marks his interpretation. His parenetic poetry specifically draw upon the two bandits as opposing examples of simple (Nicene) faith and irreverent (Arian) questioning. Two passages especially stand out.<sup>396</sup> The first is *Hymns on Faith* 7, a hymn dedicated to warning about the (Arian) danger of examining or investigating the deity of the Son.<sup>397</sup>

The bandit disputed not,  
he believed without investigating.  
The left argued.  
His arguing cut off hope from himself.  
The scribes, who argued, came to the event  
together with Herod, who questioned him.  
Satan has tried him.  
He wanted to find out who he was.  
To all of these who spurt him out,

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/ *Et nescio cui Christum regem esse ambigere sit tutum, latrone hoc ipso in crucis passione confitente:*  
***Memento mei, Domine, cum ueneris in regnum tuum.***

<sup>395</sup> Beck says that the Arian controversy in the church of Edessa lasted six years, from 365 to 371 CE (CSCO 219:iv); Ephrem's final decade was spent there (363–373 CE).

<sup>396</sup> Other relevant passages include *h. fid.* 84.1 (CSCO 154:257), where Ephrem pictures the bandit at its climactic start as parenetic model of life-giving "faith" / ܐܝܬܐ, a faith that is later (esp. strophe 12) described in strongly Nicene terms as something uncreated, "like the begotten, the one not made" / ܐܡ ܕܝܬܐ ܡܕܝܬܐ ܕܐܝܬܐ, who holds the "Creator's power" / ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ. *eccl.* 51.8 (CSCO 198:132–3) mentions the Lucan episode in the context of the Easter festival and the peace and harmony seen in nature, which probably serves to indict the Arians for the disruption of this cosmic unity. *c. Nis.* 26.7 (CSCO 218:59–60) closes with a lament over the Arian schism in Edessa and alludes to Luke 23.42–3 (conflated) as the promise of unity in God's kingdom:

And pray, O Church, for me, the Weak!  
I who over your splitting felt pain, I want to rejoice over your merging,  
and with you I want to enter into the kingdom, following you!"

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ  
ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ  
ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܐܝܬܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

<sup>397</sup> *h. fid.* 7.7 (CSCO 154:33–4).

Christ gave himself not,  
as he to the simple ones gave [himself].

ܐܢܬܝ ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
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ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ

Just after making an explicit anti-Arian argument in strophes 8–11, Ephrem brings *Hymns on Faith* 54 to a dramatic climax by staging the two bandits as contrasting, didactic models of faith.<sup>398</sup>

Now in brief \* let us speak: investigation  
all belongs to the left, \* just like the bandit  
crucified on the left. \* Even so, by investigating he  
taught in his question \* the arrogance of the inquisitive.  
O for hope cut off, \* that even when cross-bound  
is investigating the Lord!

Who should not marvel \* in contrast at the bandit,  
who on the right was crucified. \* Hanging, he saw and believed,  
that he was the Son of God. \* We, however, have believed,  
after he in lordship rose \* and sat himself on the right!  
The crucified has convinced him. \* But us—not even the cherubim  
who carry him convince us!

ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ  
ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܫܝܚ ܕܢܬܬ ܠܗܒܝܬܐ

<sup>398</sup> *h. fid.* 54.12–13 (CSCO 154:170).

ܠܡܥܠܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ \* ܡܡܬܐ ܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ  
 ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ \* ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ  
 ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ \* ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ  
 ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ \* ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ  
 ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ \* ܠܡܥܠܐ ܠܡܥܠܐ

Ephrem's followers certainly picked up on his parenetic contrast of left and right,<sup>399</sup> but they at best alluded to his anti-Arian deployment of the trope. On the other hand, Hilary's placement of the bandit within a dialectical defense of Christ's divinity does seem to resound in later Greek polemics against neo-Arians. In one of his famous, so-called "Theological Orations" written ca. 380,<sup>400</sup> Gregory Nazianzen also places the Lucan promise of paradise in the midst of a dialectical series.<sup>401</sup>

He was baptized as a man, but he destroyed sins as God. He was not in need of cleansing, but he did it to sanctify the waters... He was afflicted and was traumatized, but he heals every disease and every affliction. He is lifted upon the tree. He is pinned. But he restores [us] to the tree of life. He even saves the co-crucified bandit and darkens everything that is seen.

Ἐβαπτίσθη μὲν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' ἁμαρτίας ἔλυσεν ὡς θεός· οὐ καθαρσίῳ αὐτὸς δεόμενος, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἁγιάσῃ τὰ ὕδατα... μεμαλάκισται, καὶ τετραυμάτισται, ἀλλὰ θεραπεύει πᾶσαν νόσον, καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν. ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον ἀνάγεται, προσπήγνυται, ἀλλὰ τῷ ξύλῳ τῆς ζωῆς ἀποκαθίστησιν, ἀλλὰ σώζει καὶ ληστήν συσταυρούμενον, ἀλλὰ σκοτίζει πᾶν τὸ ὁρώμενον.

<sup>399</sup> See especially the 6<sup>th</sup> century *serm. hebd.* 6.1063–112 (CSCO 412:61), in which the parenetic contrast of the "good" and "wicked" bandit is set against on a cosmic backdrop.

<sup>400</sup> SVC 13:66–7; FC 22:17; SC 250:11–15.

<sup>401</sup> *or.* 29.20 (FC 22:212–16). In the next section, 29.21, Nazianzen's semiotic, parenetic and anti-Arian contrast between "inquiry" and "faith" resonates well with tone of Ephrem's anti-Arian polemic in his *Hymns on Faith*.

A Greek fragment of Amphilochius' *Maiores* contains a passage highly similar to the those of Hilary and Nazianzen in content, purpose and dialectical structure.<sup>402</sup> This similarity, coupled with Amphilochius' important role in and around the Council of Constantinople, suggests a date close to that of Nazianzen's passage above (ca. 380).<sup>403</sup> His use of the Lucan passage is framed by John 14.1 and 28.

But “**do not let your heart be troubled**”<sup>404</sup> because I said, “my **Father is greater than I.**” For he is greater than the one going to [God], but not [greater] than the one who is in [God]. For as God “I am in the Father.”<sup>405</sup> But as man “I am going to the Father.”<sup>406</sup> ... He is greater than the one crucified with bandits. But he is equal to the one who graciously freed the bandit.

Ἀλλὰ μὴ παρασέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδιά ὅτι εἶπον· Ὁ πατήρ μου μείζων μου ἐστίν. Μείζων γάρ ἐστι τοῦ πορευομένου πρὸς αὐτόν, οὐ τοῦ ὄντος ἐν αὐτῷ· ὥς γὰρ θεὸς ἐν τῷ πατρὶ εἰμι, ὥς δὲ ἄνθρωπος πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα... μείζων τοῦ συσταυρουμένου λησταῖς, ἴσος τοῦ τὸν ληστὴν δικαιοῦντος δωρεάν.

As we will soon see, among later Greek texts, the sermons of Chrysostom on the bandit also emphasize Christ's divinity, and the influence of those sermons in East and West echo the theme.<sup>407</sup> Yet, these texts do not focus on Arian theology and the customarily passive role given to the Lucan bandit (as the recipient of the promise of the divine Christ).<sup>408</sup> Instead, the focus shifts to the bandit as an active model of faith more

<sup>402</sup> *fr.* 2.3 (CPG 3245.2; CCSG 3:229–30). The corresponding text also appears in the complete Syriac version of this oration on John 14.28 (*Quia pater maior me est*; CPG 3241), along with accompanying ET, in C. S. Moss, “Amphilochius of Iconium on John 14:28” *Muséon* 43 (1930): 339, 354.

<sup>403</sup> In his critical edition, Datema did not attempt to date this fragment; see CCSG 3:xxiv, 226.

<sup>404</sup> John 14.1, 27.

<sup>405</sup> John 14.10.

<sup>406</sup> John 14.12, 28; 16.10, 17, 28.

<sup>407</sup> See 5D and 5E.

<sup>408</sup> One of the more explicit expressions of the continuation of this trajectory appears in CPG 4877, a Ps-Chrysostom sermon that represents a different recension than the Greek text behind Ps-Ephrem CPG 4145.22 (Georgic) // CPG 4162.3 (Arabic). Both sermons (Greek and dual Georgic-Arabic) are edited and

generally conceived. One might say that as interpreters' self-identification with the bandit grew stronger, the polemical readings of the episode increasingly submerge into the broader stream of parenesis. Chrysostom's bandit is a Nicene, but not an embattled one. This bandit does not so much fight for the Nicene Christ as contemplate him.

The same trend characterizes Latin texts. Jerome has a Hilary-like back and forth in one of his *Sermons on Mark* preached ca. 397–402, but his reference to an “Arian soul” challenging him for his own Origenist tendencies is rhetorical.<sup>409</sup> A hymn by Paulinus of Nola, written ca. 393–408,<sup>410</sup> repeats the anti-Arian, dialectical trajectory as well, but the genre is now *consolatio* and not polemic.<sup>411</sup> Augustine has numerous passages that stress the divine-human paradox in connection to the Lucan episode.<sup>412</sup> Yet, these same references show no concern over Arian theology, but rather a persistent concern over eschatological dissonance. This issue, the most problematic for early interpreters,<sup>413</sup> precedes and outlasts the Arian controversy, even as it plays a significant role in that controversy.

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translated in Esbroeck, “Une Homélie Inédite,” *AB* 101:327–50. Esbroeck notes (p. 331) that only the Greek sermon tradition speaks of a note from Christ given to the bandit (to secure his entrance into paradise) as a theological creed about the divine nature of the Son. We should also note here that an Armenian ps-Aristides sermon makes highly polemical use of the Lucan passage against the Chalcedonian theology of Leo and may even picture Leo as the wicked bandit! See *hom sanc. latr.* 7 (*CPG* 1065; Pitra 4:10).

<sup>409</sup> *Mark tr.* 7.11.1–10 lines 97–104 (CCSL 78:487 // SC 494:182, quoted in 4F).

<sup>410</sup> ACW 40:412.

<sup>411</sup> *carm.* 31 (CSEL 30:311–12, quoted in 7E).

<sup>412</sup> See *Gen litt.* 12.34.65–7 (ca. 401–416; CSEL 28.1:430–1; quoted in 4I); *serm.* 67.7 (412 CE; CCSL 41Aa:426–7); *ep.* 164.3.8 (414 CE; CSEL 44:527–8); *Jo. ev. tr.* 47.10 (414 CE; CCSL 36:409–10); *ep.* 187.3–9 (417 CE; CSEL 57:83–9); *Jo. ev. tr.* 111.2–3 (post-419; CCSL 36:629–30); *serm.* 53A.13 (ca. 417; CCSL 41Aa:122; see 6F for discussion and date).

<sup>413</sup> See chapter 4.



It appears that the anti-Arian trajectory, having served its purpose, largely lost its energy and focus by the late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century. The bandit's exegetical records plot the heat of the Arian controversy between 360 and 380 CE. This shift in emphasis and tone probably owes much to the relative success of the policies of Theodosius I, including the issuing of *Cunctos populos* in 380 CE and the agreement achieved at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

#### 5D. Teaching Faith to the Faithless

From Origen onwards, many interpreters positively and didactically note the bandit's faith in Christ.<sup>414</sup> In a Greek catena excerpt Origen even calls him "the believing bandit" / τὸν πιστεύσαντα ληστήν.<sup>415</sup> Yet, the bandit's faith, the specific content and meaning of his confession, raises questions about the bandit's thinking during the episode and his life before the episode. How and when did he learn *Christian* faith?

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<sup>414</sup> *Matt com.* A 133 (GCS 38:271), at least present in the anonymous Latin translation, though not in the similar Greek fragments: "one of them was converted and believed" / *unum ex eis conversum esse et credidisse*. Rufinus' translation of *Num hom.* 26.4 (SC 461:246) says that he "believed from the cross" / *qui de cruce credidit*. His admittedly loose translation of *Lev hom* 9.5.3 (SC 287:90) sees in the bandit a representative of "all who believe and confess" / *omnibus credentibus et confitentibus*. Also relevant here are passages in Origen's *Commentary on Romans* discussed more fully in 5F: *Rom com.* 3.27–8 (Scherer 164 // FC 2.6:104–6) // *Rom com.* A 3.6 (GLB 16:248–9); *Rom com.* A 4.1 (GLB 33:279). Around the same time, the Ps-Cyprianic *mont.* 8.1 (CSEL 3.3:112) implies the trope of faith, transitioning smoothly from the bandit's confession to the "Gentiles... who have faith in him, that he is the Son of God" / *gentes... fidem sibi habentes, quia filius Dei est*.

<sup>415</sup> *Luc cat.* 249 (GCS 49:332).

In an extended fragment written during his time in exile (ca. 327–337), Eustathius is the first on record to attempt to fill this gap. He speaks eloquently about the bandit’s direct, divine education on the cross.<sup>416</sup>

Then, turning his countenance to the Lord, he calls out: “**Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.**” Now tell me, O greatest of men, who was present from where to explain to you that the one crucified upon a tree is Lord? ... If you recognized Christ’s kingdom without teachers, then the creator himself by inspiration taught you these things. It is as the Savior himself says: “**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws, and I will raise him at the last day.**”<sup>417</sup>

καὶ πρὸς τὸν κύριον ἀποστρέψας τὸ πρόσωπον, ἀναφωνεῖ· **Μνήσθητί μου, κύριε, ὅτ’ ἂν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.** Καί μοι φράσον, ὦ κράτιστε ἀνδρῶν· τίς καὶ πόθεν παρήγγειλέ σοι παρῶν ὅτι κύριος οὗτος ὁ σταυρωθεὶς ἐπὶ ξύλου; θεῖω γὰρ οὐκ ἐπαιδεύθης νόμω, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ προφητικὰς ἐπακήκοας ῥήσεις· οὐκ εὐαγγελικοῖς ἡσκήθης μηνύμασιν· οὐκ ἀποστολικῶν πείραν εἴληφας δογμάτων. ... Εἰ δ’ ἄνευ διδασκάλων τὴν Χριστοῦ ἐπέγνωσ βασιλείαν, αὐτὸς ἄρ’ ὁ γεννήτωρ ἐμπνεύσας ἐδίδαξέ σε ταῦτα, ὥς αὐτὸς φησὶν ὁ σωτὴρ· **Οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με, ἐὰν μὴ ὁ πατὴρ ὁ πέμψας με ἐλκύσῃ, καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.**

As Eustathius explains, he also expands. Though he does not use the precise term, Eustathius pictures the bandit as a noble philosopher.<sup>418</sup> Being divinely quickened “as a truth-lover, after giving consideration he reasons” / *θιλαλήθως λογιεῖται ψηφιοῦμενος* about his predicament and learns to “disregard whatever earth-sprung things are at hand, refuse to hear what was being said” / *ἀγνοεῖν ἔνθα καὶ ὅποι γῆς ἐφοίτα παρῶν ἢ τῶν λεγομένων ἀνηκουστεῖν.*<sup>419</sup> He then “objects keenly and responds word by word” / *ἀνθυποφέρει δὲ δριμύτως καὶ ἀποκρίνεται κατ’ ἔπος*, “addresses the people” /

<sup>416</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92).

<sup>417</sup> John 6.44.

<sup>418</sup> CCSG 51:91–2.

<sup>419</sup> CCSG 51:91.

δημηγορεῖ in a “more digified way” / ἐμβριθέστερον as if “he were placed upon a tribunal on high on his tree” / ὥσπερ ἐπὶ βήματος ὑψηλοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ξύλου πεπηγώς.<sup>420</sup> The bandit exemplifies the philosophical virtues of mindfulness, mastery of pain, and measured public discourse. He does not merely receive instruction directly from God. He also quickly exemplifies the ripe fruits of the best philosophical education.

In content and form (rhetorical question), Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 350) echoes the first passage of Eustathius mentioned above.<sup>421</sup> “What sort of power enlightened you, O bandit? Who taught you to worship the one scorned and crucified with you? / Ποία σε ἐφωταγώγησε δύναμις, ὦ ληστής; τίς σε ἐδίδαξε προσκυνῆσαι τὸν καταφρονούμενον καὶ συνεσταυρωμένον; Cyril is also the first to portray the counter-intuitive quality of the bandit’s apprehension. He says of the first bandit that “the eyes of his understanding were blinded” / πεπήρωται τῆς διανοίας τὰ ὄμματα,<sup>422</sup> while juxtaposing him with the second bandit’s counter-intuitive understanding of Christ.<sup>423</sup> Hilary also has a comment (ca. 356–360) that similarly stresses the counter-intuitive quality of the bandit’s faith and confession.<sup>424</sup>

Ephrem stands out as the first extant interpreter to lay great stress on the bandit’s faith, speak of Jesus honoring the bandit for his faith, and place that faith in a favorable contrast with the infidelity of Peter and the other disciples during the passion. The first

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<sup>420</sup> CCSG 51:92.

<sup>421</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>422</sup> *Cat.* 13.30 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>423</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>424</sup> *Trin* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:488, quoted in 4F).

major passage appears in the eighth of his *Hymns on the Crucifixion* (written in Nisibis, ca. 350s), in which all of these pioneering features are present.<sup>425</sup>

Blessed are you also, O bandit!  
 For at your death, therein life encountered you.  
 They rushed to throw you from evil to evil.  
 Therefore our Lord took you and placed you in Eden.  
 Our tongue is incapable to speak of you.  
 Judas delivered deceitfully.  
 Simon denied again. The disciples fled and hid.  
 But you proclaimed him.  
 [...]
   
 To the believing one he paid honor with his word.

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In one of his Edessan (ca. 363–673) *Hymns on Faith*, the bandit’s laudable faith even finds a favorable (and parenetically advantageous) contrast with his ecclesial audience’s (“we” stretches from the apostles to the present) lack of faith.<sup>426</sup>

Various other mid-4<sup>th</sup> century interpreters call attention to the bandit’s faith, but do not match the creative force of Ephrem,<sup>427</sup> whose praise of the bandit’s faith inspired

<sup>425</sup> *cruc.* 8.8–9 (CSCO 248:74–5).

<sup>426</sup> *h. fid.* 54.12 (CSCO 154:170, quoted in 5C). *h. fid.* 84.1 (CSCO 154:257), the fourth in a series known as the Hymns of the Pearl (pearl = faith), also from his Edessan period (363–373 CE), begins with a typological exploration of the image of the bandit finding faith as fruit growing from the cross as the tree of life.

imitators.<sup>428</sup> In the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, John Chrysostom expresses several ideas similar to those of Ephrem<sup>429</sup> and Hilary.<sup>430</sup> He also shows the direct influence of Eustathius, formerly bishop of the same city (Antioch) and the subject of one of Chrysostom's encomia (CPG 4352). While indebted to these earlier developments, Chrysostom shows a creativity all his own, a creativity which saturates the last half of his seventh *Sermon on Genesis* (CPG 4410),<sup>431</sup> as well as his two sermons on *The Cross and the Bandit* (CPG 4338 and 4339).<sup>432</sup>

*Excursus: Dating Chrysostom's Sermons on the Bandit*

To my knowledge, scholars have not yet theorized a date for either one of Chrysostom's sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*. Both were obviously given on Holy Friday, though in different years.<sup>433</sup> My analysis points to a middle

<sup>427</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem claims that paradise was opened to the bandit "because of his faith" / διὰ τὴν πίστιν (*Cat.* 1.1; R-R 1:30). In *Cat.* 5.10 he mentions the bandit to illustrate saving, dogmatic faith, as contrasted with the gift of faith that does miracles (R-R 1:146). *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:92) is very creative on the whole, but its main significance here pertains to its articulation of justification by faith (see 5F). Hilary of Poitiers frequently but tritely recalls the trope: *Matt com.* A 33.5 (SC 258:252–4), *Ps* 65(66).26 (CCSL 61:250), *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:487–8), *Trin.* 10.67 (CCSL 62A:522), *Trin.* 10.71 (CCSL 62A:527).

<sup>428</sup> CPG 4062 / BHGn 438c mirrors several of Ephrem's tropes, including his encomiastic praise of the bandit (*ESO* Gk3:475). The encomiastic tendencies of Asterius Ichnotus may also owe to Ephrem's influence.

<sup>429</sup> Chrysostom stresses and lauds the bandit's great faith especially in *cruc.* 1.2–3 (PG 49:402–3), *cruc.* 2.2–3 (PG 49:410–13). He speaks of Jesus honoring the bandit in *I Cor. hom.* 31.3 (PG 61:259–60), *cruc.* 1.2 (PG 49:401) and *cruc.* 2.2 (PG 49:410), where he the bandit's presence (as the king's possession and demonstration of his benevolence) even honors paradise rather than shaming it. Finally, he also favorably contrasts the bandit's faith with the denial of Peter in *cruc.* 1.2 (PG 49:401–2) // *cruc.* 2.2 (PG 49:410).

<sup>430</sup> Particularly regarding the counter-intuitive confession of the crucified Christ as king. Cf. Hilary, *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:488, quoted in 4F) with Chrysostom, *Gen. serm.* 7.4 (SC 433:328–32), *cruc. latr.* 1.3 (PG 49:403), and *cruc. latr.* 2.3 (PG 49:413).

<sup>431</sup> SC 433:326–44 (7.4–5).

<sup>432</sup> Greek texts in PG 49:399–408 and PG 49:407–18.

<sup>433</sup> J. N. D. Kelly mentions the first one of these (CPG 4338) alongside a sermon given at an Antiochene cemetery (*de coemeterio et de cruce*, CPG 4337; PG 49:383–8), as two of Chrysostom's most notable Good Friday sermons; see *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom—Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 88. The Good Friday setting is explicit in the introductions of both sermons: *cruc.* 1.1 (PG 49:399), *cruc.* 2.1 (PG 49:407). The first sermon notably begins with the word "today" / Σήμερον, while the second sermon has it as the third word of its first sentence. In both

Antiochene provenance for both (ca. 387–394). In contrast to his later years as Constantinople’s patriarch, in Antioch Chrysostom was far more free to engage in serious exegesis, polish sermons and compose encomia, all of which characterize these sermons (even the rhetoric of the encomium in regard to the Lucan bandit!).<sup>434</sup> The sermons also lack any hint of his later political and ecclesiastical troubles in Constantinople and exiles from there (ca. 397–407), nor do they reference the Hun invasion of Syria during his final years in Antioch (ca. 395–397),<sup>435</sup> thus yielding a *terminus ante quem* of 395 CE. Regarding the *terminus post quem*, there are many obvious connections between the seventh *Sermon on Genesis* and these two Good Friday sermons, the latter sermons reveal an expansion of these themes, along with many novel ones. While noting the uncertainties surrounding the precise date of the short series of *Sermons on Genesis*, Brottier convincingly contends that it best fits the forty Lenten days of 386 CE, very early during Chrysostom’s new vocation in Antioch as priest after his five to six years as a deacon.<sup>436</sup> This strongly suggests a date after 386 for the two Good Friday sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*. The first of these is clearly the earlier of the two, since the second is essentially a repetition of the first, albeit with much fresh editing, improvisation, or both. Thus the first is a relative *terminus post quem* for the second. As with most of Chrysostom’s sermons, these share the characteristic features of a live delivery and a stenographer taking dictation.

Fixing the precise dates of both will require a closer investigation, one which we can only outline here. In the first sermon Chrysostom mentions that this marks his fifth consecutive day preaching on prayer for one’s enemies.<sup>437</sup> In the second, he mentions only having preached “yesterday” / χθες on this same topic.<sup>438</sup> His sermon *On the Prayers of Christ* may fit this description.<sup>439</sup> In both sermons he also mentions preaching yesterday on the contrast between the eleven disciples

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cases, the term refers to the Good Friday festival. Also in both cases, Chrysostom connects the celebratory term explicitly to Luke 23.43; see *cruc.* 1.2 (PG 49:401), *cruc.* 2.2 (PG 49:409).

<sup>434</sup> Regarding the characteristics of Chrysostom’s writings in Antioch vs. Constantinople, see the discussions in Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 87–8 and W. Mayer and P. Allen, *Chrysostom*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 26–7.

<sup>435</sup> See Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 91–2, regarding the references to these invasions that saturate his *Homilies on Ephesians*.

<sup>436</sup> SC 433:11–12. These sermons stand out in Chrysostom’s corpus for their lack of improvisational interaction with the audience, and they almost certainly precede the longer series of *Homilies on Genesis* (CPG 4409), which expand on many of the ideas briefly explored in the shorter series.

<sup>437</sup> *cruc. latr.* 1.5 (PG 49:405).

<sup>438</sup> *cruc. latr.* 2.5 (PG 49:415).

<sup>439</sup> PG 48:783–96. Anne Marie Malingrey died before she was able to complete her critical edition of this sermon for *Sources Chrétiennes* (cf. CPG 4323).

and Judas.<sup>440</sup> Other sermons may also offer connections and provide contextual clues.<sup>441</sup>

On the subject of the bandit's faith, two novel themes stand out in these sermons. The first is that the bandit saw Jesus "with the eyes of faith" / τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ὀφθαλμοῖς. Even if influenced by Cyril or Hilary here, Chrysostom's interpretation is thoroughly novel and far more profound than anything seen before. In the seventh *Sermon on Genesis* in particular, the unlearned bandit's surprising vision is contrasted with the unfitting assessment of the educationally privileged Jewish leaders. Also unique here is the development of the theme of inner sight as reciprocal between the bandit and God (within Christ).<sup>442</sup>

Instead, he who saw his heart did not attend to the words, but rather to the mind's disposition. For those who enjoyed the prophetic teachings, those who saw the signs, those who beheld the wonders said of Christ, "**he has a demon**," and "**he deceives the crowd**." But the bandit did not hear the prophets or see wonders. Seeing him only nailed upon the cross, he did not focus on dishonor or see ignominy. Instead, he saw divinity itself within. "**Remember me**," he says, "**in your kingdom**." This is novel and paradoxical. You see a cross, and you remember a kingdom? What did you see worthy of a kingdom? A crucified man, beaten, mocked, accused, spat upon, flogged. So tell me, are these worthy of a kingdom? Do you see that he saw with the eyes of faith, and was not scrutinizing the visible things? For this reason God was not scrutinizing his bare words, but just as he saw divinity within, thus God saw the bandit's heart within and says: "**Today you will be with me in paradise**."

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<sup>440</sup> *cruc. latr.* 1.2 (PG 49:402) and 2.2 (PG 49:411). This may also call for an examination of the sermon on the *Betrayal of Judas* (CPG 4336), in spite of its doubted authenticity.

<sup>441</sup> Potentially relevant Holy Week sermons include his other notable Good Friday sermon, *de coemeterio et de cruce* (CPG 4337), as well as his homilies on the Pasch (CPG 4408) and the Resurrection (CPG 4340, 4341, 4853, 4858). His *Homilies on Matthew* (CPG 4424, which Kelly dates to 390), particularly the sections on the Matthean passion, may prove relevant. Even his sermons *On the Maccabees* (CPG 4354) may be significant in view of the fact that Chrysostom describes the Lucan bandit's "philosophy" in terms quite similar to the view of philosophy in 4 Maccabees, the martyr-like conquest of reason over bodily suffering; see *cruc.* 1.3 (PG 49:402) and 2.3 (PG 49:411).

<sup>442</sup> *Gen serm.* 7.4 (SC 433:328–32). See also PG 54:613.

ἀλλ' ὁ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ εἰδὼς οὐ τοῖς ῥήμασι προσέσχευεν, ἀλλὰ τῇ διαθέσει τῆς διανοίας. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ προφητικῶν ἀπολαύσαντες διδαγμάτων, οἱ τὰ σημεῖα ἰδόντες, οἱ τὰ θαύματα θεασάμενοι, ἔλεγον περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὅτι Δαιμόνιον ἔχει καὶ πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον. ὁ δὲ ληστής, μὴ προφητῶν ἀκούσας, μὴ θαύματα ἰδὼν, ἰδὼν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ προσηλωμένον, οὐ προσέσχε τῇ ἀτιμίας, οὐκ εἶδε τὴν ἀδοξίαν, ἀλλ' εἰς τὴν θεότητα αὐτὴν ἰδὼν, Μνήσθητί μου, φησὶν, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου. Καίνον τοῦτο καὶ παράδοξον. Σταυρὸν ὁρᾷ, καὶ βασιλείας μέμνηται; Τί βασιλείας ἄξιον εἶδες; Ἐσταυρωμένον ἄνθρωπον, ῥαπιζόμενον, χλευαζόμενον, κατηγορούμενον, ἐμπτυόμενον, μαστιζόμενον· ταῦτα οὖν βασιλείας ἄξια, εἰπέ μοι; Ὁρᾷ ὅτι τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ἔβλεπεν ὀφθαλμοῖς, καὶ οὐ τὰ φαινόμενα ἐξήταζε; Διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ ῥήματα ἐξήταζε τὰ ψιλὰ, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ οὗτος εἶδεν εἰς τὴν θεότητα, οὕτως ὁ Θεὸς εἶδεν εἰς τὴν καρδίαν τοῦ ληστοῦ, καὶ φησι· Σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.

The rhetoric is astounding for its effective repetition, its rhetorical questions addressed to the bandit, and finally its parenetic shift of the question to the audience: “Do you see?” But this was only the first of Chrysostom’s sermons on the bandit. The two sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit* explore the same theme at much greater length.

<i>cruc. latr.</i> 1.2 (PG 49:402)	<i>cruc. latr.</i> 2.2 (PG 49:410)
Instead, <u>bypassing all these things with the eyes of faith</u> , and forgetting the humiliating curses, <u>he recognized the Master of the heavens</u> . Falling upon him he said, “ <b>Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.</b> ”	Instead, <u>bypassing all these things with the eyes of faith</u> and forgetting the humiliations and curses below, <u>he recognized the Master of the heavens</u> . He spoke these brief words and was declared worthy of paradise: “ <b>Remember me in your kingdom.</b> ”
ἀλλὰ τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ὀφθαλμοῖς ἅπαντα ταῦτα παραδραμὼν, καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ κωλύματα ἀφείς, <u>ἐπέγνω τὸν τῶν οὐρανῶν Δεσπότην</u> , καὶ αὐτῷ προσπεσὼν ἔλεγε· <u>Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου</u> .	ἀλλὰ τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ὀφθαλμοῖς ἅπαντα ταῦτα παραδραμὼν, καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ καὶ τὰ κωλύματα κάτω ἀφείς, <u>ἐπέγνω τὸν τῶν οὐρανῶν Δεσπότην</u> , εἰπὼν τὰ βραχέα ἐκεῖνα ῥήματα καὶ τοῦ παραδείσου ἄξιον αὐτὸν ἀποφώνησαντα· <u>Μνήσθητί μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου</u> .



In all three sermons, as elsewhere in his writings, “the eyes of faith” serves as a technical phrase. Chrysostom apparently coined the expression,<sup>443</sup> perhaps as an allusion to Heb 11.1 that effectively incorporated Platonic-Origenist spiritual exegesis within the Antiochene tradition by appeal to visceral imagery.<sup>444</sup> The formula caught on quickly.<sup>445</sup> While the theme in *Gen serm.* 7 of the bandit seeing the kingdom is present in the two later sermons, it also expands significantly. By drawing on John 10.11 as an intertext, Chrysostom dialectically narrates the bandit’s vision and explains his thoughts: the crucified is king.

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<sup>443</sup> A TLG proximity search of the relevant lemmata of πίστις and ὀφθαλμός shows Chrysostom as the first Greek author to use the expression “eyes of faith,” and confirms that he does so as a matter of habit (nearly 50 occurrences): *asc.* (PG 50:443); *Bern. et Prosd.* (PG 50:639); *cat. bapt. 1* (P-K 169); *cat. bapt. 3* 2.9, 2.10, 7.14, 15, 18; 8.10 (Wenger, SC 50b:138, 237–8); *cruc. latr. 1* (PG 49:402); *cruc. latr. 2* (PG 49:410); *Gal. com.* (PG 61:649); *Gen hom.* (PG 53:102, 120, 216, 256, 259, 318; 54:480, 498, 566 (bis), 569); *Gen serm.* (PG 54:613, 625, 626); *In illud: Habentes eundem spiritum* (PG 51: 275, 297); *In illud: Hoc scitote quod in novissimis diebus* (PG 56:271 (bis), 272 (sept), 273 (tri)); *Mac.* (PG 50:617, 624); *mut. nom.* (PG 51:126); *princ. Actorum* (PG 51:106); *princ. Actorum* (PG 51:106); *sanc. Barl. mart.* (PG 50:681); *sanc. Iul. mart.* (PG 50:672, 673); *sanc. mart.* (PG 50:647). Similar expressions appear elsewhere; for example, *cat. bapt. 3* 2.9–10 (SC 50b:138) also mentions seeing “with the eyes of the soul” and with “spiritual eyes,” which, unlike the eyes of the body, see only invisible things.

<sup>444</sup> Especially poignant here are *Gen hom.* 12.12 (PG 53:102D–3A), which warns of the danger of taking literally the concept of God breathing life into Adam, and 15.6 (PG 53:120C), which again speaks to the problems inherent in a literal reading of God creating Eve from Adam’s rib.

<sup>445</sup> Imitators include Ps-Chrysostom, *In illud: Si qua in Christo nova creatura* (PG 64:30); Macarius Magnes, *apocrit.* 3.27 (C. Blondel, *Macarii Magnetis quae Supersunt* (Paris 1876), 116), 4.30 (ibid., 226); Theodoret of Cyrus, *ep.* 47 (SC 40:114; also similar expressions in 40:112), *qu. oct.* (N. F. Marcos and A. Sáenz-Badillos, *Theodoretus Cyrensis quaestiones in Octateuchum*, Textos y Estudios “Cardenal Cisneros” 17 (Madrid: Poliglota Matritense, 1979), 149); *sanc. trin.* (PG 75:1173), *xiv ep. Pauli* (PG 82:400, 765), *prov.* (PG 83:724); Ps-Didymus, *trin.* 3 (PG 39:976); and Ps-Ephrem, *panop.* (Phrantzolas 6:18), *De iis, qui filii dei naturam scrutantur* (Phrantzolas 6:204, 205 (bis), 206, 207 (tri)), *enc. mart.* (Phrantzolas 7:179), *adv. Dom.* (Phrantzolas 4:190).

<i>cruc. latr. 1.3 (PG 49:403)</i>	<i>cruc. latr. 2.3 (PG 49:413)</i>
<p>You have remembered a kingdom? <u>Why do you see such a thing?</u> Tell me. “Nails and cross are <u>what is visible</u>, but this cross itself,” he says, “is a symbol of the kingdom. <u>For this reason I call him king, because I see him crucified.</u> For it belongs to a king to die for those he rules. He said of himself: ‘<b>The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.</b>’<sup>446</sup> So then a good king also lays down his life for those he rules. <u>Therefore, since he laid down his life, for this reason I call him king.</u> ‘<b>Remember me, Lord, in your kingdom.</b>’”</p>	<p>From what, tell me, O bandit, have you remembered a kingdom? <u>Why do you see such a thing now?</u> Nails and cross are <u>what is visible</u>, and accusations and jests and insults. “Yes,” he says, “for the cross itself seems to me a symbol of a kingdom. <u>For this reason I call him king, because I see him crucified.</u> For it belongs to a king to die for those he rules. He himself said: ‘<b>The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.</b>’ So then a good king also lays down his life for those he rules. <u>Therefore, since he has laid down his life, for this reason I call him king.</u> ‘<b>Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.</b>’”</p>
<p>Βασιλείας μέμνησαι; Τί γὰρ ὁρᾷς τοιοῦτον, εἰπέ μοι; Ἡλοι καὶ σταυρὸς τὰ ὁρώμενα· ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς οὗτος ὁ σταυρὸς, φησὶ, τῆς βασιλείας ἐστὶ σύμβολον. <u>Διὰ τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸν βασιλέα καλῶ, ἐπειδὴ βλέπω αὐτὸν σταυρούμενον·</u> βασιλέως γάρ ἐστι τὸ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀρχομένων ἀποθνήσκειν. Αὐτὸς δι’ ἑαυτοῦ εἶπεν· <b>Ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων.</b> Οὐκοῦν καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀρχομένων. <u>Ἐπεὶ οὖν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸν βασιλέα καλῶ.</u> Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.</p>	<p>Πόθεν, εἰπέ μοι, βασιλείας, ὦ ληστὰ, μέμνησαι; τί γὰρ εἶδες τοιοῦτον νῦν; Ἡλοι καὶ σταυρὸς τὰ ὁρώμενα, καὶ κατηγορία καὶ σκώμματα καὶ λοιδορίαι. Ναὶ, φησὶν· αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ σταυρὸς βασιλείας εἶναί μοι δοκεῖ σύμβολον. <u>Διὰ τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸν βασιλέα καλῶ, ἐπειδὴ βλέπω αὐτὸν σταυρούμενον·</u> βασιλέως γάρ ἐστιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀρχομένων ἀποθνήσκειν. Αὐτὸς εἶπεν· <b>Ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων·</b> οὐκοῦν καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀρχομένων. <u>Ἐπεὶ οὖν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τέθεικε, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸν βασιλέα καλῶ.</u> Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου. φανέντα τῆς πολιτείας τῆς ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.</p>

<sup>446</sup> John 10.11.

In these sermons the Golden Mouth develops a second related and highly creative trope: the Lucan bandit became a philosophy teacher on the cross. Even before his two sermons on the bandit, Chrysostom may already reflect the influence of Eustathius when, in an early treatise (ca. 378–386),<sup>447</sup> he contrasts the bandit’s quick and efficacious education with the way that Judas squandered his years of education.<sup>448</sup>

Thus, Judas had advantage of so much teaching, and yet he became a traitor. But the bandit has so little instruction, yet on the cross he confessed him and proclaimed his kingdom.

πόσης γοῦν διδασκαλίας ἀπήλαυσεν ὁ Ιούδας, καὶ προδότης ἐγένετο.  
ποίας δὲ παραινέσεως ἀπήλαυσεν ὁ ληστής, καὶ ἐν σταυρῷ αὐτὸν  
ὡμολόγησε, καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ἀνεκήρυξε τὴν ἐκείνου.

In his two sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*, Chrysostom significantly expands this trope. The bandit is not merely a quick student of faith and philosophy on the cross. He is also a teacher.

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<sup>447</sup> While Harkins notes that the date is “far from certain” (FOC 73:181), most of the scholarly theories he mentions fall within this range.

<sup>448</sup> *quod Chr.* 11.9 (CPG 4326). The text appears in an unpublished critical edition by McKendrick, 103–4 (= PG 48:828). This comparison of education echoes later in a contrast between the bandit and the Jewish leaders (*scand.* 14.10–14; SC 79:208–10; ca. 407). See 7A for further discussion.

<i>cruc. latr. 1.2 (PG 49:402)</i>	<i>cruc. latr. 2.2 (PG 49:410)</i>
I desire to demonstrate the bandit's <u>magnanimity</u> ... Let us not simply overlook this bandit, nor be ashamed to receive <u>as a teacher</u> the one whom our Master was not ashamed to bring first into paradise. Let us not be ashamed to receive <u>as a teacher</u> a man shown worthy of the citizenship of the heavens <sup>449</sup> before every creature.	I desire to demonstrate the bandit's <u>magnanimity</u> <u>and his surpassing philosophy</u> ... Let us not simply overlook what was said, nor be ashamed to receive <u>as a teacher</u> the bandit whom our Master was not ashamed at first to bring into paradise. Let us not be ashamed to receive <u>as a teacher</u> a man who was shown worthy of citizenship <b>in paradise</b> before everyone else of the human race.
τοῦ ληστοῦ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν δεῖξαι βουλόμενος ... Μὴ δὲ παραδράμωμεν ἀπλῶς τὸν ληστὴν τοῦτον, μηδὲ ἐπαισχυνθῶμεν διδάσκαλον λαβεῖν, ὃν οὐκ ἐπησχύνθη ὁ Δεσπότης ὁ ἡμέτερος πρῶτον εἰσαγαγεῖν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον· μὴ ἐπαισχυνθῶμεν διδάσκαλον λαβεῖν ἄνθρωπον πρὸ τῆς φύσεως ἀπάσης ἄξιον φανέντα τῆς πολιτείας τῆς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.	τοῦ ληστοῦ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν δεῖξαι βουλόμενος, καὶ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν φιλοσοφίαν ... Μὴ παραδράμωμεν ἀπλῶς τὸ εἰρημένον, μηδὲ ἐπαισχυνθῶμεν διδάσκαλον λαβεῖν τὸν ληστὴν, ὃν οὐκ ἐπησχύνθη ὁ Δεσπότης ὁ ἡμέτερος πρῶτον εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσαγαγεῖν· μὴ ἐπαισχυνθῶμεν διδάσκαλον λαβεῖν ἄνθρωπον, πρὸ παντὸς τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους ἄξιον φανέντα τῆς πολιτείας τῆς ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ.

Just later in the same sermons, Chrysostom returns to the theme. This later parallel set shows the second sermon greatly expanding the first. While the first lauds the bandit's philosophy and his "becoming a teacher on the cross," the second more concretely claims his noble philosopher death in language and imagery that may evoke the previous interpretation of Eustathius.<sup>450</sup> Drawing on Eustathius' picture of the bandit as a student, Chrysostom continues to expand his unique trope of the bandit as a teacher of faith and philosophy on the cross.

<sup>449</sup> Cf. Phil 3.20.

<sup>450</sup> Nyssen's *Life of Macrina* (ca. 380–383) has a cluster of similar themes which may show Eustathius' influence and also influence the expansion of the themes in Chrysostom's second sermon. Here Macrina is lauded for her philosophy (*vit.* 1; SC 178:142), fills in as a teacher to her youngest brother Peter (*vit.* 12; SC 178:182), and even identifies with the Lucan bandit in a confidence-filled prayer at the moment of her death (*vit.* 24; SC 178:222; quoted in 7E).

<i>cruc. latr. 1.3 (PG 49:402–3)</i>	<i>cruc. latr. 2.3 (PG 49:411–12)</i>
<p>Do you see the bandit's confidence? Do you see confidence on a cross? Do you see his <u>philosophy</u> in punishment, and his piety in torture? Who is not astounded that he was self-possessed, that he had his wits about him, even while nails were fixed in him? He was not only within himself, but forgetting his own concerns, he was mindful of those of others, becoming a <u>teacher on the cross</u>, both rebuking and saying, "<b>Do you not fear God?</b>" "Do not pay attention," he says, "to the judgment below. There is another, unseen judge; there is an impartial judgment..." ... Do you see the bandit's <u>philosophy</u>? Do you see his insight and <u>teaching</u>?</p>	<p>Do you see the bandit's confidence? Do you see how his familiar skill is not forgotten, but through its confession he steals the kingdom? He says, "<b>Do you not fear God?</b>" Do you see his confidence in a cross? Do you see his <u>philosophy</u>, do you see his piety? Isn't it deserving of amazement for reason of a <u>noble mindset</u> that he was self-possessed, that he completely had his wits about him while fixed with nails, enduring the insufferable pains of the nails? I should say that he is not only deserving of amazement, but also that he is justly blessed. For not only was he not turned toward his injuries, but instead, forgetting his own concerns, he was mindful of the concerns of another. <u>And so that he might snatch the other away from deception and become a teacher on the cross, he is studying.</u> "<b>Do you not fear God?</b>" he says. He all but says to him: "Do not focus on the judgment below, nor draw conclusions from what is seen, nor look only at what is happening. There is another, unseen judge, whose judgment is impartial, incapable of miscalculating..." ... Do you see the bandit's <u>philosophy</u>? Do you see his insight? Do you see his <u>teaching</u>?</p>
<p>Είδες παρρησίαν ληστοῦ; εἶδες παρρησίαν ἐν σταυρῷ; εἶδες φιλοσοφίαν ἐν τιμωρίᾳ, καὶ εὐλάβειαν ἐν κολάσει; Ὅτι γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἦν, ὅτι φρένας εἶχε, τῶν ἡλῶν αὐτῷ ἐμπεπαρμένων, τίς οὐκ ἂν ἐκπλαγείη; Ὁ δὲ οὐ μόνον ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀφείς, τὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἐφρόντιζε, διδάσκαλος ἐν σταυρῷ γινόμενος, καὶ ἐπιτιμῶν καὶ λέγων· <b>Οὐδὲ φοβῆ σὺ τὸν Θεόν;</b> Μὴ πρόσσεχε, φησί, τῷ κάτω δικαστηρίῳ· ἔστιν ἕτερος κριτῆς ἀόρατος, ἔστιν ἀδέκαστος δικαστήριον. ... Εἶδες φιλοσοφίαν ληστοῦ; εἶδες σύνεσιν καὶ διδασκαλίαν;</p>	<p>Εἶδες παρρησίαν ληστοῦ; εἶδες πῶς οὐδὲ ἐν σταυρῷ τῆς οἰκείας τέχνης ἐπιλανθάνεται, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ὁμολογίας αὐτῆς ληστεύει τὴν βασιλείαν; <b>Οὐδὲ φοβῆ τὸν Θεὸν σὺ,</b> φησὶν; Εἶδες παρρησίαν ἐν σταυρῷ; εἶδες φιλοσοφίαν, εἶδες εὐλάβειαν; Ὅτι γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἦν, ὅτι τὰς φρένας ὅλως εἶχε τοῖς ἡλοῖς ἐμπεπαρμένος, καὶ τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἡλῶν ὀδύνας ὑπομένων τὰς ἀφορήτους, οὐχὶ θαυμάζεσθαι ἄξιος τοῦ <u>γενναίου φρονήματος</u> ἕνεκα; Εἰ μὲν οὐ θαυμάζεσθαι μόνον ἄξιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μακαρίζεσθαι αὐτὸν δικαίως ἂν εἴποιμι. Καὶ γὰρ οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἐπεστρέφετο πρὸς τὰς ἀλγηδόνας, ἀλλ' ἀφείς τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὸν, τὰ ἑτέρου ἐφρόντιζε, καὶ ὅπως ἐκείνον ἐξαρπάσῃ τῆς πλάνης, καὶ διδάσκαλος γένηται ἐν σταυρῷ, ἐσπούδαζεν. <b>Οὐδὲ φοβῆ τὸν Θεόν,</b> φησί, σὺ; Μονονουχὶ λέγει πρὸς αὐτόν· Μὴ τῷ κάτω δικαστηρίῳ πρόσσεχε, μὴ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρωμένων ψηφίζου, μὴ τὰ γινόμενα μόνον ὄρα· ἔστιν ἕτερος κριτῆς ἀόρατος, ἀδέκαστος ἔστιν ἐκεῖνο τὸ δικαστήριον, παραλογισθῆναι μὴ δυνάμενον. ... Εἶδες φιλοσοφίαν ληστοῦ, εἶδες σύνεσιν, εἶδες διδασκαλίαν;</p>

Shortly after Chrysostom creatively develops and amplifies these themes, they begin to appear in many other Eastern interpreters, apparently in no small part because of the popularity of his two Good Friday sermons. Severian of Gabala, an occasional preacher in Constantinople's basilica and a friend of Chrysostom before becoming his vehement opponent, is profoundly indebted for the content of two of his own sermons on the bandit, including one Good Friday sermon.<sup>451</sup> One line is especially notable: "He sees him condemned and calls the crucified one king" / Βλέπει αὐτὸν κατακρινόμενον καὶ βασιλέα καλεῖ τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον.<sup>452</sup> A few decades later in Alexandria, Cyril also echoes Chrysostom's trope.<sup>453</sup>

Let us look at his most beautiful confession of faith. "**Jesus,**" he says, "**remember me when you come in your kingdom.**" You see him crucified, and call him a king. Him who was bearing scorn and suffering, you expect to come in godlike glory. You see him surrounded by a multitude of the Jews, and the wicked

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<sup>451</sup> *latr.* 16–20 (CPG 4103; Gk text in D. Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, "Sermon grec inédit de S. Éphrem sur le Bon Larron," *AB* 85 (1967): 437–9, and also in Phrantzolas 7:78–81). See also the Good Friday sermon *cruc.* 7–10 (CPG 4728; *AM* 1:179–80). Parallels to Chrysostom's Good Friday sermons abound in both sermons. Severian shares his penchant for encomium, "The bandit is the most pious" / Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ληστής ὁ εὐσεβέστατος; (*latr.* 16; *AB* 85:437). He asks similar rhetorical questions about the bandit's counter-intuitive sight, "What did you see, O bandit, to respond in this way" / Τί εἶδες, ὦ ληστή, οὕτω ἀποκρίνεσθαι; (*latr.* 20; *AB* 85:439), his remarkable faith, "Whence did such great faith arise" / Πόθεν ἡ τηλικαύτη πίστις ἀνέκυψεν; (*ibid.*), and his education, "Where were you trained to philosophize such things about Christ? ... Who taught you to say such things about him" / Πόθεν ἐπαιδεύθης περὶ Χριστοῦ τοιαῦτα φιλοσοφεῖν; ... Τίς ἐπαίδευσέν σε τοιαῦτα ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ λέγειν; (*cruc.* 10; *AM* 1:180). In both sermons, Severian uniquely develops his own extended litanies contrasting the counter-intuitive faith of the bandit with the divinely-provoked faith of many OT figures. As Hemmerdinger-Iliadou noted (*AB* 85:430–9), a litany with many close parallels also appears in Severian's "certainly authentic" sermon *de caeco nato* (PG 59:551–2; CPG 4582). In the introduction to his critical edition of *latr.* (CPG 4103; *AB* 85:429–39), Hemmerdinger-Iliadou mentioned a number of possible authors for this sermon, including Ephrem, a ps-Ephrem, Chrysostom, a ps-Chrysostom, and Severian (here 85:432). Showing dependence on Chrysostom, this sermon certainly does not belong to Chrysostom, or Ephrem for that matter. The editor's hesitancy was unwarranted. As his own comparisons show, Severian was the author.

<sup>452</sup> *cruc.* 9 (*AM* 1:180).

<sup>453</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Luc com* 153 (P–S 2:721). A Greek fragment (304) that comprises a summary of Cyril's sermon also carries the idea (PG 73:937): "He called 'king' even the one crucified" / βασιλέα ἐκάλει καὶ τοι σταυρούμενον.

gang of the Pharisees, and Pilate's band of soldiers,—all of these were mocking him, and no single one of them confessed.

An early to mid-5<sup>th</sup> century Coptic sermon falsely attributed to Theophilus of Alexandria also accentuates the bandit's counter-intuitive vision and confession of Christ's divinity.<sup>454</sup>

You have recognized the highness of my Godhead on the cross (σταυρός). ... I will grant (χαρίζεσθαι) you all this because you have confessed (ὁμολογέισθαι) my divinity in the presence of those who have denied (ἄρνέισθαι) me. They have seen all the miracles that I have done (and) they did not believe (πιστεύειν) in me. But (δε) you ... have confessed (ὁμολογέισθαι) that I am God.

And again...<sup>455</sup>

For (γάρ) he who was worthy contemplated (θεωρεῖν) the entire perfection of his divinity in that moment. Now who was worthy for this great honor? Let us get to know him. It is the bandit (ληστής) mounted on the height of the cross (σταυρός). He saw everything that happened and rejoiced because he saw it.

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<sup>454</sup> *cruc.* (CPG 2622), Pierpont Morgan M595 fols. 142<sup>v</sup>–3<sup>r</sup>. The quotation is slightly modified from the ET of A. Suci, who has been gracious to share privately his new critical edition of the Coptic text and accompanying translation, notes, and introduction, all of which is forthcoming. See A. Suci, “Ps.-Theophili Alexandrini *Sermo de Cruce et Latrone* (CPG 2622). An Edition from M595 with Parallels and Translation,” *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* (forthcoming). Suci raises doubts about the authorship of Theophilus and notes that several of its Coptic expressions, especially its quotations of the Sahidic Bible, are not mere translations of an earlier Greek sermon. G. C. O’Ceallaigh previously argued against the authorship of Theophilus, though his case was based in part on the late date of the ms used by Rossi (11<sup>th</sup> century); see “Dating the Commentaries of Nicodemas,” *HTR* 56 (1983): 31–2. His corresponding date (11<sup>th</sup> century!) is patently incorrect, not least because of the 9<sup>th</sup> century ms (Pierpont Morgan M595) Suci uses. In his recent survey of the life and work of Theophilus, N. Russell follows Rossi when ascribing this sermon to Theophilus himself, but Russell does so without providing reasons; see, for example, N. Russell, *Theophilus of Alexandria*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 52. Suci’s careful assessment is more compelling, and the proximity of themes to the Good Friday sermons of Chrysostom, Theophilus’ archenemy, also pushes against authenticity. At the same time, the influence of Chrysostom, as well as other Greek homilies (esp. Ps-Chrysostom, CPG 4525; see Suci), also makes an early to mid-5<sup>th</sup> century provenance more plausible. The pseudonymous ascription fits well with the scribal effort to make Chrysostom and Theophilus posthumous friends, notably found in Ps-Cyril of Alexandria, *de hora mortis* (CPG 5275), which describes Theophilus repenting “on his deathbed for the excommunication of John Chrysostom”; see Suci. The Coptic setting, saturated with parallels to Greek texts, also nicely fits the pattern of the other pseudonymous Coptic sermons in the Pierpont Morgan collection, which R. Greer sets within a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century context; see CSCO 525:v–xxiii.

