MARIUS VICTORINUS' COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS

Stephen Andrew Cooper

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Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians

Introduction, Translation, and Notes

STEPHEN ANDREW COOPER

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filiae carissimae
et omnibus parvulis
in spem mundi melioris
dedicatum est
hoc opus

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'What could be so magnificent as when one's mind is overwhelmed and one comes to accept the opposing mind-set, to accept what you had earlier been intent upon wiping out?' Thus Marius Victorinus characterized Paul's transformation from persecutor to propagator, but he could easily have been talking about himself. To be sure, one cannot know with certainty, for these remarks made in his commentary on Galatians are part of a literary artifice designed to bring the apostle Paul and his teachings to life. In his commentary on Paul's epistles, Victorinus literarily becomes the apostle addressing his audience. Because the vivid presentation of characters was a hallmark of good rhetorical style, we restrain our impulse to read the commentator's remarks autobiographically. Yet the ambiguities in the voice of the text—Victorinus the narrator moving back and forth into the person of Paul—leave the question open, and the fascination intact. So the conclusion of Pierre Hadot, the scholar who has done the most to bring Marius Victorinus to light in modern times, remains profoundly true: that of all the works of this many-faceted late antique academic, his commentaries on Paul are 'the most interesting for anyone who wants to penetrate the enigma which the psychology of the converted rhetor poses to the historian'. But we will be disappointed if we expect to find direct utterances of a personal or confessional nature in Victorinus' exegetical works. The personal psychology of their author and his conversion remain of necessity obscure to us; but these first Latin commentaries on Paul do permit a glimpse into the kind of thinking which led to the conversion of the Roman aristocracy. These were people deeply identified with and by their literary learning: the truths of the New Testament had to find an appropriate literary and intellectual medium to reach those who were accustomed to thinking through texts. But Victorinus' commentaries on Paul present primarily the workings of their author's trained mind, a mind which became deeply involved in the pursuit of truth in an explicit community context as the result of a religious conversion.

The meagre manuscript tradition of Victorinus' exegetical *œuvre* shows how he was all but forgotten by the Middle Ages as a commentator on Paul. Yet his attention to the apostle's epistles was followed by more familiar names of the next generation of Latin commentators—Jerome, Augustine, Pelagius—as well as a couple of

unknown authors. The Paul they read and wrote about, however, was no dead figure of the past, but an apostle who still lived and breathed among the Christian populace. Christian art of the mid-fourth century reveals that the apostle Paul was the focus of considerable piety. Thus, to help answer the question, Who was Paul for Roman Christians of the fourth century?, I have turned to the art of the early church as a useful complement to the textual data. The proliferation of commentaries on Paul and the development of a distinct Pauline iconography in the latter half of the fourth century point to a spiking of interest in this apostle during this period. It is evident that Christians in Rome especially celebrated Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles, particularly alongside Peter. Both had been martyred there; and the presence of their relics enhanced the prestige of the Roman church in no small measure. The veneration of the two 'princes of the apostles', symbolizing the unity of the entire church, went hand and hand with the use of the Pauline letters in theological controversies. This last factor, no doubt, created a demand for systematic, exegetical treatments of this significant portion of the New Testament. Victorinus, who had long held the official chair in rhetoric at Rome and had, among his numerous works, also commented on Cicero, was the kind of person to meet this demand.

With this translation of Victorinus' commentary on Galatians, I hope to open the door of a significant chapter in the history of biblical interpretation to students of early Christianity whose interests outstrip their Latin. The accompanying introduction, annotations, and appendices are intended to address both issues of general interest concerning early Christian exegesis and the scholarly discussion of Victorinus' commentaries. The various aspects of my research are in part an attempt to come to terms with the first phase of what has been dubbed 'the rediscovery of Paul in the Latin theology of the fourth century'. To chart fully this development in intellectual history is a more comprehensive undertaking in the history of exegesis, one that would require a separate treatment. I hope here to contribute to that larger task through situating Victorinus' commentaries in their historical and exegetical context. For basic questions about his commentaries remain—their scope, purpose, and influence—and their unresolved status inhibits any understanding of the first chapter of the 'rediscovery of Paul' in the Latin church.

My starting-point is the uncontroversial assumption that Victorinus' *Commentary on Galatians* can best be understood as a combined response both to what the commentator found before him in Paul's epistle and to a number of exigencies in the commentator's world. Some of these latter factors will have been historical events about which we are more or less informed. Others will have been of a

more internal, personal nature: the feelings, the goals, and the hopes which led him to write commentaries on the Pauline letters in the first place. Thus, because almost nothing is known of Victorinus' activity in the church of his times, and since we have no direct access to exigencies of an internal sort, the dilemma for understanding Victorinus' intentions in writing exegetical works is sharp. The information we do possess about Marius Victorinus is limited to very basic data about his life, although his various writings provide a good sense of his intellectual predilections. But despite the difficulties inherent in judging authorial intention, issues concerning the import of historical phenomena cannot be fully addressed apart from inquiring into the minds of those who produced the texts in question. Why did Marius Victorinus choose to comment on Paul and in this particular manner? What brought him to this project in the first place? What did he hope to achieve? These are questions which we can hope to answer only reconstructively and in full awareness of the way in which the limitations of the data delimit the certainties of our conclusions.

In light of the lack of any extensive study in English of this first Latin commentator on Paul, I have seen fit to include, in a lengthy introduction, the results of my researches into Victorinus' commentaries and their historical and exegetical contexts. The Introduction contains extended treatments of a number of themes relevant to Victorinus' commentaries: a brief survey of his life and the historical context of his conversion and period of Christian authorship; an examination of Pauline iconography in the fourth century; Victorinus' exegetical methodology; and the question of his commentaries' *raison d'être*. The final section of the Introduction deals at length with what has been perhaps the most vexed question raised in relationship to his exegetical work: did it influence any of the later Latin exegetes, most crucially Augustine? The scholarly consensus for more than a century has been a fairly assured 'no', due to the apparent lack of verbal parallels in the commentaries of these two exegetes on Galatians. For a long time this consensus has been unmoved by dissenters: for example, the claim made in 1947 by the Italian scholar Alberto Pincherle, that Augustine had indeed read Victorinus' commentaries. This claim has been vigorously renewed in the last decade by two scholars, Nello Cipriani and Eric Plumer. Working independently of each other, both claim to have uncovered clear traces of influence of Victorinus' commentaries on Augustine. The final section of the Introduction will review the matter at length, supplementing the parallels they have adduced with those that I have discovered. If the hypothesis that Augustine was influenced in his reading of Paul by his compatriot of the preceding generation were to find acceptance, it would have the salutary effect

of removing the damning *titulus* hanging over Victorinus' commentaries on Paul: interesting but irrelevant. If that hypothesis does not win the day, then Victorinus' *Commentary on Galatians* cannot forthwith be reassigned to its dusty shelf of irrelevance, for I think in this work to have demonstrated what a number of scholars have without enough fanfare surmised: that his commentaries would have been read by the second Latin commentator on Paul, that very influential exegete whose true identity still eludes the world, but who has become familiar under the name of Ambrosiaster. But whatever the case regarding the influence of Victorinus' exegetical opus in the early church, new readers today, not all of the academy, may find in Marius Victorinus' *Commentary on Galatians* something to enrich their contact with the divine apostle in that raw and passionate epistle.