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 146<sup>r</sup>; ET slightly modified from that of Suci.

What has he seen if not (εἰ μὴ τι) the army (στρατία) of angels (ἄγγελος) surrounding the Cross (σταυρός) (and) singing hymns (ὑμνεύειν) to it?

There is also a verbatim parallel in an Armenian-only section of the so-called

*Diatessaron Commentary* that reflects the work of a late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century redactor.<sup>456</sup>

It was because he had seen, with the eyes of faith, the dignity of our Lord instead of his shame, and his glory instead of his humiliation, that he said, “**Remember me.**”

Perhaps the most profound exploration of Chrysostom’s trope of faith-sight appears throughout an elaborate, 5<sup>th</sup> century Syriac dispute poem *On the Two Bandits*. The bandit on the right “perceived his hidden power,”<sup>457</sup> sees “a hidden king,”<sup>458</sup> discerns royalty in the darkening of the sun,<sup>459</sup> knows the earth itself shaking and its dead rising because of him,<sup>460</sup> beholds a heavenly chariot awaiting the “Lord of Nature,”<sup>461</sup> and knows well that<sup>462</sup>

This man’s crown cannot be seen  
Except by the soul that discerns.  
If only you would turn your gaze upwards,  
Then you would see his diadem that never decays.

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<sup>456</sup> 20.24 (CSCO 137:298; ET from McCarthy, 306). McCarthy’s ET here is corroborated by Leloir’s Latin (CSCO 145:213; *viderat oculis fidei*, “he saw with the eyes of faith”). This verbatim parallel corroborates my conclusion, based on an analysis of the authentic Syriac writings of Ephrem in Beck’s critical editions, that *Diat. com.* 20.22–6 is inauthentic to Ephrem. The fuller passage (CSCO 137:299; ET McCarthy, 306) makes its indebtedness to Chrysostom all the more clear. Its novelty appears in the way it has the bandit himself assist in the narration of Chrysostom’s tropes: “What is apparent now, the nails, the cross, will not make me forget what will be at the consummation and which is not yet visible, your kingdom and your glory.”

<sup>457</sup> 4 (ET from Brock, “Dialogue,” 158).

<sup>458</sup> 7 (*Ibid.*, 159).

<sup>459</sup> 9 (159).

<sup>460</sup> 13 (160), 19 (161).

<sup>461</sup> 25 (162).

<sup>462</sup> 27 (162).



But his debating nemesis does not. He can only see a mere human undergoing ghastly suffering, a powerless object of ridicule and shame.<sup>463</sup> Now liturgically dramatized and dialectically illustrated in two voice parts,<sup>464</sup> Chrysostom's trope rings most profoundly in the worship of his native Syria.<sup>465</sup>

### 5E. Chrysostom's Faith in the West

More surprisingly, Chrysostom's creative developments even find their way into Latin homilies, including perhaps those Ambrose of Milan, as well as Ambrose's admirers, namely Paulinus of Nola, Maximus of Turin and Augustine. While the parallels never rise to the level of verbatim literary dependence, the close and consistent resonance of theme, image, and language is quite striking.

Ambrose has two passages close to each other in his *Commentary on Twelve Psalms* (ca. 390–397)<sup>466</sup> that are both quite suggestive.<sup>467</sup>

Therefore, the crucified bandit is acquitted of the eternal condemnation of all these things, because he recognized Christ in his supplications, whom those others did not recognize in his benefits, and he confessed his sin to Christ who he knows will pardon, because on his own cross he discerns in his mind the reign of the Lord, which Judas, in living together with Christ, was not able to see.

<sup>463</sup> See esp. verses 8 (Ibid., 159), 10 (159), 12 (160), 19 (160–1), 24 (161), 26 (162).

<sup>464</sup> On the liturgical settings of this dispute poem, see S. Brock, "Two Thieves," 152–6, and also 9A.

<sup>465</sup> Another parallel appears in a sermon falsely ascribed to Chrysostom (CPG 4762 = BHGn 451u), quoted in 6D.

<sup>466</sup> For the date, see Í. Ní Riain, *Commentary of Saint Ambrose on Twelve Psalms* (Dublin: Elo Press, 2000), p. x. Elsewhere, Ambrose frequently speaks of the bandit's faith, but not in unique or notable ways. See *Exam.* 4.4.13 (CSEL 32.1:119), *fid.* 5.10.125 (CSEL 78:263), *par.* 11.53 (CSEL 32.1:310). While the trope is present in *Hymn* 9 (Fontaine 415), this composition is likely pseudonymous.

<sup>467</sup> The first is *Ps* 39.17 (CSEL 64:223), while the second is *Ps* 40.22 (CSEL 64:243).

*ideo ad istorum omnium perpetuam condemnationem latro crucifixus absoluitur, quia ille Christum in suppliciis agnouit suis, quem isti in beneficiis non agnouerunt, et peccatum suum confessus est Christo qui sciret ignoscere, quia in cruce sua regnum domini mente conspexit, quod in conuiuio Christi Iudas uidere non potuit.*

The bandit ... knew Christ on the cross, confessed the Son of God, called him king with his own voice.

*latro ... agnouit in cruce Christum, confessus est dei filium, regem uoce propria nuncupauit.*

With his mention of “benefits,” Ambrose sounds similar to Chrysostom’s indictment of the leaders who had seen Jesus’ miracles and wonders, in contrast to the bandit who lacked this experience. The theme of discerning divinity within Jesus and the contrast of vision also match.

These brief, uncertain echoes of Chrysostom’s sermons grow louder and sharper in future decades. Paulinus of Nola, in a letter dated to around 403, sounds like Chrysostom as he speaks of the bandit proclaiming “the Lord of majesty” (probably an allusion to 1 Cor 2.8) while seeing “Christ crucified in that state resembling his own punishment,” as he juxtaposes the bandit’s faith with the apostles’ lack thereof, and as he asserts that the bandit therefore preceded the apostles into paradise.<sup>468</sup> Paulinus may also here echo

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<sup>468</sup> *ep.* 31.6 (CSEL 29:274–5). For the date, see ACW 36:326–7. Shortly after describing his own gift of a relic of the cross to the basilica at Primuliacum, Paulinus pictures the bandit taking a raider’s trail as a shortcut in a race to the kingdom. He probably intends an analogy to the relic as a pilgrim’s shortcut to Golgotha’s basilica. “That blessed bandit made a well-turned raid on the long paths of the saints in their great labors. From a moment’s faith and in a moment’s confession he deservedly went ahead of the apostles and martyrs themselves. He was the first to enter ‘the **kingdom prepared for them from the beginning**.’ So heaven’s pious pirate plundered, because he saw Christ crucified in a condition resembling his own punishment. From this even the disciples’ shaken faith wavered. Yet he confessed the Lord of majesty (so he was). Begging to be remembered in God’s kingdom, he believed in resurrection’s glory before the resurrection itself. The apostles believed this only after it happened, not just by seeing but also by testing it” / *beati illius latronis ... qui bene uerso latrocinio longas in magnis laboribus sanctorum uias de*

Chrysostom's (Ephrem's before him) idea that the bandit believed in the resurrection before it happened, in contrast to the apostles.

Maximus of Turin's two main sermons on the passage also hold much in common with those of Chrysostom, including the bandit's faith in the lordship and divinity of a Christ seen as one bleeding, humiliated, and condemned,<sup>469</sup> the episode's illustration of

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*momenti fide et momento confessionis anticipans non inmerito ante ipsos apostolos et martyres praeparatum ipsis ab initio, ut ait, regnum primus inuasit et pius caeli praedo diripuit, quia Christum crucifixum similitudine suae poenae uidens in eo statu, de quo etiam discipulorum fides turbata nutauerat, dominum tamen maiestatis, ut erat, confessus est et petens in regno dei memoriam sui fieri in gloriam resurrectionis ante ipsam resurrectionem credidit, quam apostoli, posteaquam facta est, non tantum uidendo sed experiendo crediderunt.* Unfortunately, Walsh's ACW translation misses the shortcut metaphor (ACW 36:133): "He turned his robbery to good account. Through the faith of a moment and the rapid declaration of it, he preceded the saints whose journeys were prolonged with many labours."

<sup>469</sup> *serm. 74.1–2 (CCSL 23:309–10):* "Therefore, his favor is more deserved, because he believed Christ placed on the cross was Lord. Even suffering, which creates a stumbling block for others, effected faith for him. The suffering of a cross was indeed a stumbling block to many, just as the apostle says: '**Yet we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, yet to the Gentiles foolishness**' (1 Cor 1.23). 2. Rightly, therefore, he deserves paradise who had reckoned that Christ's cross was not a stumbling block but rather power" / *Deinde illud ad gratiam eius maioris est meriti, quod Christum in cruce positum dominum credidit, et passio, quae aliis scandalum facit, illi ad fidem profecit. Crucis enim passio multis scandalum fuit, sicut dicit apostolus: nos autem praedicamus Christum crucifixum, iudaeis quidem scandalum gentibus autem stultitiam.* 2. *Recte ergo meretur paradysum, qui crucem Christi non putauit esse scandalum sed uirtutem.*

*serm. 74.3 (CCSL 23:310):* "[W]hen blood is discerned flowing from the Lord's wounds, at that time pardon is requested from his power. When his humiliation is seen, at that time his divinity is honored more greatly. When he is reckoned as doomed to death, at that time a king's honor is presented by him. Indeed, that faithful bandit did not believe he was going to die. ... Though he sees his gaping wounds and watches his flowing blood, nevertheless he believes in the God whom he does not recognize as guilty. He admits him righteous whom he did not recall as a sinner" / *cum de uulneribus domini profluens sanguis cernitur, tunc de potestate eius uenia postuletur; cum uideatur eius humilitas, tunc magis timeatur eius diuinitas; cum morti addictus putatur, tunc regis illi honorificentia deferatur. Iste enim fidelis latro non credidit moriturum... Cernat licet eius hiantia uulnera, expectet ipsius sanguinem profluentem, Deum tamen credit quem reum nescit, iustum fatetur quem non meminit peccatorem.*

*serm. 75.2 (CCSL 23:314):* "[The bandit's faith] believed Christ crucified was being glorified more than punished. Indeed, in this is the form of all salvation: recognizing the Savior as the Lord of majesty at the time when he is seen crucified, suffering humiliation. Therefore, the apostle says: '**If they had recognized, they never would have crucified the Lord of majesty**' (1 Cor 2.8). This, I say, is perfect faith, believing Christ on the cross is God and not guilty. Therefore that bandit was justified, because while the Jews were insulting the Savior stationed on a cross and speaking as if to a criminal, '**Free yourself if you can,**' he, certain of his divinity and sure of his will asked that he himself be freed" / *Christum crucifixum glorificari magis credidit quam puniri. In hoc enim totius forma salutis est saluatorem tunc maiestatis dominum recognosci, cum uidetur humilitatis patientia cruciari; unde ait apostolus: si*

the power of his cross (a theme stressed in both of Chrysostom's Good Friday sermons on the bandit),<sup>470</sup> the bandit's prioritizing of eternal over temporal judgment and his martyr-like forgetfulness of his own punishment,<sup>471</sup> the contrast with Peter's infidelity and recollection of the servant girl who intimidated him,<sup>472</sup> and finally the encomiastic rhetoric regarding the bandit's "great and perfect faith."<sup>473</sup> To these Chrysostomic themes, Maximus adds a distinctive crescendo: the bandit believes that atonement for the sins of all, including his own, is happening before his own eyes, and thus he even begins to love Christ.<sup>474</sup> While direct literary dependence is not in evidence, Maximus clearly

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*cognouissent, numquam dominum maiestatis crucifixissent. Haec, inquam, perfecta fides est Christum in cruce Deum non reum credere. Vnde ille latro iustificatus est, quod saluatore in patibulo constituto iudaeis insultantibus et uelut criminoso dicentibus: **Libera te ipsum si potes**; ille certus de eius diuinitate et securus de uoluntate se magis postulat liberari.*

<sup>470</sup> For Maximus see the quotations from *serm.* 74 above. Chrysostom begins his Good Friday sermons by praising the cross as worthy of festival honors (*cruc. latr.* 1.1, PG 49:399; 2.1, PG 49:407), before going on to claim that the cross is precisely where God's power is most and best revealed (*cruc. latr.* 1.2, PG 49:401; 2.2, PG 49:409). These latter passages transition smoothly into the extended sections on the bandit (1.2–3; 2.2–3). In other words, the bandit's faith and conversion exemplify and participate in the paradoxical revelation of divine power in the crucifixion.

<sup>471</sup> *serm.* 74.1 (CCSL 23: 309): "First, this bandit was so suddenly converted by faith's devotion. He despised present suffering and prayed for future pardon. He believed that it would be more useful for him to ask about eternal judgment than about temporal punishment. Indeed, as he remembered his own crimes and bore his penance, he began to hurt for what he hoped instead of feeling what he suffered" / *primum quod iste latro deuotione fidei tam repente mutatus est, ut praesentem poenam despiceret ac de futura uenia precaretur, et magis crederet utile sibi esse de aeterno iudicio petere quam de temporali supplicio postulare. Reminiscens enim scelerum suorum et paenitudinem gerens plus incipit dolere quod sperat quam sentire quod patitur.*

<sup>472</sup> *serm.* 75.2–3 (CCSL 23:314–15).

<sup>473</sup> *serm.* 74.3 (CCSL 23:310): "This is truly the full devotion of faith" / *Haec est uere fidei plena deuotio.* 75.1 (CCSL 23:313): "But the bandit's faith furnishes this glory so great" / *Sed hanc tantam gloriam latroni fides praestitit.* 75.2 (CCSL 23:314): "Therefore, faith was great and perfect in that bandit. Clearly [his] faith is great and admirable... Great, I say, was the faith in that bandit. It was comparable to the holy apostles, except that it, as luck would have it, preceded [theirs]." / *Magna igitur et perfecta fides in illo latrone fuit; magna plane est et admirabilis fides... Magna, inquam, fides in illo latrone fuit et sanctis apostolis comparanda, nisi quod et forte praecesserit.*

<sup>474</sup> *serm.* 74.3 (CCSL 23:310): "The bandit knew that those wounds in Christ's body were not Christ's wounds but his own. Therefore, he additionally began to love after he recognized his own wounds in Christ's body" / *sciuit quod illa in corpore Christi uulnera non essent Christi uulnera sed latronis; atque ideo plus amare coepit, postquam in corpore eius sua uulnera recognouit.*

benefits from Chrysostom's sermons, whether by means of translations, imitations, or both.

Augustine was an admirer not only of Ambrose but also of Maximus and Paulinus. Apparently showing their influence, he echoes several Chrysostomic themes, probably second- or third-hand. His phrasing recalls that of Ambrose when he speaks of how the bandit's "loyalty so faithful was apparent to the Lord in his mind and to us in his words" / *pietas tam fidelis et Domino in animo eius et nobis in uerbis eius apparuit*.<sup>475</sup> Augustine also encomiastically lauds the bandit's "great faith"<sup>476</sup> / *magna fides*, just as Maximus had. One of Paulinus' themes reappears, that the disciples' faith was shaken while the

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<sup>475</sup> *an. orig.* 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369). Admittedly, the phrase "in his mind" / *in animo eius* is ambiguous here. It could refer either to the bandit's internal faith (apparent to Jesus) or to Jesus' internal awareness of the bandit's faith. I would favor the first reading within the context of the entire sentence. Either rendering points to dependence on Ambrose and reflects one of Chrysostom's themes (whether the bandit's or Jesus' internal sight).

<sup>476</sup> *serm.* 232.6 (ca. 412–413; SC 116:272). Augustine's apparent dependence on Maximus provides a *terminus ante quem* of 412–413 CE for Maximus' two sermons on the bandit (*serm.* 74 and 75). Augustine similarly continues in encomiastic fashion: "What could be added to this faith, I do not know" / *Huic fidei quid addi possit, ignoro*. See also *an. orig.* 1.9.11 (419 CE; CSEL 60:311–12): "Indeed who among us can approximate the extent of faith, hope and love with which he who sought life in a dying man accepted death for the living Christ" / *sed etiam nostrum quis non consideret, quanta fide, quanta spe, quanta caritate mortem pro Christo uiuente suscipere potuit, qui uitam in moriente quaesiuit?*

bandit gained his.<sup>477</sup> Augustine also echoes the now traditional, visceral descriptions of the suffering one whom the bandit uniquely recognizes to be Lord.<sup>478</sup>

While these resonances with Chrysostom are apparently mediated through his older Latin contemporaries, Augustine also shows a unique familiarity with other Chrysostomic tropes. His contention that the bandit, akin to Paul, believed the apostles' word without having heard it from the apostles, sounds quite similar to Chrysostom's depiction of the bandit speaking "apostolic law" without benefiting from Jesus' prior teachings.<sup>479</sup> Most striking of all, Augustine even pictures the crucifixion scene as a

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<sup>477</sup> Cf. Paulinus, *ep.* 31 (CSEL 29:274), "the shaken faith of the disciples wavered" / *discipulorum fides turbata nutauerat* and Augustine, *serm.* 232.6 (SC 116:272), "They who had seen Christ rousing the dead tottered. He believed in him whom he was seeing suspended with him on a tree. When they were tottering, he was believing" / *Titubauerunt qui uiderunt Christum mortuos excitantem; credidit illi quem uidebat secum in ligno pendentem. Quando illi titubauerunt, tunc ille credidit.* The theme also appears in Augustine's *serm.* 236A, in one of the final sections deemed as inauthentic in critical scholarship (WSA 3.7.50n1). See the discussion of this sermon below. The relevant passage here appears in *BC* 1:171. "The bandit saw and believed when apostolic faith trembled" / *Tunc enim Latro uidit et credidit, quando fides apostolica trepidauit.* A very similar line also appears in a text traditionally ascribed to the so-called Quodvultdeus,  *symb.1* 6.15–23 (CCSL 60:321–2, quoted in 6D). The parallel with Chrysostom's theme of recognition is obvious here as well.

<sup>478</sup> *serm.* 232.6 (SC 116:274). "To the one hanging, crucified, bleeding, clinging: 'when you come,' he says, 'in your kingdom.'" / *Pendenti, crucifixo, cruento, haerenti: cum ueneris, inquit, in regnum tuum.* *en Ps.* 39.15 is quite similar: "Others did not recognize the one who did miracles. But he knew the one hung on a tree" / *Alii non cognouerunt miracula facientem, agnouit ille in ligno pendentem;* see CCSL 38:436.

<sup>479</sup> *Jo ev tr.* 109.5.2 (CCSL 36:621): "In this, that bandit (already) had their (i.e., the apostles') word in his own faith" / *Ac per hoc etiam ille latro in sua fide uerbum eorum habebat.* Compare *cruc. latr.* 1.3 (PG 49:403): "He knows well the apostolic law for himself, speaking gospel sayings, 'Do not judge, lest you be judged. Since we are in the same judgment'" / *Ἀποστολικὸν αὐτῷ νόμον ἀναγινώσκει, εὐαγγελικὰ ῥήματα λέγοντα· Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε. Ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματί ἐσμεν.* Chrysostom expands the trope in his second sermon (2.3; PG 49:412): "Also notice that he already fulfills the apostolic law. He is not focusing only on his own concerns, but he is doing and trying everything to free the other from deception and to lead him to the truth. For, after saying, 'Do you not fear God,' he added, 'Since we are in the same punishment.' ... He knows well the apostolic law for himself, speaking gospel sayings: 'Do not judge, lest you be judged.' 'Because we are in the same punishment'" / *Καὶ ὅρα αὐτὸν ἀποστολικὸν νόμον ἤδη πληροῦντα, καὶ οὐ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ μόνον σκοποῦντα, ἀλλὰ πάντα ποιοῦντα καὶ πραγματευόμενον, ὥστε καὶ ἐκεῖνον τῆς πλάνης ἀπαλλάξαι, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐπαναγαγεῖν. Εἰπὼν γάρ, Οὐδὲ φοβῆ τὸν Θεὸν σὺ, ἐπήγαγεν, Ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματί ἐσμεν... Ἀποστολικὸν αὐτῷ νόμον ἀναγινώσκει, εὐαγγελικὰ ῥήματα λέγοντα· Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα*

school and the bandit as a student!<sup>480</sup> Admittedly, Augustine contrasts the bandit (as a brief but well-taught student) not with Judas and Peter, but rather with the two on the road to Emmaus (as long-time but forgetful students). But this variation is easily explained by the lectionary setting of Augustine's sermon, given on Easter Monday or Tuesday.<sup>481</sup> Another sermon contrasting the bandit with the Emmaus pair may ascribe to him a teaching role, as Augustine rhetorically invites the bandit to "Come... remind... Cry out... convince the saints" / *Veni... commone... Clama... sanctus convincet*.<sup>482</sup>

E. Hill notes that the closing sections of this second sermon, preserved within a compendium at Monte Cassino,<sup>483</sup> have been doubted as authentic to Augustine and have instead been ascribed to a Latin translation of Chrysostom.<sup>484</sup> These sections certainly do have material that recalls Chrysostom's sermons *On the Cross on the Bandit*, including the trope of the bandit as an exemplary philosopher (e.g., "Where have you learned to

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μὴ κριθῆτε." Ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματί ἐσμεν. Chrysostom heightens the rhetorical effect of the last example by changing the person from second singular ("you" / εἶ) to first plural.

<sup>480</sup> *serm.* 234.2 (ca. 418; PL 38:1115–16). For the date, see WSA 3.7:36, following Lambot. "We were hoping.' You were hoping? You already don't hope? On the cross the bandit conquered you. You have forgotten him who was teaching you. But this one recognized him when he was hanging [on the cross]. 'We were hoping.' What were you hoping? 'That he was the one to redeem Israel.' What you were hoping and lost in the one crucified, this a crucified bandit recognized. He even says, 'Lord': 'Lord, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.' See: 'that he was the one to redeem Israel.' That cross was a school. There the teacher taught the bandit. The tree of hanging was made a seat of teaching" / *nos autem sperabamus. sperabatis: iam non speratis? hic est omnis discipulatus uester? in cruce latro uos uicit. uos obliti estis eum qui docebat: ille agnouit cum quo pendeat. nos sperabamus. quid sperabatis? quia ipse erat redempturus Israel. quod sperabatis, et illo crucifixo perdidistis, hoc latro crucifixus agnouit. ait enim Domino: domine, memento mei, cum ueneris in regnum tuum. ecce quia ipse erat redempturus Israel. crux illa, schola erat. ibi docuit magister latronem. lignum pendentis, cathedra factum est docentis.* In what appears to be an earlier sermon (Hill, following Fischer and Poque, dates it to ca. 412–413; WSA 3.7:24), Augustine had already started to juxtapose the bandit's faith with the despair of the Emmaus pair (*serm.* 236.6; SC 116:274): "'We were hoping.' Where the bandit found hope, the disciple lost it" / *Nos sperabamus. Vbi spem latro inuenit, discipulus perdidit.*

<sup>481</sup> WSA 3.7:35n1 and 36n1.

<sup>482</sup> 236A.4 (BC 1:169).

<sup>483</sup> Caillou-Saint-Yves 2.60 from Codex Casinensi 12 (PLS 2:1073–8 // BC 1:168–71).

<sup>484</sup> WSA 3.7.50n1.

philosophize so well” / *Unde eruditus es talia philosophari?*). But the parallels do not come directly from Chrysostom, but rather second- or third-hand by way of a loose and expanded Latin translation of a Greek sermon by Severian of Gabala that was itself highly indebted to Chrysostom.<sup>485</sup> Still, that one of Augustine’s paschal sermons on the bandit concluded (or was later joined together) with a loose Latin translation of a sermon by Severian is highly illustrative. Even if these two sermons (and other elements) were stitched together after Augustine, such activity illustrates a broader custom of incorporating Greek texts and themes into Latin homilies.

In this case, the custom likely goes back as far back as Ambrose and continues through the end of our time frame (450 CE) as evidenced in the sermons of Leo I, who also yields numerous parallels to Chrysostom’s tropes. *Serm.* 53.1 is especially notable.<sup>486</sup>

What exhortation has urged this faith? What education soaked it? What preacher stoked it? ... Yet he confessed him as lord and king whom he sees as his companion in punishment.

*Quae istam fidem exhortatio suasit? Quae doctrina inbuit? Quis praedicator accendit? ... et tamen dominum confitetur et regem, quem uidet supplicii sui esse consortem.*

So is *serm.* 66.3.<sup>487</sup>

Thus the true worshipper of the lordly passion ought to behold the crucified Jesus with the eyes of the heart in order to recognize in him one’s own flesh. Let the

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<sup>485</sup> Cf. Caillou-Saint-Yves 2.60 sections 5–7 (*PLS* 2:1076–8 // *BC* 1:170B-171A) and Severian, *cruc. latr.* 4–10 (CPG 4728; *AM* 1:178–80). In *AM* 1:178–180, Wenger provides the original Greek and a Latin counterpart which quite faithfully and closely translates the Greek text. That Latin text differs substantially from the Monte Cassino version.

<sup>486</sup> CCSL 138A:313–14.

<sup>487</sup> CCSL 138A:403.



earth's substance quake at the punishment of its own Redeemer. Let the rocks of unfaithful minds be broken.<sup>488</sup>

*Verus itaque uenerator dominicae passionis sic crucifixum Iesum oculis cordis aspiciat, ut illius carnem suam esse cognoscat. Contremiscat in Redemptoris sui supplicio terrena substantia, rumpantur infidelium mentium petrae.*

Both friends and enemies, near and far, could not help but benefit from the best of Greek preaching.

#### 5F. *Sola fide iustificatus*

Origen is the first on record to make the Pauline intertext of justification by faith.<sup>489</sup> The relevant passages are especially interesting in the history of interpretation and theology in that Origen here is ostensibly also the first extant author to speak of the bandit being “justified by faith *alone*.”<sup>490</sup> This precise phrase appears in the Greek text of the Tura

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<sup>488</sup> For a parallel reference to the bandit's mind (here, soul) being split apart like rocks, see Chrysostom, *cruc.* 1.2 (PG 49:401): “Even the rocks of the unfeeling soul of the bandit were dragged away, and he assayed him: for ‘**Today with me you will be in paradise,**’ he says” / καὶ τὰς πέτρας διέρρηξε, τῆς πέτρας τε ἀναισθητοτέραν τοῦ ληστοῦ ψυχὴν ἐπεσπάσατο καὶ ἐτίμησε. **Σήμερον γὰρ μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ**, φησί.

<sup>489</sup> Sieben declares this the inauguration of a “dogmatique” reading of the Lucan episode; *DS* s.v. “Larron” (9:307).

<sup>490</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield noted a similarity between Origen's Latin expression *sola fide* (in *Rom com.* A 3.6) and Luther's “well known translation of Rom 3.28: *allein durch den Glauben*”; see FOC 103:226n321. In the introduction of his translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, Scheck makes an extensive argument against the attempt of Heither (and Protestants more generally) to claim Origen here as a forebear for their doctrine of justification by faith alone (FOC 103:33–41). While perhaps a bit too polemical in tone, Scheck helpfully navigates through Origen's diverse comments, positive and negative, on the idea. His concluding summary of Origen's doctrine (103:41) would suggest that Origen calls upon the bandit and the Lucan sinful woman as 1) atypical, extreme examples (not having time to do good works), and thus 2) representative specifically in regard to their initial acceptance and pardoning by Jesus. In other words, for Origen these two exempla prove the veracity of Paul's claim of justification by faith apart from works, and yet they still take nothing away from the general obligation to do good works, the vital co-existence of faith and works, as well as the real danger of forfeiting justification by engaging in sin, which is tantamount to unbelief. By way of critique, Scheck needs to take much more seriously the differences between the Tura

papyrus, which contains the longest continuous Greek text of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* (ca. 243–244). Here the Lucan bandit is presented as the first of two intertextual examples of this Pauline teaching. The reference appears in a section commenting on Rom 3.27–28.<sup>491</sup>

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papyrus and Rufinus' translation in their respective uses of the phrase "justified by faith alone." Scheck himself admits that the unique character and length of the Greek commentary here makes it "possible to test the reliability of Rufinus' work, at least in some cases" (FOC 103:17).

<sup>491</sup> *Rom com.* 3.27–8 = 5.f6 (Scherer 164).

<i>Rom com. 3.27–8 = 5.f6 (Scherer 164)</i>	<i>Rom com. A 3.6 (GLB 16:248–9)</i>
<p>Therefore, all <b>boasting</b> among the Jews is <b>excluded</b> and prevented, since <b>through the law of faith</b> [God] justifies the one who is justified, and not through <b>the law of works</b>. For both laws do not justify at the same time, nor does the law of works [justify]. The law of faith suffices for justification, since justification has already happened for one who only believed and did absolutely no work. Therefore we have to bring forth one <b>justified through faith</b> alone <b>apart from works</b>, the sort that the bandit co-crucified with Jesus was, as well as the <b>sinful woman</b> in Luke (7.37–50) who <b>provided an alabaster of myrrh</b> and <b>stood by the feet</b> of Jesus, passing over the things it recorded were done. . . . And her sins were not forgiven by the law of any work but by that of faith, when he said to her, “<b>Your sins are forgiven</b>,” and, “<b>Your faith has saved you. Go in peace</b>.” And in many places in the Gospel the phrase, “<b>Your faith has saved you</b>,” is said, so that we reckon well that a person is justified by faith apart from the law of works. But perhaps someone hearing these things becomes careless of divine citizenship, since faith suffices for justification. We will say to this one that evils done after justification nullify the grace of the justified.</p>	<p><b>Where, therefore, is your boasting? It is excluded. Through what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we reckon a human justified through faith apart from the works of the law.</b> He is saying that <b>faith</b> alone suffices for justification, so that one who merely believes is justified even if no work at all was completed by him. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us who are attempting to assert that the apostle’s writings are unified and all fit in their order, that we ask who without works has been justified through faith alone. Therefore, for such an example, I think that bandit suffices—the one who, crucified with Christ, cried out to him on the cross: “<b>Lord Jesus, remember me with you come into your kingdom</b>.” Nothing is mentioned of his good works in the gospels, but for this <b>faith</b> alone Jesus says to him: “<b>Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise</b>.” Now if it is seemly, let us apply the words of the apostle Paul to the case of this bandit and let us say to the Jews: “<b>Where, therefore, is your boasting?</b>” It is certainly excluded. Yet, it is excluded not by the law of works but rather by the law of faith. <b>Through faith</b> indeed this bandit was <b>justified apart from the works of the law</b>, because the Lord did not require beyond this that he had previously done any work. Nor did he wait for him to complete some work when he believed. Rather, through his confession alone he who would enter paradise accepted him as his justified companion. There is also [is] that <b>woman</b> who is reported in the Gospel according to Luke. <b>When she recognized that Jesus reclined in the house of a Pharisee, she brought an anointing vessel. Standing behind at his feet and weeping, she washed his feet with tears and dried [them] with the hairs of her head. She kissed and anointed [them] with ointment.</b> Yet, when the Pharisee who had invited him saw [this], he said within himself, “If this [man] were a prophet he would have known certainly who and what kind [of person] the woman is who is touching his feet—that she is a sinner.” But Jesus told him that parable of the five hundred and the fifty denarii. For no work of the law but for the sake of faith alone he said to her: “<b>Your sins are forgiven you;</b>” and again: “<b>Your faith has saved you. Go in peace</b>.” There are also many places in the gospel that we read the savior making use of this phrase. So he says the faith of a believer is the cause of his salvation. From all of these he clarifies that the apostle correctly thought a person to be justified by faith without the works of the law. But perhaps someone hearing these things relaxes, and seizes neglect of doing good, since indeed faith alone suffices for being justified. We will say to this one that if someone acts unjustly after justification, without a doubt he has spurned the grace of justification.</p>

<p>Rom com. 3.27–8 = 5.f6 (Scherer 164)</p>	<p>Rom com. A 3.6 (GLB 16:248–9)</p>
<p>διὸ πᾶν τὸ δοκῶν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις εἶναι <b>καύχημα ἐκκλείεται</b> καὶ ὥσπερ κωλύεται, <b>νόμου πίστεως</b> δικαιούντος τὸν δικαιούμενον καὶ οὐ <b>νόμου ἔργων</b>, οὔτε γὰρ ἀμφοτέροι οἱ νομοὶ δικαιοῦσιν ἅμα, οὔτε ὁ τῶν ἔργων νόμος· ἀρκεῖ γὰρ εἰς δικαίωσιν ὁ τῆς πίστεως, ἐπεὶ ἐστὶν ποτὲ ἥδη τυχεῖν τῆς δικαίωσης, πιστευσάντα μόνον καὶ τὸ καθόλου μὴδὲν ἐργασάμενον.</p> <p>Ἐχομεν γοῦν παραστήσαι τὸν <b>ἐκ μόνης πίστεως χωρὶς ἔργων δικαιούμενον</b>, ὁποῖος ἦν ὁ τῷ Ἰησοῦ συσταυρωθεὶς ληστής, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ κατὰ Λουκᾶν <b>ἁμαρτωλὸν γυναικα</b> τὴν <b>κοιμίσσαν ἀλάρκτρον μύρου</b> καὶ στάσαν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ διαπραξάμενην ἅπερ ἀναγράφεται πεποιημένη καὶ ἐξ οὐδενός γε ἔργου νόμου ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς πίστεως ἀφένονται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς ὅτε εἶπεν αὐτῇ· <b>Ἀφένονται σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι καὶ ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην</b>. Καὶ πολλὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τὸ <b>ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε</b> λέγεται, ἵνα μάθωμεν ὅτι καλῶς λογιζομεθα δικαιοῦσθαι πίστει ἀνθρώπων χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου. Ἀλλ' εἰκὸς τινα τούτων ἀκούσαντα ἀμελήσειν τῆς κατὰ Θεὸν πολιτείας ὥς ἀρκούσης πίστεως εἰς δικαίωσιν. Φήσομεν δὲ πρὸς τοῦτο ὅτι μετὰ δικαίωσιν ἀδικία γενομένη ἠθέτησεν τὴν χάριν τοῦ δικαίωσαντος.</p>	<p><u>ubi est ergo gloriatio tua? <b>Exclusa est. Per quam legem? Operum? Non, sed per legem fidei. Arbitramur enim iustificari hominem per fidem sine operibus legis</b></u>; et dicit <u>sufficere solius fidei iustificationem</u>, ita ut <u>credens quis tantummodo iustificetur etiam si nihil ab eo operis fuerit expletum</u>. Imminet igitur nobis qui integra esse scripta apostoli conamur asserere et ordine suo cuncta constare ut requiramus quis sine operibus sola <b>fide</b> iustificatus sit. Quantum igitur ad exemplum pertinet sufficere arbitror illum latronem qui cum Christo crucifixus clamavit ei de cruce: <b>Domine Iesu memento mei cum veneris in regnum tuum</b>. Nec aliud quidquam describitur boni operis eius in euangelis sed pro hac sola fide ait ei Iesus: <b>amen dico tibi hodie me cum eris in paradiso</b>. Aptemus nunc si uideatur causae huius latronis uerba apostoli Pauli et dicamus ad Iudaeos: <b>ubi est ergo gloriatio tua?</b> Certum quia exclusa est; exclusa autem non per legem operum sed per legem fidei. <b>Per fidem enim iustificatus</b> est hic latro <b>sine operibus legis</b>, quia super hoc Dominus non requisivit, quid prius operatus esset, nec expectavit quid operis cum credidisset expleret, sed sola confessione iustificatum comitem sibi eum paradisum ingressurus assumisit. Sed et <b>mulier illa quae in euangelio secundum Lucam refertur, quia cum cognouisset quod Iesus recumbit in domo Farisei detulit uas ungenti et stans retro ad pedes eius ac flens lacrimis lauit pedes eius et capillis capitis sui deterisit et osculabatur atque unguebat unguento; uidens autem Fariseus qui eum uocauerat dixit intra semet ipsum, hic si esset profeta sciret utique quae et qualis est mulier quae tangit pedes eius quia peccatrix est; Iesus autem dixit ad eum parabolam illam <b>quingentorum uel quinquaginta denariorum</b>; et ex nullo legis opere sed pro sola fide ait ad eam: <b>remittuntur tibi peccata tua</b>; et iterum: <b>fides tua saluam te fecit, uade in pace</b>. Sed et in multis euangelii locis hoc sermone usum legimus saluatorem ut fidem credentis causam dicat esse salutis eius. Ex quibus omnibus claret quia recte arbitratum apostolus, iustificari hominem per fidem sine operibus legis. Sed fortassis haec aliquis audiens resoluatur, et bene agendi neclegentiam capiat, si quidem ad iustificandum fides sola sufficiat. Ad quem dicemus quia post iustificationem si iniuste quis agat sine dubio iustificationis gratiam spreuit.</b></p>

As it happens, Rufinus' Latin translation of Origen's commentary here uses this precise expression five times, not to mention an additional reference to his "confession alone."<sup>492</sup> The Greek lacuna notwithstanding, the Latin section has substantially more content than the Greek and differs in many ways despite the clear parallels of terms, ideas and sentence structures. Thus, many of the differences are owing to Rufinus' creative modifications and amplification.

Rufinus' insistent use of the phrase "faith alone" not only confirms its authenticity in Greek Origen (of the Tura papyrus), but also demonstrates Rufinus' own intensification of the motif. Rufinus may well use repetition as a standard teaching technique, but the frequency suggests something more. While Simonetti leaves Rufinus in Aquileia in 399 and following,<sup>493</sup> Hammond Bammel finds him in Rome by at least 405,<sup>494</sup> when and where he was likely personally acquainted with Pelagius and his associates during their stay. It was at this time, ca. 405–406, that Rufinus produced his translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans*.<sup>495</sup> Scheck has shown convincingly that both Pelagius and Augustine read Rufinus' translation of Origen's commentary.<sup>496</sup> These audiences probably give some indication of the translation's purpose, and they may also affect its content. Rufinus amplifies Origen's motif of justification *by faith alone* so as make

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<sup>492</sup> *Rom. com. A* 3.6 (GLB 16:248–9). *Rom. com. A* 4.1 (GLB 33:279) also draws on the Lucan bandit as an example of justification by grace apart from works in connection to Rom 4.5.

<sup>493</sup> CCL 20:x.

<sup>494</sup> C. P. Hammond Bammel, "Last Ten Years of Rufinus' Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia," *JTS* 28.2 (1977): 372.

<sup>495</sup> In CCL 20:ix, Simonetti dates the translation to 404 CE, but in the chronology on the very next page (CCL 20:x) places his translation of "several books" / *aliquot libros* in ca. 405–406. T. Heither (FC 2.1:11) essentially concurs with Hammond Bammel, placing his translation in south Italy in 406 CE.

<sup>496</sup> T. Scheck, *Origen and the History of Justification: The Legacy of Origen's Commentary on Romans* (Notre Dame: University Notre Dame Press, 2008).

Origen's exegesis a conciliatory model (containing both adamant support for the Origen's Pauline idea as well as harsh warnings against an improper understanding of it) that navigates the divisions and addresses the soteriological debates happening in and around Rome at that time.

It is also noteworthy that the Tura papyrus only passingly mentions the Lucan bandit before moving on to the Lucan sinful woman as another example. In spite of its obvious differences in content from the Tura papyrus, a related catena excerpt lines up quite well in regard to its brief mention of the bandit, followed by a longer section on the Lucan sinful woman.<sup>497</sup>

**Therefore, we consider a person to be justified by faith apart from works of the law.** [To show] that the law of the catholic faith wards off judgment not [just] for those of us who do works, we have to point out the bandit crucified with Jesus along with **the sinful woman** in Luke **who brought the alabaster of myrrh and stayed by the feet of Jesus** and was passed over, as has already been written about. For, her **sins were forgiven** not from any **work** but from **faith**, and she heard, **“Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”**

λογιζόμεθα οὖν πίστει δικαιοῦσθαι ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου. ὅτι δὲ ἀρκεῖ εἰς δικαίωσιν ὁ τῆς πίστεως νόμος καθόλου μηδὲν ἐργασασμένοις ἡμῖν, ἔχομεν δεῖξαι τὸν συσταυρωθέντα ληστὴν τῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ κατὰ Λουκᾶν ἁμαρτωλὸν γυναῖκα τὴν κομίσασαν ἀλάβαστρον μύρου καὶ στᾶσαν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ διαπραξαμένην ἅπερ ἀναγέγραπται πεποιηκέναι. ἐξ οὐδενὸς γὰρ ἔργου ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς πίστεως ἀφέωνται ταύτης αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, καὶ ἤκουσεν τὸ ἢ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην.

This excerpt confirms the passing mention of the bandit in the Tura papyrus (and thus in Origen's original *Commentary on Romans*), which means that Rufinus not only amplified the motif of justification by faith alone but also the role of the bandit as the

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<sup>497</sup> A. Ramsbotham, "Documents: The commentary of Origen on the epistle to the Romans," *JTS* 13 (1912): 222.

paramount, defining example of this doctrine. In other words, the predominantly Western, early 5<sup>th</sup> century controversy over grace and works, faith and free will retroactively intensified the bandit's status in Origen's writings as an example of justification by faith alone. It should also be noted that Ramsbotham's catena excerpt does not contain the expression "faith alone." While it is far more likely that the phrase was simply not included in that catena rather than interpolated into the Tura papyrus, the second reconstruction points to a fascinating, however unlikely scenario, that it was Rufinus rather than Origen who was the first to champion the bandit as an explicit example of justification *by faith alone*. By way of contrast, other commentators connect the bandit to Paul's theology of justification by faith, but their comments are quite lacking in polemical features.<sup>498</sup>

In his admittedly free translation of Origen's *Lev hom.*, Rufinus is likely a reliable witness to Origen reading Lev 16.7–10 (two lots cast over two goats) as an allegorical, intertextual reference to the two Lucan bandits.<sup>499</sup> It is more debatable whether Origen himself here made an intertext to Rom 10.10 and its theology of justification by faith<sup>500</sup> when Rufinus' translation says that this bandit represents "all who believe and confess" / *omnibus credentibus et confitentibus*.<sup>501</sup> If this Rom 10.8–10 intertext did start with

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<sup>498</sup> See the following comments of Rufinus and Augustine. See also Paulinus of Nola, *carm.* 33 lines 34–5 (CSEL 30:339, quoted in 7E). See also Leo, *serm.* 55.3 (CCSL 138A:325): "The effect of faith was so quick that, of the bandits crucified with Christ, the one who believed in the son of God entered paradise justified" / *tam uelox fidei esset effectus, ut de crucifixis cum Christo latronibus, qui in filium Dei credidit, paradisum iustificatus intrauerit*.

<sup>499</sup> *Lev hom.* 9.5.2 (SC 287:88).

<sup>500</sup> "For with the heart one believes unto justification, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation" / *καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν*.

<sup>501</sup> *Lev hom.* 9.5.3 (SC 287:90).

Origen, perhaps that would account for its subtle presence in a comment by Cyril of Jerusalem, who (ca. 350) encouraged his catechumens by noting the Lucan bandit as the premier, comforting example of Rom 10.9, which he clearly paraphrases.<sup>502</sup> In his *Ps com.* (ca. 370), Athanasius also subtly makes this intertext, though his focus remains on an intertextual reading of Ps 37.4–5.<sup>503</sup> Of course, the edifying connections between Paul’s theology of justification by faith and the Lucan bandit went well beyond intertexts with Rom 10.8–10.<sup>504</sup>

Through he is famous for his anti-Pelagian polemics, and through he had read Rufinus’ translation of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* no later than 410 CE, Augustine astonishingly makes no direct anti-Pelagian use of the trope of the Lucan bandit as an example of justification by faith apart from works.<sup>505</sup> Before and beyond

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<sup>502</sup> *Cat.* 5.10 (R-R 1:146), conflating the two texts: “For if you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved and transferred into paradise by the one who brought the bandit into paradise” / Ἐὰν γὰρ πιστεύσης, ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ καὶ μετατεθήσῃ εἰς [τὸν] παράδεισον, ὑπὸ τοῦ τὸν ληστὴν εἰς παράδεισον εἰσαγαγόντος.

<sup>503</sup> *exp. Ps* 26.6 (PG 27:177).

<sup>504</sup> In a later catechetical lecture, Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of the bandit on Christ’s behalf: “I do not wait for work alone, but I have received even faith” / οὐ τὸ ἔργον περιμένω μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν πίστιν ἀπεδεξάμην (*Cat.* 13.31, R-R 2:92). Hilary of Poitiers may show the influence of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* in his own ca. 353–356 *Commentary on Matthew* when he notes that the bandit “is saved by the justification of faith” / *fidei iustificatione saluatur* (*Matt com.* A 33.5, SC 258:252). Maximus of Turin in his *serm.* 75.2 (CCSL 23:314) says, “This is perfect faith, to believe Christ on the cross is God, not guilty. On this basis that bandit was justified” / *Haec, inquam, perfecta fides est Christum in cruce deum non reum credere. Vnde ille latro iustificatus est.*

<sup>505</sup> While *pecc. mer.* (whose first book was written ca. 411–412; see WSA 1.23:11, 19) is certainly anti-Pelagian, Augustine’s reference to the Lucan bandit in 1.22.31 (CSEL 60:30–1) stands within his summary of the incoherence of the belief of some Origenists in the prenatal fall of souls. *an. orig.* 1.9.11 (ca. 419; CSEL 60:312) does the same. *serm.* 67.7 (CCSL 41Aa:426–7), for which Hill suggests a date of 412 CE (WSA 3.3:215, 220n1), reflects the influence of the Pelagian controversy on Augustine’s thinking, but the tone is not polemical here. In this particular section, Augustine composes a litany of praise to grace, as well as to Christ who graces all of creation, before exploring the Lucan bandit as one who deserves / *meruit* paradise by accusing himself / *se accusavit* (the parenetic thrust of the whole sermon as outlined in 67.2), and thus receives mercy beyond his request. Other sermons that mention the bandit together with



anti-Pelagian polemics, Rom 10.8–10 plays a key role in Augustine’s lifelong interpretation of the Lucan episode.<sup>506</sup> The intertext illustrates a core feature of Augustine’s soteriology (faith and confession) that precedes and may have even prompted his role in the Pelagian controversy.

Prosper of Aquitaine, Augustine’s apologist writing ca. 433 against John Cassian, certainly does take full advantage of the bandit’s anti-Pelagian potential. Rather than the bandit deciding of his own initiative to follow Christ, as Cassian (ostensibly channeling

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justification by faith bear no anti-Pelagian features whatsoever. *en Ps* 33(2).24 (CCSL 38:297–8) implicitly connects belief and justification by its alternating phrases: “One insulted; the other believed. One was damned; the other was justified” / *unus insultauit, alter credidit; unus damnatus est, alter iustificatus est*. Far from taking a polemical tone, Augustine is here preoccupied with the intertextual issue of why the justified bandit (here conflated with the “others” whose legs are broken in John 19.31–3) did not exemplify the promise in *Ps* 33.21, “The Lord guards all their bones: not one will be broken” / *Dominus custodit omnia ossa eorum, unum ex his non conteretur*. *en Ps.* 34(1).14 (CCSL 38:310) is essentially identical to 33(2).24, both in its questioning about the breaking of the justified bandit’s bones, as well as his allegorical solution, according to which unbreakable bones are symbols of the enduring strength of the righteous within the church.

<sup>506</sup> *Simpl.* 1.q2.19 (CCSL 44:49–50), written ca. 396–398 (WSA 1.12:161), is especially poignant. “**The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that is the word of faith which we preach. Because if you confess in your mouth and that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto justification, while with the mouth one makes confession in salvation** (Rom 10.8–10). This is the perfecting and abridging word that the Lord brought forth upon the earth. By its perfection and abridgement a bandit was justified. With all his members fixed on the cross, he still had these two free: **with the heart he believed unto justification, with the mouth he confessed unto salvation**. Immediately he deserved to hear: “**Today you will be with me in paradise**.” His good works would have followed, if, after gaining divine grace, he had lived among men. Even so, they did not precede, so that he should have merited this grace. The one fixed on the cross for banditry was translated into paradise from the cross” / *prope te est uerbum, in ore tuo et in corde tuo, hoc est uerbum fidei quod praedicamus. quia si confitearis in ore tuo quia dominus est Iesus, et credideris in corde tuo quia deus illum suscitauit a mortuis, saluus eris; corde enim creditur ad iustitiam, ore autem confessio fit in salutem. hoc est uerbum consummans et breuians quod fecit dominus super terram. qua consummatione atque breuitate latro iustificatus est, qui defixis in cruce omnibus membris et habens libera haec duo, corde credidit ad iustitiam, ore confessus est ad salutem, statim que audire meruit: hodie tecum eris in paradiso. consequerentur enim bona opera eius, si percepta gratia diu inter homines uiueret; sed tamen non ea praecesserant, ut eandem gratiam mereretur ex latrocinio fixus in cruce, ex cruce in paradisum translatus*.

Other clear intertexts of Luke 23.39–43 and Rom 10.8–10 appear in *en Ps.* 34(1).14 (CCSL 38:310) and *en Ps.* 39.15 (CCSL 38:436–7). The two are loosely connected in *serm.* 234.2 (PL 38:1115–16; ca. 418, WSA 3.7:36) and *serm.* 109.4–5 (CCSL 36:620–1).

the Egyptian ascete Chaeremon) had claimed,<sup>507</sup> the bandit's blasphemy of Jesus and drastic conversion reveals the divine initiative and the presence of the Holy Spirit working **in all things**.<sup>508</sup>

Therefore, the one who dawned in the heart of Matthew the tax-collector and of Paul (at that time a persecutor of the Church) is the same one who dawned in the heart of Zacchaeus and in the heart of the bandit crucified with the Lord. Unless, that is, the Lord's voice was idle when, after condescending to address Zacchaeus (who **was trying to see who Jesus was**),<sup>509</sup> he said, "**Zacchaeus, hurry! Come down! For today I need to stay at your house!**"<sup>510</sup> But the one whose hospitality he chose had not prepared his own soul. In fact, when all were murmuring that he had ventured to be the guest of a sinful man, only then did Zacchaeus undergo penance. Paying out half of his goods to the poor, he promised that he would pay back fourfold what was defrauded. Then the Lord said: "**Today salvation has happened in this house, because this is a son of Abraham.**"<sup>511</sup> Lest the cause of his salvation lay hidden, he added: "**But the Son of Man came to seek and to save what went lost.**"<sup>512</sup> [He said this] so that, while we recognize that he was saved, we also recognize the initiative of the one who seeks.

Likewise, in the bandit's justification, since no evidence of the working of grace is discernable, shouldn't we accept that this one, like all believers, was drawn?<sup>513</sup> Has the Lord not said: "**All things have been handed over to me by my Father,**"<sup>514</sup> and, "**When I am exalted above the earth, I will draw all things to myself**"?<sup>515</sup> The same bandit's confession shows that he is part of **all things**, whether things **handed over** or **drawn**. The one who for a while was blaspheming Jesus Christ was quickly changed and said: "**Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**" The blessed Apostle teaches us the source from which this difference sprung in such a belligerent-voiced man. He says: "**No**

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<sup>507</sup> *Conl.* 13.11.1–2 (CSEL 13:375–6).

<sup>508</sup> *Coll.* 7.3 (PL 51:231B–3A).

<sup>509</sup> Luke 19.3.

<sup>510</sup> Luke 19.5.

<sup>511</sup> Luke 19.9.

<sup>512</sup> Luke 19.10.

<sup>513</sup> John 6.44.

<sup>514</sup> Luke 10.22.

<sup>515</sup> John 12.32.

one speaking in God's Spirit says, 'Jesus be cursed'; and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."<sup>516</sup>

For this reason, let us not be in doubt about this man's will. He blasphemed of his own accord and he believed by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it was in vain that this debater [Cassian] wanted to adjust the evidence to make an inscrutable variety of simple grace, to convince us that a portion of the justified come to Christ by the impulses of their solitary wills, while another portion is reluctantly drawn and unwillingly compelled. **God is the one who works all things in all things.**<sup>517</sup> Whether God wishes to draw some in one way and some in another, no one comes to God unless one be drawn in some way.