All books have their fates, and I should like here to acknowledge some of the circumstances that brought me to this project in this particular form. Having made a translation and study of Victorinus' *Commentary on Ephesians* for my dissertation at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary, and having seen a revised version of it through to publication, I originally had no plan to turn to his *Commentary on Galatians*. The somewhat fortuitous event, however, of obtaining a position at Franklin and Marshall College gave me teaching responsibilities not only in early Christianity, my native field, so to speak, but also in the field of biblical studies. The necessity of reading more deeply in this realm drew to my attention the vogue for using classical rhetoric in the study of the New Testament. This presented me with an opportunity to put what knowledge I had attained in ancient rhetoric and early Christian exegesis to a new if related purpose. This was in the mid-1990s; and my increasing sense of what New Testament scholars were doing with classical rhetoric made me realize that important stones, dull and grey at first glance, were being left unturned: the rich field of patristic exegetes whose working knowledge of classical rhetoric I believe to be vastly superior to our own. Because so much attention of New Testament scholars had been focused on the letter to the Galatians, thanks largely to the efforts of Professor Hans Dieter Betz, my interest was drawn again to Victorinus' work on Galatians. I had, of course, read it previously, but not with a view toward a comparison with the 'rhetorical criticism' of modern biblical scholars. As I read and drank deeply of what the old Roman rhetor Victorinus found in Paul, I became convinced of two things: first, that it was the best of what remained of his series on Paul; and second, that it needed to be translated, and I could not bear it if the job should fall to anyone but me.

I would like here to acknowledge several persons for various contributions to the present work. First, I am happy to thank a number of people who have worked with me in connection with Oxford University Press: Gillian Clark, the general editor for the Latin side of the Early Christian Studies series; Hilary O'Shea, the commissioning editor under whom my project was first contracted; Lucy Qureshi, the commissioning editor who saw it through; Enid Barker, my desk editor; and Jean van Altena, my copy-editor. I would also like to express my general gratitude to all the people at the Press for their patience. A daughter was born to me shortly after I had obtained the contract some few years before the end of the last millennium; and while she brought great joy into my life, a great deal of time also elapsed before I could get on with this book. That intervening time was productive in its own way, for it allowed me to dig more deeply into my research, and to have the benefit of Eric Plumer's work on Augustine's *Commentary on Galatians*, with its significant conclusions for scholarship on Victorinus. I would also like to thank some colleagues from my academic environment in Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Harriet and Michael Flower, formerly of Franklin and Marshall's Classics faculty (now at Princeton), for helpful consultation regarding several points of translation; Greg Carey, of Lancaster Theological Seminary, for his careful reading of and helpful comments on the fourth section of the Introduction. I would also like to record my gratitude to the anonymous reader whom the Press secured for a reading of the initial draft of the third section of the Introduction, where my lack of expertise in art history would have otherwise led me into unfortunate errors (whatever errors remain, in this now expanded section, as well as elsewhere in the book, are, of course, my own). My friends Andrew Hahn and Michael Chandler did me the favour of proof-reading various sections, for which I thank them. Special thanks are also due to my student and assistant, Alicia Allison, for whom Franklin and Marshall's summer Hackman scholarship program made it possible to help me in some of the final preparation of the manuscript in matters of computing and the bibliography. For his work in editing the translation, I am especially grateful to the efforts of my father, Dr Burton Cooper, who has saved me from many a sin against the English language. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Kabi Emmanuel Hartman, and my daughter, Eva Emanuela, for their *longanimitas*, but also for their support, being, and love, apart from which I no longer recognize myself.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, ed. H. Temporini and W. Haase
Aug	*Augustinianum*
AugSt	*Augustinian Studies*
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, series latina
Chadwick, *Confessions*	Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. H. Chadwick
Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*	Stephen Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals in Marius Victorinus' Commentary on the Letter to the Ephesians*
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
EEC	*Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. A. Di Berardino
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
Gori	*Marii Victorini Opera pars II opera exegetica*, ed. F. Gori, CSEL 83/2
Gori, CorPat	*Mario Vittorino, Commentari alle Epistole di Paolo*, ed. F. Gori
Greek Grammar	*A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. F. Blass and A. Debrunner, trans. and rev. R. W. Funk
Hahn	*Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, ed. August Hahn, 2nd edn.
Halm	*Rhetores latini minores*, ed. Carolus Halm
Hanson, *Search*	R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*
HAW	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*

JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JEC	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KJV	King James (Authorized) Version of the Bible
Loeb	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	*A Greek–English Lexicon*, ed. Liddell, Scott, and Jones
Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*	*Marii Victorinii Ars grammatica*, ed. I. Mariotti
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
Patrology	Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*
PG	Patrologia Graeca, Cursus Completus, ed. J.-P. Migne
PL	Patrologia Latina, Cursus Completus, ed. J.-P. Migne
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P. G. W. Glare
RAC	*Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum*
Rbén	*Revue bénédictine*
RechSR	*Recherches de science religieuse*
RÉA	*Revue des Études Augustiniennes*
RÉtAug	*Revue des études augustiniennes*
*RivA*C	*Rivista di archeologia christiana*
RQ	*Römische Quartalschrift*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
Souter	*Pelagius' Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul*, ed. A. Souter
Souter, *GLL*	*A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.*, ed. A. Souter
SP	*Studia Patristica*
Staab	*Pauluskommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche*, ed. K. Staab
ThLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*
ThWNT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. G. Friedrich
TRE	*Theologische Realenzyklopädie*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VL	Vetus Latina (i.e. pre-Vulgate Old Latin translation of the Bible)
Vlg.	Vulgate

WS	J. Wilpert and W. Schumacher, *Die römischen Mosaiken der kirchlichen Bauten*
ZAC	*Zeitschrift für Antike und Christentum*
ZKG	*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZThK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

PART I

Introduction

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I

A Chapter in the History of Biblical Exegesis

It is unfortunate for our evaluation of Victorinus and his works that we possess his last known writings in what can only be described as a very incomplete form.[1] There are three commentaries extant—on Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians—and they refer back to earlier letters in the Pauline canon. It is evident from these references that Victorinus had also treated Romans and the Corinthian correspondence.[2] Because we lack what must have been Victorinus' very lengthy works on Romans and the Corinthians correspondence, we are not in a position to reconstruct the full picture of his interpretation of Paul. Deprived of his commentaries on First and Second Corinthians, we know little of his opinions on sex, marriage, asceticism, charismata, visions, and other fascinating subjects. His work on Romans would have given us a more systematic presentation of his views of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, pagan morality, the Law, human psychology, secular authority, and justification by faith—many of the issues that figure prominently in the work of Augustine. Moreover, we cannot know how far into the Pauline corpus Victorinus progressed; there is no evidence regarding whether or not he got beyond Philippians. The manuscript tradition of the commentaries reveals that even the ones which have survived were handed down to the modern world by the thinnest of threads. Their eventual fate and near-extinction is probably no accident, but likely to have been determined by their bulk, some of their contents, a harsh remark about their author by the great authority, Jerome, and the production of newer works on Paul

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[1] In the preface to his second book on Ephesians, he mentions his desire *permissu dei* to write a book on the 'advent and … return' of Christ (Gori, 60, 12–20). We have no evidence whether he lived long enough to complete such a project.