*Qui ergo illuxit in corde Matthaei publicani et Pauli tunc Ecclesiam persequentis, ipse et in corde Zacchaei, et in corde crucifixi cum Domino latronis illuxit: nisi forte otiosa Domini vox fuit, cum Zacchaeum, qui **quaerebat videre Jesum quis esset**, compellare dignatus est dicens: **Zacchae, festina, descende; quoniam hodie in domo tua oportet me manere**; et non sibi praeparavit ejus animum, cujus elegit hospitium. Denique cum murmurarent omnes, cur ad virum peccatorem introisset hospitari, et Zacchaeus jam paenitentiam agens, dimidio bonorum suorum in pauperes erogato, redditurum se in quadruplum fraudata promitteret, Dominus ait: **Hodie salus huic domui facta est, quia hic est filius Abrahae**. Et ne lateret causa hujus salutis, adjecit: **Venit autem filius hominis quaerere et salvum facere quod perierat**: ut quem agnoscebamus salvum factum, sciremus a quaerente praeventum.*

*In latronis quoque justificatione, etiamsi nulla operantis gratiae intelligerentur indicia, nonne cum omnibus credentibus etiam ipsum acciperemus attractum? dicente Domino: **Omnia mihi tradita sunt a Patre meo; et, cum exaltatus fuero a terra, omnia traham ad me**? Inter omnia autem, hunc vel **traditum** esse, vel **tractum**, etiam ipsius confessio docet; qui cum aliquamdiu blasphemasset in Jesum Christum, repente est mutatus, et dixit: **Domine, memor esto mei, cum veneris in regnum tuum**. Sed unde in uno homine tanta compugnantium vocum sit orta diversitas, instruat nos beatus Apostolus, et dicat: **Nemo in Spiritu Dei loquens, dicit anathema Jesu; et nemo potest dicere Dominum Jesum, nisi in Spiritu sancto**.*

*Ut non dubitemus in ejusdem hominis voluntate, et de proprio fuisse quod blasphemavit, et de Spiritu sancto fuisse quod credidit. Frustra igitur disputator*

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<sup>516</sup> 1 Cor. 12.3. See also 5D (regarding the bandit being taught by the Holy Spirit), 6G (regarding the bandit's baptism by the Holy Spirit), 7B and 7C (regarding the bandit's speech as inspired by the Holy Spirit).

<sup>517</sup> 1 Cor. 12.6.

*iste, ad inscrutabilem unius gratiae varietatem, argumentum definitionis suae voluit aptare; ut portio justificatorum solius voluntatis suae motibus ad Christum venire credatur, portio autem reluctans trahi, et invita compelli: cum **Deus sit qui operatur omnia in omnibus**, sive alios sic, alios autem sic attrahere velit, ad quem nemo nisi aliquo modo attrahatur, venit.*

Thus, Origen's chronological solution eventually underwrites a profound, one might even say Augustinian theology of justification by grace. It was clearly Prosper's influence that gained Luke's criminal an esteemed place in the canons on grace of the Second Council of Orange in 529.<sup>518</sup>

We also believe and profess for our salvation that in every good work it is not we who begin and afterwards are helped by God's mercy. Instead, he himself, without any previous merits on our part, first instills in us faith in him and love for him, so that we may faithfully seek the sacrament of baptism and, after baptism, that we may with his help accomplish what is pleasing to him. Therefore we must clearly believe that the wonderful faith of the bandit whom the Lord called to his home in paradise, [that] of Cornelius the centurion to whom an angel of the Lord was sent, and [that of] Zacchaeus who merited to receive the Lord himself, did not come from nature but was a gift from the bounty of divine grace.

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<sup>518</sup> ET slightly modified from #1922/397 in J. Neuner and J. Dupuis, eds., *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Alba House, 2001), 804.

## CHAPTER 6. CONVERT, CATECHUMEN, CONFESSOR, MARTYR

6A. *The Quick Convert*

To be sure, early interpreters consistently see Luke's criminal modeling faith in a general and broadly representative sense. But they also find in him the faith of a new and quick convert. Tatian's *Harmony* may imply a quick conversion in its chronological harmonization.<sup>519</sup> Origen stands as a more secure witness to the beginning of this trajectory. Even in an early, Alexandrian part of his *Commentary on John* (ca. 230–231),<sup>520</sup> Origen compares Paul and the bandit by drawing on the express language and imagery of repentance and illumination. Making an intertext between John 1.5<sup>521</sup> and Acts 9.4–5,<sup>522</sup> Origen includes the Lucan bandit as one who (chronologically harmonized) was, like Paul, an agent of darkness who persecuted Christ the truth. Like Paul on the Damascus Road, the Lucan bandit also had an epiphany, a decisive moment of illumination.

The idea appears in two catena fragments. The first is the more involved of the two.<sup>523</sup>

Such was the case with Paul when he was ignorant of Christ and persecuted him. He was incited to this by his encroaching ignorance, which we called **darkness**. But as **the light** was being **persecuted** by it and beamed forth its own sunlight,

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<sup>519</sup> See 3B.

<sup>520</sup> For the date and provenance of *Io com* 1–4, see Nautin 409 and FOC 80:4.

<sup>521</sup> “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”

<sup>522</sup> “Why do you persecute me? ... Jesus, whom you are persecuting” // Acts 22.7–8, 26.14–15.

<sup>523</sup> *Io cat.* f3 (GCS 10:487).

**darkness** was destroyed. In this way the **light**, being **persecuted** by it, was able to lay hold of it anew. The bandit who repented on the cross did the same. After being mutilated by the aforementioned **darkness**, he **persecuted the light**. But **darkness** was destroyed in the bandit, and **the light** laid hold anew. So may I turn my sight to what is more clear—**light** is the truth. Now when all falsehood or deception—that is, **darkness**—**persecutes the light**, then it is destroyed. It disappears as it approaches the one it **persecutes**. For falsehood and deception is destroyed by the illumining truth.

οἷον ὁ Παῦλος ὅτε ἠγνόει τὸν χριστὸν ἐδίωκεν αὐτόν, παρορμώμενος πρὸς τοῦτο ἐκ τῆς προσοῦσης ἀγνοίας, ἣν εἶπομεν εἶναι σκοτίαν· ἀλλὰ τοῦ διωκομένου φωτὸς ὑπ’ αὐτῆς ἐκλάμψαντος τὰς οἰκείας αὐγὰς λέλυται ἡ σκοτία, καὶ ταύτη καταλαβεῖν αὐτὴν δεδύνηται τὸ διωκόμενον ὑπ’ αὐτῆς φῶς. ὡσαύτως καὶ ὁ μετανοήσας ἐπὶ τῷ σταυρῷ ληστής, πεπηρωμένος τῇ προειρημένη σκοτίᾳ ἐδίωκε τὸ φῶς· ἀλλ’ ἡ ἐν τῷ ληστῇ σκοτία λέλυται, καὶ οὕτως αὐτὴ καταλαμβάνει τὸ φῶς. καὶ ἵνα ἐπὶ τὸ σαφέστερον μεταβάλω τὸ θεώρημα, φῶς ἐστὶν ἡ ἀλήθεια· ὅταν δὲ τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ ἀπάτη πᾶσα, τουτέστι τὸ σκότος, διώκη τὸ φῶς, τότε λύεται καὶ ἀφανίζεται πλησίαν τῷ διωκομένῳ. τῆς γὰρ ἀληθείας φανείσης τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ ἡ ἀπάτη λύεται.

Its shorter counterpart makes essentially the same point.<sup>524</sup>

Paul was ignorant in this way, **persecuting** Christ. But after being illumined by the **light** of life, he knew him whom he **persecuted**. Even the bandit who suffered upon the cross was enlightened and knew life.

οἷον ὁ Παῦλος ἠγνόει τὸν χριστὸν διώκων, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς τῆς ζωῆς αὐγασθεὶς ἔγνω τὸν διωκόμενον· καὶ ὁ ληστής ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ πάσχων καὶ φωτισθεὶς ἔγνω τὴν ζωὴν.

Origen uses more technical language for conversion in his ca. 248 *Commentary on Matthew*, corroborated by Greek and Latin texts. Here Origen calls him “the saved bandit” / ὁ σωζόμενος ληστής / *latro qui salvatus est*.<sup>525</sup> The bandit had a sudden change. Greek Origen says that “the other was converted to believe in him” / τὸν ἕτερον

<sup>524</sup> *Io cat.* f112 (GCS 10:565).

<sup>525</sup> *C<sup>luc</sup>* 58 (TU 47.2:39) // *Matt com* A 133 (GCS 40.2:270–1). For the fuller texts in a comparison table, see 3C.

μεταβεβληκέναι ἐπὶ τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτῷ, while Latin Origen here simply says that he “was converted” / *conversum esse*.<sup>526</sup> In keeping with his chronological harmonization, Origen clearly pictures the bandit as a quick convert on the cross.

Confirming its early popularity, the motif of the bandit’s conversion also appears in three works roughly contemporaneous with Origen. A 3<sup>rd</sup> century monarchianist paschal homily falsely ascribed to Hippolytus is highly suggestive in how it describes the bandit’s “repentance” / μετανοίας and how “he turns away from his old sins” / ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἁμαρτήμασι μεταβάλλεται.<sup>527</sup> The pseudonymous Latin *duobus montibus* implicitly carries the idea when it claims that the second criminal symbolizes Gentiles, only just later to mention “Gentiles who have converted” / *gentes... ad se conuersae*.<sup>528</sup> In keeping with these early precedents, many later interpreters describe him as a convert implicitly.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> The Latin here mentions the “conversion of the air” / *conversionem aeris*, which sounds very similar to a trope in Chrysostom’s sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*. The first (*cruc. latr.* 1.1; PG 49:400) reads: “Now for whose sake was he slaughtered on high upon a platform, and not under a roof? It was so that he may cleanse the nature of the air that [he was slaughtered] on high—not covered by a roof, but covered by heaven. For the air was cleansed on high from the lamb’s sacrifice, and the earth was cleansed as well” / Τίνος δὲ ἕνεκεν ἐφ’ ὑψηλοῦ τοῦ ἱκρίου σφάττεται, καὶ οὐχ ὑπὸ στέγην; ἵνα τοῦ ἀέρος τὴν φύσιν ἐκκαθάρῃ, διὰ τοῦτο ἐφ’ ὑψηλοῦ, οὐκ ἐπικειμένης στέγης, ἀλλ’ ἐπικειμένου οὐρανοῦ. Ἐκαθαίρετο μὲν γὰρ ὁ ἀὴρ ἐφ’ ὑψηλοῦ θυομένου τοῦ προβάτου· ἐκαθαίρετο δὲ καὶ ἡ γῆ. A similar phrase and usage (the changed air prompted the bandit’s change) also appears in a Coptic sermon falsely ascribed to Chrysostom (*res. apost.* 64; CSCO 524:69; ET from CSCO 525:72): “The latter is the one who confessed Christ when he saw that the air had changed.” As a reference to Christ’s conquest of spiritual powers of evil, the theme of the conversion of the air also fits well with the ascetic trajectory discussed in 7B.

<sup>527</sup> *pasch.* 54.1–2 (SC 27:181).

<sup>528</sup> *mont.* 7.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12, quoted in 5B).

<sup>529</sup> Eustathius of Antioch, *frag.* 26–7 (CCSG 51:88–92) does not use the express language of conversion or repentance, and yet he offers a dramatic narrative in which the bandit is directly taught and filled by the Holy Spirit, “is stirred by divine love” / θεοφιλῶς ἀνακινουμένου, confesses Christ, and is baptized directly under the blood and water of the Johannine Jesus. See 5D, 6C, and 6G for further discussion of these fragments. Athanasius, *Ps exp.* 26.6 (PG 27:177), is suggestive when referring to his

Among Greek writers, Chrysostom lays the most stress on the bandit's conversion. Several texts across his writings are significant,<sup>530</sup> but one is especially revealing. Here the preacher cites the brief moments of the bandit's conversion as an example that his hearers could very well be dramatically changed in the short time remaining before the next service.<sup>531</sup>

And let no one tell me that there is but a brief moment before the gathering about to happen. It [sometimes] happens that an entire life is changed, not just in five days, but even in one moment. For what—tell me—is worse than a bandit and murderer? Is this not the ultimate form of wickedness? Yet he went ahead to the pinnacle of virtue and went forth into paradise itself. He did not need days, or half a day, but just a brief moment. Being changed can happen suddenly, becoming gold instead of clay. Because matters of virtue and vice are not [set] by nature, change is agile, unbound from all necessity.

Καὶ μή μοι λεγέτω τις ὅτι βραχὺς ὁ καιρὸς ὁ μεταξὺ τῆς συνάξεως τῆς μελλούσης. Ἐξεστὶ γὰρ οὐχὶ ἐν πέντε μόνον ἡμέραις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν μιᾷ ῥοπῇ μεταθέσθαι τὸν βίον ἅπαντα. Τί γὰρ, εἶπέ μοι, ληστοῦ καὶ ἀνδροφόνου χεῖρον; οὐχὶ τὸ ἔσχατον τοῦτο τῆς κακίας εἶδος ἐστίν; Ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰς τὸ ἄκρον τῆς ἀρετῆς εὐθέως ἔφθασε, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐχώρησε τὸν παράδεισον· οὐχ ἡμερῶν δεηθεὶς, οὐχ ἡμίσους ἡμέρας, ἀλλὰ βραχείας ῥοπῆς. Ὡστε ἔξεστιν ἄφνω μεταθέσθαι, καὶ γενέσθαι χρύσειον ἀντὶ πηλίνου. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οὐ φύσει τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς κακίας ἐστίν, εὐκόλος ἢ μετάθεσις, πάσης ἀνάγκης ἀπηλλαγμένη.

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repentance / μετανοία. Epiphanius, *Pan A* 42.16.1–3 (GCS 31:185) presumes it when rhetorically asking why the compassionate Marcionite Jesus who converted others did not seek to convert his changeable Father. Ambrose implies it twice: once in *Parad.* 11.53 (CSEL 32.1:310), “turned from crime to confession and to faith from banditry” / *a scelere ad confessionem et ad fidem a latrocinio reuertenti*; a second time in *Ps* 40.22–3 (CSEL 64:243–4), “The bandit himself exchanged his wickedness for a better way of life” / *latro ipse nequitiam suam proposito meliore mutauit*. Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 74 (CSEL 23:309) says “that bandit was changed so suddenly by faith’s devotion” / *iste latro deuotione fidei tam repente mutatus est*. Chrysologus, *serm.* 61 (CCSL 24:341), includes him in a list of quick converts, including Paul. See Ps-Ephrem, *Diat. com.* 15.15–16 (Syriac; ET McCarthy, 237). The 5<sup>th</sup> century Codex Bezae even implicitly writes this trope into the Biblical text itself as it describes the bandit “turning to the Lord” / στραφεὶς πρὸς τὸν κύριον. Tischendorf’s Greek B (now Greek M) of the *Acta Pilati* has Bezae’s precise phrase in its quotation of Luke 23.42 (*EA* 308).

<sup>530</sup> *paen.* 1.2.14–15 (PG 49:279–80); *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483, see note in 2D); *Io hom* 85 (PG 59:460); *cruc. latr.* 1.2–3 (PG 49:401–3) // 2.2–3 (PG 49:410–12), see 5D; *quod Chr.* 11.9 (McKendrick 103–4 // PG 48:828).

<sup>531</sup> *Io hom.* 1 (PG 59:28).



The *Apocalypse of Sedrach* reflects this same theme and a near-identical expression as two of those found in Chrysostom.<sup>532</sup>

While Jerome is a significant voice among Latin interpreters,<sup>533</sup> Ambrose is by far the most emphatic on the subject. The main passage appears in his ca. 389<sup>534</sup> *Commentary on Luke*, which repeats the trope several times in succession.<sup>535</sup>

**“Truly, truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”** Most beautiful example of conversion’s desire, that pardon is so quickly extended to the bandit and grace is more plentiful than the prayer. ... The Lord pardons quickly, because he was converted quickly. ... It is not surprising that he who extended pardon to those who insulted him pardoned the convert’s guilt.

*Amen, amen dico tibi, hodie me cum eris in paradiso. Pulcherrimum adfectandae conuersionis exemplum, quod tam cito latroni uenia relaxatur et uberius est gratia quam precatio. ... Cito igitur ignoscit dominus, quia cito ille conuertitur. ... Nec mirum si conuerso culpam ignoscebat qui insultantibus ueniam relaxabat.*

This text is the first in history in which the bandit is called a “convert” / *conuerso*.<sup>536</sup>

Other texts published around the same time as these sermons have numerous, similar references.<sup>537</sup> After Ambrose and likely in part due to him, the theme echoes across late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century Latin interpretation.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> See 2D.

<sup>533</sup> “Christ brought the bandit from the cross into paradise, and, lest anyone ever think conversion [too] late, murder’s punishment brought forth martyrdom” / *Christus in paradysum de cruce latronem tulit et, ne quis aliquando seram conuersionem putaret, fecit homicidii poena martyrium*; see *ep.* 16.1.2 (CSEL 54:68; ca. 376, ACW 33:209 n1). See also *ep.* 39.1 (CSEL 54:295, quoted in 7E; 384 CE).

<sup>534</sup> CCSL 14:vii.

<sup>535</sup> *Luc* 10.121–2 (CCSL 14:379–80).

<sup>536</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>537</sup> In *exam.* 4.4.13 (CSEL 32.1:119), written ca. 387, if not later (FOC 40:vi), Ambrose describes him as a symbol of those “who will be converted to a better state” / *in meliorem statum esse conuersos*. *ep.* 19.9 (CSEL 82.1:144–5, quoted in 7E) is one of eight extant letters that remain of Ambrose’s writings to the priest Honoratus (FOC 26:xvii lists them as 45–53, and this one as 46). Several are dated by Ambrose, placing them securely in 387 CE (FOC numbers 45, 49–53). FOC 26:231n1 cites Palanque regarding a

In several of the above examples and many others, interpreters also lay great stress on the quickness of the bandit's change or one of his specific actions.<sup>539</sup> Sometimes this theme of the bandit's sudden change is accompanied by a complementary reference to the speed of Jesus' reward.<sup>540</sup> At other times, the immediacy of Jesus' reward is antithetically paired with the delay found in the bandit's request.<sup>541</sup>

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common date of 387 CE for all the letters to Horontianus and notes that its sequence for these letters reflects Palanque's attempt to establish their original chronological order, which places this letter early in 387. He also notes that Palanque believed Horontianus to be Syrian in origin.

<sup>538</sup> Augustine, *bapt.* 4.22.30 (CSEL 51:257), drawing on the Rom 10.8–10 intertext, speaks of the bandit's "faith and conversion of heart" / *fidem conuersionem que cordis*. See Prosper, *Coll.* 14.2 (ACW 32:112–13). See also Leo, *serm.* 53.1 (CCSL 138A:313), "changed by a wondrous conversion (as) the hardship of death increased" / *difficultas mortis augebat mira conuersione mutatus*.

<sup>539</sup> *Apoc. Sedr.* 15 (PVTG 4:45, quoted in 2D). Ephrem, *cruc.* 5.7 (CSCO 248:60, quoted in 5B). See also Ephrem (or pseudonymous), *epiph.* 3.30 (quoted in a note in 5A).

Chrysostom, *cruc. latr.* 1.3 (PG 49:403) // 2.3 (PG 49:412), "Quickly from a cross he leapt up into heaven" / Ἀθρόον ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνέπηδησεν. In *cruc.* 2.2–3 (PG 49:410–11), the bandit quickly becomes worthy and quickly repents. The trope is implicit in *paen.* 1.2.14–15 (PG 49:279–80) and *quod Chr.* 11.9 (McKendrick, 103–4 // PG 48:828) and strongly emphasized in *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483) and *Io hom.* 1 (PG 59:28), the last two of which are quoted in 2D. Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 74.1 (CCSL 23:309), "He was so suddenly changed" / *tam repente mutatus est*, with a near verbatim match in Prosper, *def. Aug.* 7.3 (PL 51:232B), "he was suddenly changed" / *repente est mutatus*. Peter Chrysologus, *serm.* 61 (CCSL 24:341) speaks of the bandit stealing paradise "at that time when" / *tunc... quando* he was crucified for his crimes, only briefly after speaking of Paul's "sudden confession" / *repentina confessio*.

<sup>540</sup> Chrysostom, *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483), see the note in 2D. Just after noting that the bandit's repentance only took "a few hours" / βραχείας ὥρας, Chrysostom says that when God sees "our intention" / ἡμετέρας γνώμης, God also "does not wait or delay" / οὐ μέλλει, οὐδὲ ἀναβάλλεται; see *Gen hom.* 27.18 (PG 53:247–8). Ambrose, *Luc* 10.121–2 (CCSL 14:379–80), see above. Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 74.1 (CCSL 23:309), just before the citation in the note above, mentions that "he was promised paradise so quickly by the Savior" / *tam cito a saluatore paradysum promeretur*. See also *serm.* 75.1 (CCSL 23:313), "He was saved with so much quickness" / *tanta fuerit celeritate saluatus*. Ps-Ambrose, *Hymn* 9 (Fontaine 415), "[He] acquired Jesus with brief faith" / *Iesum breui adquisit fide*. See Leo, *serm.* 55.3 (CCSL 138A:325, quoted in 5F). See also Ps-Aristides, *hom. sanc. latr.* 3 (CPG 1065; Pitra 4:9), "Thus, more quickly than he asked, his prayer is gained."

<sup>541</sup> Perhaps in (Rufinus' Latin) Origen, *Lev hom.* 9.5.2 (SC 287:88), where the bandit is taken to paradise "without delay" / *sine mora*. Certainly in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat* 13.31 (R-R 2:90), "The request (was for a) distant time, but favor (was) most quick" / μακροχρόνιος μὲν ἡ αἴτησις, ὅξυτάτη δὲ ἡ χάρις. Also Ambrose, *Ps 118* 8.11 (CSEL 62:156), "He removes the delay... (and) he adds **today**, lest grace be diminished by delay" / *aufert dilationem... addidit hodie, ne dilatione gratia minueretur*. Augustine, *en Ps* 39.15 (CCSL 38:437) illustrates it most clearly: "He was hoping for his future salvation far off, and he was content to grasp it after a long time. He was hoping far off, but the day was not delayed"

### 6B. Jerusalem's Catechumen

Early interpreters not only describe the bandit himself as a quick convert, but also draw on his witness as representative of and instructive for the new converts in their midst (i.e., catechumens and the recently baptized). In a letter dated to 256, only a few short years after the Decian persecution, Cyprian of Carthage becomes the first on record to picture the bandit's story as representing catechumens.<sup>542</sup> Even so, it is Cyril of Jerusalem who, more than any other interpreter in antiquity, exemplifies this particular trajectory. He so thoroughly interweaves the bandit's story into his ca. 350 *Procatechesis* and *Catecheses* that it serves as a paradigmatic narrative for catechumens. One of the opening sentences of the *Procatechesis* (essentially the protreptic introduction to the *Catecheses*) is suggestive: "Already you have come round the king's antechamber. Let it now be that you are brought in by the king" / Ἡδη περὶ τὸ προαύλιον τῶν βασιλείων γεγόνατε· γένοιτο δὲ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰσαχθῆτε.<sup>543</sup> Its conclusion is more than suggestive, alluding to the bandit's story twice in its litany of descriptions of the afterlife rewards that the newly baptized may expect. "At that time to each man and woman among you paradise's gate will be opened" / τότε ὑμῶν ἐκάστῳ καὶ ἐκάστη

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/ *Salutem suam longe futuram sperabat, et post longum tempus accipere contentus erat ; in longum sperabat, dies non est dilatus.*

<sup>542</sup> *ep.* 73.22 (CCSL 3C:556–7). This very important text will be discussed more fully in 6E.

<sup>543</sup> *Procat.* 1 (R-R 1:2).

παραδείσου θύρα ἀνοιχθῇ.<sup>544</sup> “Great is the baptism lying before you... [It is] paradise’s delight, the kingdom’s proxy” / Μέγα, τὸ προκείμενον βάπτισμα ... παραδείσου τρυφή· βασιλείας πρόξενον.<sup>545</sup>

The opening of the introductory catechetical lecture makes the connection perfectly clear.<sup>546</sup>

You who have fully lit the lamps of faith, keep them in hand and unquenched. So may the one who at that time opened paradise on all-holy Golgotha to the bandit because of his faith grant you to sing the bridal part.<sup>547</sup>

Οἱ τὰς τῆς πίστεως λαμπάδας ἐξάψαντες ἀρτίως, ἀσβέστους ἐν χερσὶ διατηρήσατε ταύτας· ἵν’ ὁ τῷ ληστῇ τότε τὸν παράδεισον ἐν τῷ παναγίῳ τούτῳ Γολγοθᾷ διὰ τὴν πίστιν ἀνοίξας, τὸ νυμφικὸν ὑμῖν ᾄσαι παράσχοι μέλος.

The second lecture (On Repentance)<sup>548</sup> briefly contrasts the two Lucan bandits to illustrate the difference between despair and hope.<sup>549</sup> The fifth lecture (On Faith) echoes the clear connection and language of the first, as well as its mention of Golgotha as the place of the bandit’s salvation. The catechetical journey finds its fulfillment as a

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<sup>544</sup> *Procat.* 15 (R-R 1:20).

<sup>545</sup> *Procat.* 16 (R-R 1:22).

<sup>546</sup> *Cat.* 1.1 (R-R 1:28–30).

<sup>547</sup> The intertext is Matt 25.1–13.

<sup>548</sup> The lecture subtitles are taken from the traditional manuscript headings, conveniently listed by E. Yarnald in *Cyril of Jerusalem*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 87–8.

<sup>549</sup> *Cat.* 2.5 (R-R 1:46). “The bandit who does not expect a gift departs into madness. But the one who hopes for forgiveness comes altogether to repentance” / Ὁ γὰρ ληστὴς ὁ μὴ δωρεὰν προσδοκῶν, εἰς ἀπόνοιαν χωρεῖ· ἐλπίσας δὲ τὴν ἄφεσιν, εἰς μετάνοιαν ἔρχεται πολλάκις. Here *πολλάκις* serves as an adverb of degree rather than number. Because of a misunderstanding of this usage, the translation in FOC 61:99 turns the statement into a reference to the repentance of robbers in general: “For the robber who looks not for mercy proceeds to despair, but when he has hope of pardon, he often comes to repentance.”

repetition of the bandit's pilgrimage to salvation, including its time (Friday afternoon)<sup>550</sup> and place (Golgotha).<sup>551</sup>

For if you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved and translated into paradise by the one who brought the bandit into paradise. Do not disbelieve that this is possible. For the same one who on this holy Golgotha saved the bandit who believed for one hour will also rescue you who believe.

Ἐὰν γὰρ πιστεύσης, ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ καὶ μετατεθήσῃ εἰς [τὸν] παράδεισον, ὑπὸ τοῦ τὸν ληστὴν εἰς παράδεισον εἰσαγαγόντος. Καὶ μὴ ἀπιστήσῃς εἰ δυνατόν ἐστιν. Ὁ γὰρ τὸν ληστὴν διὰ μιᾶς ὥρας πιστεύσαντα σώσας ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ τούτῳ Γολγοθᾷ, ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ σε πιστεύσαντα διασώσει.

It is his thirteenth lecture (“On ‘Who Was Crucified and Buried’”) that makes the most of the bandit's catechetical significance.<sup>552</sup> The themes here are too dense to discuss in detail, and many of them are explored in other sections. Let it suffice to note that in *Cat.* 13.30–1 Cyril describes the bandit as a convert (i.e., catechumen) and thus invites his catechumens to self-identify with him. Several phrases stand out. “For him it was the end of life and the beginning of amendment. He gave up his soul and took on salvation” / ἦν αὐτῷ τέλος ζωῆς καὶ ἀρχὴ διορθώσεως, παράδοσις ψυχῆς καὶ πρόληψις σωτηρίας.<sup>553</sup> “What sort of power enlightened you” / Ποία σε ἐφωταγώγησε δύναμις;<sup>554</sup> In some of these phrases, Cyril improvises speech for Jesus himself: “Most swiftly do I pardon you” / ὀξύτατά σοι χαρίζομαι;<sup>555</sup> “Today you have been obedient

<sup>550</sup> See 8B for further discussion of chronological parallels.

<sup>551</sup> *Cat.* 5.10 (R-R 1:146).

<sup>552</sup> *Cat.* 13.3 (R-R 2:54), 13.19 (R-R 2:74), 13.30–1 (R-R 2:88–92).

<sup>553</sup> *Cat.* 13.30 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>554</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>555</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

to faith. Today salvation is yours” / σὺ δὲ σήμερον ὑπήκουσας τῇ πίστει, σήμερόν σοι ἡ σωτηρία.<sup>556</sup> Cyril’s intertext with the Matthean parable of the staggered hires (Matt 20.1–16) is highly significant here, as is his novel intertext with the Lucan parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15.1–7).<sup>557</sup> His added dialogue and drama, coupled with numerous images and intertexts, invite catechumens to see themselves and their imminent baptismal initiation in the Lucan episode.

During his time as Antioch’s bishop, Chrysostom presumes the same connection as Cyril of Jerusalem. Preaching one of his catechetical sermons on Holy Thursday in 390 CE,<sup>558</sup> Chrysostom reminds his hearers that their baptismal questioning will take place “tomorrow, on the Preparation (Holy Friday), at the ninth hour” / μετὰ τὴν αὐριον τῇ Παρασκευῇ, ὥρα ἐνάτη.<sup>559</sup> He continues.

I did not unintentionally remind you all about this day and this hour. There is a certain mystery to learn from them. For on the Preparation, at the ninth hour, the bandit entered into paradise and the darkness (which was from the sixth hour to the ninth) was broken. ... (20.) Therefore, when you are about to be led in at the ninth hour, you should also remember the greatness of these corrections and count these as gifts for yourselves. Then, you will no longer be upon earth, but you will arise and partake of the very heavens in your soul.

οὐχ ἀπλῶς δὲ ὑμᾶς οὐδὲ τὴν ἡμέραν οὐδὲ τὴν ὥραν ἀνέμνησα ταύτην· ἀλλὰ ἔστι καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων μαθεῖν τι μυστικόν. καὶ γὰρ τῇ Παρασκευῇ, ἐνάτη ὥρα, ὁ ληστής εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσῆλθε καὶ τὸ σκότος κατελύθη τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς ἑκτῆς ὥρας ἕως τῆς ἐνάτης... ὅταν οὖν μέλλῃς εἰσάγεσθαι καὶ σὺ κατὰ τὴν ἐνάτην ὥραν, ἀναμιμνήσκου καὶ σὺ τοῦ μεγέθους τῶν κατορθωμάτων καὶ τὰς δωρεὰς ἀρίθμει ταύτας παρὰ σαυτῷ, καὶ οὐκ ἔση λοιπὸν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἀλλὰ διαναστήσῃ καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιλήψῃ τῇ ψυχῇ.

<sup>556</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>557</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:92).

<sup>558</sup> ACW 31:3, 10–11, 15.

<sup>559</sup> *Cat. ill. hom.* 3 19–20 (CPG 4467; P-K 171).

Chrysostom may even picture the bandit as a catechumen when describing him as a student of philosophy in his two sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*.<sup>560</sup> This picture in turn seems to influence Augustine.<sup>561</sup> Attested explicitly by only three interpreters, the trope of the catechumen bandit is fascinating but relatively infrequent in early interpretation. Still, there is considerable overlap with the more prevalent concern regarding whether and how the bandit was baptized (see 6G).

#### *6C. From Confession to Confessor*

The theme of confession may belong to the pre-history of the Lucan episode. The *Gospel of Peter*, reflecting an earlier tradition than Luke,<sup>562</sup> has one of the criminals confessing Jesus, though its confession is explicit (calling Jesus “the Savior of Men”) rather than implicit (asking to be remembered in the Messianic kingdom). Some mention of a criminal confessing Jesus as Messiah was apparently part of an earlier tradition picked up and adapted in both Luke and the *Gospel of Peter*. It is likely a strong, implicit feature of the Lucan text itself. The criminal’s plea carries a Messianic confession: “Remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

Given this background, it comes as no surprise that the theme of confession resounds early and often in the history of interpretation. Origen may be the first to employ the

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<sup>560</sup> See 5D.

<sup>561</sup> See 5E.

<sup>562</sup> See 2B.

express language of confession. At the same time, the only clear references appear in the Latin translations of Rufinus, namely *Lev hom.*<sup>563</sup> and *Rom com. A.*<sup>564</sup> One Greek passage may implicitly reflect the idea.<sup>565</sup> In the latter passage, after an involved discussion of the Lucan bandit, Origen may intend to contrast the bandit's actions with those of the disciples who were not able "to follow the Word and confess him" / ἀκολουθεῖν τῷ λόγῳ καὶ ὁμολογεῖν αὐτὸν.

Even apart from Origen, roughly contemporaneous texts confirm that the language of confession was indeed commonplace by the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century. A monarchianist homily written at this time says that the bandit "was confessing with confessions" / μετὰ ὁμολογίας ἐξομολογεῖται, though this may refer to confessing sin more than faith.<sup>566</sup> The ps-Cyprianic *De duobus montibus* says this criminal "confessed" / *confessus est*; this is also the first extant text to identify him explicitly as a "confessor" / *confessorem* (twice, no less!).<sup>567</sup> Cyprian of Carthage also speaks (256 CE) of the "bandit believing and confessing during his very passion" / *latronem in ipsa passione credentem et confitentem*.<sup>568</sup>

Among 4<sup>th</sup> century Greek interpreters, Eustathius of Antioch uses the language of confession the most intensely. He also makes multiple, novel intertexts in this regard. In

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<sup>563</sup> 9.5.2–3 (SC 287:88, 90), "he was confessing the Lord" / *confitebatur Dominum*, and "confessed" / *confessus est* and thus reflects the destiny "of all those who believe and confess" / *omnibus credentibus et confitentibus* (alluding to Rom 10.8–10).

<sup>564</sup> *Rom com. A* 4.1 (GLB 33:278–9): he "was confessing" / *confitebatur*. See esp. *Rom com. A* 5.9 (GLB 33:435–6, quoted in 4D).

<sup>565</sup> *Io com.* 32.32.395, 399 (SC 385:356, 358).

<sup>566</sup> *pasch.* 54.1 (CPG 4611; SC 27:133).

<sup>567</sup> *mont.* 7.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12, quoted in 5B).

<sup>568</sup> *ep.* 73.22 (CCSL 3C:556–7).



the extant fragments of his treatise *On the Soul against the Arians*, he mentions that the “criminal burst forth the sound of the most excellent confession” / τὴν τῆς ἀρίστης ὁμολογίας ἐκρῆξαι τὸν κακοῦργον φωνήν.<sup>569</sup> Again, the bandit was “confessing (Christ’s) power” / ὁμολογοῦντος τὸ κράτος<sup>570</sup> and was “showing forth a God-loving confession” / ὁμολογίαν ἐνδειξαμένω θεοφιλῇ.<sup>571</sup> Eustathius is the first to connect the bandit to 1 Cor 12.3 and 1 Jo 4.1–3, quoting both of these texts in their entirety.<sup>572</sup> It is also fascinating that Eustathius quotes certain Marcionites who, appealing to the Lucan episode, deem him “the bandit who confesses him” / Ομολογοῦντι μὲν αὐτὸν τῷ ληστῇ.<sup>573</sup>

Among 4<sup>th</sup> century Latin interpreters, Hilary of Poitiers is the most notable proponent of this idea, both during and after his Phrygian exile (356–360 CE). He not only identifies the bandit as a “confessor,”<sup>574</sup> but also frequently describes him confessing<sup>575</sup> and giving

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<sup>569</sup> *frag.* 26 (CCSG 51:88), perhaps recalling 1 Tim 6.12–13 and its twice-repeated phrase, “the beautiful confession” / τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν.

<sup>570</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:90).

<sup>571</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92).

<sup>572</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:90).

<sup>573</sup> *frag.* 23 (CCSG 51:87). This is one of three roughly continuous fragments (*frag.* 23–5) which argue against Marcionites who use the Lucan episode in support of a docetic account of the passion (CCSG 51:87–8).

<sup>574</sup> *Trin.* 10.67 (CCSL 62A:522): “It happened that he was abandoned unto death, but **according to the scriptures** at that moment he received His confessor with him in the kingdom of paradise” / *Derelinqui se ad mortem quaestus est, sed secundum scripturas tunc confessorem suum secum in regno paradisi recepit.*

<sup>575</sup> *Ps* 1.14–15 (SC 515:192–3): “that bandit who confessed him as Lord... saying, **‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.’**” / *latronem illum se Dominum confitentem Dominus... dicens: Amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso.* *Ps* 2.24 (SC 515:254–5): “And I do not understand how one could securely doubt Christ to be the king, when that same bandit in the suffering of a cross confessed: **‘Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.’**” / *Et nescio cui Christum regem esse ambigere sit tutum, latrone hoc ipso in crucis passione confitente: Memento mei, Domine, cum ueneris in regnum tuum.* *Ps* 65(66).25–6 (CSEL 22:267): “Such was that one who confessed the Lord in his own condemnation, saying: **‘Remember me, Lord, when you come in your reign.’**” / *Qualis fuit ille qui*

a confession.<sup>576</sup> The language of confession echoes sporadically among several Latin interpreters of later generations.<sup>577</sup>

Of all late antique interpreters, Cyril of Alexandria gives the highest praise to the bandit's confession. This praise takes the form of an encomium within the last extant sermon of his *Commentary on Luke*. Unfortunately, the ending of this sermon has disappeared. What remains only exists in Syriac, save one Greek fragment of a few lines that apparently summarizes the main themes of the sermon rather than quoting a particular section of it. While the Greek fragment only mentions that the bandit "confessed sin" / ὡμολόγησε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν,<sup>578</sup> the Syriac sermon frequently and encomiastically relishes the devotional and aesthetic quality of the bandit's confession.<sup>579</sup> This bandit is "justly worthy of our admiration."<sup>580</sup> He fulfills Isa 53.26 in that he...

confessed his sin, that he might be justified... He bore unto Christ a blameless testimony. O how beautiful is this confession, how wise the reasonings, and how excellent the thoughts! He became the confessor of the Savior's glory, and the accuser of the pride of those who crucified him. ... Let us look at his most beautiful confession of faith.<sup>581</sup>

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*Dominum in ipsa sua damnatione confessus est dicens: Memento mei, Domine, cum ueneris in regnum tuum.*

<sup>576</sup> *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:487–8): "this faith of a blessed confession" / *hanc beatae confessionis fidem*.

<sup>577</sup> Chromatius of Aquila, *serm.* 2.6 (late 4<sup>th</sup> cent. CE; SC 154:142, quoted in 6E). Quodvultdeus, *ymb.1* 6.15–23 (CCSL 60:321–2, quoted in 6D). Leo the Great, *serm.* 53.1 (mid 5<sup>th</sup>; CCSL 138A:313), "[U]p to now liable unto a cross, he suddenly becomes Christ's confessor" / *usque ad crucem reus, fit christi repente confessor*.

<sup>578</sup> *Luc com* 153 (PG 72:937).

<sup>579</sup> P-S 1858:447 (ET in P-S 1859:720–1).

<sup>580</sup> P-S 1858:447 (ET from P-S 1859:721).

<sup>581</sup> *Luc com* 153 (P-S 2:721).

### 6D. Peter's Counterpart

Sections 5D and 5E called occasional attention to the way early interpreters (particularly Ephrem, Chrysostom, Maximus of Turin, and Augustine) contrast the bandit's faith with the lack of faith demonstrated during Christ's passion by the apostles, especially Peter. Yet, more than a divergence of faith, it was the difference between the bandit's confession and Peter's denial that most struck early interpreters. Even for the interpreters mentioned above, the focus is on the specific contrast of confessing and denying/abandoning Christ. Ephrem is the first on record to draw the contrast.<sup>582</sup> Perhaps owing to Ephrem's influence, Asterius Ignotus notes the difference as well.<sup>583</sup>

When the centurion and the bandit said good things about him... at that time all the disciples fled, forsaking him. John departs naked. Peter denies. The disciples flee.

ὁ κεντυρίων καὶ ὁ ληστής χρηστὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ ἔλεγον... ὅτε καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ πάντες ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἔφυγον. Ἰωάννης γυμνὸς ἀναχωρεῖ. Πέτρος ἀρνεῖται. Οἱ μαθηταὶ φεύγουσι.

Ephrem's imitators continued to expand the trope. Especially notable is a sermon falsely ascribed to Ephrem, one which may well date to the 5<sup>th</sup> century. In *CPG* 4062 / *BHG* 438c (*On the Holy Day of Preparation and the Bandit*), as part of an encomiastic section on the bandit, the preacher contrasts the "one bandit... (who) confessed" with a litany of named disciples, including Peter, who, as "the first among my disciples, became

<sup>582</sup> *cruc.* 8.8 (Nisibene; CSCO 248:74, quoted in 5D).

<sup>583</sup> *hom* 25.23 on Ps 14(13) (SOFS 16:197–8).

the first of those who fled me” / ὁ πρῶτος μοι τῶν μαθητῶν, πρῶτος τῶν ἐμὲ πεφευγόντων ἐγένετο.<sup>584</sup> Also fascinating here is a sermon falsely ascribed to Chrysostom, perhaps written as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century, which potently combines Ephrem’s idea of the bandit receiving the key of paradise and Chrysostom’s idea of seeing the true identity of the crucified Christ.<sup>585</sup>

Peter, who had received the key of the kingdom, seeing the king of glory crucified, fled, throwing away the keys. Yet the bandit himself, opening the gates of the heavens, snatched the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Πέτρος ὁ τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς βασιλείας δεξάμενος, βλέπων τὸν βασιλέα τῆς δόξης σταυρούμενον, ρίψας τὰς κλεῖς ἔφυγε· καὶ ὁ ληστής ὁ τὰς θύρας ὑπανοίγων τῶν οὐρανῶν, αὐτὸς τὰς κλεῖς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ παραδείσου ἤρπασεν.

Perhaps also influenced by Ephrem, Chrysostom still demonstrates a creativity all his own. He features the contrast with Peter in both of his sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit*, where he expands the contrast through a dramatic depiction of the threat each one faced.

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<sup>584</sup> ESO Gk3:475. Peter, Andrew, Phillip, the sons of Zebedee (James and John), John, Thomas, Matthew. Rather than completing the list, the preacher concludes it by noting that “[t]he twelve-fold chorus disperses” / ὁ δωδέκατος χορὸς ἐσκοπίζη.

<sup>585</sup> CPG 4762 = BHGn 451u; see *Oratio de descensu ad inferos et de latrone*, in Brunellus, *Sanctorum Patrum orationes et epistolae selectae* (Rome, 1585), 1:146. M. van Esbroeck notes a “parallèle bref mais précis avec nos textes éphrémiens” and this sermon (Brunellus 153), specifically the theme of the bandit’s entry into paradise; see “Une Homélie Inédite,” AB 101:333. He is incorrect here, however, in his claim that the sermon begins on the parallel with Peter, when it actually commences by contrasting the bandit with Judas. See Brunellus 1:145–6. To be precise, the contrast between the bandit and Peter begins on the thirteenth line of the second page of the sermon.

<i>cruc. latr. 1.2 (PG 49:401–2)</i>	<i>cruc. latr. 2.2 (PG 49:410)</i>
<p>When Peter denied below, at that time this man confessed above. I do not say these things to denigrate Peter—God forbid. Instead, I desire to show the bandit’s magnanimity. The disciple did not withstand the threat of a meager girl. But the bandit, seeing the entire populace standing there, crying out, crazed, hurling blasphemies and jests, did not attend to them. Nor did he dwell on the meager appearance of the crucified. ... [Instead] he said, <b>“Remember me, Lord, when you come in your kingdom.”</b></p>	<p>As Peter, the chief of the disciples, denied below, at the same time this man, finding himself up on the cross, confessed. I do not say this to denigrate Peter—God forbid. Instead, I desire to show the bandit’s magnanimity and his exceeding philosophy. That one did not withstand the threat of lowly servant-girl. But this one, seeing the entire populace enraged and encircling, yelling countless insults at the crucified one, did not look at the crucified one’s mistreatment. ... [Instead he] said... <b>“Remember me in your kingdom.”</b></p>
<p>“Ὅτε Πέτρος ἡρνήσατο κάτω, τότε ἐκεῖνος ὡμολόγησεν ἄνω. Καὶ ταῦτα οὐ τοῦ Πέτρου κατηγορῶν λέγω, μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ληστοῦ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν δεῖξαι βουλόμενος. Ὁ μαθητὴς ἀπειλὴν οὐκ ἤνεγκεν εὐτελοῦς κορασίου· ὁ δὲ ληστὴς ὁρῶν δῆμον ὀλόκληρον περιστῶτα, βοῶντα, μαινόμενον, βλασφημίας καὶ σκώμματα ἐξακοντίζοντα, οὐ προσέσχεν ἐκείνοις, οὐκ ἐνενόησε τὴν φαινομένην ευτέλειαν τοῦ σταυρουμένου ... ἔλεγε· <b>Μνήσθητί μου, Κύριε, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.</b></p>	<p>“Ὅτε Πέτρος ἡρνεῖτο κάτω ὁ τῶν μαθητῶν κορυφαῖος, τότε ἐκεῖνος ἄνω ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τυγχάνων ὡμολόγησε. Καὶ τοῦτο οὐ τοῦ Πέτρου κατηγορῶν εἶπον, μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ληστοῦ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν δεῖξαι βουλόμενος, καὶ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν φιλοσοφίαν. Ἐκεῖνος οὐκ ἤνεγκε κόρης ἀπειλὴν εὐτελοῦς· οὗτος δὲ ὁρῶν δῆμον ὀλόκληρον μεμνηνότα καὶ περιστῶτα καὶ βοῶντα καὶ μυρία εἰς τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον λοιδορούμενον, οὐκ εἶδε πρὸς τὴν ὕβριν τοῦ ἐσταυρωμένου ... εἰπὼν ... <b>Μνήσθητί μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.</b></p>

Maximus seems to borrow (whether directly or indirectly) this extended contrast from Chrysostom, even as he leverages it typologically to refer to Eve as the first temptress who drew a man away from paradise.<sup>586</sup> Perhaps also indebted (whether directly or indirectly) to Chrysostom, Augustine finds the now-traditional contrast especially useful

<sup>586</sup> *serm.* 75.2–3 (CCSL 23:314–15). The first section of this sermon (CCSL 23:313) already starts to draw the contrast between the bandit and Peter, but here the contrast is between Peter’s haste and the bandit being invited as a companion of Christ. The contrast sounds quite similar to the warning found in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 1–4 (Musurillo 2–5), among other texts, regarding the danger of seeking martyrdom before the divinely appointed time.

in his anti-Donatist polemics. As part of an early attempt (ca. 399–400) to undermine the idea that Cyprian’s martyr-status exempted him from error (here especially his early idea that baptism by heretics was illegitimate), Augustine notes that Peter’s eventual martyrdom did not prevent him from being corrected by Paul (Gal 2) and denying Christ.<sup>587</sup> The contrast with the bandit follows.

By the Lord’s hidden and miraculous dispensation of grace, the bandit hanging on the cross confessed him once and on that very day is sent into paradise. Peter, after following the Lord, denies him three times and is kept wanting of the crown.

*cuius occulta et mirabili dispensatione gratiarum latro in cruce pendens semel eum confitetur et die ipso in paradisum mittitur, Petrus dominum sequens ter eum negat et a corona differtur.*

In a much later sermon with strong anti-Donatist themes,<sup>588</sup> Augustine notes the contrast again.

Nevertheless, one of them appeared to have quite enough strength. [By strength, I do] not [mean] the torture of hanging but rather the piety of confession. The bandit acquired through pain what Peter had lost through fear.

*Uerum tamen etiam in uno ipsorum satis apparuit, quantum ualeret, non cruciatus pendentis, sed pietas confitentis. acquisiuit latro in dolore, quod Petrus perdiderat in timore.*

Chrysostom’s influence echoes in Latin texts well into the 5<sup>th</sup> century, as seen in a sermon from the (debated) corpus of so-called Quodvultdeus. The relevant passage runs closely parallel to Augustine’s sermon above.<sup>589</sup>

There he immediately made that bandit a confessor. . . . The bandit was confessing at the time when Peter was disturbed. This one recognized [him] at the time when the other denied [him].

<sup>587</sup> *bapt.* 2.1.2 (CSEL 51:176).

<sup>588</sup> *serm.* 285.2 (late 419 CE or after; PL 38:1293–4). See 6F for literary and historical context.

<sup>589</sup> *ymb.1* 6.15–23 (mid 5<sup>th</sup> cent. CE; CCSL 60:321–2).

*ibi statim illum latronem fecit confessorem. ... Tunc latro confitebatur, quando petrus turbabatur; tunc iste agnouit, quando ille negauit.*

#### 6E. The Solidarity-Martyr

The many examples in 6C of interpreters describing the bandit's confession and his identity as a confessor may sometimes imply a martyr identity, and yet the same language may also occasionally distinguish him from a proper martyr. The semantic domains of confession and martyrdom overlap in many early Christian texts, and yet the title "confessor" was sometimes used to distinguished those who suffered for their confession but did not die for it.<sup>590</sup> This distinct use of the title "confessor" reflected an insistence that the title "martyr" only apply to those whose confessions were sealed in death.<sup>591</sup>

At issue also is how to define martyrdom, how to decide who qualifies as a martyr and what criteria figure in such a decision. As we will see in the next section (6F),

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<sup>590</sup> Cyprian, writing early in 250 CE, is apparently the first to use the term "confessors" in this technical sense. The term caught on quickly in the early Decian persecution to refer to and honor those who suffered but had not (yet) died. The first uses appear roughly concurrently in *ep.* 5.2.1 (CCSL 3B:27, *confessores*), the incipit of *ep.* 6 (CCSL 3B:29, *confessoribus*), and 6.3.1 (CCSL 3B:34, *confessores*). For the dates of these letters, see ACW 43:181–2, 189–90. Similar uses (mid-250 CE and afterwards) appear in 10 incipit, 13 incipit, 23 incipit, 28 incipit, 29.1.2, 30.4, 30.5.3, 31 incipit, 31.6.1–2, 32.1.1, 37 incipit, 39.1.1, 39.4.2, 39.5.1, 43.1.1, 43.2.1–2, 43.3.2, 46 incipit, 47.1.1–2, etc. Note also that in *ep.* 28.2.3, Cyprian uses the terms "confessor" and "martyr" synonymously.

<sup>591</sup> In the ca. 180 *Martyrs of Lyons*, a preoccupation with "martyr" / μάρτυς as a distinct and noble title already appears, and it is bequeathed on those who confessed and died without wavering, as in 1.4 (Musurillo 62), 1.10–11 (64), 1.16, 1.18 (66), 1.24 (68), as well as those who temporarily denied Christ only later to confess him and die, notably here a certain Biblis in 1.27 (70). Though the initial account may have dated close to the events described (ca. 177/8), the text as it stands shows various features of a mid- to late-3<sup>rd</sup> century redaction; see Musurillo, xxi–xxii. The second part of the story (2.1–8) bears several signs of later redaction, including a divergence from the basic chronological framework of the first part and the inclusion of first-person speech (the vast majority of the first part remains in the third person). The way that its would-be martyrs (2.1; 82) insist on being called mere "confessors" / ομολόγοι (2.3; 82) prior to their death also seems to reflect a later (Decian or post-Decian) concern.

Augustine insists that the Lucan criminal cannot be properly considered a martyr because he died for his crimes, not for his faith. But this argument, appearing first ca. 400 in Augustine's anti-Donatist polemic *On Baptism*, must not prejudice the analysis of earlier Christian texts and traditions, each of which must be taken seriously on its own terms and in its own context.

*Excursus: Solidarity-Martyr Stories*<sup>592</sup>

A distinct literary convention appears starting around the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE which holds considerable significance for the trajectory of the bandit as a martyr. Rabbinic literature may hold one of the earliest examples of such a story. In a Talmudic aggadah that may be of late Tannaitic origin, the execution of Rabbi Ḥaninah ben Teradion during the Hadrianic persecution (ca. 132–138) prompts sympathy from his own (Roman) executioner.<sup>593</sup> This anonym arranges an agreement with the rabbi to speed his death in exchange for a share in his eschatological reward. Ḥaninah accepts. The executioner fulfills his part in the agreement then throws himself into the fire to die together with the rabbi. Immediately after the story is narrated, it is recorded that “Rabbi” (perhaps Rabbi Judah I, II or III) weeps and states, “One may acquire eternal life in a single hour, another after many years.”

An account from the early to mid-Amoraic period (in *Sifre to Deuteronomy*) repeats this trope, but in this instance the onlooker happens to be a philosopher who rebukes this travesty of justice. He is sentenced to death with Ḥaninah and welcomes his capital punishment as an assurance of beatitude.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>592</sup> This excursus is a revised version of a presentation made at the North American Patristics Society in May of 2008. I would especially like to thank Judith Lieu for her encouraging and constructive feedback. It represents an expansion of the brief analysis and intertexts (*Sif. Deut.* ch. 307) of Dibelius and Jeremias; see M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, trans. B. L. Woolf (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 202–3; *TDNT*, s.v. “παράδεισος” (J. Jeremias, 7:771 and n54).

<sup>593</sup> *b Av. Zar.* 18b; see I. Epstein, *Hebrew-English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud: Avodah Zarah*, trans. A. Cohen (London: Soncino, 1988), 35.

<sup>594</sup> *Sif. Deut.* ch. 307; see J. Neusner, *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytical Translation*, volume 1, Brown Judaic Studies 98 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 320. Droge and Tabor discuss these two episodes, along with other similar stories of rabbis and their sympathizers seeking death, such as the Roman official who dies to save Rabbi Gamaliel (*b Taan.* 29a). See A. J. Droge and J. D. Tabor, *A Noble Death: Suicide and Martyrdom among Christians and Jews in Antiquity* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 101–5. Another similar story has a *bat-kol* declaring “whosoever has been present at the death of a Rabbi is destined to enjoy the life of the world to come” (*b Keth.* 103b, with parallels in *y Keth.* 12.3). It then tells of a “fuller” who would visit Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi daily, but on the day of his death failed to visit. Hearing the



The same trope appears in several of the earliest Christian martyr stories (mid- to late-2<sup>nd</sup> century) from various locations. The *Martyrdom of Ptolemaeus and Lucius* (ca. 148–161, Rome),<sup>595</sup> after detailing the courageous confession of Ptolemaeus, turns to a bystander named Lucius. Apparently serving as an assistant to a government official,<sup>596</sup> Lucius formally complains to the prefect about the injustice of punishing Ptolemaeus merely for the label Christian.<sup>597</sup> Urbicus immediately turns his inquiry back upon Lucius himself, who courageously reveals himself a Christian in solidarity with Ptolemaeus. Sentenced to death, Lucius welcomes the verdict as an assurance of final beatitude.<sup>598</sup> The story closes by mentioning that “a third person deserted” / τρίτος ἀπελθὼν,<sup>599</sup> apparently another government worker who wished to die in protest and solidarity with Ptolemaeus.

In the early (ca. 148–161, Pergamum),<sup>600</sup> Greek recension of the *Martyrdom of Carpus, Papyrus and Agathonice*, “a certain Agathonice, standing and watching” / Ἀγαθονίκη δέ τις ἑστῶσα καὶ ἰδοῦσα remains unidentified; even her dying prayer lacks distinctively Christian language.<sup>601</sup> Yet, as if entering the heavenly banquet itself, she throws herself upon a stake in the middle of the fire where Carpus and Papyrus are burning and is subsequently mentioned by the narrator as one “perfected with the saints” / ἐτελειώθη σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις.<sup>602</sup>

Shortly thereafter (ca. 177/178) in Roman Gaul, the account of the *Martyrs of Lyons* describes how some Christians, including one Biblis, had denied Christ

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news, the fuller throws himself from a roof and (as the *bat-kol* again declares) shares life in the world to come with the Rabbi.

<sup>595</sup> Musurillo, xvi–xvii, notes that the text of this martyr story appears in Justin’s so-called *Second Apology*, which is usually dated to 161 CE and designated as a second part or appendix of his *First Apology*. In the text, a Christian named Lucius rebukes the prefect Urbicus and mentions that Antoninus Pius (148–161 CE) is presently emperor (16; Musurillo 40).

<sup>596</sup> Note his direct, individual appeal to the emperor, as well as the way he later rejoices that he will be set free “from evil masters” / πονηρῶν δεσποτῶν (19; Musurillo 40).

<sup>597</sup> 16 (Musurillo 40). The defense here may appeal to the legal precedent established in Pliny’s correspondence with Trajan (*ep.* 10.96–7, 109–111 CE).

<sup>598</sup> 18–19 (Musurillo 40).

<sup>599</sup> 20 (Musurillo 40).

<sup>600</sup> Musurillo, xv, notes the scholarly consensus about the original setting of the martyrdom during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161–180 CE), as well as the debate about whether it was composed during this time or later, under Decius. Musurillo asserts that Eusebius’ grouping of this martyr-story with those of Polycarp and Pionius points to a relatively early date.

<sup>601</sup> 42–6 (Musurillo 26, 28). Apparently uncomfortable with the idea of Agathonice as a mere onlooker who killed herself, a later Latin recension has Agathonice called to trial as a Christian, explicitly confess herself the same, executed, and give a distinctively Christian witness while dying. See Recension B, 6.1–6 (Musurillo 34, 36).

<sup>602</sup> 47 (Musurillo 28).

under torture.<sup>603</sup> Apparently moved by the superhuman strength and endurance of the deacon Sanctus (narrated immediately before),<sup>604</sup> in her second round of tortures Biblis finds courage, “rebuked the blasphemers” / ἀντεῖπε τοῖς βλασφήμοις, and “confesses herself a Christian” / Χριστιανὴν ἑαυτὴν ὠμολόγει.<sup>605</sup> The narrator immediately informs the reader that she died faithfully and “was appointed to the portion of the martyrs” / τῷ κλήρῳ τῶν μαρτύρων προσετέθη.<sup>606</sup>

The trope is sufficiently consistent and well represented that it merits a form-critical definition, which I will offer here. A solidarity-martyr story details how the example of an heroic martyr so moves an onlooker that he or she makes an apologetic and/or confessional gesture, finally embracing death in solidarity with the heroic martyr so as to share the same eschatological reward.

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<sup>603</sup> 25 (Musurillo 68).

<sup>604</sup> 20–4 (Musurillo 68).

<sup>605</sup> 26 (Musurillo 68, 70).

<sup>606</sup> 1.27 (Musurillo 70).

Notable Early Solidarity-Martyr Stories

	<i>b Avodah Zarah</i>	<i>Sifre Deut</i>	<i>Ptolemaeus &amp; Lucius</i>	<i>Carpus, Papyrus &amp; Agathonice</i>	<i>Martyrs of Lyons</i>
Date	Tannaic (ca. 130–150?)	Amoraic (3rd cent.?)	ca. 148–161	ca. 161–180	ca. 177/178
Heroic Martyr	Haninah	Haninah	Ptolemaeus	Carpus	Sanctus
Onlooker	(Roman) executioner	philosopher	Lucius	Agathonice	Biblis
Confession	agrees to speed death	rebukes ruler	rebukes ruler	sees/speaks of fire as banquet	rebukes & confesses
Voluntary Death	jumps into fire	welcomes sentence	welcomes sentence	jumps on stake in fire	accepted death (implicit)
Beatitude	<i>bat-kol</i> and Rabbi	self-declared	self-declared	narrator: perfected with saints	narrator: martyrs' portion

The literary convention detailed in the excursus fits the Lucan account itself in many ways. In this case, Jesus himself is its heroic martyr; the bandit, his sympathetic onlooker. This character rebukes the injustice he sees and implicitly confesses his faith in solidarity with Jesus, not merely as an heroic martyr, but indeed, as the Messiah-martyr himself. Jesus immediately declares the bandit's beatitude. The most glaring question concerns the role which the bandit has in his own death. He does not directly bring it about, as in the first four examples above. But he does seem to accept his own death while suffering, akin to the case of Biblis.

The *Gospel of Peter* also bears a striking resemblance to this convention. As with Luke, this account raises the question of the bandit's role in his own death. Yet, a last-minute apologetic and confessional gesture certainly does place him in solidarity with the Messiah-martyr. In contrast with John's "others", this bandit is singled out for torture, his legs intentionally left unbroken because he angers the soldiers. The *Gospel of Peter* is thus an even closer match to the solidarity-martyr convention.<sup>607</sup> Reflecting an earlier and simpler form of the story of the apologist-criminal than that present in Luke (see 2B), it strengthens the claim that the Lucan drama presumes and conveys the same convention. While Luke would seem to diverge from the convention by omitting the idea of the criminal being tortured additionally for his defense, in another way it much more closely

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<sup>607</sup> In a more popular-level treatment of the Good Thief, H. Adams is quite perceptive in its claim that the *Gospel of Peter* pictures the bandit as a martyr; see *The Thief Who Stole Heaven* (N.p.: printed by author, 1982), 45–6. Apparently, the martyr-interpretation was in part suggested to Adams by Jerome's assertion of the bandit's martyr status (Adams, 46, citing *ep.* 16.1).

conforms to the convention in its declaration of beatitude, relocating the *bat kol* and pronouncement of beatitude in the very mouth of the crucified Christ.

One of the earliest extant interpretations of the Lucan episode may reflect a similar martyr-interpretation. Hippolytus may imply that the criminal shares in Christ's martyrdom when he speaks of the bandit as "stuck to Christ's cross" / τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπεριδόμενος, finding his way into paradise as a lizard clings to the walls of royal palaces.<sup>608</sup>

Origen never calls the bandit a martyr, but his language of confession may well presume the idea.<sup>609</sup> Two passages are especially evocative. A Greek fragment, overlapping closely with the *Commentariorum* version of Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*, makes a highly suggestive intertext with Rom 6.5–6.<sup>610</sup> The same intertext also appears (admittedly without Greek parallel in the Tura papyrus) in Rufinus' translation of the *Commentary on Romans*.<sup>611</sup> Origen seems to have thought of the bandit as a martyr, and his comments that accentuate participation resonate well with the solidarity-martyr examples mentioned in the excursus above.

Cyprian of Carthage has an even clearer reference to the Lucan bandit as a martyr, though the theme of solidarity is not apparent. Writing in 256 (in the aftermath of the Decian persecution, and in the midst of ongoing persecutions under Valerian) to the Mauritanian bishop Jubaian, Cyprian defends his position that heretics ought to be re-

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<sup>608</sup> *Prov.* f54 (GCS 1.2:176–8).

<sup>609</sup> See 6C.

<sup>610</sup> C<sup>luc</sup> 58 (TU 47.2:39; GCS 40.2:270–1, quoted in 3C in a chart with parallels).

<sup>611</sup> *Rom com.* A 5.9 (GLB 33:435–6, quoted in 4D).

baptized. He notes his opponents' appeal to the now-traditional idea of martyrdom as baptism in blood, but dismisses its relevance, since baptism in blood applies to those who hold to the catholic church and faith. Perhaps to show his deep acceptance of the traditional idea of baptism in blood, or perhaps to give assurance that catholic catechism is not an impediment to final salvation but rather the proper preparation for it, Cyprian brings forth the Lucan bandit as the premier scriptural example of baptism in blood.<sup>612</sup>

Therefore, let such persons who are supporters and patrons of heretics know [this]. Those catechumens who at first keep whole the church's faith and truth—setting forth from divine camps to wage war against the devil with a full and sincere knowledge of God the Father and Christ and the Holy Spirit—are not deprived of the sacrament of baptism. Rather, they are baptized with the most glorious and greatest baptism, [the baptism] of blood. [It was] about this [baptism] that the Lord said he had another **baptism** with which to be **baptized**.<sup>613</sup> Moreover, the same Lord declares in a gospel that those baptized in their own blood and sanctified by suffering are perfected and obtain the favor of divine promises. [He declares it] when to the bandit who believed and confessed during his very passion, he speaks and promises that he will be with him in paradise.

*Sciant igitur eiusmodi homines, suffragatores et fautores haereticorum, catechuminos illos primo integram fidem et ecclesiae ueritatem tenere et ad debellandum diabolum de diuinis castris cum plena et sincera dei patris et Christi et spiritus sancti cognitione procedere, deinde nec priuari baptismi sacramento, utpote qui baptizentur gloriosissimo et maximo sanguinis baptismo, de quo et dominus dicebat habere se aliud **baptisma baptizari**. Sanguine autem suo baptizatos et passione sanctificatos consummari et diuinae pollicitationis gratiam consequi declarat in euangelio idem dominus, quando ad latronem in ipsa passione credentem et confitentem loquitur et quod se cum futurus sit in paradiso pollicetur.*

He concludes this section (73.22.3) by arguing that mere penance is not sufficient for the admission of baptized heretics, but only catholic catechism, baptism and eucharist. In

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<sup>612</sup> *ep.* 73.22.2 (CCSL 3C.556–7); written 256 to the Mauretanian bishop Jubaian and read aloud at the Council of Carthage that same year.

<sup>613</sup> Luke 12.50.

any case, Cyprian elegantly appeals to the Lucan bandit as exemplifying catechumen martyrdom and its assured rewards.

Some eighty years later, in two of the extant fragments of his exilic work *On the Soul against the Arians*, Eustathius of Antioch clearly describes him as a martyr. *Frag.* 26 is quite explicit, calling him “truth’s martyr” / μάρτυρα τῆς ἀληθείας.<sup>614</sup> But *frag.* 27 is far more vivid, picturing the bandit as suddenly freed by Jesus and inspired by the Spirit to forget his tortures and disregard the taunts of the crowd with philosophical reason and martyr-like courage.<sup>615</sup>

But the bountiful Jesus showed forth from himself the symbols of excellence. When he saw one of the criminals entangled by the evil one’s snares, he removed the fearless soul from the death-bearing traps. Henceforth the young man, inflamed by the divine spirit, blooms into excellence with staying power. He drives out pains from the body. He becomes forgetful of the surrounding misfortune. He becomes unmindful of death and wounds and sufferings. For as a lover of truth he considered and reasoned. He is spread out from four corners on a tree. [He is] fastened to it both by feet and by hands. [He is] stretched out and raised up on the heights. His joints and sinews and bones are bored and pierced through by the nail-strokes. [So he reasons] that he must either focus on the high-points of pain or else internally disregard whatever earth-sprung things are happening. He must refuse to hear what was being said. He must only love to suffer those who are acclimated to great pains, those who rule with blindness and great darkness. For they swoon and are made breathless before the tortures. Others are carried away simply by looking at those being dispatched and distressed by crafty misfortunes. But none of these things dimmed the soul of the one who escaped the tyrannical abuse.

Ἄλλ’ ὁ μεγαλόδωρος Ἰησοῦς αὐτόθεν τὰ τῆς ἀριστείας σύμβολα  
προφαίνων, ὁρῶν τὸν ἓνα τῶν κακούργων τοῖς τοῦ πονηροῦ  
συμπεπλεγμένον θηράτροις, τὴν ἄδειλον ψυχὴν τῶν φανατηφόρων  
ἐξαιρεῖται παγίδων. Ὄθεν δὴ τῷ θεῷ πυρωθεὶς ὁ νεανίας πνεύματι καὶ  
διαρκῶς ἀκμάσας εἰς ἀρετὴν, τοὺς μὲν τοῦ σώματος ἐκρίπτει πόνους, τῇ  
δὲ περιστώσει ἐπιλανθάνεται συμφορᾶς, ἀμνευμονεῖ δὲ θανάτου καὶ

<sup>614</sup> CCSG 51:88.

<sup>615</sup> CCSG 51:91–2, discussed also in 5D.

τρώσεων καὶ πάθους. Εἰ γάρ τις θιλαλήθως λογιεῖται ψηφιοῦμενος ὅπως ἐκ τεττάρων προσεκπεπέταστο τῷ ξύλῳ, ποδοῖν τὲ καὶ χεροῖν ἐν ταυτῷ προσηλωμένος, ἐξ ἄκρων τὲ μετέωρος ἑκταθεῖς, ἄρθρων τὲ καὶ νεύρων καὶ ὀστέων διατετρημένων καὶ διαπεπερονημένων ταῖς τῶν ἡλῶν βολαῖς, δέον ἢ ταῖς τῶν πόνων ἀκμαῖς προσέχειν τὸν νοῦν ἢ ἀγνοεῖν ἔνθα καὶ ὅποι γῆς ἐφοῖτα παρῶν ἢ τῶν λεγομένων ἀνηκουστεῖν, οἷα δὲ φιλεῖ τοὺς ταῖς μεγίσταις ὁμιλοῦντας ἀλγηδόσι πάσχειν, ἀβλεψία καὶ πολλῷ σκότῳ κρατούμενους. Λειποψυχῶσι γὰρ οἱ τοιοῖδε καὶ πρὸ τῶν κολαστηρίων ἀποπνεῖν ὑπισχνοῦνται μᾶλλον ἢ τινὰ τῶν πραττομένων αἴσθησιν ἀποφέρονται, πολυτρόποις ἀλγυνόμενοι συμφοραῖς. Ἀλλ' οὐδὲν τούτων ἡμβλυνε τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ τὴν τυραννικὴν διαδράντος ἐπήρειαν.

A generation later, Cyril of Jerusalem may infer a martyr-interpretation.<sup>616</sup> Hilary of Poitiers is quite clear and insistent about it. We have already noted Hilary's frequent references to the bandit's confession and title as a confessor.<sup>617</sup> Other passages show that Hilary does not intend these references as a way of denying the martyr-status of the Lucan bandit, but rather as an assertion of it. His earliest reference to the bandit as a martyr appears in the compilation *Against Constantius*, specifically within a section (chs. 3–6) likely written during his final year in exile (360) before being included in the final redaction dated December 361.<sup>618</sup> Combining anti-Arian polemic and an intensely personal identification, Hilary nostalgically wishes that the persecution he has suffered under Constantius II could have been a clearer contest and occasion for fearless martyrdom. Including the Lucan bandit among classic examples of martyrdom (Isaiah

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<sup>616</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 1.1 (R-R 1:28, 30), and 5.10 (R-R 1:146), may echo Cyprian's idea by identifying the bandit as a catechumen (see 6B). *Cat.* 13.3 (R-R 2:54) has him a "witness" or "martyr" / μάρτυς of the "sinlessness of Jesus." *Cat.* 13.21 (R-R 2:78–9) may allude to Cyprian's interpretation and infer a martyr identity by tying baptism in blood to confession, all within a chapter that frequently mentions the Lucan bandit.

<sup>617</sup> See 6C.

<sup>618</sup> SC 334:35–9. Rocher interprets this section (chs. 3–6) as Hilary's defense of his previous correspondence (chs. 7–11) in which he portrayed Constantius II as the antichrist.



and Daniel) and calling specific attention to his disregard for his tortures, Hilary seems closer to Eustathius than Cyprian in his martyr-interpretation of the passage.<sup>619</sup>

It would have been better, O God—omnipotent creator of the universe and the only Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—if you had allowed me to fulfill my ministry and [to make] my confession of you and your only-begotten during the times of Nero and Decius! Through the mercy of the Lord and God, your Son Jesus Christ, as one burning with the Holy Spirit, I would not fear the rack, which I know **to**re **a**part Isaiah.<sup>620</sup> Nor [would I] fear the **fi**re,<sup>621</sup> amidst which I remember the Hebrew boys singing. Nor [would I] shun the cross and the breaking of my limbs, after recalling the bandit translated into **para**dise.

*Atque utinam illud potius, omnipotens Deus et uniuersorum creator, sed et unius Domini nostri Ihesu Christi Pater, aetati meae et tempori praestitisses ut hoc confessionis meae in te atque unigenitum tuum ministerium Neronianis Decianisue temporibus explessem! Nec ego, per misericordiam Domini et Dei Filii tui Ihesu Christi, Spiritu sancto calens, eculeum metuisssem, qui desectum Esaiam scissem; nec ignes timuisssem, inter quos Hebraeos pueros cantasse meminisssem; nec crucem et fragmenta crurum meorum uitassem, postquam in paradisum translatum latronem recorderer.*

Hilary even reads the Johannine *crucifragium* as the suffering of a martyr, rather than a compassionate gesture (as presumed in the *Gospel of Peter*)! This passage suggests that Hilary's use of the term *martyr* ("martyr" or "witness") in another exilic text (*On the Trinity*) is not ambiguous, but precisely a reference to his suffering and dying for Christ. "For he promised paradise to his martyr and assures him of the joys of perfect blessedness" / *martyri suo paradisum promittens et consummatae beatitudinis delicias pollicens*.<sup>622</sup> The martyr trope echoes again in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, written

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<sup>619</sup> *Const.* 4 (SC 334:174).

<sup>620</sup> Heb 11.37 // *Asc. Isa.* 5.

<sup>621</sup> Dan 3.6ff.

<sup>622</sup> *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:487).

well after his Phrygian exile. Here Hilary emphatically repeats the idea of the bandit as an eager convert of the martyr-Jesus—in other words, a solidarity-martyr.<sup>623</sup>

We know indeed that many ignorant of the divine sacraments have run to martyrdom by the example of martyrs. Living previously outside the knowledge of faith, [they] are taught by the act of present faith [and] drawn to that very glory of faith perfected in martyrdom. Such was that one who confessed the Lord in his own condemnation, saying: “**Remember me, Lord, when you come in your reign.**” He immediately received a gift from the Lord for a martyrdom such as this: “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**”

*Scimus enim plures sacramentorum diuinorum ignaros exemplo martyrum ad martyrium cucurrisse et extra scientiam fidei ante uiuentes, facto fidei praesentis edoctos, ipsam illam consummatae in martyrio fidei gloriam consecutos. Qualis fuit ille qui Dominum in ipsa sua damnatione confessus est dicens: **Memento mei, Domine, cum ueneris in regnum tuum, qui mox tale martyrii huius a Domino munus accepi: Amen dico tibi, hodie tecum eris in paradiso.***

The martyr trope proves quite explicit among various late 4<sup>th</sup> century interpreters, particularly Ambrose, Jerome and Chromatius.<sup>624</sup> Prudentius, Maximus and ps-Ephrem rather imply it.<sup>625</sup> On the other hand, several mid-5<sup>th</sup> century interpreters take care to label him a confessor in contrast to a martyr.<sup>626</sup>

<sup>623</sup> Ps 65(66).25–6 (CSEL 22:267).

<sup>624</sup> Ambrose, *Ps. 118* 8.12 (CSEL 62:156), “He says to a martyr: “**Today you will be with me in paradise.**” Jerome, *ep.* 16.1.2 (CSEL 54:68, quoted in 6A). Chromatius of Aquila, *serm.* 2.6 (SC 154:142): “But after he confessed Christ on the very cross, he becomes clean from the filth, a confessor from a blasphemer, from the devil’s bandit, the church’s martyr” / *Sed postquam christum in ipsa cruce confessus est, id est de immundo mundus, de blasphemo confessor, de latrone diaboli martyr ecclesiae.*

<sup>625</sup> See Prudentius, *Ditt.* 42 (CSEL 61:445): “Then two bandits quarrel on the crosses about this and that / alongside [each other]: this one denies God, that one wins a crown” / *tunc duo discordant crucibus hinc inde latrones / contiguis: negat ille deum, fert iste coronam.* Ps-Ambrose, *Hymn* 9 (Fontaine 415) says that the bandit “changed cross to reward” / *praemio mutans crucem.* Ps-Ephrem, *Diat. com.* 20.24 (Arm; CSCO 137:297; ET in CSCO 145:213): “He had been constrained to go up on the cross because of his sins. But [the Lord] had him go up on the cross voluntarily on account of his faith.” Note also that several interpreters identify the bandit as a “companion” of Jesus, perhaps therein evoking the traditional theme of solidarity martyrdom. See Prudentius, *Cath.* 10.157–68 (CSEL 61:62–3): “We follow your words, Redeemer, / by which, triumphing over black death, / you command to go in your steps / a bandit companion of the cross” / *Sequimur tua dicta, redemptor, / quibus atra e morte triumphans / tua per uestigia mandas / socium crucis ire latronem.* Maximus of Turin, *serm.* 75 (CCSL 23:313–14), says that the bandit

6F. *False Martyr or True? Augustine's Changing Cause*<sup>627</sup>

Augustine stands out in antiquity as the single most frequent commentator on the passage (over sixty distinct passages), as well as the one who deals most thoroughly and repeatedly with the issue of the bandit's identity as a potential martyr. That particular trope serves as an intriguing vantage point for a diachronic analysis of his interpretation. This analysis, in turn, offers significant insights regarding four sermons whose respective dates are highly debated.

In one of his earliest anti-Donatist writings, the ca. 400–401 treatise *On Baptism*,<sup>628</sup> Augustine clearly refers to Cyprian's idea of catechumen-martyrdom (and with it, Cyprian's Lucan example).<sup>629</sup> The Donatists had apparently cited this idea as proof that baptism (including their own baptism in a Catholic church) was not always necessary. Augustine admits the validity of Cyprian's idea of baptism in blood and recognizes the value of the bandit as an example, yet he argues that the Donatist use of this idea runs

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"is invited even as a companion" / *tamquam socius inuitatur*. Ps-Theophilus, *cruc.* (Suciu, "*Sermo de Cruce*"), has Jesus say, "If you used to be in the company of murderers, behold, I have made you my companion." See also Augustine, *An. orig.* 1.9.10 (CSEL 60:311, quoted in 6F); Ps-Aristides, *hom. sanc. latr.* 3 (Pitra 4:9), "He joined the bandit to himself as a companion in life." The reference to the bandit as a "companion" of Jesus is more pervasive than these references show, and most of the time a martyr interpretation is not in view. See, for instance, Origen (in Rufinus' translation), *Rom com.* A 3.6 (GLB 16:248).

<sup>626</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Luc com.* 153 (Payne Smith 1858:447, ET in 1859:721, quoted in 6C); Leo the Great, *serm.* 53.1 (CCSL 138A:313, quoted in 6C); Quodvultdeus, *ymb. l* 6.15–23 (CCSL 60:321–2, quoted in 6D).

<sup>627</sup> This section is a revised version of a presentation given in March of 2010 at Point Loma Nazarene University at its Wesleyan Center conference entitled *Nurturing the Prophetic Imagination*. I thank the participants for their thoughtful questions, encouragement and feedback.

<sup>628</sup> CCSL 57:xix.

<sup>629</sup> *bapt.* 4.22.30 (CSEL 51:257).

directly contrary to Cyprian's belief that salvation is to be found in the Catholic church, and he maintains that a martyr-like death is no help to heretics.<sup>630</sup> Defending himself as Cyprian's true heir, he pays homage to Cyprian's now-traditional idea of martyrdom as proxy baptism but limits its significance to Catholic catechumens, as Cyprian had himself done. At the same time, stemming from the influence of Ambrose, Augustine expands proxy-baptism to include not just martyrdom, but also "faith and conversion of heart."<sup>631</sup>

At that time the suffering of that bandit reasonably filled the place of baptism. To him who was not baptized it was said: "**Today you will be with me in paradise.**" The blessed Cyprian does not trivially take up this very example. As I think over it again and again, I find that what is needed in baptism can be supplied not only by suffering for the name of Christ, but also by faith and conversion of heart, if, by chance, one cannot find help in brief moments to celebrate the mystery of baptism. For that bandit was not crucified for the name of Christ, but rather for the dues of his own crimes. It was not because he believed that he suffered, but he believed while he suffered. Therefore, in that bandit who lacked the visible sacrament the power of what the apostle said was declared: "**With the heart one trusts unto justification. With the mouth one makes confession unto salvation.**"<sup>632</sup> But it is invisibly filled not when despising religion excludes the officiation of baptism, but rather when a moment of necessity [does].

*baptismi sane uicem aliquando implere passionem de latrone illo, cui non baptizato dictum est: **hodie me cum eris in paradiso**, non leue documentum idem beatus cyprianus adsumit. quod etiam adque etiam considerans inuenio non tantum passionem pro nomine Christi id quod ex baptismo deerat posse supplere, sed etiam fidem conuersionem que cordis, si forte ad celebrandum mysterium baptismi in angustiis temporum succurri non potest. neque enim latro ille pro nomine Christi crucifixus est, sed pro meritis facinorum suorum, nec quia credidit passus est, sed dum patitur credidit. quantum itaque ualeat etiam sine uisibili baptismi sacramento quod ait apostolus: **corde creditur ad iustitiam, ore confessio fit ad salutem**, in illo latrone declaratum est. sed tunc impletur inuisibiliter, cum ministerium baptismi non contemptus religionis, sed articulus necessitatis excludit.*

<sup>630</sup> *bapt.* 4.17.25 (citing Cyprian. *ep.* 73.21).

<sup>631</sup> *bapt.* 4.22.30 (CSEL 51:257).

<sup>632</sup> Rom 10.10.

Here, while drawing on the Lucan bandit to expand the modes of proxy-baptism, Augustine subtly dismisses Cyprian's idea of the bandit as a martyr. A new logic intervenes: a martyr cannot be a criminal. Because he was indeed a criminal, punished for his crimes and not his faith, the bandit was not a legitimate martyr.<sup>633</sup>

This reversal is all the more significant in view of the polemical context. It may well be that, even here, the Donatists are presumed to be identifying themselves with the Lucan bandit as a martyr (quite similar to Hilary's interpretation, it would seem). In this case, Augustine's re-cast criminal serves to undermine Donatist claims to be martyrs. A criminal (read, Donatist) cannot be a martyr; he does not die for (true, Catholic) faith, but rather for (schismatic) sedition. Even as Augustine ostensibly pays homage to Cyprian, he overturns the now-traditional martyr-interpretation so as to deprive Donatists of a scriptural warrant for their martyr-claims.<sup>634</sup> As we will soon see, Augustine's reflection here marks an initial point of development in his anti-Donatist interpretation of Luke 23.39–43.

The next securely dated reference to the bandit vis-à-vis martyrdom appears in *ep.* 93 (408 CE),<sup>635</sup> just three years before the failed Catholic-Donatist conference of 411 CE.

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<sup>633</sup> Scholars who have previously noted this disagreement include Sieben in *DS* s.v. "Larron" 9:310, and Pasquero, *Il buon ladrone*, 70. Gaume noted only Augustine's agreement with Cyprian (citing *An. orig.* 1.9.10–11, quoted in 6F); see *Life of the Good Thief*, 171–2.

<sup>634</sup> For examples of the enduring tradition of Donatist martyrdoms, see M. Tilley, *Donatist Martyr Stories: the Church in Conflict in Roman North Africa* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996).

<sup>635</sup> For the date, see FOC 18:56.

Here, it is apparent that Augustine has developed an anti-Donatist conceptual and linguistic framework that guides his reading of the Lucan drama.<sup>636</sup>

When the good and evil do the same and suffer the same, they are certainly not distinguished by deeds or punishments but rather by causes. ... Does a similarity of deeds join both together, even though a dissimilarity of cause distinguishes them? ... The Father handed over his Son, Christ himself [handed over] his body, and Judas [handed over] his Lord. Why in this handing over is God faithful and man guilty, except that while they did a single deed, they did not do it from a single cause? Three crosses were in a single place. One one [was] a bandit to be liberated, on another a bandit to be condemned, and in the middle Christ who will liberate one and condemn the other. What is more similar than those crosses? What is more dissimilar than those hanging?

*Cum boni et mali eadem faciunt eademque patiuntur, non factis et poenis sed causis utique discernendi sunt. ... Nonne similitudo facti quasi utrosque coniungit, et tamen eos causae dissimilitudo discernit? ... Cum ergo et pater tradiderit filium suum et ipse Christus corpus suum et Iudas dominum suum, cur in hac traditione Deus est pius et homo reus, nisi in re una quam fecerunt causa non una est qua fecerunt? Tres cruces uno in loco erant: in una latro liberandus, in alia latro damnandus, in medio Christus alterum liberaturus alterum damnaturus. Quid similis istis crucibus? Quid dissimilis istis pendentibus?*

The crucifixion provides one of many examples that reinforce the distinction between cause and deed, between cause and punishment. What matters, what defines a person as good or evil, is cause, i.e., the reason or basis for one's actions or one's suffering. Possessed of a different cause than that of Christ the true martyr, the Lucan bandit is disqualified from such a title and honor. He shares Christ's punishment, but not his standing as a martyr.

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<sup>636</sup> *ep.* 93.6–7 (CCSL 31A:171–2). Augustine's logic of distinct causes may have been influenced by Chrysostom (even if second- or third-hand). Cf. the early Antiochene *Gen hom.* 16.20 (PG 53:134a), “Do you see the difference between tree and tree? Do you see the devil's evildoing, humanity's indifference, and the Master's philanthropy” / Εἶδετε ξύλου καὶ ξύλου διαφοράν; εἶδετε διαβόλου κακουργίαν, καὶ ἀνθρώπου ῥαθυμίαν, καὶ Δεσπότης φιλανθρωπίαν;

Dekkers and Fraipont date *en. Ps* 68(1) precisely to 414 CE, which would make it the next securely dated text on the topic.<sup>637</sup> Ringing of time and habit, the anti-Donatist argument here reifies and amplifies his earlier distinction between cause and punishment.<sup>638</sup>

This is first: **Those who hated me without cause.** This is next: **who persecuted me unjustly.** Therefore, what is **without cause**, this is **unjustly**. This is the voice of the martyrs: “not in punishment, but in cause.” Praise does not consist in suffering persecution, being held, being beaten, being indicted, and being killed. Rather, praise is having a good cause and suffering because of that. Indeed, praise consists in the cause of goodness, not in the punishment of bitterness. For however great were the prayers of the martyrs, were they not comparable to the prayers of all bandits, all the sacrilegious, all the wicked? So what, if the world hates them? ... Finally, notice the voice of that bandit hanging on the cross with the Lord. On the other side one of the two bandits was insulting the crucified Lord, and was saying, “**If you are the Son of God, free yourself.**” The other rebuked that one and said: “**Do you not fear God, since you are placed in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for our deeds.**” Behold he was not **without cause**. Rather, by his confession he discharged pus from himself. He was thus made fit for the Lord’s food. He removed his iniquity, accused it, and lost it. Behold, here are two bandits and there is the Lord. They are crucified, and he is crucified. The world holds them in hatred, but not **without cause**. It holds him in hatred **without cause**.

*et quod primo: qui oderunt me gratis, hoc postea: qui persequuntur me iniuste. Quod ergo gratis, hoc est iniuste. Ipsa est uox martyrum, non in poena, sed in causa. Non persecutionem pati, non teneri, non flagellari, non includi, non proscribi, non occidi laus est, sed habendo causam bonam, ista pati, haec laus est. Laus enim est in causae bonitate, non in poenae acerbitate. Nam quantacumque fuerint supplicia martyrum, numquid aequantur suppliciis omnium latronum, omnium sacrilegorum, omnium sceleratorum? Quid enim, et hos odit mundus? ... Denique uide uocem illius latronis cum Domino in cruce pendentis, cum insultaret ex alia parte unus duorum latronum Domino crucifixo, et diceret: Si filius dei es, libera te, compescuit illum alter, et dixit: Tu non times Deum, uel quia in eadem damnatione positus es? Et nos quidem recte pro factis nostris. Ecce non gratis, sed confessione effudit ex se saniem, et factus est aptus cibo*

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<sup>637</sup> CCSL 38:xvii.

<sup>638</sup> *en Ps* 68(1).9 (CCSL 39:909–10).

*Domini. Exclusit iniquitatem suam, accusauit eam, et caruit ea. Ecce ibi duo latrones, ibi et Dominus; et illi crucifixi, et ille crucifixus; et illos odio habuit mundus, sed non **gratis**, et illum odio habuit, sed **gratis**.*

Augustine searches the Psalms to find support for his distinction, and the parallelism in Ps 69.4 (Vul 68.5) between *gratis* (freely, or without cause) and *iniuste* (unjustly) serves his argument well. The rhetorical master now has the martyrs and the bandit make his anti-Donatist case for him as they declare the injustice and justice of their respective sufferings.

*ep.* 185, a text which Augustine in his *Reconsiderations* labels *On the Treatment of the Donatists*, is the next securely dated and relevant text. Addressed to Boniface, governor of Africa, this letter dates to 417 CE<sup>639</sup> and contains several arguments against Donatist claims to martyr-status.<sup>640</sup>

They are the true martyrs of whom the Lord says: “**Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice**” (Matt 5.10). Therefore, [true martyrs are] not those who [suffer] for the sake of iniquity and for the sake of the impious division of Christians’ unity. Rather, it is **those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice** who are true martyrs. For even Hagar suffered persecution from Sarah. The one taking action was holy, while the one suffering was unjust. This persecution that Hagar suffered is surely not comparable to that of holy David, whom the unjust Saul persecuted, is it? Certainly they stand quite apart, since he did not just suffer, but he suffered for the sake of justice. The Lord himself was crucified with bandits. Yet, while suffering joined them, cause separated them. Therefore, in a Psalm the voice to be recognized is that of a martyr of true intentions who distinguishes himself from false martyrs: “**Judge me, God, and distinguish my cause from an unholy people**” (Ps 42.1). He did not say “distinguish my punishment,” but rather “**distinguish my cause**.” Indeed, a punishment similar to the impious can take place, but the martyr’s cause is dissimilar.

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<sup>639</sup> CCSL 57:xx; WSA 2.3:230.

<sup>640</sup> *ep.* 185.9 (CSEL 57:8).



*Veri autem martyres illi sunt, de quibus dominus ait: **Beati, qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam.** non ergo qui propter iniquitatem et propter Christianae unitatis impiam diuisionem, sed **qui propter iustitiam persecutionem patiuntur**, hi martyres ueri sunt. nam et Agar passa est a Sarra persecutionem et illa erat sancta, quae faciebat, illa iniqua, quae patiebatur. numquid huic persecutioni, quam passa est Agar, comparandus est sanctus David, quem persecutus est iniquus Saul? ualde utique distat, non quia patiebatur, sed quia propter iustitiam patiebatur. et ipse dominus cum latronibus crucifixus est; sed quos passio iungebat, causa separabat. ideo in psalmo uox illa intellegenda est uerorum martyrum uolentium se discerni a martyribus falsis: **Iudica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta**; non dixit discerne poenam meam, sed discerne causam meam. potest enim esse impiorum similis poena, sed dissimilis est martyrum causa.*

The contrasts drawn between the suffering of Hagar and David, along with the actions of Sarah and Saul, supplement the contrasting scriptural examples found in *ep.* 93. More importantly, in the precise Latin phrasing of Matt 5.10 and Ps 42.1, Augustine finds scripture carrying the logic of his argument. Now it is not only the martyrs, but even Jesus himself who makes Augustine's case for him.<sup>641</sup>

The next securely dated and relevant texts belong to Augustine's involved exchange with Vincent Victor. Once a member of the Rogatists (a group of former Donatists who opposed religious coercion in any form), this young convert to the Catholic Church read Augustine's *ep.* 190 (418 Sept.) to Optatus on whether each new soul is created through propagation or *ex nihilo*. Siding with Optatus, Vincent is shocked by Augustine's admitted ignorance on the issue and writes two books in response that argue the propagation thesis. Augustine soon gets hold of these books and hears of their warm

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<sup>641</sup> Augustine may have intentionally cut off the last part of Matt 5.10, "because theirs is the kingdom of heaven" / *quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum*, since it could have contradicted his case regarding the bandit whom Augustine believes *did* inherit that kingdom.

reception by one Peter the Priest. In response, Augustine writes four books *On the Nature and Origin of the Soul* in fairly quick succession, between 419 and 421 CE.

Fortunately for posterity, in his second book Augustine carefully quotes Vincent's interpretation of the Lucan passage and thus reveals its place within Vincent's arguments.<sup>642</sup>

"I am prepared to say," he says, "that these [infants] can attain leniency for original sins, but not that they are brought into the heavenly kingdom. Even so, to the bandit who confessed but was still not baptized, the Lord did not grant the kingdom of heaven, but instead paradise. It still stands: '**He who was not born again from water and the Holy Spirit will not enter the kingdom of heaven.**'"<sup>643</sup> It is especially so because the Lord declares that there are **many mansions**<sup>644</sup> in the presence of his Father. By this diversity of mansions numerous merits are designated. So, the one not baptized is brought here in pardon, while the baptized [is brought] to the prize which has been prepared through grace."

*ausim dicere, inquit, istos peruenire posse ad originalium indulgentiam peccatorum, non tamen ut caeleste inducantur in regnum, sicuti latroni confesso quidem sed non baptizato dominus non caelorum regnum tribuit, sed paradisum, cum utique iam maneret: qui non renatus fuerit ex aqua et spiritu sancto, non intrabit in regnum caelorum, praecipue quia multas esse mansiones apud patrem suum dominus profitetur, in quibus designantur merita multa et diuersa mansorum, ut hic non baptizatus perducatur ad ueniam, baptizatus ad palmam, quae est parata per gratiam.*

Vincent understands paradise as a lesser reward, one given to the Lucan bandit,

Perpetua's brother Dinocrates, and all unbaptized infants.<sup>645</sup> The kingdom of heaven, on the other hand, is a greater form of beatitude reserved only for the baptized.

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<sup>642</sup> *An. orig.* 2.10.14 (CSEL 60:348).

<sup>643</sup> John 3.5.

<sup>644</sup> John 14.2.

<sup>645</sup> *An. orig.* 1.9.11–10.12 (CSEL 60:311–12); 2.10.14 (CSEL 60:348–9); 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369). It is interesting to note that Ambrose also speaks of paradise as a lesser reward than the kingdom of heaven when he contrasts the respective rewards of the bandit and Peter; see *ep.* 19.8–9 (CSEL 82.1:145, quoted in 7E).

In his first book, written 419 fall to the monk Renatus,<sup>646</sup> Augustine responds by appealing to intellectual humility, dismissing Vincent's certainty that Dinocrates<sup>647</sup> and the bandit<sup>648</sup> had not been baptized. For the bandit in particular, Augustine offers three scenarios in which he could have been baptized: Cyprian's martyr-baptism, direct-baptism (in the water and blood flowing from the Johannine Jesus' side), and prior water baptism.<sup>649</sup>

No one becomes a member of Christ except either by baptism in Christ or death for Christ. 11. A precedent against the sacrament of baptism is sometimes hunted or attempted from that bandit who did not follow the Lord before the cross, but became a confessor on the cross. Yet by holy Cyprian he was counted among the martyrs who were baptized in their own blood. This happened to many who were not baptized during burning persecution. That he confessed the crucified Lord carried so much weight and was valued so much by him who knows how to grasp these matters as if he had been crucified for the Lord. Indeed, his faith blossomed from the tree at that time when the disciples' [faith] shriveled. While theirs shriveled by fear of death, his grew green again from the resurrection. They despaired of the one who died. He hoped in the one dying with him. They fled from the author of life. He begged his partner in punishment. They grieved as if for a human's death. He believed in the one who would reign after death. They forsook the surety of salvation. He honored his companion of the cross. The measure of a martyr was found in him who believed in Christ at that time when those who were going to be martyrs failed. This was certainly clear in the eyes of the Lord, who immediately conferred such beatitude to the one not baptized as if he had been washed in martyr's blood. Indeed, who among us can approximate the extent of faith, hope and love with which he who sought life in a dying man accepted death for the living Christ? Moreover, it is not unbelievable to say that the bandit who believed alongside the crucified Lord was doused by that water that flowed from the wound in his side, as if by a most holy baptism. I will omit that he could have been baptized before he was condemned, since none of us knows, none can prove it. One can accept as true the things one wants, provided that the savior's lesson on baptism is not countermanded by the example of his bandit and that no one promises to unbaptized little ones some middle place of

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<sup>646</sup> CCSL 57:xxi.

<sup>647</sup> *An. orig.* 1.10.12 (CSEL 60:312).

<sup>648</sup> *An. orig.* 1.9.11 (CSEL 60:311–12).

<sup>649</sup> *An. orig.* 1.9.10–11 (CSEL 60:311–12).

rest and beatitude of whatever kind and whatever place between damnation and the kingdom of heaven.

*nemo fit membrum Christi nisi aut baptisate in Christo aut morte pro Christo. 11. Vnde et latro ille non ante crucem domini sectator, sed in cruce confessor, de quo nonnumquam praeiudicium captatur siue temptatur contra baptismatis sacramentum, a Cypriano sancto inter martyres computatur, qui suo sanguine baptizantur, quod plerisque non baptizatis feruente persecutione prouenit. tanto namque pondere appensum est tantumque ualuit apud eum, qui haec nouit appendere, quod confessus est dominum crucifixum, quantum si fuisset pro Domino crucifixus. tunc enim fides eius de ligno floruit, quando discipulorum marcuit, nisi, cuius mortis terrore marcuerat, eius resurrectione reuiresceret. illi enim desperauerunt de moriente, ille sperauit in commoriente; refugerunt illi auctorem uitae, rogauit ille consortem poenae; doluerunt illi tamquam hominis mortem, credidit ille regnaturum esse post mortem; deseruerunt illi sponsorem salutis, honorauit ille socium crucis. inuenta est in eo mensura martyris, qui tunc in Christum credidit, quando defecerunt qui futuri erant martyres. et hoc quidem oculis domini clarum fuit, qui non baptizato tamquam martyrii sanguine abluto tantam felicitatem statim contulit. sed etiam nostrum quis non consideret, quanta fide, quanta spe, quanta caritate mortem pro Christo uiuente suscipere potuit, qui uitam in moriente quaesiuit? huc accedit, quia non incredibiliter dicitur latronem qui tunc credidit iuxta dominum crucifixum aqua illa, quae de uulnere lateris eius emicuit, tamquam sacratissimo baptismo fuisse perfusum, ut omittam quod eum, antequam damnaretur, baptizatum non fuisse, quoniam nemo nostrum nouit, nemo conuincit. uerum haec ut uolet quisque accipiat, dum tamen de baptismo non praescribatur saluatoris praecepto huius latronis exemplo et non baptizatis paruulis nemo promittat inter damnationem regnum que caelorum quietis uel felicitatis cuiuslibet atque ubilibet quasi medium locum.*

While the overall frame of the argument is deconstructive (undermining Victor's naïve certainty),<sup>650</sup> Augustine still ends up making an extended, positive argument for the first of these three options.<sup>651</sup> In other words, Augustine now suddenly supports Cyprian's martyr-reading of the Lucan story.

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<sup>650</sup> He also refers to the false assumptions of Victor's argument in *An. orig.* 2.10.14 (CSEL 60:349) and 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369–70).

<sup>651</sup> Augustine repeats these three options in *An. orig.* 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369–70). In this passage, he apparently presumes that he had already (in book 1) convincingly argued the martyr-interpretation. Thus he spends the most time focusing on the third option, that the bandit had previously been baptized in water.

Some five to six years later, in the *Reconsiderations* (ca. 426/427), Vincent shows up twice more and the Lucan bandit together with him. In *retr.* 1.26(25), Augustine evaluates his own previous interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 in *div. qu.* 62.<sup>652</sup> In this early work (ca. 388–397), Augustine had asserted that Luke’s bandit had obviously *not* been baptized in water, but rather had received the Holy Spirit “secretly” / *latentur*, akin to Cornelius and his household.<sup>653</sup> As the late Augustine realizes, this assertion puts the early Augustine in the same company with Vincent. The elder desires nobler company for his younger self, so he claims the precedent of “other leaders of Holy Church before us” / *alios ante nos rectores sanctae ecclesiae* for the view that the bandit had not been baptized.<sup>654</sup> Yet he ultimately disagrees with his former self and refers the reader to his more recent work on the *Nature and Origin of the Soul* for his definitive arguments on the matter.<sup>655</sup>

But I do not know with which examples it can be sufficiently shown that that bandit had not been baptized. This matter was more carefully argued in some of our later works, mostly in what we wrote to Vincent Victor on the origin of the soul.

*sed quibus documentis satis possit ostendi, quod non fuerit ille latro baptizatus, ignoro. De qua re in posterioribus quibusdam opusculis nostris diligentius*

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<sup>652</sup> CCSL 57:83.

<sup>653</sup> CCSL 44A:132–3; see 6G.

<sup>654</sup> *retr.* 1.26(25) (CCSL 57:83). He may be thinking of the martyr-interpretation of Cyprian, *ep.* 73 (CCSL 3C:556–7) and Hilary, *Ps.* 65(66).25–6 (CSEL 22:267), which implies the bandit’s lack of water baptism, but that is unlikely, since he used Cyprian’s martyr-interpretation as an argument *for* the bandit’s baptism. It is far more likely that Augustine is referring here to Ambrose’s (apparently novel) case that the bandit had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, akin to Cornelius and his household; see *ep.* 3.9 (CSEL 82.1:23–4) and the following section for further discussion. FOC 60:112n44 notes the above references from Cyprian and Hilary, but incorrectly numbers Cyprian’s as *ep.* 74 while wrongly claiming several other precedents which say nothing at all about the issue of whether the bandit was baptized or not: Hilary, *Ps.* 1.9 and *Trin.* 10.35 (apparently meaning 10.34, but still inapplicable), as well as Ambrose, *paen.* 1.11.

<sup>655</sup> CCSL 57:83.

*disputatam est, maxime in eo quod ad Vincentium Victorem de animae origine scripsimus.*

In *retr.* 2.81.3 (or 2.55), Augustine repeats the same concern and gainsays the position he once held, that the bandit had *not* been baptized. But in this case, the work corrected is of far more recent mint. The relevant section appears in *qu. Hep.*, written in 419 CE,<sup>656</sup> apparently just before his response to Vincent Victor in the fall of that year.<sup>657</sup> His correction reads as follows.<sup>658</sup>

Regarding the bandit to whom it was said: “**Today you will be with me in paradise,**” that he had not been visibly baptized—I had [previously] supposed this as if it were certain. But it is uncertain and should rather be believed that he was baptized, just as I likewise argued elsewhere later.

*De latrone etiam cui dictum est: **Hodie mecum eris in paradiso**, quod non fuerit uisibiliter baptizatus, quasi certum posui, cum sit incertum magisque illum baptizatum fuisse credendum sit, sicut ego quoque alibi postea disputaui.*

To summarize, Vincent Victor provoked a sudden and dramatic change in Augustine’s position, both in regard to the bandit’s baptism and his martyr-status. Before Vincent, Augustine argues against Cyprian’s martyr-interpretation; after him, he resumes this traditional position. This marked change in Augustine’s interpretation, mapped out in clearly dated texts, provides a background against which may be plotted writings more difficult to date, namely four anti-Donatist sermons: 53A, 285, 327, and 335C.

Theories for the date of *serm.* 53A range from 405–411 CE (Fischer and Kunzelmann) to 405–420 CE (Hill), and even to 425–430 CE.<sup>659</sup> For the date of *serm.*

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<sup>656</sup> CCSL 57:xxi.

<sup>657</sup> *qu. Hep.* Lev 84 (CCSL 33:227–8); quoted in 6G.

<sup>658</sup> *retr.* 2.81.3 (or 2.55; CCSL 57:134).

<sup>659</sup> WSA 3.3:85.

327, the accepted range seems to be 405–411 CE.<sup>660</sup> In terms of their basic anti-Donatist character, it is certainly reasonable to place both of these sermons in the heated years leading up to the Catholic-Donatist conference of 411. Both make the distinction between cause and punishment,<sup>661</sup> and this distinction is apparent as early as ca. 408–409 in *ep.* 93. His appeal to the “voice of the martyrs” in both sermons, however, securely appears (at least among texts citing Luke 23.39–43) ca. 414 in *en. Ps.* 68(1), and this trope is also echoed in *ep.* 185 (ca. 417). In relationship to all of the securely dated texts discussed above, both sermons bear the most similarity to *ep.* 185 (ca. 417). *Serm.* 53A shares a unique intertext with *ep.* 185, namely the connection of Matt 5.10 with Luke 23.39–43. *Serm.* 327 also shares a unique and significant intertext with *ep.* 185, connecting the Lucan bandit to Ps 42.1. A more thorough diachronic investigation is needed in regard to Augustine’s anti-Donatist use of the “voice of the martyrs,” as well as his interpretation of Ps 42.1 and Matt 5.10. Still, the peculiar connections of these two sermons with *ep.* 185 point to dates closer to 417 CE.

This relatively later and closely-connected provenance for both sermons is further supported by the significant connections and novel phrases and tropes that *serm.* 53A and 327 share with each other. For example, they have a near verbatim parallel that tersely summarizes Augustine’s key anti-Donatist argument.

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<sup>660</sup> WSA 3.9:174–5, 311.