[2] Internal references to a commentary on Romans are found in his comments on Gal. 4: 7 and 5: 8 (Gori, 144, 9–10; 161, 3–5). References to a commentary on 1 Corinthians occur at Eph. 4: 11–12 (Gori, 63, 8–13, 21–3) and Gal. 5: 6 (Gori, 160, 18). A commentary on 2 Corinthians is presupposed by his comments on Eph. 4: 10 and Gal. 5: 14 and 6: 14 (Gori, 62, 13–14; 163, 1–7; 171, 5–6).

without any of these hindrances. What may have made them some-
what problematic in their own time, however, makes them all the
more interesting for us. For they are among the first witnesses to the
blend of Christianity and Neoplatonic philosophy that proved to be
so potent a draught in the hands of Augustine and, through him,
played no small role in the development of the Western intellectual
tradition.

Victorinus' three commentaries are preserved in a peculiar
order[3]—Galatians, Philippians, Ephesians—by a fifteenth-century
manuscript (Vaticanus Ottobonianus Latinus 3288 A, or *O*) and two
sixteenth-century ones (Vaticanus Ottobonianus Latinus 3288, *Ω*;
Vaticanus Latinus 3546, *F*), which are copies of the first. The works
on Galatians and Philippians also exist in a copy (*S*) made by the
humanist Jacques Sirmond (1559–1651) from a codex Herivallensis,
no longer extant, which was also the archetype of *O*.[4] Unfortunately,
Sirmond did not indicate how many commentaries this apparently
very ancient codex contained.[5] The surviving ones are regrettably
not fully intact: all are marred by significant lacunae, most severe in
the case of Philippians, where the preface and comments to the first
sixteen verses are wanting (a great pity, as Victorinus sets out in the
preface of his commentaries his basic understanding of the letter).
None of these manuscripts, however, were edited until 1828, when
Cardinal Angelo Mai brought out the first printed edition, a text
that Migne reprinted along with its many defects.[6] That his com-
mentaries did not meet the printing press until this relatively late
date helps explains the paucity of scholarship devoted to these
works.[7] Indeed, it was not until 1972 that the appearance
of Albrecht Locher's Teubner edition provided scholars with
the first truly critical text of the commentaries.[8] Locher's edition

[3] See Appendix 1 for discussion.

[4] As is apparent from the presence of the same lacunae, corrections, etc. (Gori,
pp. xi–xiv).

[5] Sirmond wrote vaguely of 'several (*aliquot*) commentaries on the epistles of
St. Paul' (cited in Gori, p. xii).

[6] A. Maius, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio e Vaticanis codicibus edita*, 3. 2. 1–
146 (also in PL 8, 1145–1294). Unfortunately Mai had only the three Vatican
codices mentioned above, and—even more unfortunately—drew mainly on one of
the sixteenth-century texts (Gori, p. xiv).

[7] Although several scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century have
taken Victorinus' commentaries into account in their more comprehensive projects
(Koffmane, Gore, Harnack, Schmid, Monceaux, and Souter), to date only three
monographs have focused on his Christian exegetical works: the 1924 Marburg
dissertation of Werner Karig, 'Des Caius Marius Victorinus Kommentare zu den
paulinischen Briefe'; the Hamburg dissertation of Werner Erdt, *Marius Victorinus
Afer* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1980); and the recent work of Giacomo
Raspanti, *Mario Vittorino esegeta di S. Paolo* (Palermo: L'epos società editrice, 1996).

[8] *Marii Victorini Afri commentarii in epistulas Pauli ad Galatas, ad Philippenses,
ad Ephesios*, ed. A. Locher (Leipzig: Teubner, 1972).

unfortunately proved rather faulty upon review.[9] A solid basis for future study was supplied by Franco Gori, who first edited the text, with an Italian translation, for the Corona Patrum series (1981). Gori was also responsible for the Vienna corpus edition (1986) of the commentaries, which is the basis for my translation in the present work.[10]

A brief consideration of the history of Pauline exegesis in the Latin church makes it evident that Victorinus' exegetical efforts were overshadowed and replaced by the works of other commentators with historically weightier names: 'Ambrose', Jerome, and Augustine. The success of their commentaries was probably a major factor in the eclipse of Victorinus' pioneering work in this area, as Alexander Souter surmised quite some time ago.[11] But the eventual form and sad fortune of his exegetical *magnum opus*, however, cannot obscure the fact, as Giacomo Raspanti put it in his recent exemplary work *Mario Vittorino esegeta di S. Paolo*, that 'Marius Victorinus was not only the first commentator on Paul in the Latin language but was also among the first Christians who applied themselves to the exegesis of the sacred text in a systematic manner'.[12] Left with what must at best be considered the smaller half of Victorinus' commentaries on Paul, we should not fail to evaluate appropriately the significance of his exegetical work as a whole. For Victorinus set out to compose an entire series, not just individual commentaries on specific Pauline epistles, such as we find in Jerome and Augustine. Thus the significance of his exegetical work in its time should not be underestimated. It is possible that the work of the first Latin commentator on Paul stimulated the activity

[9] See Pierre Hadot, 'A propos d'une récente édition des commentaires de Marius Victorinus sur les Épîtres de saint Paul', *Latomus*, 35 (1976), 133–42. Locher, whose introduction none the less contains valuable material, does not dispute this general assessment of his critical text; see his entry, 'Marius Victorinus Afer', in Friedrich Wilhelm Bautz and Traugott Bautz (eds.), *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexicon* (Hertzberg: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 1993), 840–2.

[10] *Marii Victorini opera pars II opera exegetica*, ed. Franco Gori, CSEL 83/2 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986), 111. Gori previously published his critical text (with Italian translation and brief notes) in the Corona Patrum series: *Mario Vittorino, Commentari alle Epistole di Paolo agli Efesini, ai Galati, ai Filippesi*, ed. F. Gori (Turin: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1981).

[11] Souter: 'As causes for this meagre manuscript tradition we may suggest the fact that the commentaries were superseded by the handier and more interesting works of Ambrosiaster and Pelagius' (*The Earliest Latin Commentators on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927; repr. 1999), 10). Need we note that 'more interesting' is in the eye of the beholder?