<sup>661</sup> The relevant portion of *serm.* 53A (13) appears in CCSL 41Aa:122. Most of *serm.* 327 focuses on the Lucan episode; its text appears in PL 28:1450–1.

*Serm. 53A:* “Punishment does not make a martyr, but rather cause”  
*martyrem non facit poena, sed causa.*

*Serm. 327:* “Punishment does not make a martyr, but rather cause”  
*non facit martyrem poena, sed causa.*

Additionally, they both have hints that Augustine is now pulling back from his largely negative reading in which the bandit merely serves as an illustration (by his own admission, no less) that he is no martyr. In both, embedded within his traditional anti-Donatist interpretation is an appeal to *choose one’s cause* that now invokes the bandit as a parenetic model of martyrdom in his death. In *serm. 53A*, just before mentioning the bandit, Augustine exhorts his hearers, “First choose your cause, and securely bear suffering” / *prius eligat causam, et securus sufferat poenam*. In *serm. 327*, immediately after an involved discussion of the bandit, Augustine gives a similar appeal: “Let us labor that we may have a good cause, so that if anything befalls us in this world, we may leave here with a good cause” / *laboremus ut bonam causam habeamus: ut si quid nobis acciderit in hoc saeculo, cum bona causa hinc exeamus*. *Serm. 335C*, which is almost certainly dated after 419 (see below), has a similar refrain just before the Lucan episode is invoked: “As much as you are able, you all must choose the first cause” / *causam primitus, quantum potestis, eligite*. These distinct connections and novel tropes suggest that *serm. 53A* and 327 are roughly contemporary and written around 417, and quite likely after 419.



Hill apparently reflects a common view when he locates *serm.* 335C in the heated years of the Donatist controversy, ca. 405–411.<sup>662</sup> But this analysis points clearly to a date after autumn 419 CE. Various tropes appear among his earlier writings (cause vs. punishment; three crosses), but one distinct, pivotal idea shows the influence of his exchange with Vincent Victor. “Of these two guilty men, one deserved punishment, the other a reward. Why did the other deserve a reward? Because he changed cause on the cross” / *ex illis duobus reis unus meruit supplicium, alter praemium. quare meruit alter praemium? quia causam in cruce immutavit.*<sup>663</sup> While the reference is quite brief, it marks a dramatic shift in Augustine’s long-developed anti-Donatist trajectory (400–419 CE!) denying that the bandit should be considered a martyr. When Augustine exhorts his readers to choose the “first cause” (that of the martyrs), he supplies the bandit as an example of just that, even if he happened to change cause on the cross itself.

The same shift appears in *serm.* 285, a text whose provenance is highly debated. Most agree that the place is likely Carthage and the date May 22, the feast day of the Carthaginian martyrs Castus and Aemilius. Yet theories about the year range from 397 (Lambot, Perler, Hill) to 405–410 CE (Bonnardi re, Monceau), to 416 CE (Kunzelmann).<sup>664</sup> Numerous features point to a date later than all of these. Pointed, rehearsed expressions move the argument.<sup>665</sup> A variety of ready-made intertexts appear in

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<sup>662</sup> WSA 3.9:225, 311.

<sup>663</sup> *RB* 46:754.

<sup>664</sup> WSA 3.8:95, 100.

<sup>665</sup> PL 38:1293–4. “Thus were made three crosses, three causes” / *ita factae sunt tres cruces, tres causae*. “Their crimes crucified them; ours crucified him” / *illos facinora sua, illum crucifixerunt nostra*.

quick succession.<sup>666</sup> But the clearest and most compelling evidence for a post-419 CE provenance is the reversal of Augustine's traditional position (thanks to Vincent Victor) regarding the martyr-status of the bandit. "He admitted his crime, he ascended a cross. He changed cause, he acquired heaven. He entirely deserved to change cause, he who did not disdain in Christ a similar punishment" / *scelus admisit, crucem ascendit; causam mutauit, paradisum comparauit. meruit omnino causam mutare, qui non contempsit in christo similitudinem poenae*. Because of Vincent Victor, Augustine's Donatist criminal finally emerged as a martyr on the cross. Late in life he changed cause, and Augustine with him.

#### 6G. Filling in the Font

As seen in 6B, Cyril of Jerusalem and John Chrysostom implicitly refer to baptism when they hold out to their catechumens the bandit's promise of paradise as the hope of their own initiation.<sup>667</sup> Yet, the issue of whether and how the bandit was baptized is a more prevalent concern, a gap that invited a variety of curious answers. Some interpreters quoted in the previous section fill this gap with the martyr blood of the bandit himself. For catechumens who face the prospect of death, Cyprian notably refers to the bandit as the key scriptural example of baptism in blood.<sup>668</sup> While he does not explicitly raise the

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<sup>666</sup> Isa 53.12; 1 Pet 3.18–20; Luke 16.16 // Matt 11.12.

<sup>667</sup> See especially Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.* 15 (R-R 1:20), *Procat.* 16 (R-R 1:22), *Cat.* 5.10 (R-R 1:146). See also Chrysostom, *Cat. ill. hom.* 3 19–20 (CPG 4467; P-K 171).

<sup>668</sup> Cyprian, *ep.* 73.22.2 (CCSL 3C.556–7); see 6E.

bandit's lack of baptism as a problem to be solved, his interpretation may reflect this implicitly, as may that of Cyril of Jerusalem, Hilary and others.<sup>669</sup> As also noted in the previous section, the early Augustine (ca. 400–401) recognizes the issue of the bandit's lack of baptism and pays homage to Cyprian's idea even as he undermines it.<sup>670</sup> Yet, because of his concern to rebut Vincent Victor, the later Augustine (419–427 CE) now strongly supports Cyprian's solution.<sup>671</sup>

Eustathius of Antioch, in a fragment written ca. 327–337, so vividly pictures the typological significance of Jesus as the blood-seeping tree of life that it suggests the idea that the bandit was actually baptized in the blood and water flowing from the side of the Johannine Jesus.<sup>672</sup> Nearly a century later, in both books one and three *On the Nature and Origin of the Soul*, Augustine clearly and positively, however cautiously mentions this idea.<sup>673</sup>

Moreover, it is not unbelievable to say that the bandit who believed while beside the crucified Lord was doused by that water that flowed from the wound in his side, as if by a most holy baptism.

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<sup>669</sup> In *Cat.* 13.21 (R-R 2:78), Cyril notes that confession brings about baptism in blood, which could be inferred of the bandit. For other references in which catechumens are invited to identify themselves with the bandit, see *Procat.* 15–16 (R-R 1:20–2); *Cat.* 1.1 (R-R 1:28–30), 5.10 (146), 13.3 (R-R 2:54), 19 (74), 30–1 (88–92), 14.10 (116–18). For fuller discussion of these texts, see 6B. Hilary, *Ps.* 65(66).25–6 (CSEL 22:267, quoted in 6E), is especially suggestive in his reference to “many ignorant of the divine sacraments” who “have run to martyrdom by the example of martyrs” / *plures sacramentorum diuinorum ignaros exemplo martyrum ad martyrium cucurrisse*. See also Ambrose, *Ps.* 118 8.11–12 (CSEL 62:155–6, quoted in 6E) and Jerome, *ep.* 16.1.2 (CSEL 54:68, quoted in 6A). Chromatius of Aquila, *serm.* 2.6 (SC 154:142, quoted in 6A) is also highly suggestive.

<sup>670</sup> *bapt.* 4.22.30 (CSEL 51:257).

<sup>671</sup> Especially *An. orig.* 1.9.10–11 (CSEL 60:311–12), but also *An. orig.* 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369–70). See also *retr.* 1.26(25) (CCSL 57:83) and 6F.

<sup>672</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92–3, quoted in 8A).

<sup>673</sup> *An. orig.* 1.9.11 (CSEL 60:312), 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369).

*huc accedit, quia non incredibiliter dicitur latronem qui tunc credidit iuxta dominum crucifixum aqua illa, quae de uulnere lateris eius emicuit, tamquam sacratissimo baptismo fuisse perfusum.*

I will omit that it is believed that he, transfixed nearby, could have been doused by water together with the blood flowing from the Lord's side and washed by that most holy baptism.

*ut omittam, quod creditur aqua simul cum sanguine exiliente de latere domini iuxta confixus potuisse perfundi atque huiusmodi sanctissimo baptismate dilui.*

In the later instance, the use of “it is believed” / *creditur* suggests that Augustine is appealing to a wider tradition. This is corroborated in the 5<sup>th</sup> century Syriac dispute poem *On the Cherub and the Bandit*.<sup>674</sup> “with blood from the side he cleansed and washed me” / *ܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ*. It also appears in a pseudonymous, Armenian section (ca. late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century) of Ephrem's *Diatessaron Commentary*: “It was through the mystery of the water and blood issuing forth from [the Lord's] side that the bandit received the sprinkling which gave him the remission of sins.”<sup>675</sup> Perhaps reflecting a tradition as old as Eustathius, these bold claims lend a unique status to the bandit as the only recipient of baptism administered by the dead Christ himself, from the very fluids of his deceased body.

Eustathius speaks quite forcefully about the bandit being inspired and taught by the Spirit to know and confess Jesus as Lord, but he does not connect this idea directly to baptism.<sup>676</sup> So it is Ambrose who apparently pioneers the idea that the bandit was

<sup>674</sup> Strophe 19 line 3 (Brock, “Dispute,” 177).

<sup>675</sup> *Diat. com.* 20.26; CSCO 137:299 (Arm); CSCO 145:214 (Lat). The translation is slightly modified from McCarthy, 307.

<sup>676</sup> *frag.* 26 (CCSL 51:88), *frag.* 27 (CCSL 51:90–2). See also 5D.

baptized in the Holy Spirit.<sup>677</sup> Around 386, in one of four letters written to Simplicianus,<sup>678</sup> Ambrose seeks to resolve his Syrian friend's dilemma regarding the authority that Moses accorded Aaron.<sup>679</sup> He eventually contrasts the destructive fires of the passions with the purifying fire of the Holy.<sup>680</sup> Ambrose follows this with a litany of scriptural examples.<sup>681</sup>

Regarding what that fire is, listen to what was said, that Jesus **baptizes in the Holy Spirit and fire**.<sup>682</sup> This is the fire which dried up **the blood flowing for twelve years**.<sup>683</sup> This is what took away the sin of Zacchaeus who said that he would give half of his goods to the poor, and if I have taken away anything from anyone, he would return it fourfold.<sup>684</sup> This is the fire which cleanses the guilt of the bandit. Indeed, it is **a consuming fire**<sup>685</sup> that said to him: "**Today you will be with me in paradise.**" Thus it healed those in whom it found a single and pure confession, nothing spiteful or deceitful.

*Qui sit iste ignis, audi dicentem quia Iesus baptizat in spiritu sancto et igni. Hic est ignis, qui siccavit aemorrhousae per XII annos sanguinem profluentem. Hic est qui peccatum Zacchaei abstulit dicentis quod dimidium bonorum suorum daret pauperibus, et si cui quicquam abstulit, redderet quadruplum. Hic est ignis qui abstersit culpam latronis; ignis enim consumens est, qui dixit ei: Hodie me cum eris in paradiso. Illos itaque sanavit, in quibus simplicem et puram repperit confessionem, nihil malignum, nihil fraudulentum.*

Ambrose never explicitly mentions the bandit's lack of water baptism as a problem, but his appeal to spirit baptism here is highly suggestive.

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<sup>677</sup> FOC labels this as *ep.* 57 (FOC 26:311–16). This letter, addressed to Simplicianus, was probably written in 386 CE. For references to baptism in the Holy Spirit, see Acts 1.5, 2.4, 8.15–19, 10.44–7, 11.15, 19.1–7. Ambrose directly applies the Baptist's fire-baptism logion in Luke 3.16 // Matt 3.11.

<sup>678</sup> These letters make up a running dialogue. Fortunately, one of them has a date inscribed of 386 (FOC 26:303), which provides an approximation for the entire correspondence.

<sup>679</sup> *ep.* 3.1–2 (CSEL 82.1:19–20).

<sup>680</sup> *ep.* 3.8 (CSEL 82.1:23).

<sup>681</sup> *ep.* 3.9 (CSEL 82.1:23–4).

<sup>682</sup> Matt 3.11 // Luke 3.16.

<sup>683</sup> Mark 5.25 // Matt 9.20 // Luke 8.43.

<sup>684</sup> Paraphrasing Luke 19.8.

<sup>685</sup> Deut 4.24, 9.3, Heb 12.29.

While Ambrose does not directly tie the bandit to Cornelius (Acts 10.44–48) in this regard, his pupil Augustine does. In one of his early works, *On 83 Different Questions*, written to address various exegetical dilemmas encountered in his life in monastic community (ca. 388–397),<sup>686</sup> Augustine in his explanation of John 4.1–2 turns to the Lucan bandit.<sup>687</sup>

It is questioned whether they received the Holy Spirit—those who were baptized at that time about when it was written that the Lord through his disciples was baptizing more than John. In another place in the Gospel it does say: “**The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**”<sup>688</sup> And it can certainly be answered easily that they did receive the Holy Spirit, because the Lord Jesus, who was raising the dead, could have allowed none of them to die until after his glorification, that is, his resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven. But that bandit comes to mind to whom it was said: “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**” He had not received baptism itself, although Cornelius and those Gentiles with him who believed received the Holy Spirit even before they were baptized. Yet I do not see how that bandit, apart from the Holy Spirit, could have said: “**Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**” Indeed, “**No one says Jesus is Lord,**” says the apostle, “**except by the Holy Spirit.**”<sup>689</sup> The Lord himself demonstrated the fruit of his faith by saying: “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**” Therefore, by the ineffable power and justice of the God who rules, baptism was reckoned to the believing bandit. [It was] considered as received in his free soul since it could not be received by a crucified body. Likewise, the Holy Spirit was given secretly before the Lord’s glorification, yet after the manifestation of his divinity it was more manifestly given.

*Quaeritur utrum qui baptizati sunt illo tempore, quo scriptum est dominum per discipulos suos baptizasse plures quam Iohannes, acceperint spiritum sanctum; alio enim loco euangelii sic dicitur: Spiritus enim nondum erat datus, quia Iesus nondum erat clarificatus. Et facillime quidem ita respondetur, quod dominus Iesus, qui etiam mortuos suscitabat, poterat neminem illorum mori sinere, donec post eius clarificationem, id est resurrectionem a mortuis et ascensionem in caelum, acciperent spiritum sanctum. sed occurrit animo latro ille, cui dictum est:*

<sup>686</sup> CCSL 57:xviii; see also CCSL 44A:xl. WSA xlv places it between 388 and 396 CE.

<sup>687</sup> *div. qu.* 62 (CCSL 44A:132–3; ca. 388–97).

<sup>688</sup> John 7.39.

<sup>689</sup> 1 Cor 12.5.

*Amen dico tibi, hodie me cum eris in paradiso, qui nec ipsum baptismum acceperat—quamquam Cornelius et qui cum eo ex gentibus crediderant spiritum sanctum etiam priusquam baptizarentur acceperint; non tamen uideo, quomodo et ille latro sine spiritu sancto dicere potuerit: Domine, memento mei, cum ueneris in regnum tuum; nemo enim dicit dominus Iesus, ait apostolus, nisi in spiritu sancto. cuius fidei fructum dominus ipse monstrauit dicens: Amen dico tibi, hodie me cum eris in paradiso. quomodo ergo ineffabili potestate dominantis dei atque iustitia deputatum est etiam baptismum credenti latroni, et pro accepto habitum in animo libero quod in corpore crucifixo accipi non poterat, sic etiam spiritus sanctus latenter dabatur ante domini clarificationem; post manifestationem autem diuinitatis eius manifestius datus est.*

Likened to Cornelius and his household who received the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, the bandit supplies a key example of receiving the Holy Spirit even before Pentecost. In this solution to an exegetical problem, Augustine also notes and solves another problem, the bandit's apparent lack of baptism. His anti-Donatist treatise *On Baptism* (ca. 400–401) may presume the spirit baptism reading, even as the Rom. 10.8–10 intertext, “faith and conversion of heart” / *fidem conuersionem que cordis* now fills in for baptism.<sup>690</sup> His *Questions on the Heptateuch*, written in 419 CE, approaches the issue by means of a distinction between the visible sacraments and invisible sanctification.<sup>691</sup>

Obviously visible baptism had no benefit for Simon Magus, to whom invisible sanctification was lacking. But it did profit them to whom the invisible was present, since those who had been baptized received the visible sacraments. Was not Moses, who was visibly sanctifying priests, where he himself was present with the same sacrifices or oil, shown as one sanctified? Indeed, who dares to deny that he—from whom such grace stands out—was invisibly sanctified? This can also be said of John the Baptist. Before he was the Baptist he appeared as one baptized. Therefore, we can by no means deny that he was sanctified, even though we do not find it done visibly to him before he came to the ministry of baptizing. This also [applies] to that bandit crucified with him, to whom the Lord said: **“Today you will be with me in paradise.”** Indeed, such beatitude was not given

<sup>690</sup> See *bapt.* 4.22.30 (CSEL 51:257).

<sup>691</sup> *qu. Hep.* Lev 84 (CCSL 33:228).

without invisible sanctification. Hence invisible sanctification is inferred to be present or useful to certain persons without the visible sacraments which changed for different times.

*Nihil quippe profuit Symoni mago uisibilis baptismus, cui sanctificatio inuisibilis defuit; sed quibus ista inuisibilis quoniam adfuit profuit, etiam uisibilia sacramenta perceperant similiter baptizati. Nec tamen Moyses, qui uisibiliter sacerdotes sanctificabat, ubi fuerit ipse ipsis sacrificiis uel oleo sanctificatus ostenditur; inuisibiliter uero sanctificatum negare quis audeat, cuius tanta gratia praeeminebat? Hoc et de Iohanne Baptista dici potest; prius enim baptizator quam baptizatus adparuit. Vnde eum sanctificatum nequaquam negare possumus. Id tamen in eo factum uisibiliter non inuenimus, antequam ad ministerium baptizandi ueniret. Hoc et de latrone illo, cui secum crucifixo dominus ait: **hodie me cum eris in paradiso**. Neque enim sine sanctificatione inuisibili tanta felicitate donatus est. Proinde colligitur inuisibilem sanctificationem quibusdam adfuisse atque profuisse sine uisibilibus sacramentis, quae pro temporum diuersitate mutata sunt.*

The bandit shares the noble company of Moses and John the Baptist as one of many exceptions (sanctified apart from visible sacraments) who prove the rule (that visible sacraments are the usual means of invisible sanctification).

Augustine's clever exegesis also manifests in another notable way in one of his later writings. In his rebuttal of Vincent Victor's certainty that the bandit was not baptized, Augustine speculates that the bandit was actually, previously baptized in water. He ever so cautiously mentions the idea in book one of the *Nature and Origin of the Soul*.<sup>692</sup>

I will omit that he could have been baptized before he was condemned, since none of us knows, none can prove it.

*omittam quod eum, antequam damnaretur, baptizatum non fuisse, quoniam nemo nostrum nouit, nemo conuincit.*

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<sup>692</sup> *An. orig.* 1.9.11 (CSEL 60:312).



But what occasions such reserve in book one finds far more committed and imaginative support in book three.<sup>693</sup>

What if he had been baptized in prison, insofar as afterwards, during a time of persecution, some were able to obtain [baptism] secretly? What if [it happened] even before he was arrested? The laws of the state which applied to bodily death could not spare him on the basis that he had divinely received the remission of sins. What if, having already been baptized, he had incurred the outrage and guilt of banditry? [What if it was] not as one lacking baptism, but rather as a penitent that he received pardon of his crimes—[crimes] which, after being baptized, he had abandoned? Indeed, such faithful loyalty was apparent to the Lord in his mind and to us in his words. For we misrepresent the apostles themselves if we argue that they departed from this life without baptism—those of whom nothing was written about whether they were baptized. We do not know when they were baptized, except the apostle Paul. Perhaps it could be made known to us that they were baptized through what the Lord said to blessed Peter: “**One who has been washed does not need to wash.**”<sup>694</sup> But what about the others of whom we read nothing at all—Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Philemon, the evangelists themselves, Mark and Luke, and innumerable others? Ought we doubt them (Let it not be!) to have been baptized, because we do not read [it]?

*quid si in carcere fuerat baptizatus, quod et postea persecutionis tempore nonnulli clanculo impetrare potuerunt? quid si et antequam teneretur? neque enim propterea illi publicae leges parcere poterant, quantum adinet ad corporis mortem, quoniam diuinitus remissionem acceperat peccatorum. quid si iam baptizatus in latrocinii facinus et crimen incurrerat et non expers baptismatis, sed tamquam paenitens accepit scelerum ueniam quae baptizatus ammisit? quando quidem pietas tam fidelis et domino in animo eius et nobis in uerbis eius apparuit. nam si eos, de quibus non scriptum est utrum fuerint baptizati, sine baptismo de hac uita recessisse contendimus, ipsis calumniamur apostolis, qui praeter apostolum Paulum quando baptizati fuerint ignoramus. sed si ipsos baptizatos esse per hoc nobis innotescere potuit, quod beato Petro dominus ait: **qui lotus est, non indiget, ut lauget**, quid de aliis, de quibus uel tale nihil legimus dictum, de Barnaba, de Timotheo, de Tito, de Sila, de Philemone, de ipsis euangelistis Marco et Luca, de innumerabilibus ceteris, quos absit ut baptizatos esse dubitemus, quamuis non legamus?*

<sup>693</sup> *An. orig.* 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369–70).

<sup>694</sup> John 13.10.

In sum, a handful of early interpreters seek to fill the bandit's font in a variety of ways, whether with his own martyr-blood, with the blood and water flowing from the side of the Johannine Jesus, with the Spirit's baptism of fire, with a proxy baptism of faith and conversion of heart, or with speculation about a previous water baptism. The sacramental faith and piety of later centuries is inscribed into the Lucan story. To have become one of the faithful, he must have known the baptism of the faithful.

## CHAPTER 7. THE PENITENT THIEF

## 7A. Judas' Counterpart

“The penitent thief” is a common title for the Lucan criminal in more recent custom, and yet this title arises out of the early history of interpretation. While the concept of penitence took time to develop, the theme of the bandit’s repentance appears quite early and takes shape in various ways serving multiple parenetic ends.<sup>695</sup> This early popularity corresponds well to the way that repentance is built into the fabric of Luke in its unique stories, including those of the sinful woman (Luke 7.36–50),<sup>696</sup> Zacchaeus (Luke 19.1–10), as well as the criminal who repents on the cross. The theme also belongs to the pre-history of the Lucan story, represented in its simpler version more faithfully preserved in the *Gospel of Peter*.<sup>697</sup>

In early interpretation, this popular theme often goes hand in hand with the juxtaposition of the Lucan criminal with Judas Iscariot. In the closing, late-life chapter of his *Commentary on John* (ca. 248–249), Origen is the first on record to develop this didactic contrast, here focused on the difference between pure and impure repentance.<sup>698</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> For various examples, see 6A.

<sup>696</sup> While matching certain features of the Markan/Matthean stories of the anointing of Jesus with perfume (Mark 14.3–9 // Matt 26.4–13, identified and re-narrated as Mary of Bethany in John 12.1–8), the Lucan narrative is displaced from its paschal setting (as a preparation of and testimony to the burial of Jesus) and recast as an account of repentance (washing his feet with her tears before applying perfume) and the forgiveness of sins that accompanies.

<sup>697</sup> See 2B.

<sup>698</sup> *Io com.* 32.19.242–3 (SC 385:288–90).

For neither his repentance was pure from sin, nor [was his] evil unmixed with something better. For had he repented purely—even as the bandit who said, “**Remember me, Jesus, when you come in your kingdom**”—, he would have come to the Savior and done what we could to make atonement for his previously committed treason. (243.) But if he had driven out of his own soul every thought of good, he would not have regretted when he saw that Jesus was condemned. Instead, he would have spoken more words like those of his treason by cursing him.

καὶ γέγονεν αὐτῷ οὔτε καθαρὰ ἀπὸ ἀμαρτίας μετάνοια, οὔτε ἄκρατος πρὸς τι χρηστότερον ἢ πονηρίᾳ. εἰ μὲν γὰρ καθαρῶς μετενόει κἂν ὡς ὁ ληστής εἰπὼν· **Μνήσθητί μου, Ἰησοῦ, ὅταν ἔλθῃς ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου**, προσελθὼν τῷ σωτῆρι ἐποίει τὰ παρ’ αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὸ ἐξιλάσασθαι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῇ φθασάσῃ γεγονέναι προδοσίᾳ. Εἰ δὲ πάντα τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ ἔννοιαν ἐξεληλακῶς ἦν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς, οὔτ’ ἂν μετεμελήθη ἰδὼν ὅτι κατεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἀλλὰ καὶ προσετίθει ἂν λόγους κατηγορῶν αὐτοῦ συγγενεῖς τῇ προδοσίᾳ·

As is well known, Origen’s portrayal of Judas is quite sympathetic and even-handed, reflecting his attempt to balance prophetic fulfillment and free will. Still, while he defends the earnest character of Judas’ repentance, he still finds it lacking in purity. Contrary to Judas, the Lucan bandit models full, unadulterated repentance, though a reason is not given except Origen’s flat quotation of Luke 23.42. As it happens, in the textual history of Luke 23.42, the form of this quotation is extremely rare as it shifts Jesus’ name from the beginning of the bandit’s words to the heart of his plea (transposing Ἰησοῦ *after* μου).<sup>699</sup> This subtle shift may express the thrust of Origen’s theology of repentance here, that it has a direct encounter with Jesus at its defining center. That is what Judas’ repentance lacked. That is what defined the bandit’s.

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<sup>699</sup> Fascinatingly, no early NT mss have this reading and only one other extant patristic quotation matches: Epiphanius, *Pan. B* 66.40.3 (GCS 37:77).

One of Origen's Latin devotees, Ambrose of Milan, in *ep.* 3 to Simplicianus (ca. 386),<sup>700</sup> seems to have depended on Origen's portrayal. While Ambrose does not mention Judas explicitly, he apparently echoes Origen as he describes the bandit's confession in the categories of purity and impurity.<sup>701</sup> Closer in time to Origen, Pachomius (writing pre-330 CE in his *Catechism about a Spiteful Monk*)<sup>702</sup> is apparently the next extant author to draw the contrast between the bandit and Judas, juxtaposing them as parenetic opposites to show the importance of maintaining innocence and abiding perpetually in a state of mutual indwelling with God by keeping the commandments.<sup>703</sup> In a late Nisibene hymn (350s), Ephrem briefly contrasts the bandit's confession with Judas' deceitful treason.<sup>704</sup> Epiphanius, writing 374/375–378 CE, mentions Judas and the bandit in an anti-Manichean litany of examples designed to show that creatures, included the devil himself, are not created evil.<sup>705</sup>

Chrysostom adapts the parenetic contrast throughout his writing career in a distinctive way. Echoing and expanding Eustathius' wonderful description of the bandit's lack of

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<sup>700</sup> *ep.* 3.9 (CSEL 82.1:23–4; quoted in 6G). The letter lacks a date, but it is one of four letters to Simplicianus dealing with various exegetical problems. One of these letters is explicitly dated to 386 (FOC 26:303).

<sup>701</sup> Ambrose does explicitly make the contrast between the two elsewhere, namely in *Ps.* 39.17 (CSEL 64:223), where, *a minori ad maius*, the bandit's fidelity more than makes up for Judas' betrayal.

<sup>702</sup> For the date, see CSCO 159:viii.

<sup>703</sup> *Catechism about a spiteful monk* (CSCO 159:10–11).

<sup>704</sup> *cruc.* 8.8 (CSCO 248:74, quoted in 5D). Ephrem may also allude to this contrast in *nat.* 4.46–7 (CSCO 186:29) when picturing Judas as having slipped through the nets of Christ the fisher, whose “snare catches for life” / ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ... ܕܚܝܬܐ, after having mentioned the bandit as one of Christ's catches just prior in *nat.* 4.37 (186:28): “He caught that bandit for life” / ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ. Beck reads Ephrem's Gethsemane juxtaposition of light and darkness in *virg.* 51.7 as a reference to this contrast as well (CSCO 223:164, 224:144).

<sup>705</sup> *Pan.* B 66.62.6–8 (GCS 37:100).

prior education and his direct, divine education on the cross,<sup>706</sup> Chrysostom persistently notes how the bandit took advantage of the briefest education and warning, contrasted with the way Judas squandered his past education and privileged experience as a disciple. In his early apology *Against the Jews and Gentiles that Christ is God* (ca. 378–386),<sup>707</sup> this contrast is made as an NT pairing mentioned immediately after an OT pairing of the infidelity of the Jews to Torah and the response of the Ninevites to Jonah’s brief warning.<sup>708</sup> The same distinctive contrast also appears implicitly in one of his last writings, *To Those Who Have Been Scandalized* (ca. 407).<sup>709</sup> The contrast has an ascetic upshot, warning against presumption upon one’s standing before God and calling for responsible fidelity to what one has been given. This ascetic tone comes clearer in one of his early priestly homilies *On Penitence* (ca. 386–387).<sup>710</sup> While this passage does not speak of Judas’ education as a disciple, it does stress that “becoming indifferent” / ῥαθυμίας was the reason for his fall.<sup>711</sup> This contrasts with the bandit who “did not

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<sup>706</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92).

<sup>707</sup> For discussion regarding its date, see 5D.

<sup>708</sup> *quod Chr.* 11.9 (McKendrick, 103–4 = PG 48:828). “Thus, Judas had advantage of so much teaching, and he became a traitor. But the bandit has so little instruction, and on the cross he confessed him and proclaimed his kingdom” / πόσης γοῦν διδασκαλίας ἀπῆλαυσεν ὁ Ιούδας, καὶ προδότης ἐγένετο. ποίας δὲ παραινέσεως ἀπῆλαυσεν ὁ ληστής, καὶ ἐν σταυρῷ αὐτὸν ὡμολόγησε, καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ἀνεκήρυξε τὴν ἐκείνου.

<sup>709</sup> *scand.* 14.10–14 (CPG 4401; SC 79:208–10). Here Chrysostom contrasts the Jews and the bandit along the same lines (those blessed with Torah but not keeping it vs. the one who had no Torah, before making the same point by contrasting Job and Judas. *cruc.* 1.2 (PG 49:402) // 2.2 (PG 49:411) also implicitly contrasts the bandit and Judas, but here it takes the simple form of comparing the divergent responses of the two bandits to Jesus with the divergent responses of the eleven (planning Passover) and Judas (planning treachery). While the contrast is not as direct in these sermons, they do share the idea of the bandit’s lack of education.

<sup>710</sup> For the date, see FOC 96:xv.

<sup>711</sup> *paen.* 1.2.15 (PG 49:279). Grouping Judas with Satan (who falls because he “became indifferent” / ῥαθυμίας and “despaired” / ἀπογνοῦς) and the praying Pharisee of Luke 18.9–14 (who falls because he “became audacious” / θαρρήσας).

despair” / μὴ ἀπέγνων.<sup>712</sup> The technical ascetic terminology provides context for Chrysostom’s other juxtapositions of Judas and the bandit. In other words, his lifelong use of the contrast calls upon an ascetic sensibility, one that likely grew out of his own early years in monastic life between 372 and 378 CE.

Besides Chrysostom, Maximus of Turin makes the most use of the contrast.<sup>713</sup> His first sermon on the bandit (*serm.* 74) reflects an adaptation and expansion of one of Chrysostom’s themes. He argues that the bandit deserves paradise precisely because he honors Christ in the midst of suffering and persecution, unlike Judas who dishonors him under persecution.<sup>714</sup> In his second sermon, in a passage perhaps indebted in part to Ambrose, Maximus also claims that Judas lost his innocence while the bandit gained his.<sup>715</sup> The two switch places, as it were: the innocent apostle becomes a bandit, and the bandit becomes an innocent.<sup>716</sup> By innocence, Maximus seems to mean a lack of guilt

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<sup>712</sup> The bandit is grouped with Paul (who ascends because “he was zealous and did not despair” / ἐσπούδασε καὶ οὐκ ἀπέγνων) and the Lucan penitent publican (18.9–14, who ascends because he “did not despair” / μὴ ἀπογνοῦς). See 7D for a fuller discussion of these intertexts.

<sup>713</sup> Other interpreters occasionally contrast this pair in similar ways. See Jerome, *ep.* 125.1 (CSEL 56.1:118); Ps-Ephrem, *serm. excerpt* 5.255–8 (CSCO 363:64); Leo, *serm.* 53.1 (CCSL 138A:313–14); ps-Ephrem, *Diat. com.* 20.24 (Armenian only; CSCO 137:297–8; McCarthy, 306, quoted in 8D). Nazianzen might have held the honor of crafting the most creative juxtaposition of the two (using the Lucan criminal rebuke, “Do you not fear God?” against Judas), except that the Christian tragedy sometimes attributed to him (*Christus patiens*) is inauthentic. See CPG 3059, citing Grosdidier. See also Quasten 3:245, and J. Tixeront, *A Handbook of Patrology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (St. Louis, MO.; London: B. Herder Book Co., 1923), 175. Tulier is in the minority when claiming its authenticity (SC 149:53ff).

<sup>714</sup> *serm.* 74.2 (CCSL 23:310).

<sup>715</sup> *serm.* 75.1 (CCSL 23:313–14). Ambrose had previously claimed that the bandit (or perhaps Jesus on the bandit’s behalf; the subject is unclear) “earned the reward of innocence” / *praemia innocentis emeruit* (*fid.* 5.10.125; CSEL 78:263).

<sup>716</sup> “Faith... makes innocents of bandits. In sum, Judas, having been made an apostle, after ruining his faith, he lost his innocence... Just as treachery makes [Judas] a criminal, so faith effects innocence... Therefore faith makes bandits innocents and treachery makes apostles criminals” / *Fides... facit de latronibus innocentes. Sicut enim perfidia crimosum facit, ita fides perficit innocentem. Denique Iudas, posteaquam fidem perdidit, innocentiam apostolatus amisit... Facit igitur et fides innocentes latrones et perfidia apostolos crimosos.*

under human and divine law. This is quite a different notion than Pachomius' previous advocacy for ascetic simplicity of mind and heart in the keeping of the commands.

### *7B. The Desert's Victorious Athlete*

As the last section showed, Pachomius and Chrysostom both contrast Judas and the bandit for the parenetic purposes of monastic (or monastic-like) ascesis. In a different passage in that same pre-330 catechism, Pachomius provides his most profound example of an ascetic interpretation of Luke 23.39–43.<sup>717</sup>

Do you want to dwell among men? Imitate Abraham, Lot, Moses and Samuel. Do you want to dwell in the desert? Behold all the prophets who have preceded you. Be like them, **“wanderers who lived in the deserts, the valleys and caves of the earth,”**<sup>718</sup> plunged into distress, tribulations and affliction. He has already said: **“A shelter for the thirsty and a spirit of wronged men will bless you.”**<sup>719</sup> And so, for the bandit on the cross who spoke a word, he pardoned his sins and received him in paradise. These will be your honors if you have constancy against temptation, against the spirit of fornication, the spirit of pride, or whatever other passion. You must also fight against the devilish passions not to follow them, and Jesus will grant you that which he has promised.

The Lucan episode is provoked by the quotation of Isa 24.4–5. Perhaps Pachomius connects the Lucan bandit to its mention of “wronged men,” and/or conceived of his “word” to Jesus as the Isaian reference to blessing. In its broader literary context, the bandit provides a key example within a parenetic summons to desert existence and “constancy” in the fight against “devilish passions.” The reward that Jesus “promised” to

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<sup>717</sup> *Catechism about a spiteful monk* (CSCO 159:6–7). My translation is based on Lefort's French translation (CSCO 160:6–7) of the Coptic.

<sup>718</sup> Heb 11.38.

<sup>719</sup> Isa 25.4–5 LXX: σκέπη διψώντων καὶ πνεῦμα ἀνθρώπων ἀδικουμένων εὐλογήσουσιν σε.



“grant” to victorious ascetes likely recalls the Lucan oath-formula of shared life in paradise. One wonders whether Pachomius thinks of the bandit as a desert dweller himself, which would seem to fit his social situation (bandits were a real problem in the Egyptian deserts, even for monks). Perhaps that is reading too much into his interpretation here, but it does make some sense of how the later (5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> cent.) legends came to be regarding the bandits’ encounter with the Holy Family in Egypt. In any case, Pachomius’ bandit summons new monks to the desert and holds out to them the promise of paradise for their ascetic struggle.

Also writing as the leader of an ascetic community (the “covenanters”) somewhere within the Persian empire,<sup>720</sup> Aphrahat (perhaps in reality Jacob of Nineveh),<sup>721</sup> mentions the Lucan bandit twice in the second portion of his *Demonstrations* (books 11–22). He published this particular collection ca. 343–344,<sup>722</sup> in the midst of Shapur II’s extended persecution of Christians in the Persian empire.<sup>723</sup> Aphrahat first calls upon the episode in his book on Encouragement.<sup>724</sup> Here he contrasts ascetic contentment and its beatitude with the the pride and greed of Adam. Discontent with a paradise larger than the inhabited world, the first man lost it. It is tempting to read Aphrahat’s description not only as ascetic summons, but also as an implicit critique of imperial Persia and perhaps Rome as well, given their frequent battles over territory throughout his life. Later in the

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<sup>720</sup> See A. Lehto, *The Demonstrations of Aphrahat* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2010), 5–7. Lehto also notes that while the *Demonstrations* have a larger audience in mind, that they are written specifically to and for the ascetic community that Aphrahat represents; see pp. 13–16.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>722</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>724</sup> *Dem.* 14.22 (PS 1.1:625–8)

same collection, in his book on the Final Judgment, he draws on the episode again in a question and answer dialogue about the locations associated with reward and punishment in the afterlife.<sup>725</sup> While the topic might seem to reflect innocent speculation about the afterlife given in typical Socratic form, it fits well within the broader purpose of his compendium of ascetic theology. This teacher's initial response is exasperated or bemused rebuke ("O thinking mortal" / *أَيْهَا الْمُبْتَهِمُ*). His exclamation conveys an important ascetic principle: beware of curiosity, that desire to investigate matters beyond human understanding. Aphrahat's eventual answer attempts to affirm in simple faith anything and everything that scripture says, without claiming certainty about how everything works, particularly when the scriptures have diverse testimonies. Thus, the Lucan episode characterizes the scriptures that speak of a heavenly afterlife, while other scriptures presume and illustrate some afterlife within the earth. In a similar vein, he admits ignorance of whether the final kingdom of heaven will be on earth or a new earth-like place will be fashioned by God in the heavens. The Lucan episode is one of several dissonant texts cited in the interest of advocating simplicity of mind and faith. As it happens, Ephrem's anti-Arian references to the bandit resonate closely with Aphrahat's emphasis here.<sup>726</sup>

Another contemporary of Ephrem, Symeon the Mesopotamian (Ps-Macarius) also finds the bandit an ascetic guide for his fellow Messalians in the deserts of northeast

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<sup>725</sup> *Dem.* 22.24 (PS 1.1:1037–8).

<sup>726</sup> See 5C.

Syria.<sup>727</sup> In the first passage, he includes the bandit in a litany of figures (Mary of Luke 10.38–41; Zacchaeus of Luke 19.1–10; the sinful woman of Luke 7.36–50; and the Samaritan woman of John 4.1–42) who received the Holy Spirit internally by associating directly with Jesus (implicitly in contrast to receiving the Spirit through ecclesiastical channels, i.e., the apostolic laying on of hands).<sup>728</sup> Just a few paragraphs earlier Symeon had emphasized contentment with the limits of human knowledge, the importance of avoiding investigation, the priority of seeking Jesus directly, and the all-importance of having the mark and seal of the Spirit within.<sup>729</sup> Symeon's other citation of the Lucan bandit also mentions him as an example of receiving the Spirit, as well as several other ascetic virtues: radical transformation, having a heaven-like soul, whole-heartedly believing divine promises, and participating in the divine nature (2 Pet 1.4).

The ascetic bandit also appears quite clearly, albeit briefly, in the late-life interpretation (ca. 412) of Jerome of Stridon during his time among the many monks living in Palestine. Passing along the proverbial wisdom of the East in a letter written from Bethlehem to Rusticus in Marseilles, Jerome begins by referring to the bandit as an ascetic champion.<sup>730</sup> The juxtaposition of the bandit and Judas appears yet again, as Jerome follows in the wake of Pachomius, Ephrem and Chrysostom.

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<sup>727</sup> G. Maloney notes that the Messalians were more of a movement than a sect; see *Pseudo-Macarius*, CWS (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1992), 8. He also notes that they tended to downplay the sacraments and ecclesiastical authority in favor of asceticism and cultivating a perpetual state of prayer and freedom from passion.

<sup>728</sup> *log.* 12.16–17 (PTS 4:117–18).

<sup>729</sup> *log.* 12.12–13 (PTS 4:113–14).

<sup>730</sup> *ep.* 125.1 (CSEL 56.1:118–19). Regarding its provenance and purpose, see Cain, *Letters*, 11, 151–5.

Nothing is more blessed than the Christian to whom is promised the kingdoms of heaven. Nothing is more laborious [than the one] who is daily tested by life. Nothing is stronger [than the one] who conquers the devil. Nothing is weaker [than the one] who is overcome by flesh. There are many examples of both. The bandit believed on the cross and immediately deserved to hear: “**Truly, truly I tell you: Today with me you will be in paradise.**” Judas slipped from the pinnacle<sup>731</sup> of the apostolate to the Tartarus of betrayal. He was shattered by the familiarity of a banquet, the dipping of a cup, and the grace of a kiss. He did not merely betray a man, but knew that he was the Son of God.

*Nihil Christiano felicius, cui promittuntur regna caelorum; nihil laboriosius, qui cotidie de uita periclitatur. nihil fortius, qui uincit diabolum; nihil inbecillius, qui a carne superatur. utriusque rei exempla sunt plurima. latro credidit in cruce et statim meretur audire: amen, amen dico tibi: hodie me cum eris in paradiso. Iudas de apostolatus fastigio in proditiōis tartarum labitur et nec familiaritate conuiuii nec intinctione buccellae nec osculi gratia frangitur, ne quasi hominem tradat, quem filium dei nouerat.*

Jerome’s bandit reflects not only the promise of reward, but also the ascetic virtue of believing under duress (*in cruce*, no less). Perhaps the interpretation of Eustathius and/or Chrysostom lay in the background. Both had pictured the bandit’s noble philosopher death, defending and confessing Christ amidst great pain.<sup>732</sup> Another Latin (perhaps born in Roman Dacia) sojourner among the monks of the East, John Cassian, writing ca. 426–429, claims that he picked up from Egypt’s masters (recorded here as a Socratic dialogue between Abba Germanus and Chaeremon) the idea that the bandit represents those who grabbed salvation of their own accord, in contrast to those who were called to it.<sup>733</sup>

Coptic texts around this time reinforce such readings. A 5<sup>th</sup> century ps-Chrysostom sermon, in its lengthy expansion of the promise of Luke 23.43, has Jesus himself

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<sup>731</sup> Probably an allusion to Jesus’ temptation on the pinnacle of the temple (Matt 4.5 // Luke 4.9).

<sup>732</sup> See 5D and 6E.

<sup>733</sup> *conl.* 13.11.1–2 (CSEL 13:375–6). While the comment may authentically reflect the source, its anti-Augustinian tenor was obvious and thus provoked the response of Prosper (see 5F).

elaborate on the bandit's previous life of ease (read, lack of asceticism) as unworthy of paradise.<sup>734</sup> In a sermon set in the early to mid-5<sup>th</sup> century, Shenoute of Atripe cites the Lucan episode in a manner quite in keeping with these prior traditions, particularly the interpretation of Aphrahat and Ephrem.<sup>735</sup> He sternly warns those who vex themselves over questions of the respective locations and reality of the scriptural depictions of the afterlife. Even in a robust monastic civilization, the ascetic value of the bandit's promise endured as an example of simple faith and endurance and their reward.

### *7C. A Lesson in Language*

The quotation from Pachomius' pre-330 catechism that started section 7B contains a brief phrase potentially brimming with significance: the bandit "spoke a word."<sup>736</sup> Within its monastic and literary context, this short phrase may well illustrate the monastic insistence on internal quiet and the simple speech that arises from it and protects it. Pachomius recalls the ascetic virtue of simple speech in the broader context of both of his references to the Lucan bandit.<sup>737</sup>

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<sup>734</sup> *res. apost.* 66 (CSCO 524:69; ET from CSCO 525:73). "You have spent all your time eating, drinking, and living in luxury. You did not trouble yourself in any worldly matter, nor did you pray, fast, or take trouble with regard to moral conduct, as a result of which I might have promised you Paradise."

<sup>735</sup> *serm.* 47 (CSCO 73:128–9).

<sup>736</sup> *Catechism about a spiteful monk* (CSCO 159:6).

<sup>737</sup> A couple paragraphs before the first citation of the Lucan bandit, Pachomius instructs his monks to "persevere in... your excellent language" and warns against lust as a force that can make one "a stranger to the language of the Spirit" (CSCO 159:5, my translation from Lefort's French in CSCO 160:5). Just a few lines before his second citation, he counsels them to "be innocent like lambs whose wool is removed while not saying a word."

Around the same time as Pachomius,<sup>738</sup> Eustathius of Antioch lauds the character of the bandit's speech and likely personally identifies with him in the process. In keeping with the Plutarchian *synkrisis* embedded in the Lucan narrative,<sup>739</sup> Eustathius first calls extended attention to the first bandit as a negative model, demonstrating shameful and abusive speech inspired by the devil himself.<sup>740</sup> This bandit “did not speak apart from the all-hostile spirit resounding within him” / οὐδὲ τὸν ἕτερον ἄνευ τοῦ ἐνηχοῦντος αὐτῷ παμπολεμίου πνεύματος.<sup>741</sup> Through him the devil was “the one shooting off godless slanders from the height” / ὁ ἐκ τοῦ μετεώρου τὰς ἀσεβεῖς ἀποτοξεύων δυσφημίας;<sup>742</sup> again, that serpent was “the one shooting off poisonous sounds from the heights” / ἐκ τῶν ὑψηλοτάτων τοὺς ἰοβόλους ἀποτοξεύων λόγους;<sup>743</sup> and again, through the bandit the devil was “vomiting forth such sounds” / τὰς τοιαύτας ἐξεμέσειν ... φωνάς.<sup>744</sup> Eustathius three times uses the Lucan language of blasphemy, rather than the Markan/Matthean terminology of reviling, and he confines the “blasphemous sounds” / βλασφήμους ... φωνάς to only one of the bandits.<sup>745</sup> While his interpretation may convey a sylleptical harmonization of the synoptic disparity, his

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<sup>738</sup> See 3D.

<sup>739</sup> Eustathius may refer to this when he refers to Luke's authorial method as “taking up the net of contemplation” / ἐκδεξάμενος τὸ τῆς θεωρίας ὕψος (CCSG 51:90).

<sup>740</sup> See 8D for a discussion of how Eustathius describes the episode, especially the speech-acts, as part of a cosmic spiritual war.

<sup>741</sup> *frag.* 26 (CCSG 51:88).

<sup>742</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:90).

<sup>743</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:91).

<sup>744</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:91).

<sup>745</sup> *frag.* 26 (bis; CCSG 51:88–9), *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:89). The “blasphemous sounds” quotation appears in 51:89; see also 3D.

language is especially crafted to paint one bandit as a puppet who speaks the words of Satan.

Eustathius carefully paints the other bandit as a contrastive model of speech. His words are pious: “pleasant and agreeable to God” / εὐφήμους καὶ τῷ θεῷ προσφιλεῖς<sup>746</sup> as one “bringing forth the phrases of godliness” / τὰ δὲ τῆς εὐσεβείας ῥήματα προβαλλόμενος.<sup>747</sup> His voice is inspired by the Spirit as one taught directly by God.<sup>748</sup> He even models honorable, public discourse and philosophical-theological debate, apparently the kind of speaking and writing to which Eustathius himself aspired,<sup>749</sup> thus implicitly self-identifying with him as a model. Eustathius also makes highly creative intertexts regarding the bandit’s righteous speech and its rewards.<sup>750</sup> The famous dung-beetle typology (Hab 2.11 LXX) even pertains to the bandit’s speech.<sup>751</sup> While the theology of Nicea is not in immediate focus in fragment 27 of Eustathius’ treatise *On the Soul against the Arians*, the detail and force of the contrast may well echo his assessment of its proceedings and his participation.

Writing only a few decades later than Pachomius and Eustathius, and perhaps indebted to their interpretation, Ephrem calls significant attention to the parenetic value of the bandit’s speech. In Ephrem’s case, asceticism combines with the particularities of

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<sup>746</sup> *frag.* 26 (CCSG 51:89).

<sup>747</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:94).

<sup>748</sup> See 5D regarding the idea of his direct, quick education. See 6C regarding the idea of his confession being inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the use of 1 Cor 12.3 and 1 Jo 4.1–3 as intertexts.

<sup>749</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92), also discussed in 5D and quoted in 8D.

<sup>750</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92; quoted in 8A). The expression “fruit of lips” may refer to any of several verses: Prov 18.20, Isa 57.18, Hos 14.2, Heb 13.15.

<sup>751</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:93, quoted in 8A).

his life's history to bring forth an extremely creative exploration of the trope. While his earlier Nisibene hymns (ca. 325–360) bear no sign of the motif, a cluster of references to the bandit's model speech suddenly emerges in Nisibis in the years 361–363 CE. This moment stands out for its significance in the life of Ephrem and Syrian Christianity. In 361 Shapur II successfully conquered Ephrem's home city. Ephrem himself served as an ecclesiastical advisor and political mediator in the Roman surrender of Nisibis to Persian control.<sup>752</sup> The fifth of his *Hymns on Abraham Qidunaya* refers to this precarious situation (5.1ff) and eventually finds wise counsel in the Lucan passage.<sup>753</sup>

With words the people denied and went lost  
 Through words the peoples found life, which he announced.  
 Because of words Kora and Dathan died.  
 Because of his words the serpent was cursed.  
 Through a word a bandit found life.

With a single sentence I want to instruct you:  
 All that to the sinner  
 damage and loss brings,  
 that for the good will be an asset,  
 with which he wins interest.

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The combination of contrastive speech and spiritual warfare may well echo Eustathius. In this specific case, the speech of the bandit points the path to life, not only

<sup>752</sup> T. Kronholm, *Motifs from Genesis 1–11 in the Genuine Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1978), 24.

<sup>753</sup> *Abr. Kid.* 5.9–10 (CSCO 322:13).



as a virtue befitting the saints,<sup>754</sup> but also as concrete rhetorical guidance for Ephrem's diplomatic efforts and the hope of a future for his Syriac-speaking Christian community in Nisibis as it prepares for its forced migration to Edessa. Scriptural exempla demonstrate the point: harsh words bring destruction, but wise and simple words lead to life. Even a time of destruction can be leveraged for the benefit of the saints. So who better to lead the official negotiations during a time of crisis than early Christianity's greatest poet?

These brief yet crucial years were also overshadowed by the humiliating (for Christians) yet brief (not enough for Christians) reign of Julian as Augustus. In an authentic sermon from this time with abounding parallels to his *Hymns against Julian*,<sup>755</sup> Ephrem takes up the same trope, again mirroring Eustathius' combination of parenetic speech and spiritual warfare.<sup>756</sup>

Just as God \* gives us life at every opportunity.  
 So also Satan \* kills us at every opportunity.  
 As two mites<sup>757</sup> \* can save a soul,  
 so can two words of mockery \* kill a soul.  
 As through a single word \* the well-known bandit found life,  
 so can through a single word \* the one who mocks bring down.

ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ \* ܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܠܥܡܪܐ  
 ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ \* ܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܠܥܡܪܐ  
 ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ \* ܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܠܥܡܪܐ  
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 ܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ \* ܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܠܥܡܪܐ

<sup>754</sup> Beck notes that this hymn is the last of a group of five which together elaborate the lifestyle of the saints (CSCO 323:v).

<sup>755</sup> See Beck in CSCO 306:vii.

<sup>756</sup> *Serm.* 1.2 lines 1199–212 (CSCO 305:35)

<sup>757</sup> Mark 12.42 // Luke 21.2.