[12] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 81. Here he is following Maria Grazia Mara, 'Ricerche storico-esegetiche sulla presenza del corpus paolino nella storia del cristianesimo dal II al V secolo', in *idem, Paolo di Tarso e il suo epistolario* (L'Aquila: Japadre, 1983), 6–64, 52.

of other exegetes who needed to work out their own synthesis of Pauline theology. Indeed, the half-century after the appearance of Victorinus' commentaries brought a succession of no fewer than five other Latin authors who commented either on single epistles or on the whole series. This phenomenon has been heralded as 'the rediscovery of Paul in the Latin theology of the fourth century'.[13]

Whether it was in fact a 'rediscovery' of Paul,[14] and whether the apostle had truly been neglected by the Latin church prior to the time of Victorinus' authorship,[15] are questions beyond the scope of this work. Whatever the case, Victorinus' commentaries did not stand long as the sole Latin works on the Pauline corpus. Less than two decades later, the mysterious Italian exegete we call Ambrosiaster wrote what became the most historically influential set of commentaries in the West.[16] These were probably the first full treatment of the Pauline corpus—if Victorinus did not in fact complete his work. By the 380s, Jerome began plying his learned devotion to make accessible to his Latin contemporaries the wealth of the Greek exegetical tradition. Along with a stream of translations, he composed works of his own on four of the minor Pauline epistles (Galatians, Ephesians, Titus, Philemon). Jerome's Pauline commentaries consisted largely of adaptations and translations of the exegetical works of various Greek authors, particularly Origen.[17] More original works were produced by more original thinkers.

[13] See the important article by Bernhard Lohse, 'Beobachtungen zum Paulus-Kommentar des Marius Victorinus und zur Wiederentdeckung des Paulus in der lateinischen Theologie des vierten Jahrhunderts', in A. M. Ritter (ed.), *Keryma und Logos* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1979), 351–66. Lohse (p. 353) cites Hans von Campenhausen as the originator of the notion of a 'rediscovery of Paul' in the West: 'The Western theology of the fourth century was the first to discover the anti-Jewish Paul—the Paul who broke through the Law and established the ''righteousness of faith''—and never let him go' (Campenhausen, *Lateinische Kirchenväter* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960), 152).

[14] Indeed, 'rediscovery' is a questionable term. See the opening pages of S. Taylor's article 'Paul and the Persian Sage', in C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders (eds.), *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1998), 312–31.

[15] The Pauline epistles, including Hebrews, were important to the late-third-century bishop of Pettau (d. 304), named Victorinus, who wrote important exegetical works in Latin, though not on Paul. See the comprehensive study of Martine Dulaey, *Victorin de Poetovio, premier exégète latin* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1993), 73–4.

[16] H. J. Vogels (ed.), *Ambrosiastri qui dicitur commentarius in epistulas paulinas*, CSEL 81 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1966–9). For a full-length study of this anonymous author, see Alexander Souter, *A Study of Ambrosiaster* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905).

[17] Margaret A. Schatkin, 'The Influence of Origen on St. Jerome's Commentary on Galatians', *VC* 24 (1970), 49–58. For some cautionary remarks on this score, see

Augustine found that it was Paul who spoke to his heart and mind with life-changing power; he too put his hand to the apostle's letters in three of his early Christian productions.[18] Around the turn of the century, another unknown commentator (probably Aquileian), whom we call the Budapest Anonymous, compiled a text of all fourteen Pauline epistles accompanied by brief summaries and explanations.[19] Between 405 and 410 Pelagius weighed in at Rome with his comprehensive, if terse, commentary on the thirteen epistles, which presented a Paulinism often in direct opposition to the understanding of the apostle achieved in Augustine's works of the last decade of the fourth century.[20] Rufinus' translation of Origen's *Commentary on Romans* (405–6) is also a manifestation of the Latin church's intense interest in Paul during this period. Important issues for Christians could clearly not be decided on the basis of anything less than the full arsenal of the literary science of the day: the line-by-line commentary.

Looking at the earlier history of Pauline exegesis, we note that Origen was the only third-century figure who produced a 'systematic commentary on the *corpus Paulinum*', although many Greek Christian authors of the fourth century commented on one or more of the epistles, sometimes from decidedly non-Nicene perspectives.[21] But

Francis Deniau, 'Le Commentaire de Jérome sur Ephésiens nous permet-il de connaître celui d'Origène?', in *Origeniana* (Bari: Istituto di Letteratura Cristiana Antica, 1975), 163–79. More recent (and optimistic) is the article of Richard A. Layton, 'Recovering Origen's Pauline Exegesis', *JECS* 8 (2000), 373–411. I have not examined the most recent work on Origen's Pauline exegesis, which presumably contains the fullest treatment of the issue: Ronald E. Heine, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[18] Augustine's two works on Romans (one unfinished) and his commentary on Galatians, written in 394–5, have been edited by Johannes Divjak (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1971). The works on Roman have been re-edited and translated by Paula Fredriksen (*olim*) Landes, with facing Latin, as *Augustine on Romans* (Chico, Calif.: Scholar's Press, 1982); the commentary on Galatians has been translated, with Divjak's text, by Eric Plumer (*Augustine's Commentary on Galatians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)).

[19] Budapest Anonymous, *Ein neuer Paulustext und Kommentar*, ed. H. J. Frede (Freiburg: Herder, 1973–4). The manuscript was discovered in the National Museum of Hungary, whence the moniker of this unknown commentator.

[20] Alexander Souter, *Pelagius' Expositions of Thirteen Epistles on St Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922). The commentary on Romans has been translated (with facing Latin) by Theodore de Bruyn for Oxford Early Christian Studies, *Pelagius' Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). For the date of Pelagius' commentaries, ibid. 11.

[21] Mara, *Paolo di Tarso*, 6. Mara lists the following Greek commentators: 'Asterius the Arian, Acacius of Caesarea, Eusebius of Emesa, Theodore of Heraclea, Eunomius, Didymus, Apollonarius, Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom, Severian of Gabala, Cyril of Alexandria' (ibid. 27–8).

as none of Origen's works on Paul[22] are intact in Greek, Victorinus'
exegetical works are actually the earliest commentaries on the Pauline
epistles, Latin or Greek, to survive into the modern era in their original
language.[23] The relative lateness of the entire Latin Christian exeget-
ical tradition notwithstanding,[24] in Victorinus we find systematic
Latin commentary on the epistles concurrent with the flowering of
Greek commentators on Paul. For Greeks and Latins alike were
composing exegetical works in view of the Trinitarian controversies,
also during a time when the relations between the church and the
rapidly Christianizing Roman world were in flux. In line with the
precedent of highly educated converts turning their pens to Christian
causes—Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arno-
bius, Lactantius, Synesius, to name a few—it is unsurprising to find a
quintessential academic like Victorinus standing at the head of this
attention to the Pauline letters among the Latins. 'It is exactly this that
takes the prize for his Paul-commentaries,' Hadot has said.[25] But it is
time for Victorinus' commentaries to be afforded more significance
than that of simply being the first of many such Latin works on Paul.
The scholarship of the twentieth century has for the most part
regarded them as having found no readership or having had no lasting
impact. This consensus was unmoved by arguments to the contrary
voiced by Alberto Pincherle in 1947, that 'Augustine was familiar with
and at some point had in front of him the commentary of Marius
Victorinus'.[26] I hope here, in the final section of this Introduction, to

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[22] A full study of Origen's Paulinism has been made by Francesca Cocchini, *Il
Paolo de Origene* (Rome: Edizioni Studium, 1992).

[23] Origen's opus on Romans, the only surviving work on Paul earlier than Victor-
inus', exists complete, if not intact, in Rufinus' somewhat free Latin translation (PG 14,
831–1294). Greek catena fragments exist (edited by A. Ramsbotham, *JTS* 13 (1912),
210–24, 357–68; *JTS* 14 (1913), 10–22), along with extracts from the *Philokalia*, now
supplemented by a substantial section of the original recovered in 1941 and first edited
by Jean Scherer, *Le Commentaire d'Origène sur Rom. III.5–V.7* (Cairo: Institut français
d'Archéologie Orientale, 1957). A critical edition of Rufinus' translation of Origen's
commentary has been provided by Caroline P. Hammond Bammel, *Die Römerbrief-
kommentar des Origenes* (Freiburg: Herder, 1996). An English translation has recently
been made by Thomas P. Schreck: Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*
(Washington: Catholic University of America, 2001–2). The catena commentaries
have preserved substantial fragments of Origen's commentary on 1 Corinthians (ed.
Claude Jenkins, *JTS* 9 (1908), 231–47, 353–72, 500–14) and Ephesians (ed. J. A. F.
Gregg, *JTS* 3 (1902), 233–44, 398–420, 554–76).

[24] As J. N. D. Kelly has nicely put it, the student who turns to the Latin exegetes
after a study of the Greek patristic authors 'is moving . . . from a richly stocked,
amazingly luxuriant garden to one that is more homely in style and more sparsely
planted' ('The Bible and the Latin Fathers', in D. E. Nineham (ed.), *The Church's
Use of the Bible Past and Present* (London: SPCK, 1963), 41–56, 41).

[25] Pierre Hadot, *Marius Victorinus* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1971), 289.

[26] Alberto Pincherle, *La Formazione teologica di S. Agostino* (Rome: Edizioni
Italiane, 1947), 118. Pincherle also states generally that Victorinus' 'example and

show that this claim, recently revived independently by Nello Cipriani[27] and Eric Plumer,[28] is now able to withstand the test of critical scrutiny. But this is a matter of a commentary's afterlife, so to speak, and the pleasures of hindsight; but a primary evaluation of a work must look at it from the standpoint of its own time.

The genre of commentary in the Graeco-Roman world particularly suited an age when scholars played down their own contributions through a filiopietistic approach to the authorities they revered and commented on.[29] In his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* (*ad* 1.51), Victorinus himself refers parenthetically to this tendency: 'it was the custom for disciples to refer things of their own invention to their teachers, and to present these ideas as if they had been discovered by them.'[30] The pagan milieu of Victorinus was one where the élite thought that Truth had been vouchsafed to the wise men whose lore had received literary form: Homer, Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato.[31] This Truth had been deposited in texts unceasingly to be mined, a treasure trove whose riches could be

writings . . . were of such a great impact on Augustine's soul' (18). Hadot does not seem to have been familiar with Pincherle's work, but he too has suggested that Augustine may have been influenced by Victorinus, more likely by his commentaries than by his Trinitiarian treatises ('L'Image de la Trinité dans l'âme chez Victorinus et chez saint Augustin', *SP* 6 (1962), 409–42, 433).

[27] 'Agostino lettore dei Commentari paolini di Mario Vitttorino', *Aug* 38 (1998), 413–28. Cipriani argues for the influence of the Paul commentaries also on Augustine's early dialogues. In previous articles Cipriani has demonstrated the impact of Victorinus' Trinitarian works on Augustine ('Le fonti cristiani della dottrina trinitaria nei primi Dialoghi di S. Agostino', *Aug* 34 (1994), 253–312; 'La *Retractatio* agostiniana sulla processione—generazione dello Spirito Santo [*Trin.* 5,12,13]', *Aug* 37 (1997), 431–9). John Rist has also asserted the influence of Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises on Augustine (*Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 258).

[28] *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians.*

[29] Christoph Schäublin expresses this sentiment perfectly: 'Since there was a general conviction in "classical" *pietas* that one's own creative production grew out of the careful preservation and usage of an extant ancient work, one's entire literary and spiritual endeavors quite simply had to bear the stamp of a systematic treatment of texts' ('Zur paganen Prägung der christlichen Exegese', in J. van Oort and U. Wickert (eds.), *Christliche Exegese zwischen Nicaea und Chalcedon* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1992), 150).

[30] Victorinus, *In Ciceronis rhetorica*, in *Rhetores latini minores*, ed. Carolus Halm (Leipzig: Teubner, 1863), 240, 34–6.

[31] See Pierre Hadot, 'Théologie, exégèse, révélation, écriture, dans la philosophie grecque', in Michel Tardieu (ed.), *Les Règles de l'interprétation* (Paris: Cerf, 1987), 13–34. The reception of new oracles by philosophical pagans did not contradict their premiss of the antiquity of truth. As H. D. Saffrey has noted, 'utilization of the *Chaldean Oracles* as theological authority in fact gave the Neoplatonists a new way of reading and interpreting the Platonic texts' ('Neoplatonic Spirituality, II', in A. H. Armstrong (ed.), *Classic Mediterranean Spirituality* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 250–65, 254).

displayed time and time again under ever-changing lights without loss.[32] This conviction is visible in the activities of the pagan philosophical schools, whose masters were busy producing commentaries on their own masters, Plato and Aristotle, for purposes of intellectual-spiritual pedagogy.[33] Christian piety and the learning that accompanied it also eschewed suspicion of innovation. Commentators sought the truths in the text, preferring to ascribe insights not to themselves, but to the biblical texts whose subtleties they uncovered. Whether or not they delivered their work orally, patristic commentators sought to bring the revealed truth to their audiences in order to facilitate illuminating encounters with the sacred text.[34] As it was in the philosophical schools, so too among Christians: the life of the Spirit was lived in relation both to texts and to the teachers of those texts. But if it is the case that among the educated, as Michelle Salzman has noted, 'literary activities provided a common language and value system that distinguished aristocrats from those below