While it is impossible to establish the direct influence of Pachomius or Ephrem upon him here, Chrysostom does share their ascetic theme about the simplicity of the bandit's speech. In his longer homiletic series on Genesis (*CPG* 4409), delivered in Antioch within a few years of his ca. 386 shorter series on Genesis,<sup>761</sup> he mentions that the bandit was radically transformed “through those few words” / διὰ τῶν ὀλίγων ἐκείνων ῥημάτων. His second sermon *On the Cross and the Bandit* has a similar phrase: the bandit “was speaking those brief words... **Remember me in your kingdom**” / εἰπὼν τὰ βραχέα ἐκεῖνα ῥήματα.... Μνήσθητί μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.<sup>762</sup> Chrysostom's “few words” may have found their way into a pseudonymous Syriac sermon originally composed shortly after the 451 Council of Chalcedon, but now extant only in Armenian (*CPG* 1065).<sup>763</sup> “[T]his wise bandit... spoke so much with few words: ‘**Remember me, Lord, in your kingdom.**’” Quite an apt summary of the entire trajectory!

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authenticity of the original Syriac version of this sermon to Ephrem (p. 334). While noting the similarities with the Syriac interpretations of Ephrem, he fails to note the many themes not found in the authentic Syriac texts of Ephrem (found in Beck's CSCO critical editions). These themes (the bandit opening paradise; angels lauding his faith; a discourse between the angels and righteous about the bandit; the heavenly homecoming of the bandit; etc.) are rather characteristic of the more involved speculative traditions that emerge in the late 4<sup>th</sup>, early 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>760</sup> *res. apost.* 66 (CSCO 524:69; ET CSCO 525:73).

<sup>761</sup> SC 433:11–12.

<sup>762</sup> *cruc. latr.* 2.2 (PG 49:410). The theme overlaps here with the theme of the bandit's quick conversion.

<sup>763</sup> Ps-Aristides, *hom. sanc. latr.* 3 (Pitra 4:9). Previous scholarship recognized the clear pseudonymity of this sermon (e.g., P. Pape in TU 12.2, as cited in the note on *CPG* 1065). It has clear references to Leo pulling back from the 449 Council of Ephesus, and its extremely heated tone suggests that Chalcedon had already (likely just recently) happened. My translation is based on Pitra's Latin translation of the Armenian text. Isaac of Antioch deserves consideration as a possible author of this sermon.

### 7D. A Penitential Guide

Origen first describes the bandit as a model of repentance, even as “the bandit who repented on the cross” / ὁ μετανοήσας ἐπὶ τῷ σταυρῷ ληστής.<sup>764</sup> While Origen himself may not have intended the participial use of repentance as an ersatz naming convention,<sup>765</sup> one of his imitators may have: “to the bandit who repented” / τῷ μετανοήσαντι ληστῇ.<sup>766</sup> Didymus of Alexandria almost certainly did, repetitively using the participial phrase both in aorist and present forms.<sup>767</sup>

Origen is also the first on record to make the most significant intertexts related to the theme of the bandit’s repentance: the Lucan sinful woman (7.36–50) and praying publican (18.9–14).<sup>768</sup> Perhaps owing in part to Origen’s influence, perhaps to the

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<sup>764</sup> *Io cat.* f3 (GCS 10:487). See also 7A regarding Origen’s description of the bandit’s repentance as pure, contrasting it with the mixed though real repentance of Judas: *Io com.* 32.19.242–3 (SC 385:288–90).

<sup>765</sup> The Heinrici catena excerpt (1908:330–1), loosely connected to Origen’s *Matt com.* A 133 (Commentariorum Series), contains a similar phrase: “the one who repented” / ὁ εἰς μετενόησεν. But this phrase is absent both from the Latin and the other corresponding Greek catena excerpts.

<sup>766</sup> *Ps cat.* (PG 12:1088).

<sup>767</sup> See “to the repenting bandit” / μετανοοῦντι ληστῇ in *Ps cat.* A 683a (PTS 16:64), “the bandit who repented” / μετανοήσαντος ληστου in *Ps cat.* A 1019 (PTS 16:247), “the bandit who repented” / ὁ μετανοήσας ληστής in *Ps com.* B 159.1 (PTS 8:152 (frag 159.2) and “the repenting bandit” / ὁ μετανοῶν ληστής in *Ecc com.* A 92.9 (PTA 22:130). The commonality between the Ps-Origen excerpt in the note above and these phrases in Didymus suggests that serious consideration should be given to the relationship between Didymus and the author of the former, including the possibility of Didymus as the author.

<sup>768</sup> The first intertext is made clearly and immediately in the Greek and Latin of Origen’s *Commentary on Romans*; see *Rom com.* 3.27–8 in the Greek Tura papyrus (Scherer 164–6 // FC 2.6:104–6), a Greek catena excerpt of this passage (Ramsbotham, “Documents,” 222), and also its anonymous Latin translation (*Rom. com.* A 3.6; GLB 16:248–9). The penitent publican is a likely intertext, mentioned just shortly later in the Tura papyrus (Scherer 166 // FC 2.6:107) and anonymous Latin translation (GLB 16:250) in a section making the same point about justification apart from works.

recurrence of the theme of repentance in Luke, numerous subsequent interpreters picture the bandit as a penitent by means of the same Lucan intertexts.<sup>769</sup>

Apparently Origen was not alone even in his own time. A Ps-Hippolytus sermon on the Pasch, likely written during Origen's own lifetime, sees in the divergent bandits not only a sign of supersession, but also a clear contrast of repentance and avoidance of the same.<sup>770</sup>

You two may also be those two dispositions of the soul. The one turns himself from the old sins and humbles himself for the Master, because by repentance he is made worthy of kindness and honor. The other is without excuse, because he is unchanging and remains a bandit until the end.

Εἴτε καὶ οἱ δύο ψυχῆς εἰσιν οὗτοι λογισμοί, ὧν ὁ μὲν ἕτερος ἐν τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἁμαρτήμασι μεταβάλλεται καὶ πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην ἀποδύεται, διὸ καὶ τῆς ἐκ μετανοίας φιλανθρωπίας καὶ τιμῆς ἀξιούται, ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ἀναπολόγητος, ὅτι καὶ ἀμετάθετος καὶ μέχρι τέλους ἐστὶ ληστής.

<sup>769</sup> In successive lines in *nat.* 4.37–40 (CSCO 186:28), Ephrem mentions the bandit (37), the harrowing of hell (38), Christ's catching of publicans and prostitutes (39), and finally the Lucan sinful woman as a "mirror (*or*, example) for penitents" / ܠܡܝܪܬܐ ܕܡܬܬܝܒܐ (40). Symeon the Mesopotamian (*log.* 12.17; PTS 4:117–18) groups the bandit and Lucan sinful woman with the Lucan praying Mary (10.38–42) and Zacchaeus as those who received the Spirit and were drawn to Jesus by love, perhaps suggesting penitence. Chrysostom shows a habit of listing Paul, the bandit, and the Lucan publican (in that precise order) as collective examples of persistence in a life of penitence: see *paen.* 1.2.15 (PG 49:279) and *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483). In *Ps com.* 111 (PG 55:284), Chrysostom speaks of the sinful woman, Matthew the publican, the bandit and even the Matthean magi as graciously given extended time by God for repentance. He also pairs the bandit and Lucan sinful woman as examples of the fear of God in *Ps com.* 128 (PG 55:366) and Christ's treatment of this pair as exemplifying his willing self-humiliation in *1 Cor hom.* 33.2 (PG 61:278). Jerome mentions the bandit shortly after likening himself to the penitent publican in *ep.* 16.1 (CSEL 54:68). Theodoret of Cyrus habitually groups the Lucan sinful woman, the Lucan bandit, and publicans (in that precise order): see *Ps com.* 103.3 (FOC 102:155–6) and *Ps com.* 107.10 (FOC 102:192). Asterius Ignotus also groups the bandit and Lucan publican as models of penitential prayer (*hom.* 4.12; SOFS 16:28). In medieval Latin tradition, Thomas of Celano's famous 13<sup>th</sup> cent. hymn *Dies Irae* makes a similar penitential pairing between the bandit and Lucan sinful woman.

<sup>770</sup> *Pasch hom.* 54.1–2 (CPG 4611; SC 27:181). The first section is quoted in 5A.

In the second quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, in his *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem becomes the first to recall the episode as a basis for penitential prayer, even describing his own tears in the encounter.<sup>771</sup>

Encouraged by the words \* I had heard  
I knelt down and wept there, \* and spoke before our Lord:  
“Legion received his request from You \* without any tears;  
permit me, with my tears, \* to make my request,  
grant me to enter, instead of that herd, \* the garden,  
so that **in paradise** I may sing \* of its planter’s compassion.”

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Ephrem’s devotional adaptation of the bandit’s penitence influenced later interpretation significantly.<sup>772</sup> Nowhere is Ephrem’s influence in this regard seen more clearly than in a group of metrical homilies on penitence falsely ascribed to him: Beck’s *Sermons* 1.5, 1.7, 1.8 and 3.4. Their connections point to a common author and avid devotee of Ephrem, one whom we might name Ephrem Paenitens.<sup>773</sup> Throughout these

<sup>771</sup> *par.* 12.9 (CSCO 174:52; ET from Brock, *Paradise*, 163–4). As noted in 5A, Asterius Ignotus persistently calls on the bandit as a model of penitential prayer in a way quite similar to Ephrem; see *hom.* 4.12 (*hom.* 1 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:28) // *fr. in Ps* 4 (SOFS 16:251); *hom.* 5.17–19 (*hom.* 2 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:40–1).

<sup>772</sup> In addition to the texts analyzed below, a Ps-Ephrem sermon entitled *in sanctam parasceuen, et in latronem et crucem* (CPG 4062), includes the title “barb of penitence” within an extended litany of names (ESO Gk3:475). This may even recall Ephrem’s image of Christ as the fisherman who caught the bandit and others (*nat.* 4.37–40; CSCO 186:28) who themselves had once caught others.

<sup>773</sup> Beck noted the connections among these sermons, as well as the signs of their pseudonymity, in the introductions to his critical editions: see CSCO 306:xviii–xix and CSCO 321:vii–viii. A closer comparison of these sermons with Ephrem’s authentic writings strengthens Beck’s conclusions here. Certainly, these sermons imitate many of Ephrem’s poetic devices, including his personal, poetic identification with the bandit, his contemplative quest for a refuge in scripture’s personas and dramas, the personification of themes, etc. Ephrem’s previously developed themes also appear, including his notable trope of the bandit

late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century sermons, Ephrem Paenitens consistently identifies himself and his hearers with the bandit as a practitioner of penitence and heir of its rewards, forgiveness and paradise.<sup>774</sup> Two of his sermons (Beck's *Sermons* 1.7 and 1.8) in particular reflect the most profound penitential interpretation of the passage in antiquity.

In its extended introduction, *Sermon* 1.7 mentions the bandit confessing his sins and groups him with the Lucan sinful woman (7.36–50), publican (18.9–14), Zacchaeus (19.1–10), other outsiders, and even the penitent poet himself.<sup>775</sup> In the heart of the sermon, the bandit is deemed “your relative” / ܐܪܡܐܝܐ, vis-à-vis penitents.<sup>776</sup> In the surrounding passage, he stands in paradise, together with the angels, all of whom (including paradise personified), invite the hearers to join them by following the path of

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receiving the key of paradise and the poet's desire to receive that key as well. Yet, as Beck notes, these sermons take self-identification to an exaggerated extreme. Additionally, they transition between scriptural exempla much more abruptly than Ephrem, calling the cast of penitents in a repetitive fashion more akin to later sermons (Chrysostom, Theodoret) than to Ephrem's metrical homilies. *Serm.* 1.8 especially stands out. It includes an involved interaction between the poet and the bandit in which the bandit is given additional speech on three successive occasions. Here the bandit is not speaking to and facing Christ but rather speaks to the poet himself and even preaches to him. At the poet's penitent cry, the bandit is dispatched by Jesus as a messenger to the poet, and prompts, perhaps even mediates his encounter with Jesus and his receiving of forgiveness. Indeed, the bandit is speaking from within paradise, standing amidst an enormous crowd, in which groups are distinguished by different labels, the perfect, the righteous, etc. All of this is completely different from anything found in Ephrem's authentic hymns. Ephrem consistently pictures the bandit *on the cross*, or *heading from the cross to paradise*, or *waiting near paradise for the final resurrection*. In other words, Ephrem pictures the bandit going to paradise and leading Ephrem there, rather than as a figure inviting him into a paradise in which he already stands. Or, to put it another way, authentic Ephrem pictures the bandit as a text-bound figure, a character with a given scriptural context which Ephrem seeks to co-inhabit, rather than a story whose next, missing chapter Ephrem presumes to know and seeks to narrate. The heavenly bandit of *serm.* 1.8 attests to an intervening historical development, the emergence of the bandit's *cultus* starting around the late 4<sup>th</sup> century. The sermon's enumeration of groups in paradise, the perfect from the righteous, also suggests the influence of the late 4<sup>th</sup> century *Liber Graduum* rather than Ephrem here.

<sup>774</sup> *serm.* 1.7 lines 65–9 and 77–8 (CSCO 305:97), lines 506–7 (CSCO 305:105); *serm.* 1.8 lines 41–65 (CSCO 305:107).

<sup>775</sup> Lines 77–92 (CSCO 305:97).

<sup>776</sup> Line 507 (CSCO 305:105).

penitence. An intertext between Luke 23.43 and Luke 15.7,<sup>777</sup> and perhaps Hebrews 12.1 as well,<sup>778</sup> sets the stage for an involved depiction of heavenly encouragement for penitents.<sup>779</sup>

The angels in the heights rejoice \* and the holy ones in their droves.  
The angels cry aloud: Hosanna, \* the seraphim exult,  
The terrifying cherub of paradise, \* who watches the way to paradise,  
welcomes you, O penitent, \* as new heirs of paradise.  
Paradise itself cheers towards you \* as the bandit, your relative,  
opens to you its great gate \* with the key in which the cross is engraved.  
The tree of life exults over you \* and hands you its life-fruit.

חַלְתִּיכָא בְּיָמֵיכֶם \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים  
חַיִּים אֲחֵרִים כְּהַקְדִּישׁוּ \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים  
בְּיָמֵיכֶם וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ \* נְפִילָא דְּפָרַדִּיז  
מַלְאָךְ לִי אֵל אֲדָמָא \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים  
אֵל אֲדָמָא וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים  
וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים  
וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים \* וְהַקְדִּישׁוּ כָּל חַיִּים

*Sermon 1.8* develops this trope of heaven's invitation to paradise in the form of an extended dialogue with the bandit. The bandit himself becomes a dialectical preacher<sup>780</sup> of penitence. He re-assures the poet that Jesus is all-merciful, counsels repentance and tears, and is even dispatched by Jesus from paradise to offer the rewards of penitence.<sup>781</sup>

The bandit holds me lazy, \* as I investigated him on your mercy:  
“He is brought out to seek us, \* and you are slow in your steps.  
See he stands there with outstretched hand \* to grasp your hand, when you come.  
Fear not, though he is terrifying! \* Because no one is easier than he.”  
With two words he passed me \* the great key to paradise.  
As soon as I called, he pardoned me, \* and by Eden sent me his messenger.

<sup>777</sup> “There will be more joy in heaven over one repenting sinner...”

<sup>778</sup> “Such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us...”

<sup>779</sup> Lines 498–509 (CSCO 305:105).

<sup>780</sup> Just after this passage (line 74; CSCO 305:107), Ephraim Paenitens alludes to the Lucan bandit together with other Scriptural exempla of penitence as “preachers” / *חַלְתִּיכָא*.

<sup>781</sup> Lines 41–65 (CSCO 305:107).





May I wrap myself in their promises! \* For I was lost just like  
the bandit and the harlot. \* Last became the first.

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ܡܝܬܝܢ ܡܝܬܝܢ ܡܝܬܝܢ \* ܡܝܬܝܢ ܡܝܬܝܢ ܡܝܬܝܢ

Another Syriac text, the ca. 400<sup>785</sup> *Book of Steps* (*Liber Graduum*), moralizes so rigorously that it inverts Ephrem's penitential appropriation in certain ways even while presuming it. While the bandit's forgiveness provides encouragement to penitents, his lack of penitential works is perceived as a potential seduction to moral license and apathy. Thus the Lucan episode must be read counter-intuitively in order to fulfill its proper moral function to encourage the works of penitence. The reference stresses the exceptional character of the bandit's story as a mysterious example of divine fiat and surprise.<sup>786</sup>

There is a kind of forgiveness that is given to one individual only, such as to the bandit who alone was forgiven without having any works to his credit. Other people are not forgiven when they have no works to refer to, only when they have done penance... If you want to understand why this bandit was forgiven: in his case the king came to his door while he was not aware of it. He granted him his petition and forgave him. Our Lord disposes of the things that are his own. To you he says, "Repent and I will forgive you." So he showed the richness of his mercy by the example of this one person, in order to encourage the penitent, who keep his commandments in their penance. How great are his mercies that he even had pity on someone who had no works to offer, and yet forgave him!

Various Greek and Latin interpreters also bear witness to this trope and bear some traces of Ephrem's influence. Chrysostom sounds quite like Ephrem when he lists the

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own prayer for mercy and confession of his sins (lines 325ff; CSCO 305:112). In *sermon* 3.4 the bandit is similarly depicted as a model of penitence, here grouped with the Lucan sinful woman (CSCO 320:48).

<sup>785</sup> See Brock, *Paradise*, 63.

<sup>786</sup> *Grad.* 1.7. ET slightly modified from that of R. Kitchen and M. Parmentier, *The Book of Steps: The Syriac Liber Graduum* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2004), 12. On the mystery of some individuals receiving forgiveness while others do not, a similar reference appears in *Grad.* 1.2 (*Ibid.*, 9).

bandit as one of several examples / ὑποδειγμάτων of penitence,<sup>787</sup> and Theodoret of Cyrus includes him in a list of examples of penitence as well.<sup>788</sup> Asterius Ignotus may also be influenced by Ephrem here.<sup>789</sup>

During his sojourn East, Jerome briefly but potently makes use of the trope.<sup>790</sup> Maximus of Turin, showing his devoted imitation of Chrysostom's homilies,<sup>791</sup> stands as its foremost Latin popularizer. Indeed, Fitzgerald classifies Maximus' two sermons on the bandit as penitential sermons.<sup>792</sup> In the first, Maximus himself explicitly claims that the bandit was "remembering his own crimes and bearing penitence" / *Reminiscens enim scelerum suorum et paenitudinem gerens*.<sup>793</sup> Perhaps reflecting the influence of Maximus, Augustine stands out in the West for his brief historical speculation that the bandit was actually (not just symbolically) a penitent who had been previously baptized.<sup>794</sup> While the interpretation is given as a question and one option among many to explain the plausibility of the bandit's baptism, it is nevertheless a fascinating line of thought that hinges on a penitential reading.

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<sup>787</sup> *Gen hom.* 55.13 (PG 54:483). The bandit is also used as an example of penitence in *paen.* 1.2.15 (PG 49:279), *Ps com.* 111 (PG 55:284), and *Ps com.* 128 (PG 55:366).

<sup>788</sup> *Ps com.* 103.3 (FOC 102:155–6); *Ps com.* 107.10 (FOC 102:192).

<sup>789</sup> *hom.* 4.12 (SOFS 16:28).

<sup>790</sup> *ep.* 16.1.2 (CSEL 54:68). Cain notes that Jerome in this letter softens the reproach genre (expressing dissatisfaction with the recipient not returning a previous letter) by making himself the offending (penitent) party; see *Letters*, 29. Identifying himself with a litany of examples of persistence and penitence (Matt 15.22–8, Luke 11.5–8, Luke 18.9–14, Jonah 3), he begs for the reply, guidance and support of Damasus as he seeks to be Rome's ambassador to help resolve the split in the Antiochene church among three rival bishops.

<sup>791</sup> See 5E.

<sup>792</sup> A. Fitzgerald, "The Relationship of Maximus of Turin to Rome and Milan: A Study of Penance and Pardon at the Turn of the Fifth Century," *Augustinianum* 27 (1987): 478–9, 484–5.

<sup>793</sup> *serm.* 74.1 (CCSL 23:309).

<sup>794</sup> *an. orig.* 3.9.12 (CSEL 60:369). This speculation, which Augustine proposes as a serious possibility, is used to undermine Vincent Victor's initial presupposition that the bandit was not baptized and still received the reward of paradise.

What if he, having already been baptized, rushed into the outrage and crime of banditry? [What if] it was not as one lacking baptism, but rather as a penitent that he accepted the pardon of crimes which he received as one who had been baptized?

*quid si iam baptizatus in latrocinii facinus et crimen incurrerat et non expers baptismatis, sed tamquam paenitens accepit scelerum ueniam quae baptizatus ammisit?*

John Cassian, another pilgrim to the East, rounds out the Western examples, making a unique intertext with David as a penitent.<sup>795</sup> In sum, though penitence is sometimes considered a Western, Latin obsession, the most emphatic and profound penitential interpretations of the Lucan bandit were cultivated in Syria and popularized in the Greek-speaking East before spreading West. The Lucan criminal first became the proverbial “penitent thief” in Syria.

#### *7E. The Profitable Hope of a Peaceful Death*

As with many tropes, it took time for the idea of the bandit’s last minute or “death-bed” conversion to develop. Origen has but one comment in his late-life (ca. 248) *Commentary on Matthew* that is suggestive of such an idea. A Greek fragment (C<sup>luc</sup> 58) shares this reading with the anonymous Latin translation, confirming it as original to Origen.<sup>796</sup> It is difficult to know whether Origen intends a reference to late-life converts in a general sense, or more specifically to those who convert under the threat of execution, or even, as

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<sup>795</sup> *Inst.* 12.11 (CSEL 17:213).

<sup>796</sup> See the comparison table in 3C.

in various early Christian and Jewish martyr stories, spectators who courageously join martyrs in their deaths and thus share in their rewards.<sup>797</sup> In any case, Origen suggests the episode's symbolic relevance for some group of late-life converts.

The next relevant passage belongs to Eustathius of Antioch, appearing ca. 327–337 in a fragment of his treatise *On the Soul against the Arians*.<sup>798</sup> Here a brief, subtle yet novel intertext with Matt 20.1–16 (the parable of the staggered hires) frames the trope. In his ca. 350 *Catecheses*, Cyril of Jerusalem draws more elaborately on the same intertext.<sup>799</sup>

The lawless bandit enters... Those who have borne the burning (heat) had not yet entered. Yet the one (who came) around **the eleventh hour** entered. Let no one grumble against the house master, since he says: “**Friend, I have not wronged you. Do I not have authority to do what I want with my things?**” The bandit wants to do justice, but death prevents.

ὁ ληστής παράνομος εἰσέρχεται... οἱ βαστάσαντες τὸν καύσωνα οὐπω εἰσῆλθον, καὶ ὁ περὶ **τὴν ἑνδεκάτην ὥραν** εἰσῆλθεν. μηδεὶς γογγυζέτω κατὰ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότη, ἐπεὶ φησιν· **ἑταῖρε οὐκ ἀδικῶσε. οὐκ ἔχω ἐξουσίαν ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς ποιῆσαι ὃ βούλομαι; θέλει δικαιοπραγῆσαι ὁ ληστής, ἀλλὰ προλαμβάνει ὁ θάνατος.**

For Cyril, the last hour hire of the bandit exemplifies divine mercy, and his execution explains why he could not do the just works expected of a believer. Taken at face value, *Diat. com.* 15.15–16 makes this same intertext between Matt 20.1–16 and the Lucan bandit.<sup>800</sup> But 15.16 is conspicuously absent from the Armenian version,<sup>801</sup> suggesting this intertext was a later (late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> century?) Syriac interpolation and not original to Ephrem. Without that section, the bandit and this intertext are missing, and all

<sup>797</sup> For the background of this text and other relevant discussion, see 6E.

<sup>798</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92, quoted in 8A).

<sup>799</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90–2).

<sup>800</sup> CBM 8:154 (Syriac).

<sup>801</sup> CSCO 137:213–14.

that is left is a simple reflection on Matt 20.1–16 as an illustration of conversion happening at any and all times of a person's life. Apparently a later redactor made the now traditional intertext.

Though he does not make the Matthean intertext, Ambrose is the first on record to state explicitly the idea of the bandit's last-minute conversion. In an letter to Horontianus likely written in 387 CE,<sup>802</sup> after noting a distinction between the bandit's request for the kingdom and Christ's (lesser!) pledge of paradise, Ambrose typifies two ways of living and dying, each with its own distinct reward.

More is reserved for disciples, which is bestowed for their labors. Therefore, while he promised [them] a dwelling, he deferred the kingdom [from the bandit]. Therefore, to him who at the stroke of death was converted and confessed **Jesus is Lord**,<sup>803</sup> the dwelling of paradise should be deserved. But the one who trained oneself long before and "was a soldier for Christ," won people's souls, and offered oneself for Christ will have the kingdom of God provided for his wages. This one should rejoice over what is given in remuneration.

*Servatur discipulis, quod plus conferatur pro laboribus ideo que incolatum promisit, regnum distulit. Itaque is qui sub ictu mortis convertitur et confitetur **dominum Iesum**, mereatur incolatum paradisi, qui vero multo ante se exercuit et 'Christo militavit', adquisivit populorum animas, pro Christo se obtulit, habeat paratum stipendiis suis dei regnum, cuius se remuneratione donatum gaudeat.*

For Ambrose, last-minute conversion may result in beatitude, but not in its highest form.

While it is one thing to describe the bandit as a last-minute convert, it is still another to identify one's own or another's last-minute conversion with that of the bandit.

Macrina's *Life*, written by her brother Gregory Nyssen,<sup>804</sup> certainly does not picture Macrina as a last-minute convert. Yet, as we will see, this text likely influenced later

<sup>802</sup> *ep.* 19.8–9 (CSEL 82.1:145). Regarding its historical background, see the note in 6A.

<sup>803</sup> Cf. Rom 10.9.

<sup>804</sup> SC 178:67.

efforts to identify last-minute converts with the Lucan bandit. Unlike Cyprian's effort to comfort his catechumens facing the threat of martyrdom (see 6E), Macrina invokes the Lucan episode as a point of hope and consolation in her own non-violent death.<sup>805</sup> In the last moments of life, as part of her final prayer, she passionately recounts the bandit's story just before she loses her voice and expires.

You who broke through the flame of the fiery sword and restored to paradise the man who was crucified with you and fell upon your mercies, **remember me also in your kingdom**. For **I** also was **crucified with** you.<sup>806</sup> I nailed my flesh with the fear of you and terrified [it] by your judgments.

Ὁ διακόψας τὴν φλόγα τῆς πυρίνης ῥομφαίας, καὶ ἀποδοὺς τῷ παραδείσῳ τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν συσταυρωθέντα σοὶ καὶ ὑποπεσόντα τοῖς οἰκτιρμοῖς σου, κάμου μνήσθητι ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, ὅτι καὶ γὰρ σοὶ συνεσταυρώθην, καθηλώσασα ἐκ τοῦ φόβου σου τὰς σάρκας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν κριμάτων σου φοβηθεῖσα.

Styled after earlier Christian martyr stories, the noble Macrina plays the part of Socrates comforting his students and reverses customary gender roles by bravely facing death and consoling her weak brother. Macrina models the courageous death of an ascete. She even bases her claim to the bandit's beatitude upon her ascetic life. In and through her brother's hagiograph (ca. 380–383), Macrina makes the Lucan bandit a focus of dying prayer and meditation. Her *Life* draws on and thus popularizes the dying exchange between the bandit and Jesus as a template for Christian noble death more generally.

<sup>805</sup> *vit. Macr.* 24 (*GNO* 8.1:397–8).

<sup>806</sup> Cf. Gal 2.19.

Perhaps Nyssen even made this noble-death intertext as part of his effort to promote the cultus of Macrina as a matron of last-minute converts.<sup>807</sup>

Jerome had lived in Constantinople during the important years of 379 to 381 and met Nyssen, among other influential Greek theologians, under Nazianzen's patronage.<sup>808</sup> Perhaps this connection explains in part why, only shortly after the appearance of Nyssen's brave and noble *Macrina*, Jerome pens a similar biography and noble death story on behalf of a recent convert from an aristocratic Roman family.<sup>809</sup> As Jerome tells her life (*ep.* 38, the *vita Blesillae*, written ca. 384),<sup>810</sup> Blesilla was a young widow who had lived a profligate life and converted dramatically while suffering from a severe fever. Briefly after this epistolary biography was composed, the young convert and newly committed widow quickly died from malnutrition due to her rigorous fasting.<sup>811</sup> Upon her death, Jerome wrote a letter to Blesilla's mother Paula. The letter blends encomiastic genres, Latin *consolatio* with Greek *epitaphios*. After recounting her courageous devotion amidst painful illness, Jerome makes a stark connection between the story of young Blesilla and the bandit's dying conversion.<sup>812</sup>

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<sup>807</sup> On this note, it is very interesting that Nyssen's *Macrina* makes the same intertext Origen had made between Luke 23.39–43 and Gal 2.19 ("I have been crucified with Christ") in his *Commentary on Matthew*, quoted in 3C (C<sup>luc</sup> 58, TU 47.2:39 // *Matt com* A 133, GCS 40.2:270–1), and that this is the only extant reference in Origen's corpus to the bandit as a symbol of the death of late-life converts.

<sup>808</sup> S. Rebenich, *Jerome*, ECF (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 23. See SC 352:19 regarding the idea of Nazianzen as a patron for Jerome's translation of Origen.

<sup>809</sup> For a description of this family, see A. Cain, *Letters of Jerome*, 36–7.

<sup>810</sup> *Ibid.*, 74–6.

<sup>811</sup> *Ibid.*, 75–6.

<sup>812</sup> CSEL 54:295.



You will be safe, my Blesilla, we trust. You show the truth of what we say:  
 “Conversion is never too late.”<sup>813</sup> This saying was first dedicated to the bandit:  
**“Truly, I tell you, today you will be in paradise.”**

*Secura esto, mi Blesilla, confidimus; probas uera, quae dicimus: numquam est  
 sera conuersio. uox haec primum dedicata est in latrone: Amen dico tibi; hodie  
 me cum eris in paradiso.*

Though Blesilla’s lease on life was somewhat lengthened, the threat of death did occasion her conversion, and Jerome ties this late-life conversion to the bandit’s story. On the other hand, the Lucan episode also appears in the context of Jerome’s description of Blesilla’s death as a noble one brought about by her ascetic rigor. Jerome’s bandit is caught half-way between asceticism and consolation, between Macrina’s noble death and his own desire to lend hope to the family of a late-life convert.<sup>814</sup>

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<sup>813</sup> Jerome had used a nearly identical phrase some eight years prior. His second letter to Damasus (ca. 376; see ACW 33:209 n1), *ep.* 16.1.2 (CSEL 54:68), reads: “Christ brought the bandit from the cross to paradise, and lest anyone ever think conversion [too] late, murder’s punishment brought forth martyrdom” / *Christus in paradisum de cruce latronem tulit et, ne quis aliquando seram conuersionem putaret, fecit homicidii poena martyrium*. Courtray notes this as a stock phrase used twice in Jerome *Epistles* (*ep.* 38 and *ep.* 107), both times of the bandit; see “La figure,” 114. Courtray apparently did not find this third example (*ep.* 16.1.2), the earliest of the three and quite possibly the earliest reference to Luke 23.39–43 in the writings of Jerome.

<sup>814</sup> A brief reference to the bandit also appears in the consolatory epistle and *epitaphios* written 396 CE to Jerome’s long-time friend Heliodorus (bishop of Aquitaine and later a monk) on his nephew Nepotian (*ep.* 60.3; CSEL 54:551). Jerome and Nepotian had corresponded on several occasions previously, with Jerome taking the role of a guide to Heliodorus in his vocation as an ascete-priest. For further discussion of the historical and prosopographical background of this letter, see Cain, *Letters*, 146–7, 172, 174, 211–2. Jerome’s mention of the bandit is part of his oft-repeated view (expressed by Ephrem and Chrysostom before him) that Christ’s promise to the bandit opened a heavenly paradise that had been closed to everyone beforehand: “Before Christ Abraham was in hell. After Christ a bandit is in paradise” / *ante Christum Abraham apud inferos; post Christum latro in paradiso*. Jerome’s understanding hinges on his frequently made intertext with Luke 16.19–31 as proof that Abraham (along with all the righteous before Christ) was actually in hell before the crucifixion. See further discussion in Courtray, “La figure,” 109–13, who notes many parallel texts in Jerome’s corpus, esp. *Laz. div.* (CCSL 78:515), but also *Isa* 16.59.1–2 (CCSL 73A:678–9), *Ecccl* 3.18.21 (CCSL 72:281), *ep.* 129.2 (CSEL 56:164–5), *Mark tr.* 2.1.13–31 (CCSL 78:461). *ep.* 60 differs significantly from the *vita Blesillae* in that Jerome feels no need to establish the standing of Nepotian as an ascete or a true convert to Christian faith. In keeping with this, Jerome does not make a direct connection between the bandit and Nepotian, as he had done for Blesilla.

For later Latin authors, asceticism need not always be a pre-requisite for crafting a *consolatio* that included the bandit's promise of paradise. In yet another example of the genre, this one in poetic form (*epikēdeion*),<sup>815</sup> written between 393 and 408,<sup>816</sup> Paulinus of Nola weaves the bandit into the eulogy of a mere child, one whose death was likely caused by diphtheria or quinsy.<sup>817</sup> This was the young son of one Pneumatius and Fidelis, who may have been relatives of Paulinus from Aquitaine.<sup>818</sup> As in the previous examples, the connection between the speaker and the deceased is deeply personal. Paulinus' own deceased son even has the same name as this family's departed son: Celsus. Given the circumstances, the connection with the bandit has nothing to do with the theme of noble death, but rather everything to do with the cosmic overturning of death by the death of the God-Man.<sup>819</sup>

On the cross a man is hanged. God from the cross terrifies the world.  
 A man is dead. Death itself suffers the true God.  
 A man hangs on the cross. God from the cross forgives sins  
 and dying cuts life off from sins.  
 Considered among the guilty and reckoned worse than a bandit,  
 whom Judea placed ahead of its pious Lord,  
 to the believing bandit he gives the celestial kingdom,  
 enclosed by earth he already opens paradise.  
 So we ought to strengthen our spirits, lift our mind  
 and thrust idle fears from our heart.  
 For us (behold!) he laid down his soul and again took it up,  
 the very Son of God remaining entirely God.

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<sup>815</sup> ACW 40:14, 412.

<sup>816</sup> ACW 40:412–13.

<sup>817</sup> ACW 40:413.

<sup>818</sup> ACW 40:415.

<sup>819</sup> *carm.* 31 lines 127–38 (CSEL 30:311). On a related note, Vincent Victor's idea of paradise as a realm of beatitude for the unbaptized, including the bandit and children, may represent a similar penchant for a consolatory reading of the Lucan episode. See Augustine's discussion and disagreement with this idea in *An. orig.*, partly discussed in 6F.

*in cruce fixus homo est, deus e cruce terruit orbem.  
mortem homo, uerum mors ipsa deum patitur.  
in cruce pendet homo, deus e cruce crimina donat  
et moriens uitam criminis interimit  
proque reis habitus peiorque latrone putatus,  
quem Iudaea pio praeposuit Domino,  
credenti donat regnum caeleste latroni,  
clausus adhuc terris iam paradisum aperit.  
nos igitur firmare animos, attollere mentem  
ignauosque decet trudere corde metus,  
pro quibus ecce animam posuit simul atque resumpsit  
filius ille dei cuncta manente deo.*

Another poem (*carm.* 33), attributed to Paulinus yet of questioned authenticity,<sup>820</sup> follows Jerome's pattern of a last-minute convert's noble (ascetic) death more closely. Yet, it is also patently obvious that the eulogist takes great pains to find ascetic virtue where none had existed. Here a male aristocrat, one Baebianus of the Verii, after a life of "lazy delay" / *pigra... mora* (ln 2), in his dying days finally comes to faith and receives baptism by the bishop (lines 1–40). Offered the assurance of divine healing and an extension on life, he now bravely refuses but instead consoles his wife and suddenly reveals a preference for angelic chastity (lines 41–60). After his baptism, his body goes stiff for two days, yet the poet assures us that Baebianus is in a visionary state, his soul taken up to heaven (lines 61–80). The church's liturgy awakens his body briefly, allowing him to bring back news of his journey to paradise, after which he finally dies (lines 81–100). This particular poem not only recounts the Lucan bandit, but explicitly identifies the deceased as that bandit, in dactylic hexameter no less. The poem also

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<sup>820</sup> ACW 40:419–21.

incorporates the notable Matthean intertext (Matt 20.1–16) as a connected assurance of afterlife reward.<sup>821</sup>

Here is that blessed bandit, who, at his own end  
 confessing Christ, though guilty, merited faithful stars.  
 Here departs one given a day's solid pay,  
 a late hired worker, just now at the eleventh hour.

*hic est ille latro felix, qui fine sub ipsa  
 confessus Christum meruit reus astra fidelis;  
 hic donatus abit solida mercede diei,  
 serus ab undecima iam mercennarius hora.*

This poem pushes the application of the Lucan episode even closer to the last minute of the proverbial death-bed conversion. More significantly, it suggests the idea of a stairway to heaven, that aristocrats could get a last-minute pass to heaven ratified by the eulogizing invocation of the Lucan bandit.

On a related note, in his brilliant and exacting analysis of Jerome's letters, Andrew Cain explains how the early *vita Blesilla* was not only a gesture of fidelity to Jerome's patrons in the Paula family, but also part of a larger epistolary collection (the Marcellan collection) designed to garner support from the wealthy Marcella and the broader Aventine circle of ascetic families through whom Jerome sought to gain renown as an ascetic and exegetical master.<sup>822</sup> Aristocratic patronage also explains the invocation of the bandit in Paulinus' *carm.* 31 on behalf of the child Celsus, as well as his (or an imitator's) *carm.* 33 for Baebianus. Consolatory literature was largely a privilege granted aristocratic families and the province of those seeking to maintain and expand patronage for their

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<sup>821</sup> *carm.* 33 lines 34–7 (CSEL 30:339).

<sup>822</sup> See Cain, *Letters of Jerome*, 68–91.

literary work and reputation. This poetic clamoring for patronage also befits the historical moment, given that the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century was the golden age of early Christian Latin poetry. In this context, consolation at times overshadows and even invents asceticism. The Lucan story now underwrites the assurance of salvation even for members of wealthy families who did not have the time or inclination for a life of faith and self-denial.<sup>823</sup>

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<sup>823</sup> The ca. 400 Syriac *Liber Graduum* quoted and discussed in 7D provides an interesting contemporaneous counterpoint here as it warns against using the bandit's story presumptuously so as to avoid the necessity of penitence.

## CHAPTER 8. TYPE-CASTING A THIEF

*8A. Mystical Trees, Fruits and Bugs*

As discussed previously (1B), the reference to “paradise” in Luke 23.43 likely recalls that same, oft-repeated term in LXX Genesis 2–3, and perhaps various other intertexts as well which explore the idea of paradise as a realm of beatitude for the righteous. Early interpreters of Luke saw the Genesis intertext quite clearly. As the first extant interpreter of the passage, Tatian secures it for his semitic-speaking audience when he opts for the Syriac phrase “in the garden of Eden” / ܥܕܢ ܗܕܢܐ, rather than using the Greek loan-word “in paradise” / ܦܪܕܝܝܫܐ (as in Peshitta, Sinaiticus, and Hareclean).<sup>824</sup> In keeping with the proclivity of early interpreters for symbolic images and catch-words, as well as their ongoing quest to find the crucifixion of Jesus hidden throughout the Jewish scriptures,<sup>825</sup> numerous interpreters develop horticultural typologies stemming from this intertext.

Origen of Alexandria is ostensibly the first to apply a horticultural typology to the bandit.<sup>826</sup> If the translation of Rufinus may be trusted here, Origen depicts the bandit himself as a tree planted in paradise by making an intertext with Rom. 6.5 and its term

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<sup>824</sup> See 2E.

<sup>825</sup> J. Duncan and M. Derrett explore the textual history of Ps 96.10 (LXX 95.10) and many of the horticultural intertexts to the cross developed by early interpreters; see “Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΕΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΕΝ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥ ΞΥΛΟΥ” *Vigiliae Christinae* 43 (1989), 378–92.

<sup>826</sup> Paradise speculation appears in connection with the Lucan episode in *Gen fr. pap.* (Glaue 10; ca. 229–230), *Ezek hom* 13.2 (SC 352:422–4; ca. 239–242), *Lev hom.* 9.5.2–3 (SC 287:88–90; ca. 239–242). See chapter four for numerous examples of the early interpretation of paradise in Luke 23.43.

“co-planted” / σύμφυτοι.<sup>827</sup> In his *Ps com.*, Eusebius of Caesarea apparently alludes to this (or a similar) interpretation of Origen. He expands the trope by means of an intertext with Aquila Ps 1.3, while also making it a more broadly representative reference to beatitude.<sup>828</sup>

The one who is blessed, transplanted from this mortal life, receives the promise to come into the paradise of God, as the tree which is planted alongside streams of water.

ὁ μακαριζόμενος, μεταφυτευθεὶς ἐκ τοῦ θνητοῦ βίου, ἐπαγγελίαν ἔξει ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔσεσθαι, ὡς τὸ ξύλον τὸ πεφυτευμένον παρὰ τὰς διεξόδους τῶν ὑδάτων.

Commenting on Zech 14.3–4 (“his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... on the east”), Didymus also echoes this typology when he speaks of the bandit as representing those trees “transplanted” / μεταφυτευθησόμεναι in the garden of Eden in the east.<sup>829</sup>

<sup>827</sup> *Rom com* A 5.9 (GLB 33:436), “For what was joined to the tree of life was a sprout worthy of paradise” / *Digna namque erat planta paradisi quae arbori uitae sociata est*. The passage is quoted in full in 4D.

<sup>828</sup> PG 23:80. The intertext with Aquila Ps 1.3 (“transplanted” / μεταπεφυτευμένον instead of LXX “planted” / πεφυτευμένον) also appears in typologies about Christ (rather than the bandit) in two ps-Origen comments. One speaks of the Word, “rooted in the Father” / ῥριζώκως ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ, being “transplanted” / μεταπεφυτευμένον into paradise through his passion, thus providing illumination to the saints (*Ps cat.*; PG 12:1088–9). Another uses the same Aquila intertext to speak of Christ, “rooted in the roots of the patriarchs” / ῥριζόμενος τῶν πατριαρχῶν ῥίζαις, setting up (himself?) as the tree of wisdom in scripture, “transplanted” / μεταπεφύτευται (apparently in his incarnation) so as to allow others to partake of his image, after which his soul was “transplanted” / μεταφυτευθεῖσα into paradise (*Ps cat. B* on Ps 1.3; Pitra 2:446). Hilary of Poitiers follows this ps-Origen line of thought, describing the Christ of the Lucan passage as the tree of life (*Ps* 1.14–15; SC 515:192). He makes a similar intertext to Aquila 1 and the “paradise of delights” in *Trin.* 10.34 (CCSL 62A:487–8). Ambrose explicitly recalls the traditional Aquila intertext, mentioning the bandit while identifying Christ himself as the transplanted tree (*Ps* 1.39; CSEL 64:34):

Beautifully indeed Aquila said, “τὸ μεταπεφυτευμένον, what was transplanted,” of him who was at first planted in a virgin then transplanted in paradise, just as he said to the bandit: “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**”

*pulchre autem Aquilas τὸ μεταπεφυτευμένον dixit, hoc est transplantatum, eo quod primo sit plantatus in uirgine, postea transplantatus in paradysum, sicut dixit ad latronem: amen dico tibi, hodie me cum eris in paradiso.*

<sup>829</sup> Making an intertext with Gen 2.8; *Zac. com.* 5.45 (368; SC 85:992).

Asterius Ignotus pictures the bandit in a similar way, though not as a transplanted tree but rather as a grafted wild olive shoot, here making an intertext with Rom 11.17–24.<sup>830</sup>

A gardener engrafts one wild olive branch. After he brings it forth flourishing and fruitful, from the one the others are secured. So also Christ engrafted the bandit as a wild olive shoot upon the cultivated olive branch, and he secures the ability of all the nations to be engrafted and transplanted into Paradise.

Ὡς περ γὰρ γεωργὸς μίαν ἐγκεντρίσας καλλιέλαιον, καὶ εὐθαλῇ καὶ εὐκαρπὸν ἀποδείξας, ἀπὸ τῆς μιᾶς καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἐμπιστεύεται, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τὸν ληστὴν ὡς ἀγριέλαιον εἰς καλλιέλαιον ἐνεκέντρισε καὶ ἐπιστεύθη ὅτι καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐγκεντρίσαι καὶ μεταφυτεῦσαι εἰς τὸν παράδεισον δύναται.

Asterius seems to envision a more instrumental role than his predecessors for the bandit's transplant.<sup>831</sup>

Others focus on Christ as the central subject of typological reflection, assigning secondary roles to one or both bandits in the typology. Drawing on Ps 106.4 as an intertext, the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century ps-Cyprianic *duobus montibus* pictures Christ's cross as a garden watch-tower from which Christ judges the two bandits and two peoples, Jews and Gentiles.<sup>832</sup> Eustathius of Antioch is apparently the first to explore the trope of Christ as the tree of life in connection to the Lucan episode.<sup>833</sup> The bandit comes to this tree as a late-comer to the vineyard (Matt 20.1–16 intertext), harvests fruit by his words, and partakes of forgiveness and life directly from the sap of the Christ-Tree.<sup>834</sup>

<sup>830</sup> *hom.* 5.18 (*hom.* 2 on Ps 4).

<sup>831</sup> This fits together nicely with the depiction of the bandit as an instrumental Second Adam; see 8B.

<sup>832</sup> *mont.* 7.2–8.2 (CSEL 3.3:111–12, quoted in 5B).

<sup>833</sup> The idea of Christ's crucifixion as the tree of life was pervasive by the early to mid-second century; see Duncan and Derrett, "Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΕΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΕΝ," 382ff.

<sup>834</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:92–3). Duncan and Derrett claim that "[t]he bleeding corpses on crosses could be called the fruit of dead trees;" see "Ο ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΕΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣΕΝ," 383.



Even if you have arrived late to the vineyard, still the final **fruit of your lips** procures you freedom from evils and shows forth a god-loving confession. Now the recompense of Christ's words has become to you endless worship. Remissions from the sprinklings emerging like a spring from the God-bearing body now purify (you). The precious blood of cleansing that secretes from **the tree of life** now seals you. Quickly the flow of blood which starts from dead limbs became a life-giving ransom to you. For at the time you were confessing Christ as king, you were bringing forth streams of blood trickling through all juices.

εἰ καὶ βραδέως τῷ ἀμπελῶνι προσέμιξας, ὁ μὲν οὖν πανύστατος τῶν σῶν **χειλέων καρπὸς** λύσιν σοι προϋξένησε τῶν κακῶν, ὁμολογίαν ἐνδειξαμένῳ θεοφιλῇ, τῶν δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ῥημάτων ἡ ἀμοιβὴ θεραπείας σοι γέγονεν ἀτελεύτητος. Ἀγνίζουσι δέ <σε> περιραντηρίων ἀφέσεις ἐκ τοῦ θεοφόρου σώματος ἀναβλυστάνουσαι κρουνηδόν· σφραγίζει δέ σε καὶ τὸ τίμιον αἷμα καθαρσίῳς ἐκ **τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς** ἐκκριθέν. Τάχα δὲ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος ἡ πρόχυσις ἢ ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν ὀρμηθεῖσα μελῶν λύτρον σοι γέγονε ζωτικόν· ὀπηνίκα γὰρ ὡμολόγεις τὸν βασιλέα Χριστόν, ρεῖθρα προὔφერες αἱμάτων διὰ πασῶν στάζοντα τῶν ὀπῶν.

A few decades later in one of his *Hymns on the Pearl* (of faith),<sup>835</sup> Ephrem similarly describes Christ as the tree of life, together with the bandit as one who partakes of its fruit of faith.<sup>836</sup>

The bandit obtained \* faith  
which obtained him, \* entered, put him  
within paradise. \* He saw it on the cross,  
the tree of life. \* It was fruit,  
and instead of Adam, \* he was, as it were, the eater.

ܠܗܘܬܐ \* ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ  
ܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ \* ܡܕܢܚܐ, ܡ  
ܕܡܕܢܚܐ \* ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ  
ܕܡܕܢܚܐ, ܡܕܢܚܐ \* ܕܡܕܢܚܐ  
ܕܡܕܢܚܐ \* ܕܡܕܢܚܐ ܕܡܕܢܚܐ

<sup>835</sup> Composed during his Edessan period, 363–373 CE.

<sup>836</sup> *h. fid.* 84.1 (CSCO 154:257). A similar trope appears in the 5<sup>th</sup> century Syriac *Dispute between the Cherub and Thief*, strophe 21, where the bandit says, “I’ve left behind, hanging on Golgotha, that very Fruit of Salvation that’s in your garden.” Syriac text from Brock, “Dispute,” 177; ET from *ibid.*, 184.

Around the same time,<sup>837</sup> Hilary of Poitiers also pictures Christ as the tree of life, even as he (akin to Origen and his followers) portrays the bandit as the righteous man, the perennial tree of Ps 1.3. His intertexts also include Gen 2.9 and Prov 3.18.<sup>838</sup>

There indeed is this tree planted, where the Lord, who is wisdom, brought in that bandit who confessed him Lord, saying: “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**” And that wisdom (who is Christ) is named the tree of life, we have already shown...

*Illic enim plantatum hoc lignum est, quo latronem illum se Dominum confitentem Dominus, qui sapientia est, introducit dicens: Amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso. Et quia sapientiam, qui Christus est, lignum uitae cognominari ... docuimus ...*

Various other 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century interpreters also explore the idea of the bandit benefiting from Christ and/or his cross as the tree of life.<sup>839</sup> One of the most creative intertexts appears in Maximus of Turin, who ties the Lucan episode to the Odyssean/Ulyssean story of Scylla and Charybdis. As with the sailors who survive the strait, Christ makes a safe way home by being bound to wood. The bandit becomes an

<sup>837</sup> ca. 364–367 (SC 344:15–17).

<sup>838</sup> Ps 1.14–15 (CCSL 61:28–9).

<sup>839</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90); Asterius Igotus, *hom.* 1.5 (SOFS 16:2), *hom.* 5.17 (hom 2 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:40–1); Augustine, *en Ps.* 39.15 (CCSL 38:437); ps-Ephrem, *Diat. com.* 20.24 (CSCO 137:298; CSCO 145:213); ps-Ephrem, *serm.* 1.7 lines 510–11 (CSCO 305:105, quoted in 7D). Augustine paints an especially creative diversity of related scenes. His bandit sees Christ, via an intertext with Mark 4.31 (// Matt 13.31, Luke 13.19), as a prolific “mustard seed” / *granum sinapis*; see *serm.* 111.2 (RB 57:114). The wood of the cross even becomes a “teacher’s chair” / *cathedra... docentis* from which Christ instructs the bandit as a student; see *serm.* 234.2 (PL 38:1116). More recently, V. Guroian, inspired in part by the paradise theologies of Cyril of Jerusalem, Ephrem and other patristic interpreters, elegantly elaborates this typology: “While on that cross Jesus promised the repentant thief who hung next to him like a withered vine that they would see each other in paradise that day; not in some penumbral realm where the dead exist in a disembodied state, but in a luxuriant garden filled with perpetual light. On Holy Saturday Jesus descended into dark Hades and took Adam and Eve back with him to paradise. And on Sunday, the first day of the new creation, Jesus sprang up from the tomb, a vine laden with the fruit of resurrection.” See “And I Look for the Resurrection,” in *Nicene Christianity: The Future for a New Ecumenism*, ed. C. Seitz (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2001), 207.

Odyssean, shipwrecked sailor who returns home by being bound also to Christ's mystical mast.<sup>840</sup>

Making an intertext with the story of the spies retrieving fruit for Moses (Num 13.23–4), Amphilochius of Iconium is apparently the first on record to refer to the bandit himself as fruit. He specifically describes the bandit as a grape-cluster / βότρυν retrieved by the second Joshua.<sup>841</sup>

That Jesus got grapes, removing them from earth's tree. This one, the true Jesus, grabbed the bandit, introducing him into paradise.

Ἐκείνη Ἰησοῦν <ἐ>δέξατο τὸν τὸν βότρυν <ἐπ>ὶ ξύλου ἐκ τῆς γῆς  
<ἐξαγ>αγόντα· οὗτος <τὸν ἀληθ>ινὸν Ἰησοῦν ὑπε<δέξατο τὸν> τὸν ληστὴν  
<εἰς τὸν παρὰδ>εισον εἰσα<γαγόντα>.