[32] This aspect of pagan piety is well expressed by Porphyry's concluding remark to his allegorical treatment of a passage from the *Odyssey* (13. 102–12): 'When one takes into consideration the ancient wisdom and the vast intelligence of Homer, along with his perfection in every virtue, one cannot reject the idea that he has hinted at images of more divine things in molding his little story' (Porphyry, *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, ch. 36, trans. Robert Lamberton (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill, 1983), 40). Cf. also Hierocles of Alexandria in the introduction to his commentary on the Pythagorean Golden Verses: 'Among such compilation of rules (κανόνων) extending to cover the whole of philosophy, we would with good reason put the Pythagorean Verses—the so-called 'Golden Verses'—in the first place. For they contain the complete teachings of all of philosophy, both practical and theoretical. By means of these one would acquire truth and virtue, would recover oneself in a purified state, and would obtain the likeness to God. One would even—as Plato's Timaeus, the astute instructor of the Pythagorean teachings—says, "return to the form of the prior state" [*Tim.* 42D], having become "perfectly sound" [*Tim.* 44C]', (Hierocles of Alexandria, *Hieroclis in Aureum Pythagoreum carmen commentarius*, ed. F. G. Koehler (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1974), 5–6). Koehler has translated the same work with notes: *Kommentar zum Pythagoreischen goldenen Gedicht* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1982). The same commonplace division of philosophy into *theoria* and *praxis* is also found in the Platonist Christian Synesius of Cyrene (*Ep.* 103; PG 66, 1476D).

[33] See the contributions by P. Donini ('Alessandro di Apfrodisia e i metodi dell'esegesi filosofica') and Ilsetraut Hadot ('Le Commentaire de Simplicius sur le Manuel d'Épictète comme exercise spirituel') in Claudio Moreschini (ed.), *Esegesi, parafrasi e compilazione in età tardoantica* (Naples: M. d'Auria, 1995). It is Pierre Hadot who has highlighted in our time this aspect of ancient philosophy (see his *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, 2nd edn. (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987), now translated by Michael Chase in Arnold Davidson (ed.), *Philosophy as a Way of Life* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995)). Hadot attributes his own rediscovery of this motif to Paul Rabbow, *Seelenführung* (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1954).

[34] On reading as a spiritual practice, see Louis Leloir, 'La Lecture de l'Écriture selon les anciens Pères', *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique*, 47 (1971), 183–200.

them in society',[35] this was less so for Christians in general. For the religious life in Christianity was tied to the book, even among those who could not read—which was by no means the case for the traditional religions of the Graeco-Roman world (which I shall refer to hereafter—no prejudice intended—as 'pagan'). A famous passage of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* observes how there are 'many non-Greek-speaking peoples who believe in Christ without paper or ink, having salvation written by the Spirit on their hearts'. Such believers, the bishop of Lyons maintains, have a fair enough grasp of truth to reject the inventions of the gnostic heretics.[36] Literacy was no requirement for an adequate theological knowledge, which was imparted by catechesis, the liturgical reading of Scripture, and sermons.[37]

The exegetes of the fourth century were for the most part clergy, whose studies and works sought to transmit the message to broad audiences. Educated lay persons such as Victorinus also wrote theological works, including scriptural commentaries, whose audience would have surely included both lay study groups and clergy with preaching responsibilities. But the techniques of reading and theological reflection found in patristic commentaries belonged broadly to the culture in which the teachings of the faith first took definitive shape.[38] Indeed, it was inevitable that the sacred texts themselves would be read and interpreted through the scholastic practices of literate circles, pagan and Jewish.[39] The Christian appropriation of this legacy played no small part in the eventual success of the new religion, and in that light the effort of the commentators was fundamental. As Averil Cameron has well observed in her Sather Classical Lectures, 'a large part of Christianity's effectiveness in the Roman

[35] Michelle R. Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 48.

[36] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3. 4. 1, in *Sancti Irenaei Libros quinque adversus haereses*, ed. W. Harvey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1857), ii. 16 (ET: ANF 1, 417).

[37] Douglas Burton-Christie has pointed to the importance of Scripture as an 'oral text' in *The Word in the Desert* (Oxford: Oxford University Pres, 1993), 18. On the relation between exegesis and catechesis, see the essays edited by Sergio Felici, *Esegesi e catechesi nei Padri (secc. IV–VII)* (Rome: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1994).

[38] See the important article by Basil Studer, 'Die patristische Exegese', *RÉtAug* 42 (1996), 71–95. Studer regretfully observes that we still lack a comprehensive study of the genre of commentary in antiquity (p. 79). In English, similar material by Studer can now be consulted in Angelo Di Berardino and B. Studer (eds.), *History of Theology*, i; trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1997).

[39] In the realm of textual interpretation Jews had absorbed much from the Hellenistic world. See Elias Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), esp. chs. 19 and 22.

Empire lay in its capacity to create its own intellectual and imaginative universe'.[40] And what was the centre of that universe? 'Christians of whatever background in the early century formed their discourse on and around the Scripture.'[41] We meet that discourse most directly in the genre of biblical commentary, all the stylistic disadvantages of the verse-by-verse method notwithstanding. Through the analysis of examples of that genre and the study of their context—as a jointly authored article of 1957 entitled 'History of Exegesis as Necessary Theological Activity' stated—'an unknown literature begins to speak'.[42]

These last words are happily not as true as they once were. The exegetical literature of the earliest Christian era can no longer be considered a complete unknown. Despite the complaint voiced by Karl Holl just after the Great War that 'the history of exegesis belongs to the fields most neglected by us',[43] this area of work, with its claim on New Testament scholars and historians of early Christianity alike, has in the last few decades shown more than a few signs of revitalization.[44] Certain aspects of the present intellectual climate—emphasis upon the openness of texts to multiple interpretations, the rediscovery of the importance of rhetoric for the study of the New Testament,[45] and

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[40] Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 6.

[41] Ibid. 7. Cameron defines the term 'discourse' as 'all the rhetorical strategies and manners of expression ... particularly characteristic of Christian writing' (p. 5), but then goes on to observe that 'the prominence of the notion of the *difference* between pagan and Christian expression in the work of the Christian writers themselves is to be read as a rhetorical device and symptom of adjustment rather than a description of a real situation' (p. 7). None the less, we ought to admit that some of the 'difference' was genuinely different: Christian intellectuals could not hide the fact that they built their doctrines on largely Jewish writings in an unimpressive Greek style.

[42] L. Vischer and D. Lerch, 'Die Auslegungsgeschichte als notwendige theologische Aufgabe', *SP* 1 (1957), 414–19, 416.

[43] Cited in Karl Schelke, 'Von alter und neuer Auslegung', in *idem*, *Wort und Schrift* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1966), 201–15, 201.

[44] Charles Kannengiesser has provided a useful overview in his article, 'État des travaux et des instruments de travail sur la réception de la Bible à l'époque patristique', in Jean-Claude Fredouille and René-Michel Roberge (eds.), *La Documentation patristique* (Paris: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1995), 71–82. See also Gilles Pelland, 'Que faut-il attendre de l'histoire de l'exégèse ancienne?', *Gregorianum*, 69 (1988), 617–28.

[45] For a recent survey of this scholarship, see Duane Watson, 'Rhetorical Criticism of the Pauline Epistles since 1975', *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies*, 3 (1995), 219–48. For critical perspectives on this trend in Pauline scholarship, see R. D. Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*, 2nd edn. (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1999); P. H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); and Lauri Thurén, *De-rhetorizing Paul* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2000).

the renewed concern for the final form and canonical context of biblical books—have helped to eliminate the residue of what some have described as the 'chronological snobbery' which they find 'so often displayed by modern exegesis toward its own forbears'.[46] If the historical scholarship of the twentieth century has grounds to boast of progress beyond the nineteenth century's historicism, this boast must surely lie in the rejection of the confident positivism that marked the previous century.[47] Rarely do contemporary scholars who address the matter claim to be non-interested interpreters; rarely do they adopt the position of interpreters with sufficient ascetic rigour to stifle the cries of their own interests.[48] As Maurice Wiles pointed out in his 1967 study of the patristic exegesis of Paul, *The Divine Apostle*, 'we as much as they are children of our own times and there may well be aspects of Pauline thought to which we are blinded by the particular presuppositions and patterns of theological thinking in our own day'.[49] An implementation of this laudable critical perspective on the part of biblical scholars could entail modern commentators becoming more like their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors, in

[46] Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson, 'The Significance of Precritical Exegesis', in *idem* (eds.), *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 335–45, 336.

[47] See the sharp critique by Henry A. Giroux concerning the inhibiting effects of such positivism on the development of a critical historical consciousness in 'Schooling and the Culture of Positivism', in *idem*, *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), 3–34. Giroux's essay was originally published in *Educational Theory*, 29 (1979), 263–84.

[48] See the contribution of Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza to the 1994 Pretoria Conference: 'Challenging the Rhetorical-Half-Turn', in Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (eds.), *Rhetoric, Scripture and Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1994), 28–53. I concur completely with Schüssler-Fiorenza's call for 'a critical rhetoric of inquiry . . . a second order reflection on the positivist practices, unacknowledged theoretical frameworks and socio-political interests of scholarship that undergird its self-understandings as value-detached, objectivist science' (p. 31). That ancient exegetes of all religious and philosophical persuasions did not lay claim to such detachment has been nicely pointed out by Heinrich Dörrie: 'To us, philology is inclined to appear as a value-free method which can be applied to every type and level of linguistic and literary phenomena. In antiquity one saw it in an entirely different manner' ('Zur Methodik antiker Exegese', *ZNW* 65 (1974), 121–38, 122).

[49] Maurice F. Wiles, *The Divine Apostle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 132. This work is, and will no doubt remain, the starting-point for further study of the exegesis of the Pauline epistles in the early church. It is chronologically more comprehensive than the studies of Ernst Dassman (*Der Stachel im Fleish* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1979)), Andreas Lindemann (*Paulus im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979)), and Eva Aleith (*Paulusverständnis in der alten Kirche* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1937)), who concludes with Methodius (d. 311). Karl H. Schelke's *Paulus Lehrer der Väter* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1956) is an exemplary work of historical exegesis, albeit without the wider focus of the other studies here mentioned.

making concerted efforts to read patristic exegetes and credit their achievements.[50] Comprehensive monographs on the scriptural interpretation of individual patristic figures have recently appeared, some of which, like Margaret Mitchell's recent and impressive analysis of Chrysostom on Paul,[51] also benefit from the revived attention to rhetoric. Translations from Italian and French have now made accessible current surveys of the history of patristic exegesis.[52] But the renewed interest in patristic exegesis is not, moreover, purely historical. Early Christian commentators are now taken seriously by those interested in both original meaning and the theological application of Scripture.[53] In a surprising and welcome development, a modern revivification of the medieval genre of catena commentary (a 'chain' of remarks by various exegetes on individual biblical verses or passages) is currently under way, clearly for the benefit of those outside

[50] Sustained engagement with patristic exegesis is found in the Galatians commentaries of J. B. Lightfoot (*St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Macmillan, 1865; repr. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1957)), Theodor Zahn (*Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1905)), and Ernest De Witt Burton (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (New York: Scribner, 1920; repr. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999)). These works are also unmatched in their depth of philological and text-critical discussion.

[51] Margaret Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2002). This book came out only when my work was in its final stage. Unable to consult it fully, I have made reference to it at a number of apposite points. Similar to some of my own reflections above are Mitchell's comments in her Preface: e.g. that the study of Chrysostom's Pauline exegesis 'has the salutary effect of illuminating some present hermeneutical assumptions, both implicit and explicit, and of bringing into relief some of the ways in which the dynamic of his biblical interpretation remains present and has died out, to both our gain and our detriment' (p. xx).

[52] Manlio Simonetti's briefer treatment of the subject (*Profilo storico dell' esegesi patristica* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1981)) is now available in English as *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, trans. John A. Hughes (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994). Bertrand de Margerie's 4-vol. *Introduction à l'histoire de l'exégèse* (Paris: Cerf, 1981–3) is now in English, *An Introduction to the History of Exegesis*, trans. Leonard Maluf and Pierre de Fontnouvelle, 3 vols. (Petersham, Mass.: Saint Bede's Publications, 1991–6). De Margerie is less comprehensive than Simonetti, covering fewer authors but at greater depth.

[53] See Moisés Silva's remarks in his Introduction ('Lessons from the History of Exegesis') to *Explorations in Exegetical Method* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996). For a rather different perspective, compare now Charles Kannengiesser's lucid presentation of the issues, 'A Key for the Future of Patristics', in P. M. Blowers *et al.* (eds.), *In Dominico Eloquio* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002). Kannengiesser has drawn an important conclusion about the contemporary significance of patristic exegesis: 'Should scholars succeed in reaching the ground of the contemporary implications of the patristic interpretation of Scripture, they would be in a position to emulate the creativity of the Fathers, that is, to articulate the truth of the Bible beyond the obsolete security of the "third temple"' (p. 100).

the circle of specialists who none the less treasure the theological perspectives and critical acumen of the church's ancient commentators on the Bible.[54]

[54] I am referring to the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (with Thomas C. Oden as general editor), a series which evidently envisions an audience outside the domain of the academy. The eighth volume contains selections from Victorinus, ably translated by Mark J. Edwards (*Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998)).

2

The Life and Times of Marius Victorinus

The biographical facts about Gaius Marius Victorinus[1] that have come down to us provide little more than the barest sketch of his life. Bracketing his literary dossier, the 'hard facts' about him tell us only his land of birth and events of his profession and religion in the final decade of his life. Jerome's *Chronicon* tells us that he received honours in 354 as Rome's professor of rhetoric,[2] with a portrait bust in Trajan's Forum.[3] To Jerome again we owe the only other sure particulars of time and place: Victorinus was born in Roman Africa, and became a Christian in Rome *in extrema senectute*, 'at an advanced old age'.[4] This would put his date of birth in the 280s.[5] Nothing is known about the date of his decease, except that he died some time before Augustine's encounter with Simplician in 386. Prior to the

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[1] Jerome gives the full name in his commentary on Galatians (PL 26, 308A [332 B]). Citation of Jerome's commentaries on Paul will always be given in the column numbers of both the 1845 and the 1884 Migne editions, the latter in square brackets. All ancient testimonia to Victorinus have been gathered and critically discussed by Italo Mariotti in the introduction to his edition of Victorinus' *Ars grammatica* (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1976).