In a wordplay with Vul Luke 23.31,<sup>842</sup> Augustine paints a similar picture: “What great fruit Christ has gained from dry wood” / *Qualem fructum Christus de arido ligno percepit!*<sup>843</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century common source behind two partial versions of the *Acts of Andrew, Mart. pr.* (BHG 96) and *Laud.* (BHG 100), clearly pictures the bandit as fruit of Christ's cross as the tree of life.<sup>844</sup> A Greek ps-Ephrem sermon (5<sup>th</sup> century or later) likewise lauds the bandit: “O early blossom of the cross! O first, upper-fruit of

<sup>840</sup> *serm.* 37.2 (CCSL 23:145–6). For a discussion of Odyssean/Ulyssean typologies in early Christianity, see H. Rahner, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery* (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1971), 328–86.

<sup>841</sup> *Zech* 8.2 (CCSG 3:166).

<sup>842</sup> “Because, if they do such things to green wood, what will happen to dry” / *Quia si in viridi ligno haec faciunt in arido quid fiet?*

<sup>843</sup> *serm.* 232.6 (SC 116:272). In *an. orig.* 1.9.11 (CSEL 60:311) he refers to the bandit's faith as what blossomed from the cross: “Indeed, his faith blossomed from the wood at that time when the disciples' (faith) shriveled” / *tunc enim fides eius de ligno floruit, quando discipulorum marcuit.*

<sup>844</sup> Quoted in 2C. On a related note, the *Laudatio* (BHG 100) of Nicetas the Paphlagonian makes the same intertext as Amphilochius with Num 13.23–4, but here the cross not only bears the bandit as fruit but also “bore the Master as a grape-cluster” / τὸν δεσπότην ὡς βότρυν βαστάσας (AB 13:347–8).

Golgotha's foliage" / ὦ σταυροῦ πρώϊμον ἄνθος· ὦ τῆς γολγοθᾶ χαίτης, πρώτον ἀκρόδρυον.<sup>845</sup>

These nature intertexts expand beyond horticultural themes even to include the famous “dung-beetle” / κάνθαρος of LXX Habakkuk 2.11, a common Christian type with deep roots in Egyptian lore and symbolism. Eustathius of Antioch is the first to explore this type in connection to the Lucan passage. He does so at great length by means of an involved comparison of the habits of dung-beetles and bandits.<sup>846</sup>

I think **to a dung-beetle** speaks parabolically of the bandit **speaking** piously toward his expectation **from the** same **tree**. And is it not a paradox, since the prophetic character compares the Lord **to a worm** through the parable of the seed? For the dung-beetle appears to be so lowly and small, both dark and black. They are grovelers altogether. Though winged it sits on stinking raw matter. By making spheres it introduces feces into the stinking matter of the earth. Escaping and holing up on the spot, it eats the preserved delights. Even so, all who have known a more bandit-like existence are lowly and small in virtue, dark and benighted in their souls. Inconsiderately avoiding the deeds of the day, as grovelers who want to walk on air—wall-scalers, rope-climbers—they run about on roofs and ceilings. Bent on robberies, they plunder in many ways. They do not abstain from grave-robbings. They tear off the remains and spit out foul-smelling discharges. They even search out raw matter as treasures. Then, they gather together many coverings of clothes. They spread out much gold and an abundance of coins. Then spheres made with ties are stored in the hidden places of the earth. Finally, furtively escaping home, they feed on hellebore fare. Accordingly, the prophetic mind of bandits, focused on this diet, seems to liken a criminal to a dung-beetle. The one fixed on high on a tree was distinguishing by inspiration.

Κανθάρω δὲ νομίζω παραβάλλεσθαι τὸν ληστὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ξύλου παρὰ προσδοκίαν φθειγόμενον εὐσεβῶς. Καὶ τί παράδοξον, ἐπεὶ καὶ σκώληκι τὸν κύριον ὁ προφητικὸς ἀπεικάζει χαρακτὴρ διὰ τὴν τοῦ κόκκου παραβολήν; Δοκεῖ γάρ πως ὁ κάνθαρος εὐτελὴς εἶναι καὶ μικρός, σκοτεινός τε καὶ μέλας· ὅλως δὲ χαμαιπετὴς ὢν εἰς τὰς δυσώδεις ὕλας ἀμφοποτώμενος ἐφέζεται· τὰ δὲ σκύβα[λ]λα σφαιροποιῶν εἰς τὰς δυσώδεις ὕλας εἰσκομίζει τῆς γῆς· εἰσδύς δὲ καὶ φωλεύσας αὐτόθι, τὰς

<sup>845</sup> CPG 4062 (ESO Gk3:475).

<sup>846</sup> frag. 27 (CCSG 51:93–4).

ταμειευθείσας ἐσθίει τροφάς. Οὐκοῦν καὶ πάντες ὅσοι βιοτεύειν  
 ληστρικώτερον ἐγνωκότες, εὐτελείς μὲν εἰσὶ καὶ σμικροὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν,  
 σκοτεινοὶ δὲ καὶ ζοφώδεις τὰς ψυχάς· τὰ τῆς ἡμέρας ἔργα  
 δια<δι>δράσκοντες ἀβούλως, χαμαιπετεῖς ὄντες ἀεροβατεῖν ἐθέλουσι,  
 τοιχοβατοῦντες, σχοινοδρομοῦντες, ἐπὶ τοῦ στέγους καὶ τῶν ὀροφῶν  
 διατρέχοντες. Εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρπαγὰς καθιστάμενοι, ληΐζονται παντοίως·  
 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τυμβωρυχίας ἀπέχονται, τὰ μὲν λείψανα περι<ρ>ρηγνύντες,  
 τοὺς δὲ δυσώδεις διαπτύσσοντες ἰχώρας, καὶ τὰς τῶν κειμηλίων  
 ἀνιχνεύοντες ὕλας. Εἴτα πολλὰς μὲν συναγαγόντες ἐσθημάτων  
 περιβολάς, πολὺν δὲ χρυσὸν καὶ νομισμάτων πλῆθος διαφορεῖν,  
 σφαιροειδεῖς ποιησάμενοι τοὺς δεσμούς, ἐν τοῖς ἀποκρύφους τῆς γῆς  
 ταμειύονται τόποις. Εἴτ' εἰσδύντες οἴκοι λεληθότως, τὴν ἐλεβορώδη  
 σιτοῦνται προφῆν. Εἰς ταύτην τοίνυν τὴν τῶν ληστῶν δίαιταν ὁ  
 προφητικὸς νοῦς ἀφορῶν, κανθάρῳ μὲν ἀφομοιάζειν ἐδόκει τὸν  
 κακούργον· διεδήλου δ' ἐνθέως ὁ προσπεπηγὼς μετέωρος τῷ ξύλῳ·

Eustathius envisions the bandit as an inspired interpreter of scripture who, because of the dark life and mantic fodder he shares with scarabs, sees the true identity of the condemned Jesus and the true meaning of Habakkuk's prophecy.

In his *Commentary on Luke* (published 389 CE), Ambrose of Milan either works directly from LXX Hab. 2.11 or uses an Old Latin translation. In either case, he pictures Christ himself as the “scarab who cried from the wood” / *scarabaeus qui clamavit e ligno* in his last words, including his promise to the bandit.<sup>847</sup>

A **worm** on a cross! A **scarab** on a cross! And a good **worm**, who clung to **wood**! A good **scarab**, who **cried out from wood**! What **did he cry out**? “Lord, **do not establish this sin against them**.” He cried out to a bandit: “**Today you will be with me in paradise**.” He **cried out** as if a scarab: “**God, my God, save me! Why have you forsaken me?**” And a good **scarab** at that, who with the steps of virtue was turning the formless and lazy mud of our body! A good scarab, who **roused the poor from the dung-heap**! He roused Paul, who was esteemed as **dung**. He also roused Job, who **was sitting in a dung-heap**.

*Vermis in cruce, scarabaeus in cruce. Et bonus uermis, qui haesit in ligno, bonus scarabaeus, qui clamauit e ligno. Quid clamauit? Domine, ne statuas illis hoc*

<sup>847</sup> *Luc* 10.113 (CCSL 14:377–8).

*peccatum. Clamauit latroni : hodie mecum eris in paradiso, clamauit quasi scarabaeus: deus, deus meus, respice me! Quare me dereliquisti ? Et bonus scarabaeus, qui lutum corporis nostri ante informe ac pigrum uirtutum uersabat uestigiis, bonus scarabaeus, qui de stercore erigit pauperem. Erexit Paulum, qui aestimatus est stercore, erexit et Iob, qui sedebat in stercore.*

Making a litany of intertexts with the catch-word “dung,” Ambrose implicitly pictures the Lucan bandit as scarab’s dung. Piled together with other scriptural examples, the bandit sits in the company of Job (LXX 2.8), the Psalter’s “poor man” (Ps 113.7; LXX/Vul 112.7), and Paul (Phil 3.8). With these others, the bandit represents all humanity mired in a base existence but remade by Christ the dung-beetle.<sup>848</sup>

Gregory of Elvira’s *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (ca. late 4<sup>th</sup> century) makes the same Hab 2.11 intertext. He apparently used a slightly different Old Latin text than Ambrose (*scarabaeus de ligno* rather than *scarabaeus e ligno*), but his interpretation is quite different in one respect. He sees the blaspheming bandit as the scarab’s antitype.<sup>849</sup>

But in Habakkuk “a stone,” he says, “**from the wall cried out and the scarab beetle from the tree will proclaim it.**” So Christ, **a stone from the wall** of his body **cried out to the Father. And a scarab beetle from the tree**—i.e., one of the bandits—**proclaimed**, saying: “**If you are the Son of God, why do you suffer these things?**”

*sed et Habacuc lapis inquit de pariete clamauit et scarabaeus de ligno adnuntiauit ea. Lapis itaque Christus de pariete corporis sui clamauit ad patrem et scarabaeus de ligno, i. e. unus de latronibus pronuntiauit dicens : tu cum sis filius dei, quare haec pateris?*

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<sup>848</sup> Ambrose draws on the same typology in *Ep. A* 40.5 (CSEL 82.2:38): “As if a **scarab on wood, he cried out... He cried out** so as to despoil (the devil), responding to the bandit, ‘**Truly, truly I tell you, Today you will be with me in Paradise.**’” / *sicut scarabaeus in ligno, clamauit. Clamauit ut despoliaret respondens latroni: Amen, amen, dico tibi: hodie me cum eris in paradiso.*

<sup>849</sup> *Cant.* 4.6–7 (CCSL 69:200–1).

Jerome's ca. 393 translation of Habakkuk in the Vulgate, based on a Hebrew text, absents the Septuagintal reference to a dung-beetle in 2.11. Yet his ca. 405 *Commentary on Habakkuk* not only shows awareness of the LXX reference, but also an interpretation of it quite in keeping with that of Gregory of Elvira.<sup>850</sup>

I know a certain brother understands the Lord Savior as **the rock who cried out from the wall**, and **the scarab speaking from the tree** as the bandit who blasphemed the Lord. This could be understood in a pious way. However, I do not find how it can fit the whole context of prophecy.

*Scio quemdam de fratribus, lapidem, qui de pariete clamaverit, intellexisse Dominum Salvatorem, et scarabaeum de ligno loquentem, latronem qui Dominum blasphemaverit, quod licet pie possit intellegi, tamen quomodo cum universo prophetiae contextu possit aptari, non invenio.*

While Jerome's "certain one of the brothers" could refer to a local monk, the apparent oddity of this interpretation suggests that he was referring to Gregory.

#### 8B. *The Second, Second Adam*

Origen is likely the first interpreter in extant texts to position the Lucan episode as the reversal of Adam's expulsion from paradise.<sup>851</sup> This reversal also lies behind Origen's

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<sup>850</sup> Courtray's summary failed to mention this possible connection: "Jérôme rapporte qu'un frère—qui reste difficilement identifiable." See "La figure," 108.

<sup>851</sup> E.g., *Gen fr. pap.* (Glaue 10, quoted in 2F); Origen, *Lev hom.* 9.5.3 (SC 287:90); *Rom com.* A 5.9ff (GLB 33:435ff).

attempt to ascribe an identical afternoon time to the primal parent's expulsion and the crucifixion of Jesus.<sup>852</sup>

He was hanged on the sixth day, so that—in respect to what had happened on the sixth day and at the sixth hour, falling out of paradise—he might call the dead back.

ἐκρεμάσθη τῆς ἑκτῆς ἡμέρας, ἵνα  
τὸν ἐν τῇ ἑκτῇ ἡμέρᾳ γεγονότα καὶ τῇ ἑκτῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦ παραδείσου ἐκπεσόντα  
πάλιν ἀνακαλέσῃται.

A similar temporal connection appears in a self-contained apology included in the initial, ca. 350 redaction of the *Cave of Treasures*, a text likely influenced by Ephrem if not authored by him.<sup>853</sup> A clear typological reference to the Lucan bandit is buried in an extensive list of chronological parallels (*Cave* 48.11–49.1) between Gen 2–3 and the crucifixion as its reversal. This reference appears in both Eastern (Or.) and Western (Oc.) Syriac recensions (as well as a later Georgic translation), though with slightly different phrasing.<sup>854</sup>

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<sup>852</sup> *Luc cat.* f249 (GCS 49:332). Note that the Lucan episode is expressly mentioned in f248, which may strengthen the case that the Lucan episode is in mind in f249.

<sup>853</sup> CSCO 487:21–2. The final Syriac redaction of this text was done by a Nestorian in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century (CSCO 487:xix). Su-Min Ri describes *Cave* 44–54 as a self-contained apology composed during the early to mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century debates between the Rabbinic academy and Origen's academy in Caesarea. It was later (ca. 350) incorporated into an early redaction of the *Cave of Treasures*. In CSCO 581:468, Ri disagrees with the assertion of A. Götze that the chronological parallels in 48.11–49.1 (which includes the relevant passage here) are the 4<sup>th</sup> century product of Ephrem, but instead maintains that Ephrem draws on this prior work. In view of my analysis of the reception-history of Luke 23.39–43, Götze's attribution to Ephrem seems far more plausible than a 3<sup>rd</sup> century provenance for this subsection of the *Cave*. In particular, the reference in *Cave* 51.23 to the Messiah "wrote the decree of his return in his own blood and sent it to him by the hands of the bandit" strikes me as a mid-4<sup>th</sup> century trope at the earliest, making use of Ephrem's idea of Christ's blood giving a decree while beginning to speculate more concretely about the bandit's journey to paradise.

<sup>854</sup> *Cave* 48.24–7 (Or. in CSCO 486:402, 404; Oc. in CSCO 486:403). The Georgic translation appears in CSCO 526:131.



Cave Or. 48.24-7 (CSCO 486:402,404)	Cave Oc. 48.24-7 (CSCO 486:403)
<p>(24) On Friday, [Adam and Eve] departed from Paradise. And on Friday, they departed from the tomb.</p> <p>(25) On Friday, Adam and Eve were laid bare. And on Friday, the Messiah was undressed and dressed them.</p> <p>(26) On Friday, Satan laid them bare.</p> <p>And on Friday, the Messiah laid Satan bare, along with all his powers, and he made blatant their shame.</p> <p>(27) On Friday, Adam and Even departed. And the door of paradise was closed.</p> <p>And on Friday, it was opened and the bandit entered.</p>	<p>(24) On Friday, they departed from Paradise.</p> <p>(25) On Friday, Adam and Even were laid bare. And on Friday, they undressed the Messiah and he dressed Adam and Eve.</p> <p>(26) On Friday, Satan laid them bare. And on Friday, the Messiah laid Satan bare.</p> <p>(27) On Friday, the door of paradise was closed. And on Friday, the bandit entered into paradise.</p>
<p>(24) סבאסבאס נפסא נא פאדאסא. סבאסבאס נפסא נא פבא. (25) סבאסבאס אדאפאסא אדא נאסא. סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא (26) סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. (27) סבאסבאס נפסא נאסא אדא נאסא. אדא אדא נאסא אדא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא אדא אדא.</p>	<p>(24) סבאסבאס נפסא נא פאדאסא. (25) סבאסבאס אדאפאסא אדא נאסא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. (26) סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. (27) סבאסבאס אדא נאסא אדא אדא. אדא אדא נאסא אדא אדא. סבאסבאס אדא אדא אדא.</p>

In a clearly authentic text from around the same time (ca. 350s), Ephrem happens to note the same Friday overlap as given in the *Cave of Treasures*.<sup>855</sup> Around the same time (ca. 350), Cyril of Jerusalem implies the Friday parallel in his 13<sup>th</sup> catechetical lecture (“On ‘Who Was Crucified and Buried’”), even as he notes parallel times of day.<sup>856</sup>

In the afternoon they hid from the Lord as he walked (in paradise). In the afternoon the bandit is brought into paradise by the Lord.

δειλινὸν τοῦ κυρίου περιπατοῦντος ἐκρύβησαν, καὶ δειλινὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου εἰς παράδεισον ὁ ληστής εἰσάγεται.

As with Origen, John Chrysostom notes parallel hours, but the hour differs, as does its significance for a specific liturgical moment. He repeatedly mentions that his catechumens will be baptized “at the ninth hour” / ἐνάτη ὥρα, the exact same time when “the bandit entered into paradise” / ὁ ληστής εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσῆλθε.<sup>857</sup> That baptism will take place on a Friday, the day when paradise was opened,<sup>858</sup> suggests that Chrysostom, like Ephrem, also saw Adam falling on a Friday.

Chronological parallels aside, Ephrem is the most creative and influential purveyor of the trope of the bandit as a Second Adam. In his early Nisibene *Hymns on Paradise*,

<sup>855</sup> *cruc.* 5.2 (CSCO 248:60).

<sup>856</sup> *cat.* 13.19 (R-R 2:74).

<sup>857</sup> *cat. ill. hom. 3 ad neophytos* 19–20 (CPG 4467; PK 171). While quite outside of our scope, a 9<sup>th</sup> century Palestinian horologion (Sinai gr 863) echoes the temporal typology (“at the ninth hour”) seen in Chrysostom’s catechetical instruction. The Greek text appears in S. Alexopoulos, “The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite: A Comparative Analysis of its Origins, Evolution, and Structural Components” (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 2004), 98. “You who hanged on the tree at the ninth hour gave your soul to the Father, who pioneered the entrance into paradise with the bandit co-crucified with you, do not forsake me!” / Ὁ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπὶ ξύλου κραμάμενος ἐνάτη ὥρα παραδούς τῷ Πατρὶ, καὶ τῷ συσταυρωθέντι σοι ληστῇ ὁδοποιήσας τὴν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσοδόν, μὴ με παρίδῃς.

<sup>858</sup> See also *Iud.* (PG 56:264).

while exploring an extensive series of typological connections, Ephrem makes the bandit a pivotal character in the drama of salvation history, a vicarious Adam.<sup>859</sup>

Adam had been naked and fair, \* but his diligent wife  
labored and made for him \* a garment covered with stains.  
The Garden, seeing him thus vile, \* drove him forth.  
Through Mary Adam had another robe \* which adorned the bandit;  
and when he became resplendent \* at Christ's promise,  
the Garden, looking on, \* embraced him in Adam's place.

ܐܕܡ ܡܢ ܬܪܝܢ ܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ  
ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ  
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He may also repeat the idea of the bandit as a vicarious Adam in a later hymn *On the Church*.<sup>860</sup> Elsewhere in his *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem speaks of the *original* Adam being taken by Christ from Sheol into paradise.<sup>861</sup> Still, given how Ephrem's types and symbols often bleed into each other, even in these passages the Lucan intertext proves influential and the Lucan bandit significant, even instrumental. *Par.* 12.10 provides an excellent example of this blending of the two Adams.<sup>862</sup>

Because Adam touched the tree \* he had to run to the fig;  
he became like the fig tree, \* being clothed in its vesture:

<sup>859</sup> *par.* 4.5 (CSCO 174:13–14; ET slightly modified from Brock, *Paradise*, 99).

<sup>860</sup> *eccl.* 24.9 (CSCO 198:53). The relevant section (bracketed below) only appears in one manuscript tradition (F), raising some question about its authenticity. Still, the reference certainly fits the context of this hymn and Ephrem's broader interpretation.

Even the True Right \* from Sheol to Eden [has introduced us  
In the bandit whose promise \* was fulfilled among the trees.]

ܐܕܡ ܡܢ ܬܪܝܢ ܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ  
ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ ܕܡܪܝܡ

<sup>861</sup> *Par.* 4.4–6 (CSCO 174:13–14; ET in Brock, *Paradise*, 98–9), 8.9–11 (CSCO 174:35; ET in Brock, *Paradise*, 134–5).

<sup>862</sup> *Par.* 12.10 (CSCO 174:52; ET slightly modified from Brock, *Paradise*, 164).

Adam, like some tree, \* blossomed with leaves.  
 Then he came to that glorious \* tree of the cross,  
 put on glory from it, \* acquired radiance from it,  
 heard from it the truth \* that it would introduce him to Eden again.

ܠܝܬܝܬܐ ܕܐܕܡ ܠܝܬܝܬܐ \* ܠܝܬܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ  
 ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ \* ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ  
 ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ \* ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ  
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Ephrem blends together many persons and moments to illustrate and participate in the fulfillment of the scriptural drama. In an authentic passage from the *Diatessaron Commentary*, the original Adam, the bandit, the poet, the church, and perhaps all humanity bleed into each other as partakers of the redemptive flow coming forth from the side of the Johannine Jesus as the Second Adam.<sup>863</sup>

I ran to all Your limbs, and from them all I received every kind of gift. Through the side pierced with the sword I entered the Garden fenced in with the sword. Let us enter in through that side which was pierced, since we were stripped naked by the counsel of the rib that was extracted. The fire that burned in Adam, burned him in that rib of his. For this reason the side of the Second Adam has been pierced, and from it comes a flow of water to quench the fire of the first Adam.

ܐܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ  
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<sup>863</sup> *Diat. com.* 21.10, extant in both Syriac (CBM 8:214) and Armenian (CSCO 137:318). ET (and implicit confirmation of its authenticity) is from Brock, *Paradise*, 65–6.

In his ca. 350 *Catecheses*, Cyril of Jerusalem may already reflect Ephrem's influence when he adeptly juxtaposes Adam and the bandit. Expanding the episode and its dramatic potential, Cyril even has the voice of the crucified Jesus make the comparisons.<sup>864</sup>

“Most quickly did I speak against Adam. Most quickly I grant favor to you. To him it was said, ‘On the day you eat, you will die in death.’ But **today** you have been obedient to faith. **Today** salvation is yours. He fell away because of the tree, and you, because of the tree, are entering into **paradise**. Fear not the serpent. He cannot cast you out, for he has fallen from the heavens. I do not tell you, ‘**Today** you are leaving,’ but ‘**Today you will be with me.**’”

ὀξύτατα κατὰ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ ἀπεφηνάμην, ὀξύτατά σοι χαρίζομαι. ἐκείνῳ μὲν εἴρηται· ἡ δ' ἂν ἡμέρα φάγητε, θανάτῳ ἀποθανεῖσθε· σὺ δὲ **σήμερον** ὑπήκουσας τῇ πίστει, **σήμερόν** σοι ἡ σωτηρία. ἐκεῖνος διὰ τοῦ ξύλου ἀπέπεσε, καὶ σὺ διὰ τοῦ ξύλου εἰσάγη εἰς τὸν **παράδεισον**. μὴ φοβηθῆς τὸν ὄφιν, οὐκ ἐκβαλεῖ σε, πέπτωκε γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανῶν. καὶ οὐ λέγω σοι, **σήμερον** ἀπέρχῃ, ἀλλὰ **σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ**.

Also apparently influenced by Ephrem, Nazianzen hymnically blends together the Adam of Gen 2–3 and his counterpart in Luke 23, while also (quite in keeping with Ephrem's interpretation)<sup>865</sup> identifying himself with both.<sup>866</sup>

As you receive me again inside the plants,  
a bandit from the tree entering with Christ.

Ὡς ἂν πάλιν δέξῃ με τῶν φυτῶν ἔσω  
Χριστῷ συνεισελθόντα ληστὴν ἐκ ξύλου.

In another of his hymns, Nazianzen even names the bandit “Adam”!<sup>867</sup>

<sup>864</sup> *Cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90).

<sup>865</sup> See especially 5A.

<sup>866</sup> *carm. hist.* 1.63 (PG 37:1406).

<sup>867</sup> *carm. mor.* 2.34 (PG 37:960).

Of the bandits, one was saved by believing—Adam.  
But the other was evil, even while being crucified.

Ληστῶν δ' ὁ μὲν σέσωστο πιστεύσας, Ἀδάμ·  
Ὁ δ' ἦν πονηρὸς, καί περ ἐσταυρωμένος.

John of Jerusalem<sup>868</sup> and Asterius Ignotus<sup>869</sup> also seem to reflect the influence of the Second Adam readings of Ephrem and his followers. Ambrose's interpretation likewise resonates with that of Ephrem, though this influence was likely mediated through Ephrem's Greek imitators.<sup>870</sup> The same applies to a Coptic sermon falsely attributed to Euodius of Rome.<sup>871</sup>

The Syrian-Greek Severian of Gabala makes extensive use of this tradition in his two sermons on the bandit. A good Friday sermon briefly develops the idea.<sup>872</sup> The typological comparison frames the second sermon at its outset.

The holy scripture remembers two bandits. Let us investigate the deeds of the two and enjoy a benefit in them.

Δύο ληστῶν ἡ θεία Γραφή μέμνηται. Τῶν δύο τὰς πράξεις ἐξετάσωμεν καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐταῖς ὠφελείας ἀπολαύσωμεν.

It also accounts for well over half of that sermon's content.<sup>873</sup> He gives an elaborate description of the original Adam as the first bandit.<sup>874</sup> Christ then receives praise for

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<sup>868</sup> *On the Church* 41–4; Gk text in Esbroeck, “Une Homélie sur L’Église attribuée à Jean de Jérusalem,” *Muséon* 86 (1973): 295. Esbroeck defends the authenticity of this sermon, extant only in Armenian; see *ibid.*, 287.

<sup>869</sup> *hom.* 5.17 (*hom* 2 on Ps 4; SOFS 16:40); *hom.* 16.10 on Ps 8 (*hom* 3; SOFS 16:120–1).

<sup>870</sup> *bon. mor.* 12.53; Latin text in W. T. Wiesner, *S. Ambrosii de Bono Mortis* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1970), 144–6. See also *Luc* 4.13 (CCSL 14:111), *Psalm* 39.19–20 (CSEL 64:224–5), *Psalm* 40.29 (CSEL 64:249).

<sup>871</sup> *pass. res.* 57 (CSCO 524:95).

<sup>872</sup> *cruc.* 4 (CPG 4728; *AM* 1:178, quoted in 8C).

<sup>873</sup> *latr.* 1–8 (CPG 4103; Hemmerdinger-Iliadou, *AB* 85:433–7 // Phrantzolas 7:69–74).

<sup>874</sup> *latr.* 1–8 (*AB* 85:433–6 // Phrantzolas 7:69–74).

reversing Adam's death in his resurrection.<sup>875</sup> Last comes an involved series of juxtapositions of the first Adam and the bandit (extending the *ad minori ad maius* structure and logic of Rom 5).<sup>876</sup>

While Ephrem is apparently the most influential proponent of the theme of the bandit as a Second Adam, Marcellus of Ancyra deserves mention. Writing around the same time Ephrem was composing his *Hymns on Paradise*, Marcellus is the first on record to ascribe an instrumental role to the bandit as a vicarious Adam.<sup>877</sup>

In his humanity he was crucified and died for us. He rose from the dead. He ascended into the heavens. He who was **created as the beginning of ways**<sup>878</sup> lived with us on the earth. He showed us light from darkness, salvation from deception, life from the dead. [He gave us] entry into the Paradise from which Adam had been expelled. He entered it again through the bandit, as the Lord said: "Today you will be with me in Paradise." Even Paul entered it in an ascent into the heavens<sup>879</sup> **where the lordly human entered as a forerunner for us.**<sup>880</sup> Through him [God] is about to judge the living and the dead.

ἐν ᾧ ἄνθρωπῳ σταυρωθεὶς καὶ ἀποθανὼν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἀνελήφθη εἰς οὐρανοὺς, ἀρχὴ ὁδῶν κτισθεὶς ἡμῖν ἐν τῇ γῇ ὧν ἡμῖν ἔδειξεν ἐκ σκοτῶν φῶς, σωτηρίαν ἐκ πλάνης, ζωὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν, εἰσοδὸν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, ἐξ οὗ ἐκβέβλητο Ἀδάμ, εἰς ὃν πάλιν εἰσῆλθε διὰ τοῦ ληστοῦ, ὡς εἶπεν ὁ κύριος· σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, εἰς ὃν καὶ ὁ Παῦλος εἰσῆι· ἄνοδόν τε εἰς οὐρανοὺς, ὅπου πρόδρομος εἰσῆλθεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ὁ κυριακὸς ἄνθρωπος, ἐν ᾧ μέλλει κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.

<sup>875</sup> *latr.* 9 (*AB* 85:435–6 // Phrantzolas 7:74–5).

<sup>876</sup> *latr.* 10–13 (*AB* 85:436–7 // Phrantzolas 7:75–7).

<sup>877</sup> *Exp. fid.* 1.7; Gk text in H. Nordberg, *Athanasiana: Five Homilies, Expositio Fidei, Sermo Maior*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 30.2 (Helsinki: Helsingfors, 1962), 50–1. This pro-Nicene symbol dates ca. 335 and has often been incorrectly attributed to Athanasius and included in earlier editions of his works (*CPG* 2804). H. Adams repeats this misattribution; see *Thief*, 37–8.

<sup>878</sup> LXX Prov 8.22.

<sup>879</sup> 2 Cor 12.2–4.

<sup>880</sup> Heb 6.20.

Nyssen may well borrow this formulation.<sup>881</sup>

Through his [Christ's] soul he was in paradise, pioneering the entrance for humans through the bandit.

διὰ μὲν τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ γίνεται ὁδοποιούσα διὰ τοῦ ληστοῦ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὴν εἴσοδον.

### 8C. One Final Robbery

While perhaps not following the customary definition of a typology, another trope conveys a similar poetic impulse. Rather than a biblical scene furnishing the impress, here the typical behavior of bandits supplies the necessary pattern. In his ca. 350s *Hymns on the Crucifixion*, Ephrem is the first to express yet another creative trope, that the bandit robbed the crucified Christ!<sup>882</sup>

[...] like the bandit who plundered our Lord.  
His Lord saw he was hungry and opened his treasure before him.  
Then he robbed him, taking the promises!

ܡܠܝܟܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܡܠܝܟܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ  
ܡܠܝܟܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ ܕܡܪܝܬܐ

In two Edessan hymns *On Virginity*, Ephrem poetically adapts, even reverses the image. In the first, Christ steals the bandit, ostensibly from Satan as his former disciple!<sup>883</sup> In the second, Christ conquers the bandit by disarming him!<sup>884</sup> In this latter

<sup>881</sup> *ep.* 3.22 (SC 363:140). This post-381 letter (SC 363:34) is addressed to the nuns Eustathia, Ambrosia, and Basilissa.

<sup>882</sup> *cruc.* 5.7 (CSCO 248:61).

<sup>883</sup> *virg.* 13.2 (CSCO 223:44), quoted and discussed in 8D.



passage, after alluding to Jesus as the angel who shut the mouth of the lions (Dan 6.22),

Ephrem stresses Christ's non-violent conquest of a wild bandit.

Reptile and animals are terrified of you without (you using) violence.  
They depart to their dens on seeing you.  
Your rising upon the thief pursues him without a rod,  
even when the sword is not taken up.  
In [your rising] you gathered and hid a murderer's sword.

ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ  
ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ

Ephrem's influence continues in Syriac texts, notably in a ca. 5<sup>th</sup> century, ps-Ephrem metrical homily on repentance.<sup>885</sup>

And the one who plundered in the streets \* also plundered from you  
paradise.

ܐܢܝܢ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ

Among Greek authors, Athanasius may first hint at Ephrem's clever trope.<sup>886</sup> Yet it first echoes clearly in Gregory of Nyssa, who intensely dramatizes the motif.<sup>887</sup>

Indeed, the bandit did not come voluntarily to the cross. Instead, since he was near the Savior, the sharp and well-planted thief saw the treasure. Seizing the moment, he—as one well-practiced and well-aimed in thieving—snatched away life: “**Lord, remember me,**” he said, “**in your kingdom.**”

Καίτοι γε οὐχ ἐκουσίως ὁ ληστής τῷ σταυρῷ προσήλθεν· ἀλλ’ ἐπειδὴ ἐγγὺς τῆς σωτηρίας ἐγένετο, εἶδεν ὁ ὄξυς καὶ ευφυὴς κλέπτης τὸν

<sup>884</sup> *virg.* 51.6–7 (CSCO 223:163–4).

<sup>885</sup> *serm.* 1.8.159–60 (CSCO 305:109).

<sup>886</sup> *Decr.* 3.6.6 (*AW* 2.1:5–6): “[t]he bandit, who through confession immediately took the promise to be within paradise” / ληστοῦ, ὅς διὰ τὴν ὁμολογίαν ἐπαγγελίαν ἔλαβεν εὐθὺς εἰς τὸν παράδεισον ἔσεσθαι. See the note in 5C regarding the date of this text (ca. 350–357).

<sup>887</sup> *Qvadr.* 2 (*GNO* 10.1:56).

θησαυρόν, καὶ ἐπιτυχῶν καιροῦ τὴν ζωὴν ἐληΐσατο, καλῶς τῇ κλεπτικῇ καὶ εὐστόχως ἀποχρησάμενος, **Κύριε μνήσθητί μου, εἰπὼν, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου.**

That Nyssen, like Ephrem, opts for the term “thief” / κλέπτης / ܟܠܝܬ rather than the usual term “bandit” / ληστής / ܠܗܝܬܝܬܝܬ strengthens the case for dependence here. The same motif also appears in another text attributed to Nyssen whose authorship is contested in recent scholarship.<sup>888</sup>

When life was hanged<sup>889</sup> in the midst of bandits, one reviled and slandered, while the other with repentance plundered paradise.

ἐν μέσῳ ληστῶν ἡ ζωὴ ἐκρέματο τοῦ μὲν ὀνειδίζοντος καὶ καταλαλοῦντος, τοῦ δὲ τῇ μετανοίᾳ ληστεύοντος τὸν παράδεισον.

The resonance of imagery and language (particularly the term “life”) provides a piece of evidence in favor of authenticity to Nyssen, or perhaps dependence upon him. In any case, Ephrem’s influence upon Nyssen is clear enough.

A few decades later, Severian of Gabala also echoes the trope in both of his sermons on the bandit. The first also uses the term “thief” / κλέπτης and weaves the trope together with a second Adam typology. It also makes the first extant intertext to Matt 11.12.<sup>890</sup>

Today, brothers, Adam was thrown out of paradise because of disobedience. Today he enters again into paradise. And the bandit is witness. A thief departed, and a thief entered. The one who stole against the will of the commandment departed. The one who stole salvation from the cross entered. ... Earthly possessions were not enough for him. He even pillaged heavenly things. He did

<sup>888</sup> *Resur* (GNO 9:318). Geerard (CPG 3177) asserts its authenticity but notes the dissenting opinion of Daniélou and Aldana, who favor Amphilochius as its author.

<sup>889</sup> An echo of LXX Deut 28.66: “And your life will be hanged before your eyes” / καὶ ἔσται ἡ ζωὴ σου κρεμασμένη ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν σου.

<sup>890</sup> *cruc.* 4 (CPG 4728; AM 1:178).

not defraud with force, but conquered by faith. For the Master's own voice said, **"The kingdom of the heavens is done violence, and the violent snatch it."**<sup>891</sup>

Σήμερον ἀδελφοὶ Ἀδὰμ ἐξεβλήθη τοῦ παραδείσου διὰ τὴν παρακοήν, σήμερον πάλιν εἰσάγεται εἰς τὸν παράδεισον. Καὶ μαρτὺς ὁ ληστής. Ἐξῆλθεν κλέπτῃς καὶ εἰσῆλθεν κλέπτῃς, ἐξῆλθεν ὁ κλέψας παρὰ τὸ βούλημα τῆς ἐντολῆς καὶ εἰσῆλθεν ὁ κλέψας ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ τὴν σωτηρίαν. ... Οὐκ ἤρκει αὐτῷ τὰ ἐπίγεια ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐπουράνια ἐσύλησεν, οὐ περιγράφων τῇ δυνάμει, ἀλλὰ νικῶν τῇ πίστει. Αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν φωνὴ τοῦ δεσπότη λέγοντος· **Ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν βιάζεται καὶ βιάσται ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν.**

The second briefly includes it in an encomiastic litany: "O wonderful bandit plundering the kingdom of the heavens" / Ὁ ληστοῦ θαυμασίου τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν ληστεύσαντος.<sup>892</sup> Near the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century, Cyril of Alexandria also briefly echoes the idea: "By this (confession) he snatched the lot of the saints" / Ταύτητοι τὸν τῶν ἁγίων ἤρπασε κλῆρον.<sup>893</sup>

In his own poetic prose, Paulinus is apparently the first Latin author to recall the theme: "heaven's pious pirate plundered" / *pius caeli praedo diripuit*.<sup>894</sup> Augustine casts it in stronger martial tones, perhaps reflecting the influence of Severian when he makes an intertext with Matt 11.12.<sup>895</sup>

Therefore, the Lord (said) to the proud Pharisees: **"Truly I tell you, publicans and prostitutes are preceding you into the kingdom of the heavens."**<sup>896</sup> They are **preceding** because **they do violence**. They lay siege by believing, and it falls to faith. No one is able to resist them, because **those who do violence plunder it**. Indeed, it has been established there: **"The kingdom of the heavens suffers**

<sup>891</sup> Matt 11.12; cf. Luke 16.16.

<sup>892</sup> *latr.* 20 (CPG 4103; AB 85:439 // Phrantzolas 7:81).

<sup>893</sup> *Luc com.* hom. 153 (PG 72:937 // Payne Smith 1858:447).

<sup>894</sup> *ep.* 31 (CSEL 29:274). This epistle, one of three letters to Severus (*ep.* 30–2) were written during a short space of time, between 402 and 404. *ep.* 30 was most likely written in 402 or 403. See ACW 36:326.

<sup>895</sup> *en Ps.* 86.6 (CCSL 39:1204). On a related note, see 5E for an example of one of Augustine's paschal sermons concluding with a loose and expanded Latin translation of a sermon by Severian.

<sup>896</sup> Matt 21.31.

violence, and those who do violence plunder it.” That bandit did this, stronger on a cross than at a neck.

*Vnde Dominus superbientibus pharisaeis : Amen dico uobis, publicani et meretrices praecedunt uos in regnum caelorum. Praecedunt, quia uim faciunt ; impellunt credendo, et ceditur fidei, nec obsistere potest quisquam, quia qui uim faciunt, diripiunt illud. Ibi enim positum est: Regnum caelorum uim patitur, et qui uim faciunt, diripiunt illud. Hoc fecit ille latro, fortior in cruce quam in fauce.*

Peter Chrysologus insists on the trope in all three of his brief references to the passage.<sup>897</sup>

The bandit penetrated paradise life in the very moment of death.

*Latro in ipso momento mortis paradisum peruadit et vitam.*

One may even apply that amazing lesson to the bandit. He plundered paradise at the very time he was hung to repay the penalties of his banditry.

*Accedit illud etiam latronis mirabile documentum, qui tunc diripuit paradisum, quando latrocinii sui poenas est adpensus ut solueret.*

The Gospel’s bandit proves this. On the cross and in the hour of death he snatched pardon, invaded life, broke open paradise, [and] penetrated to the kingdom.

*Probat hoc euangelicus latro, qui in cruce et in hora mortis rapuit ueniam, inuasit uitam, effregit paradisum, penetrauit ad regnum.*

But not everyone in antiquity appreciated the idea that paradise could be plundered.

Apparently relying on 2 Cor 12.4 and its passive construction (where Paul “was snatched into paradise”), a mid-5<sup>th</sup> century Armenian sermon falsely ascribed to Aristides takes direct issue with the now-traditional idea.<sup>898</sup>

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<sup>897</sup> *serm.* 60.1 (CCSEL 24:335), *serm.* 61.1 (CCSL 24:341) and *serm.* 167.5 (CCSL 24B:1027). While the first reference seems ambiguous, such a reading fits the context perfectly. Just prior to the quotation above, Chrysologus says that the Canaanite woman “with a sudden shout” / *clamore subito* “extorts” / *extorsit* what she wants from Christ, and that the Ethiopian eunuch “snatched” / *rapuit* baptism.

<sup>898</sup> ps-Aristides, *hom. sanc. latr.* 3 (CPG 1065; Pitra 4:9). The translation is based on Pitra’s Latin translation (Pitra 4:285) of the Armenian text.

This one at a distance recognized with certainty the crucified as truly God. On account of his cry of faith, he was snatched into paradise. Yet he himself did not snatch paradise from the Lord's paradise. ... It is impossible that paradise lay exposed to be plundered, because the hands of pillagers cannot touch this place.

#### 8D. *The Serpent's Defeat*

Matthew's incorporation of the Q temptation narrative into the crucifixion makes it a scene of spiritual warfare in which the two bandits echo the voice of Satan. The earliest interpreters of Luke 23.39–43 (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen) do not develop the tropes of spiritual warfare in direct connection to the passage. Still, such tropes appear readily and vividly among a variety of 4<sup>th</sup> century interpreters. Sometime before 330, Pachomius draws on the episode to exhort his monks in their spiritual warfare: “fight against devilish passions, not to follow them, and Jesus will grant you what he has promised.”<sup>899</sup>

Eustathius of Antioch, in his pre-exilic, pre-Nicene *de engastrimytho*, does invoke Luke 23.43 in a discussion of spiritual warfare. Yet, rather than focusing on the Lucan passage itself, Eustathius mentions the devil appearing as Samuel to Saul in 1 Sam 28 and perversely imitating the (future!) promise of paradise which Christ gives the bandit.<sup>900</sup>

Still, even this passage likely presumes an agonistic reading of the Lucan passage. This is confirmed by a fragment from his post-exilic polemic *Against the Arians*. Here

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<sup>899</sup> *Catechism about a spiteful monk* (CSCO 159:6). Jerome has a similar reading, apparently gained from his time among the monks of Palestine; see *ep.* 125.1 (CSEL 56.1:118–9, quoted in 7B).

<sup>900</sup> 14.6 (CCSG 51:31–2).

Eustathius gives a more thorough account of spiritual warfare in regard to Luke 23.39–43 than anyone else in antiquity.<sup>901</sup>

Just as each one speaks by one's spirit, this one was stirred by divine inspiration, but the other was used by a diabolic inflow. ... [quotes 1 Cor 12.3 and 1 Jo 4.1–3] ... Therefore, if the insulting, false prophets put out slanders because they were inflamed by the devil's spirit, it is clear that the blood-sucker stirred the homicidal bandit at that moment. Just as he had slipped on a serpent's character for Eve, again he shoots off poisonous sounds from the heights and produces distinct manifestations in many. Just as he had surrounded himself in a tragic form externally, shielding himself with garments in manifold ways—his person feigned, his character put on—, [again] he seems to conceal himself wholly on the inside. And so the bandit's person was tragically denouncing. As a preacher he cries out: **"If you are the Christ, save yourself and us."**<sup>902</sup> Even so you confess, O abominable head, as you cry out more boldly, that you emerge in two ways from the most inward parts. Indeed, you are both reluctant and disturbed. You look up jealously at the end of your destruction, and you see the victorious trophy established against you. Where did the bandit learn to vomit forth such sounds and pretend to be forgetful of the impending pains? But the bountiful Jesus...<sup>903</sup> ... But none of these things dimmed the soul of the one who escaped the tyrannical abuse. While he hears all the things sharply spoken, he objects keenly and responds word by word, so that through his blessing the abominable mouth was silenced. As if his tree were a tribunal placed on high, he clamps the shameless tongue with unbreakable muzzles. He addresses the people in the hearing of all. In a more dignified way he rebukes him and cries out: **"Do you not fear God, since you are in the same judgment? And we justly so, for we are getting back what is worthy of what we have done. But he has done nothing out of place."**

ὥσθ' ἑκάτερος δι' ἑκατέρου φθέγγεται πνεύματος, ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς θείας διεγειρόμενος ἐπιπνοίας, ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς διαβολικῆς ἐνεργούμενος ἐπιρροίας ... Ἀρ' οὖν εἰ τῷ τοῦ διαβόλου πυρούμενοι πνεύματι τὰς κατὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ προφέρονται κακηγορίαις οἱ ψευδοπροφῆται δυσφημοῦντες, εὐδελον ὅτι καὶ τὸν ἀνδροφόνον κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ διήγειρε ληστήν ὁ αἰμοβόρος, ὡς τὸ τοῦ ὄφεως πρόσωπον ἐπὶ τῆς Εὐας ὑποδύς, ἵν' ἐκ τῶν ὑψηλοτάτων τοὺς ἰοβόλους ἀποτοξεύων λόγους ἐπιφανὲς παρέχοι γνῶρισμα τοῖς πολλοῖς.

<sup>901</sup> *frag.* 27 (CCSG 51:90–1), also discussed in 7C, where another relevant quotation appears (CCSG 51:92). Ps-Euodius of Rome, *pass. res.* 63 (CSCO 524:97), similarly describes the devil entering into the first criminal.

<sup>902</sup> Luke 23.39.

<sup>903</sup> See 6E for this portion of the quotation.

Καθάπερ σχῆμα περιβαλλόμενος τραγικὸν ἔξωθε μὲν τοῖς ἐσθήμασι φράττεται ποικί[λ]ως, πεπλασμένον δὲ τὸ πρόσωπον χαρακτῆρα περιθείς, ὅλον ἔοικεν ἀποκρύπτειν ἔνδοθεν ἑαυτόν. Καὶ τὸ τοῦ ληστοῦ πρόσωπον ὑποκρινόμενος τραγικῶς, ἐκβοᾷ κηρύττων· **Εἰ σὺ εἰ ὁ Χριστὸς, σῶσον σεαυτὸν καὶ ἡμᾶς.** Ὡσθ' ὁμολογεῖς, ὦ μιαρὰ κεφαλὴ, παρρησιαίτερον κεκραγώς, ὅτι διπλῶς ἐκ τῶν ἐνδοτάτων προκύπτεις μερῶν· καὶ δὴ ἀσχάλλεις καὶ θορυβῇ τὸ τῆς σῆς ἀπωλείας ὑφορώμενος τέλος, τὸ νικηφόρον κατὰ σοῦ πρόπαιον ἀντικρυς ἰδρυμένον ὁρῶν. Ἐπεὶ πόθεν ὁ ληστὴς τὰς τοιαύτας ἐξεμέσειν ἐπειρᾶτο φωνάς, τῶν ἐνεστῶτων προσποιούμενος ἐπιλελῆσθαι πόνων; Ἀλλ' ὁ μεγαλόδωρος Ἰησοῦς ... Ἀλλ' οὐδὲν τούτων ἡμβλυνε τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ τὴν τυραννικὴν διαδράντος ἐπήρειαν, ἀλλὰ πάντων μὲν ἀκούει τῶν λεγομένων ὀξέως, ἀνθυποφέρει δὲ δριμύτως καὶ ἀποκρίνεται κατ' ἔπος, ὥστε καὶ διὰ τῆς εὐλογίας τὸ μιαρὸν κατασιγάσαι στόμα. Καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπὶ βήματος ὑψηλοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ ξύλου πεπηγώς, τὴν ἀναιδῆ γλῶτταν φιμοῖς εἵργων ἀλύτοις, εἰς ἐπήκοον πάντων δημηγορεῖ, ἐμβριθέστερον ἐπιπλήττων αὐτῷ καὶ κεκραγώς· **Οὐδὲ φοβῇ σὺ τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κρίματι εἶ.** Καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν δικαίως· ἄξια γὰρ ὧν ἐπράξαμεν ἀπολαμβάνομεν· οὗτος δὲ οὐδὲν ἄτοπον ἐπράξε.

In one of his early Nisibene texts, Ephrem is apparently the first to combine the Second Adam and Christus Victor themes, however subtly.<sup>904</sup>

Adam had been most pure \* in that fair garden,  
but he became leprous and repulsive \* because the serpent had breathed on him.  
The garden cast him from its midst; \* all shining, it thrust him forth.  
The high priest, the exalted one, \* beheld him  
cast out from himself: \* He stooped down and came to him,  
He cleansed him with his hyssop, \* and led him back to paradise.

ܟܕܡܬܐ ܟܕܡܬܐ ,ܟܕܐ \* ܕܒܐ ܟܕܡܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ  
ܟܕܐ ܟܕܡܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܝܬܐ ܟܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ  
ܟܕܠܠ ܕܡܝܬܐ \* ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܟܕܠܠ

<sup>904</sup> *par.* 4.4 (CSCO 174:13; ET slightly modified from Brock, *Paradise*, 98–9; 4.5 is quoted in 8B). He likely has something similar in mind in the late Nisibene *cruc.* 8.14 (CSCO 248:76). In an Edessan hymn, he gives a similar reading, referring to Satan as the “left” whose oppression is undone by Christ the “right” / ܕܡܝܬܐ who “introduced us” / ܕܡܝܬܐ to paradise “in the bandit” / ܕܡܝܬܐ; see *eccl.* 24.4–9 (CSCO 198:53), partially quoted in a note in 8B. Cyril of Jerusalem is apparently not far behind in his *ca.* 350 *cat.* 13.31 (R-R 2:90) when he gives assurance that Satan’s defeat guarantees the permanence of the promise of paradise. “Do not fear the snake. He will not throw you out, for he has fallen from the heavens. And I do not say to you, ‘Today you will leave,’ but rather, ‘**Today you will be with me.**’ Have courage; you will not be thrown out” / μὴ φοβηθῆς τὸν ὄφιν, οὐκ ἐκβαλεῖ σε, πέπτωκε γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανῶν. καὶ οὐ λέγω σοι, σήμερον ἀπέρχῃ, ἀλλὰ **σήμερον μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ.** θάρσησον, οὐκ ἐκβληθήσῃ.

ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ \* ܡܬܬܢܐ  
 ܕܥܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ \* ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ  
 ܕܥܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ \* ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ

During Ephrem's time in Edessa, the Christus Victor trajectory becomes more pronounced. For example, he parenetically groups the bandit on the left with the spiritual evil conveyed by the scribes and Satan.<sup>905</sup> Another Edessan text accents the Christus Victor motif, and even describes Christ as a thief. Rather than a simple reference to Christ defrauding Satan, the poet here probably refers to Christ stealing the bandit himself, ostensibly from Satan, given the following line.<sup>906</sup>

Behold, at a thief's side he lifted you, and he was stolen.  
 Slain, you slayed him who slew us.

ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ \* ܡܬܬܢܐ  
 ܕܥܬܐ ܕܚܝܬܐ \* ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ

Likely reflective of Ephrem's theology, the ca. 350 redaction of the *Cave of Treasures* similarly combines the Second Adam and Christus Victor tropes.<sup>907</sup>

Chrysostom is one of the most avid proponents of such readings, and his exegesis parallels that of Ephrem in several ways. Similarly combining the Second Adam and

<sup>905</sup> *h fid.* 7.7 (CSCO 154:33–4, quoted in 5C). See also *Abr. Kid.* 5.9 (CSCO 322:13, quoted in 7C). Ps-Ephrem, *serm.* 1.2 lines 1201–12 has highly resonant themes (CSCO 305:35), here juxtaposing the life-taking words of Satan with the life-giving word of the bandit, as quoted in 7C. Though Ephrem only explicitly calls publicans and prostitutes “snares of the deceitful one” / ܡܬܬܢܐ ܕܥܬܐ, now caught by the Holy One (strophe 39), Ephrem's language here may well imply the idea of the bandit as such a snare, whose devilish career is undone when he is caught by Christ (strophe 37); see *nat.* 4.37–9 (CSCO 186:28–9).

<sup>906</sup> *virg.* 13.2 (CSCO 223:44). Regarding its Edessan date, see K. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns*, CWS (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1989), 27–8, and also Kronholm, *Motifs*, 22. McVey's translation retains the ambiguity about whether Satan or the thief is being defrauded, “At a thief's right hand he crucified You, but he was defrauded,” see *Ephrem*, 317. *virg.* 51.6 is highly suggestive, mentioning Christ's non-violent conquest of the bandit amidst multiple references to Satan and serpent imagery (*virg.* 51.5–8; CSCO 223:163–4).

<sup>907</sup> 48.26–7 (R. Or in CSCO 486:402, 404; R. Oc. in CSCO 486:403; both quoted in 8B).



Christus Victor motifs, he repeatedly refers to Christ's promise of return to paradise as the undoing of the devil's primal deed.<sup>908</sup> Like Ephrem, Chrysostom also parenetically juxtaposes the bandit and the devil within groups of opposites.<sup>909</sup> Similarities aside, Chrysostom uniquely insists that the placement of Christ among bandits was a Satanic ploy to discredit Jesus, but one that Christ turned to show the superiority of his power.<sup>910</sup>

They waited, and through the same events his divine and unbeatable power was shown. That sly trick that happened to deceive many was turned around on the devil's head. For when he saw that [Jesus] had come, he wanted to overshadow his coming and the true economy. He brought in some rogues, whom we mentioned before, so that he would be considered as one of them. And he did these things even on the cross, when he prepared two bandits to be crucified with him. He also produced this at his coming, when he was eager to overshadow the truth by setting the false alongside. But it prevailed neither there nor here. Instead, this very thing showed the superior power of Christ.

Ἀνέμειναν, καὶ δι' αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐδηλοῦτο ἡ θεία καὶ ἄμαχος δύναμις, καὶ τὸ σόφισμα τοῦτο καὶ πρὸς ἀπάτην τῶν πολλῶν γενόμενον, εἰς τὴν τοῦ διαβόλου περιετρέπετο κεφαλὴν. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ εἶδεν αὐτὸν παραγενόμενον, βουλόμενος συσκιᾶσαι αὐτοῦ τὴν παρουσίαν καὶ τὴν ἀληθῆ οἰκονομίαν, εἰσήνεγκεν ἀπατεωνᾶς τινάς, οὓς προείπομεν, ἵνα καὶ οὗτος εἰς ἐκείνων νομίζεται εἶναι. Καὶ ὅπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ πεποίηκε, δύο παρασκευάσας ληστὰς μετ' αὐτοῦ σταυρωθῆναι, τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς παρουσίας εἰργάσατο, τῇ παραθέσει τοῦ ψεύδους τὴν ἀλήθειαν συσκιᾶσαι σπεύδων· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐκεῖ τι ἴσχυσεν, οὐδὲ ἐνταῦθα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο μάλιστα τὴν δύναμιν ἔδειξε τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

They crucified him along with bandits, even in this unwillingly fulfilling prophecy. For what they did in committing an outrage, he perfected for truth's sake, so that you may learn how great its power is. Just as stated above, the prophet predicted that **he was reckoned among the lawless**. The demon accordingly wanted to overshadow what was happening, but it did not prevail. For while the three were crucified, Jesus shone alone, so that you may learn that his power performed everything. Wonders happened when the three were nailed upon

<sup>908</sup> *Gen serm.* 7.4 (SC 433:326), 7.5 (SC 433:336, 338); *Gen hom* 46.16 (PG 54:427).

<sup>909</sup> *paen.* 1.2.15 (PG 49:279).

<sup>910</sup> *adv. Iud.* 5.3.7–8 (PG 48:887; ca. 387, see FOC 68:lix–lx), *Io hom.* 85 (PG 59:460; ca. 390, see FOC 33:xv).

a cross. But no one on that basis ascribed any happening to anyone among them except Jesus alone. Thus the plot of the devil became vain, and everything was turned back on his head. Indeed, one of those two was saved. Hence, he did not come off any worse in glory from being crucified. But he added to it not a little. For converting the bandit on the cross and introducing him into paradise was not a deed lesser than quaking the rocks.

Σταυροῦσι δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ μετὰ ληστῶν, ἄκοντες καὶ ἐν τούτῳ τὴν προφητείαν πληροῦντες. Ἄ γὰρ ὑβρίζοντες ἐποίουν οὗτοι, ταῦτα τῇ ἀληθείᾳ συνετέλει· ἵνα μάθῃς ὅση αὐτῆς ἡ δύναμις. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο ἄνωθεν προεῖπεν ὁ προφήτης, ὅτι **Μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη**. Εβούλετο τοιγαροῦν συσκιᾶσαι τὸ γινόμενον ὁ δαίμων· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἴσχυσεν. Ἐσταυρώθησαν μὲν γὰρ οἱ τρεῖς, ἔλαμψε δὲ μόνος ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ἵνα μάθῃς, ὅτι ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ τὸ πᾶν εἰργάσατο. Καίτοι τῶν τριῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ προσηλωμένων, τὰ θαύματα οὕτως ἐγένετο· ἀλλ' ὅμως οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν τῶν γινομένων ἐπέτρεψεν οὐδενὶ ἐκείνων, ἀλλ' ἡ μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ· οὕτως ἑωλὸς ἡ τοῦ διαβόλου ἐπιβουλὴ γέγονε, καὶ εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ τὸ πᾶν περιετράπη κεφαλὴν. Καὶ γὰρ ἐκ τῶν δύο τούτων διεσώθη εἷς. Οὐ μόνον τοίνυν οὐκ ἐπηρεάσε τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ σταυρουμένου, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνετέλεσεν οὐ μικρόν· τοῦ γὰρ κλονῆσαι τὰς πέτρας οὐκ ἔλαττον ἦν τὸ ληστὴν ἐν σταυρῷ μεταβαλεῖν, καὶ εἰς παράδεισον εἰσαγαγεῖν.

In keeping with the previous examples of Ephrem and Chrysostom, later interpreters also combine the Christus Victor and Second Adam tropes.<sup>911</sup> While Eustathius speaks of the bandit's rhetorical victory over Satan-inspired voices (see above), Severian of Gabala is the first on record to refer explicitly to the bandit himself conquering the devil.<sup>912</sup>

Adam's defense did not have a humble-minded origin. He did not say: "You know that I sinned." But the bandit's confession conquered the devil in humble-mindedness.

Καὶ τοῦ μὲν Ἀδὰμ ἡ ἀπολογία οὐκ ἔσχε ταπεινοφροσύνης ὁρμήν· οὐ γὰρ εἶπε· σύγγνωθι ὅτι ἥμαρτον. Τοῦ δὲ ληστοῦ ἡ ὁμολογία τὸν Διάβολον ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἐνίκησε.

<sup>911</sup> E.g., Asterius Ignotus, *hom.* 1.4–6 (*hom.* 1 on Ps 1) (SOFS 16:2), "For the Tree of Life is Christ, but the Tree of Death is the Devil. That one cast out man from Paradise; this one leads the bandit into Paradise" / Ξύλον γὰρ ζωῆς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ξύλον θανάτου ὁ διάβολος. Ἐκεῖνος μὲν ἐκ παραδείσου τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐβάλλει· οὗτος δὲ τὸν ληστὴν εἰς τὸν παράδεισον εἰσάγει.

<sup>912</sup> *latr.* 11 (AB 85:436).

Among all ancient interpreters, Ambrose is by far the most insistent and creative purveyor of Christus Victor readings of the Lucan episode. In a letter written around 387, amidst an extended midrash on Vul Jer 17.11 (“a partridge ... in the middle of their days abandons them” / *perdix ... in dimidio dierum suorum derelinquet eas*) and a catena linked by the catch-word “cry out” / *clamo*, Ambrose makes Luke 23.43 the crucial, final example of Christ crying out to defeat and plunder Satan, robbing the partridge of its stolen brood.<sup>913</sup>

Therefore, he has pillaged that devil **partridge** of that grace. He has carried away from it the riches of a multitude wrongfully gathered. He has called back from error the souls of Gentiles and the minds of the straying nations. He knew they were deceived by the devil’s voice. So as to release the chains and bond of old errors, he himself **cried out** first in Abel, whose **voice of blood** cried out. **He cried out** in Moses, to whom he said, “**Why do you cry out to me?**” **He cried out** in Joshua son of Nun. **He cried out** in David who said: “**I cried out to you; save me.**” **He cried out** in all the prophets, wherefore he even says to Isaiah: “**Cry out,**” and he said, “**What shall I cry out?**” **He cried out** in Solomon, as wisdom calling with highest commendation: “**Come, eat my bread and drink the wine that I have mixed for you.**” **He cried out** even in his own body, just as a scarab on a tree. **He cried out** to deceive and circumvent the ambusher, saying, “**God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**” **He cried out** to plunder (him), responding to the robber, “**Truly, truly, I tell you, Today you will be with me in Paradise.**” And so, wherever Jesus **has cried out**, at once that **partridge** has been abandoned **in the middle of their days**.

*Ea igitur gratia depraedatus est perdicem illum diabolum, abstulit ei male congregatas divitias multitudinis, revocavit ab errore animas gentium mentesque nationum deviantium. Et quia diaboli voce deceptos sciebat, et ipse, ut vincula nexusque veteris erroris solveret, clamavit primum in Abel cuius clamavit vox sanguinis. Clamavit in Moyse cui dixit: Quid clamas ad me? Clamavit in Iesu Nave. Clamavit in David qui ait: Clamavi ad te, salva me. Clamavit in omnibus prophetis; unde et ad Esaïam dicit: Clama, et ille ait: Quid clamabo? Clamavit*

<sup>913</sup> *ep. A 40.5* (CSEL 82.2:38); for the date, see FOC 26:425–8 (numbered here as *ep. 75*). He continues to develop the metaphor of Jesus plundering the devil-partridge through the rest of the letter: 40.6–8 (CSEL 82.2:38–40).

*in Salomone, convocans cum altissima praedicatione sapientia: **Venite, edite de meis panibus et bibite vinum quod miscui vobis. Clamavit etiam in corpore suo, sicut scarabaeus in ligno, clamavit, ut insidiatorem falleret et circumveniret dicens: Deus, Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti? Clamavit ut despoliaret respondens latroni: Amen, amen, dico tibi: hodie me cum eris in paradiso. Itaque ubi clamavit Iesus, continuo perdix ille a congregatis in dimidio dierum suorum derelictus est.***

In his *Commentary on Luke*, published in 389 CE,<sup>914</sup> Ambrose echoes the now traditional combination of the Christus Victor and Second Adam themes, even while invoking the Lucan passage as a description of Christ pioneering of a path from the temptation (as an exilic wilderness) to humanity's primal home of paradise.<sup>915</sup>

Finally, this Evangelist testifies that by the Lord's strength humanity is called back. In view of the others this Evangelist alone introduced the Lord saying to the bandit: "**Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**" Therefore, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, is led into a debate in the desert in order to challenge the devil. For had he not contended, he would not have conquered for me. In a mystery, he liberated that Adam from exile.

*Denique uirtute domini hominem esse reuocatum prae ceteris hic euangelista testatur, qui solus inducit dominum dicentem latroni: **amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso.** Plenus igitur Iesus spiritu sancto agitur in desertum consilio, ut diabolum prouocaret—nam nisi ille certasset, non mihi iste uicisset—mysterio, ut illum Adam de exilio liberaret.*

In a later passage from that same commentary, Ambrose coins the phrase "good bandit," ironically not of the Lucan criminal, but rather of Christ. Apparently influenced by Ephrem (through his Greek translators or imitators), Ambrose pictures Christ stealing the bandit as one of the "tools" of Satan. He goes on to echo Hilary's idea about the divergent destinies of the two Lucan criminals.<sup>916</sup>

<sup>914</sup> See note in 3G.

<sup>915</sup> *Luc* 4.13–14 (SC 45b:156).

<sup>916</sup> *Luc* 10.123 (SC 52b:196). On Ambrose's dependence on Hilary here, see the note in 3G.

How detestable was the iniquity of the Jews in what happened. They crucified the redeemer of all as if a bandit! Yet in the mystery a good bandit laid in wait for the devil to steal his tools. Mystically, two bandits signify that two sinful peoples will be crucified with Christ through baptism.

*Quam execrabilis in facto iniquitas Iudaeorum, ut quasi latronem crucifigerent omnium redemptorem! Bonus tamen in mysterio latro, qui insidiatus est diabolo, ut uasa eius auferret. Mystice tamen latrones duo duos populos peccatores significant per baptismum crucifigendos esse cum Christo.*

Two passages within his *Exposition of Twelve Psalms*, dated ca. 390–397,<sup>917</sup> repeat the idea of Christ stealing the bandit as Satan’s disciple. The first adds that Christ’s taking of the bandit was a greater feat than the Devil’s taking of Judas.<sup>918</sup>

Dance, serpent, because you had carried off an apostle to Christ. You lost more than you destroyed, you who see the bandit being translated into Paradise. There is no one who can be excluded. When your servant, the bandit, is received and comes to him, then you yourself are overthrown.

*tripudiabas, draco, quod apostolum subtraxeras Christo: plus amisisti quam sustulisti, qui latronem uides in paradysum esse translatus. nemo est qui possit excludi, quando receptus est latro minister tuus et eo peruenit, unde ipse deiectus es.*

The second is briefer yet more poetic for it.<sup>919</sup> “He overthrew the enemy. From him he snatched away the bandit’s death” / *deiecit aduersarium, cui mortem latronis eripuit.*

Christus Victor readings also echo in at least two other examples.<sup>920</sup> Probably in part due

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<sup>917</sup> Ní Riain, *Twelve Psalms*, x.

<sup>918</sup> *Ps* 39.17 (CSEL 64:223).

<sup>919</sup> *Ps* 40.13 (CSEL 64:237).

<sup>920</sup> The first maintains that Christ fulfilled the prophecies that “He will walk upon the serpent and the snake. He will tread upon the lion and the dragon” / *super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis et conculcabis leonem et draconem*; see *Ps* 1.39 (CSEL 64:34). The second reads the motif intertextually with *Ps* 46.2–3 (Vul 45.3–4) and Matt 27.51. “What is this except the victory over the serpent? By the Son of God’s courage the mountains were disturbed, when the devil and his ministers saw the dead rising. These are the mountains that are disturbed, the mountains which were transferred into paradise. To them it was said: **‘Today you will be with me in paradise.’**” / *quae est ista nisi de serpente uictoria? in hac fortitudine filii dei conturbati sunt montes, cum diabolus et ministri eius uiderent mortuos resurgentes. isti sunt montes qui*

to Ambrose's influence, several other Latin interpreters give similar Christus Victor readings of the passage.<sup>921</sup>

A late 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century Armenian section of the *Diatessaron Commentary* shows the influence of Ephrem and the intensification of the bandit's role in Christ's victory over Satan. With Ephrem and quite similar to Ambrose, it claims that Christ stole Satan's disciple after Satan had stolen his. It echoes the traditional combination of Christus Victor and Second Adam readings. Perhaps recalling the custom of cutting off the hands of thieves, it uniquely claims that Christ pinned the hands of this Adam to the cross to overcome his inability to reach the fruit on the tree of life. Recalling Ephrem's line about

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*turbantur, illi montes qui transferuntur in paradysum, quibus dicitur: hodie me cum eris in paradiso; see Ps 45.11.3 (CCSL 64:337).*

<sup>921</sup> Prudentius, *Cath.* 10 lines 157–64 (CSEL 61:63). Chromatius of Aquileia, *serm.* 2.6 (SC 154:142, quoted in 6E). Paulinus of Nola mentions the episode immediately after a section describing the incarnation as Christ's victory over Satan; see *carm.* 31 (CSEL 30:311–12). Augustine may allude to the Lucan figure as a Second Adam and demonstration of Christ's victory; see *Trin.* 4.10.13 (CCSL 50:178). Quodvultdeus sees Christ bringing life where the Devil plotted murder; see *ymb.* 1 6.15–23 (CCSL 60:321–2). Whether by the same or another author, another work under the name of Quodvultdeus speaks of Christ snatching the bandit from the devil's maw as David snatched a lamb from a lion's; see *prom.* 2.25.52 (CCSL 60:120). Leo seems to picture the bandit as the spoils of Christ's victory of humility over the devil's pride (apparently alluding to the virtue-vice battle motif of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*): "There the whole adversity of diabolic domination was being crushed. Victress humility was triumphing over the strangling of pride" / *ibi tota diabolicae dominationis conterebatur aduersitas, et de elisione superbiae uictrix humilitas triumphabat*; see *serm.* 55.3 (CCSL 138A:325). Another sermon again points to the bandit as spoils of Christ's victory. "As Christ finished off his victory, so in him and with him all who believe in him were triumphing. Thus the Lord was carrying out the reconciliation of the world on a citadel of torture by the lifting high of his crucified body. At that time he was calling the converted bandit to the dwelling place of paradise" / *sic suam Christo consummante uictoriam, ut in ipso et cum ipso omnes qui in eum crederent triumpharent. Cum ergo Dominus crucifixi corporis eleuatione sublimis, reconciliationem mundi exsequeretur in quadam arce supplicii, latronemque conuersum ad faradisi uocaret habitaculum*; see *serm.* 61.4–5 (CCSL 138A:373).

Christ “the slain” who “slew the slayer,” it makes the bandit’s hands the instruments of this holy victory.<sup>922</sup>

Because Satan drew one of his disciples away from justice, [the Lord] rivaled with him in turn and drew one of his disciples away. ... Satan made Judas a voluntary outcast and a fallen man, even though grace had chosen him. He prepared for him a cord in place of a throne. [But the Lord prepared] a garden of delights in place of the cross [for the bandit]. The hands which [Adam] had stretched out toward the tree of knowledge to transgress the commandment were unworthy of being stretched out towards the tree of life to receive the gifts of the God which they had despised. Therefore, our Lord took [these hands] and fastened them to the cross, so that they might slay their slayer and arrive at his marvelous life.

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<sup>922</sup> 20.24 (CSCO 137:297–8, LT in CSCO 145:213; ET modified from McCarthy, 306). The reversal of the devil’s conquest of Judas may allude to the distinctly Lucan intertext of 22.3, in which Satan enters into Judas.

## CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSION

9A. *Living on in Lectionaries*

Formal lectionaries first begin to appear in the manuscript record in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. This explains why most of the early interpretations of Luke 23.39–43 covered in this dissertation do not clearly depend on lectionary use. Still, a closer look at the history of the interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 may yield insights into the role of the Lucan crucifixion in the development of lectionaries. Conversely, the use of lectionaries may help explain the paths that certain trajectories took.

According to de Urbina, Tatian's ca. 172 Syriac *Harmony* was originally created as "un leccionario litúrgico,"<sup>923</sup> thus it ostensibly furnishes the earliest the lectionary text of Luke 23.39–43.<sup>924</sup> In keeping with this Syrian precedent, Ephrem is the first to leave behind traces of the lectionary reading of the passage. No hint of lectionary use appears in the vast majority of his authentic writings,<sup>925</sup> including those written specifically for the *Nativity* and *Epiphany*.<sup>926</sup> On the other hand, his *Crucifixion* cycle is quite suggestive.

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<sup>923</sup> BPM 6:x.

<sup>924</sup> See 2E in regard to the presence of Luke 23.39–43 in the text of Tatian's *Harmony*.

<sup>925</sup> Nisibene examples include *par.* 4.5 (CSCO 174:13–14), 8.1 (33), 12.9–10 (52); *Abr. Kid.* 5.9 (CSCO 323:14). Edessan examples include *c. Nis.* 26.7 (CSCO 218:59–60, quoted in a note in 5C), 45.6 (CSCO 240:51), 45.16 (53); *eccl.* 24.9 (CSCO 198:53); *h. fid.* 7.7 (CSCO 154:33–4), 54.12–13 (170), 67.21–2 (209), 84.1 (257); *serm.* 1.2 lines 1207–8 (CSCO 305:35); *virg.* 13.2 (CSCO 223:44), 30.11 (112), 36.3 (131), 51.7 (163–4).

<sup>926</sup> Nisibene examples include *nat.* 4.37 (CSCO 186:28), 8.4 (59), 21.19 (108); *res.* 2.1 (248:82). Edessan examples include *epiph.* 3.30 (CSCO 186:153, quoted in a note in 5A and of doubted authenticity). McVey, *Ephrem*, 29–30, notes that in Ephrem's time Nativity was celebrated on Jan. 6 and was only later (as compilations of Ephrem's hymns show) moved to Dec. 25, while Jan. 6 became an Epiphany



While it provides no explicit or compelling evidence of lectionary use, this cycle does contain the highest density of references to the Lucan passage of any hymn cycle.<sup>927</sup> *Cruc.* 5.2 gives a clear, internal reference to the hymn being sung on Good Friday, just before alluding to the Lucan bandit in 5.3 and referring to him clearly in 5.7.<sup>928</sup> *Cruc.* 6 seeks to resolve the chronological issues surrounding the *triduum*. Here Ephrem recalls the bandit hopefully at the conclusion (6.20), apparently in anticipation of Easter. *Cruc.* 8 seems to fit a Holy Saturday or Easter vigil setting, since it thoroughly recounts details of the passion (verses 1–11) as well as the resurrection and ascension (verses 12–16). This hymn has more references to the bandit than any other single hymn and seems well-suited to follow a lectionary reading of the Lucan passage.<sup>929</sup> At the same time, the references to many traditions among various Gospels (including the non-Lucan mocking by the soldiers in 8.3–4 and term “Golgotha” in 8.5, 10) suggests the use of Tatian’s *Harmony*, rather than the Lucan crucifixion as a self-standing text.

The earliest extant sermons that suggest the lectionary reading of the Lucan crucifixion (including 23.39–43) as a self-standing text (whether regular or occasional) are the two Good Friday sermons of John Chrysostom *On the Cross and the Bandit*. In

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celebration and occasion for baptism. Armenian tradition continued to keep the ancient observance of Nativity on Jan 6.

<sup>927</sup> *cruc.* 5.3 (CSCO 248:60; possible allusion), 5.7 (61), 6.20 (68), 8.2 (72–3), 8.5 (73), 8.8–9 (74–5), 8.14 (76). *eccl.* 51 is clearly an Easter festival hymn (CSCO 199:iv, 126), but it gives comparatively little attention to the Lucan episode (51.8; CSCO 198:132–3).

<sup>928</sup> CSCO 248:60. 5.2 reads, “This is the day when Adam was condemned by turning” / Գործարար օրն էր Եդեմի քանդումը.

<sup>929</sup> See note above for a list of references. For a quotation from 5.8, see 5D; from 5.9, see 5B.

the first sermon, the opening word, “Today” / Σήμερον,<sup>930</sup> may connect the Good Friday festival to the promise (23.43) of the Lucan text just read, though it could also be a simple festival reference apart from this intertext. Lectionary use comes clearer in that the interpretation of Luke 23.39–43 occupies most of the first half of that sermon,<sup>931</sup> as well as a later version of the same.<sup>932</sup> Influenced by Chrysostom’s custom and likely presuming the same lection, both Severian of Gabala and Ps-Theophilus of Alexandria preach extensively on Luke 23.39–43 in their respective Good Friday sermons.<sup>933</sup> At least one of two (5<sup>th</sup> century?) sermons falsely ascribed to Ephrem routinely quote and intensely focus upon the Lucan episode, likely drawing upon it as a Good Friday reading.<sup>934</sup> The two notable Syriac dispute poems on the Lucan bandit also presume and reinforce these explicit homiletic and implicit lectionary precedents. Likely indicative of

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<sup>930</sup> *cruc.* 1.1 (CPG 4338; PG 49:399). The term moves to third position in the opening line of *cruc.* 2.1 (CPG 4339; PG 49:407); here “Festival” / ἑορτήν is first. Even Chrysostom’s *cat. ill. 3 ad neophytos* 19 is suggestive, since it mentions that “tomorrow, Friday” the catechumens will be baptized at the same hour that the bandit went to paradise (P-K 171).

<sup>931</sup> *cruc.* 1.2–4 (PG 49:401–3).

<sup>932</sup> *cruc.* 2.2–4 (PG 49:409–13).

<sup>933</sup> Severian, *cruc.* 1–4 (CPG 4728; AM 1:177–8), echoing Chrysostom’s “today” / Σήμερον, but here more clearly as an anaphora. The sermon begins “Let us begin on the day of the cross” / Ἀπαρξώμεθα τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σταυροῦ. Subsequently, thirteen clauses (with some material occasionally between) begin with the word “today” / Σήμερον. See also Ps-Theophilus, *cruc.* (CPG 2622; see note on its authorship and provenance in 5D). In Rossi’s Coptic edition and Italian translation (which Russell follows, see *Theophilus of Alexandria*, 70), the sermon concludes, “This is why, you see, we gather here together for five days and five nights.” Russell notes, “The MS breaks off here. The five days and nights presumably refer to the services of Holy Week”; see *Theophilus of Alexandria*, 188n52. Despite using this inferior text, Russell still correctly notes (188n46) that this “homily was probably delivered on Good Friday.” Suciu’s forthcoming critical edition (“*Sermo de Cruce*”) includes the sermon’s conclusion and translates this line quite differently and in a way that may recall the intertextual “today” of the sermons of Chrysostom and Severian, “For this reason I have established today for us to fast and pray in the holy place” (M595 fol. 147<sup>v</sup>). Suciu also notes that the entire codex of Pierpont Morgan M595 is a collection of patristic homilies intended as “liturgical texts for the feast of Easter.”

<sup>934</sup> CPG 4062 (ESO Gk3:471–6). Van Esbroeck notes that CPG 4162.3 (Arabic, “Une Homélie Inédite,” AB 101:351–5) = CPG 4145.22 (Georgic, 101:344–50) was included liturgically on Good Friday or Holy Saturday (101:336), though the title of the Georgic sermon sets it at “Holy Thursday at dawn” (101:338).

the reason and setting of their initial creation in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, these poems in their earliest manuscripts (10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century) are clearly used in the liturgies of Good Friday and Holy Saturday.<sup>935</sup> Apparently reflecting the tradition seen in the Good Friday sermons of the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 5<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the two 5<sup>th</sup> century Syriac dispute poems focused on the bandit, an East Syrian lectionary of the early 6<sup>th</sup> century lists Luke 23.27–49 as the sole Gospel lection during the noon to 3:00pm service on Good Friday.<sup>936</sup>

Drawing on the inclusive precedent of Tatian's *Harmony* while maintaining the Orthodox delineation of the four Gospels, the church in Jerusalem apparently helped to standardize the reading of the Lucan crucifixion together with the crucifixion accounts of the other canonical Gospels during this same service. Egeria's *Journal* of her visit to Jerusalem (ca. 385–396)<sup>937</sup> recalls the reading of all four crucifixion accounts in immediate succession.<sup>938</sup> An important Armenian lectionary, intent on chronicling and

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<sup>935</sup> See Brock, "Dialogue," 152–6. *The Two Bandits* was read on Good Friday at the Third Hour only in West Syriac tradition, while *The Cherub and the Bandit* was read on Holy Saturday in both West and East Syriac. Brock notes that some manuscripts of *The Two Bandits* had mostly even or odd numbered verses, which practice clearly illustrates its liturgical use in different choral parts.

<sup>936</sup> F. C. Burkitt, "The Early Syriac Lectionary System," in *Proceedings of the British Academy 1921–1923* (London: The British Academy and Oxford University Press, 1923), 309. For the date of BM Add. 14528 (the lectionary appears in fols. 152–91), see 305.

<sup>937</sup> FOC 61:3.

<sup>938</sup> *Itin.* 37.5 (SC 296:286). "From the sixth unto the ninth [hour] nothing else happens except that lections are read thus. First, there is reading from the Psalms, wherever it spoke of the Passion. There is also reading from the Apostle, whether from the Epistles or from the Acts of the Apostles, wherever they spoke of the Lord's Passion. Neither are the places from the Gospels where he suffered not read. Likewise, there is reading from the Prophets where they said that the Lord would suffer. Also, there is reading from the Gospels where he mentions the Passion" / *de sexta usque ad nona aliud nichil fit nisi leguntur lectiones sic: id est ita legitur primum de psalmis, ubicumque de passione dixit; legitur et de apostolo siue de epistolis apostolorum uel de actionibus, ubicumque de passione Domini dixerunt: nec non et de euangeliiis leguntur loca, ubi patitur; item legitur de prophetis, ubi passurum Dominum dixerunt; item legitur de euangeliiis, ubi passionem dicit.* While Egeria does not specify the limits of the lections, the reference to

exporting the customs of the church in Jerusalem in the early to mid-5<sup>th</sup> century, similarly claims that the people gather at Golgotha at noon on Good Friday and hear crucifixion lections from all four Gospels, but here the Gospel lections are interspersed among various readings from the Psalms and prophets: Matt 27.1–56, Mark 15.1–41, Luke 22.66–23.49, and John 19.16b–37.<sup>939</sup> A ca. 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> century Armenian lectionary has essentially these same characteristics, though the limits of its Gospel lections differ slightly: Matt 27.3–53, Mark 15.16–41, Luke 23.32–49, and John 19.25–37.<sup>940</sup> A 5<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> century Georgic lectionary is a close match to the Armenian examples. Its Gospel lections are closer to the latter (only John 19.17–37 differs), while its rubrics are more similar to the former.<sup>941</sup> Incidentally, later Byzantine synaxaria customarily reflect several of these precedents and their expansion. Luke 23.32–49 often appears in a Good Friday series of Gospel lections collectively entitled “The Twelve Gospels of the Passions”; Luke 22.66–23.49 often stands as the sole Gospel lection for the noon service; and Luke 23.39–43 often appears in a Good Friday evening service.<sup>942</sup>

According to G. Willis, notable Latin preachers including Ambrose, Maximus, Chrysologus, Augustine, and Leo make no regular lectionary use of the Lucan

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“the Gospels” likely refers to all four, particularly in light of the evidence of the later Armenian and Georgian lectionaries mimicking Jerusalem’s practice. For the date of Egeria’s pilgrimage to Jerusalem, see SC 296:27–39.

<sup>939</sup> PO 36.2:286–93, based on codex Arm. Jer. 121, edited by Renoux.

<sup>940</sup> See F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), 522. Renoux (above) also provides the text of this lectionary (Ms. P) alongside the older text (Ms. JE) in PO 36.2:286–93. Conybeare notes parenthetically that the Markan lection is present in MS Matt. The lectionary also mentions that Luke 23.24–31 is read *en route* to Golgotha while the people sing psalms (521). For the provenance of this lectionary, see 507–8.

<sup>941</sup> CSCO 188:122–32 (FT in CSCO 189:97–105).

<sup>942</sup> F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell and Co.; London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), 82–3.

crucifixion, nor do any of the major Western lectionary traditions.<sup>943</sup> Basically, the Matthean crucifixion dominates early Latin lectionary custom. Yet, a closer look reveals the ways, both subtle and overt, in which the Lucan crucifixion and its criminals are present in the Holy Week and Easter Octave traditions of the West. It also reveals the profound influence of Eastern customs and homilies on these emerging Western traditions. For example, Maximus of Turin apparently never uses Luke 23.39–43 as a lection, but he does make significant use of the Lucan episode in a sermon given on Good Friday.<sup>944</sup> His reference to “today”<sup>945</sup> may well echo Chrysostom’s Good Friday sermons, whose influence saturates two other sermons by Maximus.<sup>946</sup>

Augustine also never mentions or draws on Luke 23.39–43 as a lection, he does make it a key text in several sermons which happen to be delivered on Easter Monday and/or

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<sup>943</sup> See G. Willis, *St. Augustine’s Lectionary* (London: SPCK, 1962), 14–17 (Ambrose), 62–7 (Augustine), 94–5 (Chrysologus), 96–9 (Maximus), 100 (Leo), 76–9 (Mozarabic), 80–4 (Gallican), 84–8 (Ambrosian and North Italian), 88–90 (Roman), 90–2 (Neapolitan), 92–3 (Anglo-Saxon).

<sup>944</sup> The title of *serm.* 37 marks this date: “On the Day of the Holy Pasch and on the Cross of Christ” / *DE DIE SANCTO PASCHAE ET DE CRUCE DOMINI*; see CCSL 23:145. Maximus also refers to it in the sermon body, even as he alludes to his Odyssean intertext (see 8A): “Today the tree of the cross snatched the whole human race away from death’s danger” / *hodie omne genus hominum de mortis periculo crucis arbor eripuit!* See *serm.* 37.2 (CCSL 23:145). B. Ramsey claims that “today” could refer to a broader span of time than Good Friday itself, and that his mention in *serm.* 38, given on Easter Sunday, of preaching on the Odyssean theme “yesterday” (ostensibly *serm.* 37), would place *serm.* 37 on Holy Saturday instead of Good Friday; see ACW 50:304–5. The internal evidence of *serm.* 37, as well as his dependence on Eastern Good Friday sermons, makes this unlikely. Ramsey’s reconstruction does not account for the possibly figurative use of “yesterday” in *serm.* 38, nor the possibility of a distinct but similar sermon on Holy Saturday. In other words, *serm.* 37–39A, while coherent as a collection, may well not have been perfectly continuous. Maximus later mentions the Lucan criminal later in this same series in a sermon likely given on the Sunday after Easter; see *serm.* 39 (CCSL 23:154). He also briefly figures twice in an Easter Sunday sermon: 53.1 (CCSL 23:214), 53.4 (216).

<sup>945</sup> *serm.* 37.2 (CCSL 23:145).

<sup>946</sup> *serm.* 74.1–3 (CCSL 23:309–10) and 75.2 (CCSL 23:314); see 5E.

Easter Tuesday.<sup>947</sup> In keeping with Western custom, the Lucan resurrection accounts provide his standard lections on these days.<sup>948</sup> By making a repeated intertext with Luke 24.13–35 (Jesus’ appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus), Augustine contrasts their despair and disbelief with the faith and hope of the crucified bandit. As it happens, his tropes in these sermons are especially dependent on the precedent of Eastern Good Friday sermons and their echoing among his Western predecessors and contemporaries.<sup>949</sup> In the midst of one of these sermons (*serm.* 232.6), Augustine quotes the entirety of Luke 23.39–43 in proper sequence, punctuated by running comments.<sup>950</sup> In other words, Augustine uses his Easter Monday and Tuesday sermons on the Lucan resurrection as an opportunity to smuggle in, as it were, the Good Friday homiletical and lectionary traditions of the East!

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<sup>947</sup> *serm.* 232 (SC 116:260–78; for its liturgical setting see WSA 3.7:24, 29n1 and SC 116:260–1, 358); *serm.* 234 (PL 38:1115–16; see also WSA 3.7:36, 39n1 SC 116:358); *serm.* 236A (BC 1:168–9; see also WSA 3.7:47, 50n1).

<sup>948</sup> Luke 24.1–12 is an Easter Monday reading in the Ambrosian tradition (the Sacramentary of Bergamo and *Codex Rehdigeranus*, see Willis, 85–6), an Easter Wednesday reading in the Mozarabic table (Willis, 79), and varies in Augustine between Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday (Willis, 65–6; SC 116:86–94). Luke 24.13–35 is an Easter Monday lection in the Homiliary of St Gregory and the Missal of Monte Cassino (Willis, 88–9), an Easter Tuesday the Ambrosian tradition (*Rehdigeranus*, *Foroiuliensis*, and Milan *Codex C* 39 *Inf.*; see Willis 84–6) and the Mozarabic table (Willis, 79), but and an Easter Wednesday lection in the Sacramentary of Bergamo (Willis, 85). In Augustine it varies between Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday (Willis, 66; SC 116:86–94). Luke 24.36–47 is an Easter Tuesday lection in the Missal of Monte Cassino (Willis, 89) and varies between an Easter Monday and an Easter Wednesday lection in Augustine (Willis, 66; SC 116:84–94). Willis notes the custom of Augustine’s lectionary (Willis, 65, citing *serm.* 232.1), and several other Western lectionaries as well, to read through all of the resurrection narratives during the week of Easter.

<sup>949</sup> See especially the analysis of *serm.* 232.6 and 234 in 5E.

<sup>950</sup> SC 116:272–4.

Even without lections from the Lucan crucifixion,<sup>951</sup> Pope Leo routinely makes room for Eastern homiletical texts and themes in his Holy Week sermons. His earliest Holy Wednesday sermon to mention Luke 23.39–43 (19 March 441 CE)<sup>952</sup> has several parallels to Chrysostom’s Good Friday sermons.<sup>953</sup> While the sermon’s opening is suggestive of the lectionary reading of the Lucan crucifixion, this is not likely, particularly given his stated intent to continue the topic of his previous sermon.<sup>954</sup> Even so, perhaps supplementing the lack of a Western lection, he weaves verbatim quotations of Luke 23.42–3 into the sermon text itself. Two other Holy Wednesday sermons (dated 442 and 445 CE) also refer to the bandit,<sup>955</sup> and the encomiastic, rhetorical questions in the first are reminiscent of Chrysostom and his heirs.<sup>956</sup> In a sermon from 453 CE that is especially reliant on Chrysostom’s themes,<sup>957</sup> the setting for his treatment of the bandit moves to Good Friday (10 April),<sup>958</sup> suddenly conforming to Eastern custom. The sermon begins by noting the well-known and frequent custom of reading from the passion, but

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<sup>951</sup> Willis provides a table, “Lectionary of St Leo the Great,” which does not include the Luke 23.39–43 as a Holy Week lection; see p. 100. He also notes that Leo “often refers in his sermons to lessons which had been read; but it is not possible to fix many of his references to particular days”; see p. 90.

<sup>952</sup> For the sermon’s date, see FOC 93:230.

<sup>953</sup> *serm.* 53.1 (CCSL 138A:313–14); see 5E.

<sup>954</sup> *serm.* 52, preached on Palm Sunday, 16 March 441 CE (FOC 93:226), deals primarily with the betrayal and death of Judas, as well as the arrest in Gethsemane. It primarily makes use the Matthean passion traditions, though it does quote Luke 23.34 (*serm.* 52.5).

<sup>955</sup> *serm.* 55.1–3 (CCSL 138A:323–5), preached 8 April 442 CE (FOC 93:237); *serm.* 61.4–5 (CCSL 138A:373), preached 4 April 445 CE and apparently recycled on a later Holy Wednesday (FOC 93:264, n191).

<sup>956</sup> *serm.* 55.3 (CCSL 138A:325), “Who could explain the oath of such great service? Who could relate such power of a wonderful change” / *Quis tanti muneris explicet sacramentum? Quis potentiam tam mirae commutationis enarret?* See also 5D.

<sup>957</sup> *serm.* 66.3–4 (CCSL 138A:403–4); see 5E.

<sup>958</sup> *Feria sexta* (CCSL 138a:400); see also FOC 93:285.

this statement probably still presumes and points to a Matthean lection.<sup>959</sup> Even so, the importance of Luke 23.39–43 in this sermon leaves open the possibility of a reading from the Lucan crucifixion. At the least it shows that Eastern Good Friday traditions were influential enough to filter into Western homiletical traditions in spite of the dominance of the Matthean passion in Western lectionaries. One wonders if Leo's lost sermons (written 446–451 and 455–461 CE)<sup>960</sup> would include other Good Friday sermons attentive to the Lucan episode, or clearer signs of its inclusion as a lection.

In summary, the presence of the Lucan crucifixion (and also the absence of the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits) in the lectionary reading of Tatian's *Harmony* helps explain the vital role of the Lucan figure in Ephrem's understanding of the crucifixion and all of salvation history. These liturgical rhythms nurture his astounding creativity and thus his profound influence on later interpreters. The late 4<sup>th</sup> century custom of reading Luke 23.39–43 as a self-standing lection—a custom perhaps born in Chrysostom's Syrian Antioch before spreading elsewhere for a time—goes together with the rise of sermons focused on the Lucan characters. These predominantly Eastern sermons exercise a pervasive influence on later interpretation in the East, even in churches which, following Jerusalem's example, read all four canonical Gospels during the Good Friday noon service. Their influence also echoes among the preachers of the West, even in basilicas in which the Lucan crucifixion is present only in the words of the preacher.

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<sup>959</sup> *serm.* 66.1 (CCSL 138A:400).

<sup>960</sup> FOC 93:225.



*9B. Directions and Contributions*

The lectionary customs and homiletical traditions of the East also play a profound role in the development of the Lucan character as a legend, one with a name, a past life, feelings, motives and additional speech on the cross, and a gloriously detailed entry, future, and role within paradise. Nor is there but one name, one version, one way of telling the legend. Diversity permeates even the earliest depictions of the legendary bandit. And as the legend of the good bandit grows and multiplies, so also does the legend of the wicked one, though he is seldom a point of focus. Moreover, these traditions are not mere exercises in speculation born of sheer curiosity. They are often telling expressions of devotion to the good bandit, testimonies to the rise and spread of his cultus among various peoples and places.

The legendary material is quite dense and complex, embedded in many apocryphal stories and in sermons both genuine and pseudonymous. The unclear provenance of many of these texts makes it difficult at present to discern when various traditions emerged and how they developed. For example, is the *Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea*, a text which includes names (Demas and Gestas, similar to *Acta Pilati* Greek A) and a backstory for each bandit, and also details the post-mortem, bodily (!) appearances of Demas to Joseph of Arimathea—is this text a product of the late 4<sup>th</sup> or early 6<sup>th</sup> century? Did it come before or after the emergence of the legend of the bandits encountering the Holy Family in Egypt? The question of provenance must be answered for the *Narrative* and many other apocrypha and homilies in order to give a cogent reconstruction of the early (4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup>)

emergence of the legend and cultus of the bandit. Frey and Outtier have recently (2005) done the unprecedented service of providing a preliminary attempt to locate the *Narrative* amongst 4<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century homiletical traditions (consulting only a few sermons in detail). Still they conclude their assessment of provenance with a 200 year range of possible dates and a *desideratum*.<sup>961</sup>

Une étude plus complète du dossier homilétique et exégetique relatif au bon larron permettra peut-être de repérer des contacts supplémentaires avec les données du récit apocryphe et de déterminer plus précisément l'époque et le milieu de rédaction de la *Déclaration*.

This statement in one sense presages this dissertation (providing a critical account of the emergence of the most prevalent trajectories of interpretation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to early 5<sup>th</sup> century), but in another sense points to second, related project (sorting through the provenance and inter-relationships of the many important apocryphal and homiletical texts and traditions of the late 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> centuries related to the bandit as a legend).

Drawing on his work in this dissertation, the author hopes to continue it with a companion monograph on this topic, along with another, related volume that provides a critical introduction and translation of the most important, late-antique sermons related to this work. While the legend must wait, the work to date has already yielded a number of significant claims for the consideration of scholars who focus on a wide variety of specializations. Tatian's *Harmony*, not the *Gospel of Peter*, offers the first plausible reception of Luke 23.39–43. Not only that, the original Syriac version of Tatian's *Harmony* left out the Markan/Matthean tradition of the reviling bandits. The *Apocalypse*

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<sup>961</sup> *EAC* 2:337–8.

of *Sedrach* bears a strong resemblance to the interpretation of Chrysostom and should be dated around the late 4<sup>th</sup> century. The testimony of Eustathius indicates that Luke 23.39–43 was present in Marcion’s *Gospel*, contrary to Epiphanius’ claim. Eustathius is the first on record to take issue with Origen’s chronological solution to the synoptic dissonance of the Markan/Matthean reviling bandits and the contrasted criminals of Luke. Ambrose and Jerome simultaneously adopt both Origen’s chronological solution and Epiphanius’ explicit sylleptical one. At the end of his life, Origen faced considerable criticism for his customary, chronological solution to the eschatological and Christological dissonance of the Lucan promise of paradise and Christ’s resurrection. Ephrem plays a pivotal role in the homiletical, devotional and liturgical push to self-identify with the bandit. In regard to this passage, Hilary of Poitiers is the most intense and adept exegetical defender of Nicea in antiquity. Chrysostom’s two sermons *On the Cross and the Bandit* were enormously influential in the East and the West, spreading abroad the trope of the bandit’s exemplary faith-sight and giving rise to numerous imitations, whether preached on Good Friday or at other times. *Diatessaron Commentary* 20.22–6 is inauthentic to Ephrem as a certainty, since it not only reflects numerous ideas not present in Ephrem’s authentic hymns but also repeats verbatim a phrase from Chrysostom’s sermons. Rufinus deliberately multiplied Origen’s single reference to justification by faith alone and retroactively made a passing mention of the bandit into the focal and premier example of the same. Consistent with the early Rabbinic and Christian trope of solidarity-martyrdom, numerous interpreters saw the bandit as a martyr. Apparently reflecting their own sense of marginalization, they found no difficulty with identifying a criminal as a martyr, or

identifying themselves with this martyr-criminal. In his polemics against the Donatists, Augustine becomes the only interpreter in antiquity to deviate expressly from this martyr trajectory, and yet his later disdain for the certainty of young Vincent Victor prompts him to change positions and affirm the bandit's martyr-status. In ascetic and early monastic contexts, the bandit mainly serves as an illustration of the simplicity of speech and the danger of questioning or speculating about eschatological specifics. Vying for aristocratic patronage, Latin eulogists are the first to fashion the bandit as the proverbial deathbed convert. Ephrem's creative typologies, particularly the idea of the bandit as a Second Adam and one who pillaged paradise, have a vibrant afterlife. There are striking parallels between the hymns of Ephrem and those of Nazianzen, connections which call for a thorough, comparative analysis of their hymnody.

### *9C. Summary and Summons*

Broader, synthetic observations also deserve reflection, including at least a brief assessment of the reputations of the better-known interpreters of the Bible. In regard to the interpretation of Luke 23.39–43, Origen, the first to express so many tropes, stands as the single most influential and controversial interpreter in antiquity. No one was more cited, no one more quoted. No one was more hated, no one more insulted. On the major doctrinal issues at stake, almost all relevant interpretation meant coming to terms with Origen in some way. On the other hand, Augustine is the most able theological interpreter, the best reader of the texts of others, the most aware of their interpretations, the

most gifted at seeing the issues at stake in exegesis, and by far the most skilled at turning interpretation to polemical purpose. In terms of homiletical creativity and influence, Chrysostom's reputation as the greatest preacher in antiquity is indisputable. His rhetorically and theologically powerful sermon *On the Cross and the Bandit* (in two versions) is far and away the most influential text in antiquity in respect to the interpretation of Luke 23.39–43. On the other hand, in terms of poetic creativity and liturgical influence, Ephrem stands above his companions. If the most fundamental logic of interpretation is *lex orandi lex legendi*, then Ephrem is the greatest Biblical interpreter in antiquity. It was Ephrem who first turned this story into liturgy.

Still, these premiere examples are only part of a much larger network of interpretation and a far deeper obsession that early Christians had with their scriptures. The most influential are themselves deeply influenced by their predecessors, even when that influence is not directly in evidence. Origen and his followers owe a considerable debt to Philo for the interpretation of this passage which Philo never knew. Even the greatest interpreters stand amidst broader currents of interpretation. Hence, interpretation is a lively conversation across place and time, a conversation that constantly grows and expands.

In many instances, this conversation reinforces theological and community boundaries, for example in the trope of supersessionism, the defense of Nicene Orthodoxy, the Donatist appeal to the martyr-bandit, or Augustine's dismissal of the same. Yet, most of the time, the conversation is not taken up with doctrinal standards or

identity boundaries.<sup>962</sup> Most interpretation, focused on the parenetic potential of the episode, transgresses boundaries by means of a lived, liturgical theology of participation.<sup>963</sup> The lines are thoroughly blurred between the scriptural characters in the divine drama, and also between the scriptural characters and the hearing community itself. For example, the trope of the bandit as a Second Adam might seem to violate the unique status of the Pauline Christ as the Second Adam. Yet, the typological connections, predicated on resonance of imagery and parenetic potential, prove so compelling as to make a special space for a bandit himself as a Second, Second Adam. Christ is the tree of life, but the bandit becomes fruit and foliage of that tree. Christ is the scarab, but so is the bandit who lived underground. Such transgressions are most pronounced between the bandit and the hearers, whose identities so often fuse. Hearers become believers, worshippers, confessors, martyrs, ascetes, and penitents *with* and *in* the bandit. Scripture is a living world, and all its hearers liturgical players.

Thus there is profound coherence in early interpretation, at least as that interpretation has been preserved for posterity. Chapters 5–8, while enumerating myriad tropes, also show myriad intertexts that bespeak the assumption and practice of the unity of scripture. Even the debates over synoptic (ch. 3) and eschatological (ch. 4) disparities reveal an

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<sup>962</sup> J. L. Kovacs describes patristic interpretation of Paul along similar lines; see *1 Corinthians*, The Church's Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), xxvi–xxix. The Fathers were not primarily concerned “to reconstruct past events” but with the “theological and existential” power of scripture and “the transformation the text occasions in the interpreter.”

<sup>963</sup> Quoting P. Riceour's saying, “the liturgy generates a new us,” Wilken describes the way in which liturgy sets a different context for the interpretation of scripture than the merely literary or historical frameworks often presumed in modern interpretation; see *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 74.

underlying coherence in the practice of reasoning from scripture and upholding its authority. One cannot merely agree or disagree. One must agree or disagree *from* and *for* scripture.

This underlying coherence problematizes the customary accounts of competing exegetical and theological traditions, in particular the hard and fast distinction made between Antiochene and Alexandrian schools. For example, while the interpretations of Athanasius and Didymus resonate with that of Origen, there are also resonances with his later detractors. The most notable efforts to explain Christ's historical (i.e., geographical and chronological) movements in the *triduum* come not from the school of Antioch but from Origen himself. On the other hand, Chrysostom's oft-repeated trope of the "eyes of faith" (particularly when used to warn against reading Genesis too literally) would likely be considered Alexandrian had it not been born in Antioch. A closer and more careful look at early interpretation reveals that contexts are not so much prescriptive as descriptive. The early exegetical schools and theological traditions (Antiochene, Alexandrian) are not closed systems with hard-lined boundaries, but rather patterns of reading, living, worshipping and mentoring in sometimes heated, sometimes open relationship with each other.

Striking is the quickness with which ideas travel and the close connections among interpreters even across long distances. For example, Epiphanius' sylleptical

harmonization echoes only a few years later in Ambrose's homilies on Luke.<sup>964</sup>

Augustine mimics Ambrose's related argument only about a decade after its publication.

Most remarkably, within a few decades, Chrysostom's homiletical tropes saturate not only Greek sermons, but even Latin sermons throughout Italy and Augustine's Africa.

Texts and the interpretations embedded with them course rapidly throughout the Mediterranean.<sup>965</sup> The early history of the interpretation of this one passage repeatedly maps intricate, fast-moving and far-reaching networks of communication and correspondence.

Language and culture was not nearly the barrier we might expect or even presume in our scholarly methods. On a closing, confessional note, the research behind this dissertation began exclusively with Greek and Latin texts on the assumption that such texts could provide a fairly comprehensive account of patristic interpretation. As Syriac references, influences, and intertexts rapidly multiplied, it soon became clear that here was a wealth of material that demanded serious consideration. In retrospect, in regard to the effort to account for the breadth and depth of trajectories that emerge in early Christianity, it would have been preferable to ignore Latin texts rather than Syriac. This is not said to slight Latin, which is indispensable indeed, but to be reminded that bilingual Syria (which lays claim to both Ephrem and Chrysostom, along with a host of other influential interpreters and texts) is probably *the* most creative and influential center of

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<sup>964</sup> That is, if it was part of the sermons that Ambrose originally preached in 377–378 CE. Otherwise, it took a little over a decade to appear in the redacted sermons as published in 389 CE. See CCSL 14:vii.

<sup>965</sup> On the rapid and geographically broad dissemination of early Christian texts, almost always through private channels and copying, see H. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), ch. 3.



biblical interpretation, at least in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. This is not meant as a statement of personal preference (I would have preferred that the creative matrix been a place where everyone spoke just Greek or Latin!), but rather as an assessment of broader interpersonal and intertextual patterns across place and time. The synapses of the brain of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century biblical interpretation pulse most frequently and brightly around this center. In the attempt to reconstruct and write the reception-history of the Bible in late antiquity, it is imperative to take Syriac literature seriously. Egeria's observation then is still instructive for scholarship today.<sup>966</sup>

A portion of the population in this province knows both Greek and Syriac; another segment knows only Greek; and still another, only Syriac. Even though the bishop may know Syriac, he always speaks Greek and never Syriac; and, therefore, there is always present a priest who, while the bishop speaks in Greek, translates into Syriac so that all may understand what is being explained. Since whatever scriptural texts are read must be read in Greek, there is always someone present who can translate the readings into Syriac for the people, so that they will always understand. So that those here who are Latins, those consequently knowing neither Greek nor Syriac, will not be bored, everything is explained to them, for there are other brothers and sisters who are bilingual in Greek and Latin and who explain everything to them in Latin.

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<sup>966</sup> *Itin.* 47 (ET from ACW 47:125–6).

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