[2] Jerome, *Chronicon* (354): *Victorinus rhetor et Donatus grammaticus praeceptor meus Romae insignes habentur. E quibus Victorinus etiam statuam in foro Traiani meruit* (text in Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 4). Jerome's more exact specification of Trajan's Forum is to be preferred to Augustine's vague *statuam Romano foro meruerat et acceperat* (*Conf.* 8. 2. 3; O'Donnell, i. 89), according to Pierre Courcelle, since the bishop of Hippo provided a more generalized formulation 'à l'usage de lecteurs africains' ('Du nouveau sur la vie et les oeuvres de Marius Victorinus', *RÉtAug* 64 (1962), 127–35, 133). See also Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 31–2, here, 256. On Victorinus' colleague, the grammarian Aelius Donatus, see Louis Holtz, *Donat et la tradition de l'enseignement grammatical* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1981); for a brief account of him in English, see Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 275–8.

[3] On Trajan's Forum in this period, see Henri-Irénée Marrou, 'La Vie intellectuelle au forum de Trajan et au forum d'Auguste', *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 49 (1932), 93–110.

[4] Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, 101; text cited in Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 4.

[5] For this date see A. H. Travis, 'Marius Victorinus', *HTR* 36 (1943), 83–90.

period covered by the few biographical details we possess, his life may have taken a course similar to that of other ambitious Roman Africans, like Augustine, who came to Italy to obtain better teaching posts.[6] Given his education, Victorinus would have been from at least a small landholding family.[7] The education was expensive; perhaps it was bankrolled in part, as Augustine's was, by a wealthy patron, if his own family's wealth was exceeded by their aspirations for their son. Progressing through the usual curriculum[8]—the basics of letters and numbers, then grammar, and finally rhetoric—Victorinus was also fortunate and diligent enough to attain a level of fluency in Greek that escaped most educated Latins of his time. This enabled him to obtain an extensive first-hand knowledge of Greek philosophy, extraordinary for a Latin of the period.[9] Like many a Latin academic, he was a transmitter of Greek learning in its Latin adaptation.[10] A mark of his enduring success is the fact that his secular works were used throughout the Middle Ages and into the

[6] Claude Lepelley, 'Quelques parvenues de la culture de l'Afrique romaine tardive', in L. Holtz and J.-C. Fredouille (eds.), *De Tertullian aux Mozarabes*, i: *Mélanges offerts à Jacques Fontaine* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1992), 583–4.

[7] William V. Harris's *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989) documents the decline in literacy (based largely on the epigraphic evidence) in the Roman Empire during Late Antiquity (see his ch. 8). During this period, he concludes, 'much of the elite made sure that its own sons were reasonably well-educated, but the upper orders made very little or no attempt to assist the education of the masses' (p. 307). While some people of very humble origins may have risen to high position (see the evidence Harris cites, p. 288), it is safe to assume that these cases were exceptional, and that as a rule those who went through to the rhetorical schools would have been at least at the lower end of the curial class.

[8] See the classic by Henri-Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (New York: New American Library, 1964). But Harris rightly cautions against an overly rigid conception of the threefold curriculum (*Ancient Literacy*, 234). A still useful presentation of Roman rhetoric is M. L. Clarke's *Rhetoric at Rome* (London: Cohen & West, 1953). George Kennedy offers a more comprehensive picture in *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).

[9] R. P. C. Hanson rightly states: 'He was a late Platonist, and had a far greater understanding of Platonism, at any rate of developed Platonism, than any of his contemporaries in the West known to us' (*The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 532).

[10] See the recent excellent work on Victorinus' *De definitionibus* (with annotated translation) by Andreas Prosnay, *C. Marius Victorinus* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997). Prosnay has detected in this opusculum the use of a Greek source (or sources) as well as original traits (ibid. 16, 23–4). He credits both Paul Monceaux and Pierre Hadot with having appreciated the significance of this work. Monceaux characterized it as 'one of the most important monuments of rhetoric and logic on Roman soil' (*Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne*, iii: *Le ive siècle, d'Arnobe à Victorin* (Paris: E. Leroux 1905; repr. Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1963), 385).

Renaissance.[11] Victorinus probably taught grammar before becoming an instructor in rhetoric; eventually he obtained a top professorship through which he was awarded senatorial rank. We know him to have been married with children, at least one, through the chance survival of an inscription. His granddaughter's epitaph—commissioned or composed by her grieving husband—proudly mentions a 'venerated grandfather who incarnated the ideal of classical culture', as Hadot has nicely put it.[12]

The exact date and circumstances of Victorinus' move to Rome are unknown. Jerome's notice in *De viris illustribus* tells us that he taught rhetoric there during the reign of Constantius (337–61).[13] At some point during this period he obtained the post of *rhetor urbis Romae*, official teacher of rhetoric for the old capital. A *rhetor* at this period was not an orator, but a professor of the subject.[14] Victorinus himself defines the term in his commentary on Cicero's youthful textbook of rhetoric thus: a *rhetor* is 'one who teaches literature and transmits the skills pertaining to eloquence'.[15] In this capacity he obtained public honours, the award of a statue in Trajan's Forum. At Rome, honorific statues were reserved for the dead, unless otherwise decreed by the Senate, but violations of the rule did occur.[16] Perhaps it was then, if not previously, that Victorinus was awarded

[11] This is particularly the case for his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 74). Along with his translation of Porphyry's *Introduction to Aristotle's Categories*, Victorinus probably also translated the *Categories* themselves, as well as Aristotle's *On Interpretation* (ibid. 179–90). These would have been the works by which he exercised, according to Pierre de Labriolle, 'a leading influence on the logicians of the Middle Ages through the intermediary of Boethius' (*History and Literature of Christianity from Tertullian to Boethius*, trans. Herbert Wilson (New York: Knopf, 1925), 261).

[12] For discussion of this inscription (*C.I.L.* 6. 31. 934), see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 16–17.

[13] The notice of Jerome (*Victorinus, natione Afer, Romae sub Constantio principe rhetoricam docuit* (*Vir. ill.* 101)) does not specify whether Victorinus held that position for the entirety of Constantius' reign or only for the latter part when he was sole ruler of the Empire after the defeat of the Western usurper Magnentius in 353. But since Jerome gives the date of the award of the statue to Victorinus as 354 (*Chron. ab Abr.* 2370), we may presume that the rhetor had held the official chair at Rome prior to the period of Constantius' sole rule.

[14] Full references to primary sources in Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 13–17.

[15] *Dicendum etiam videtur, quae distantia sit inter rhetorem, sophistam et oratorem. Rhetor est, qui docet litteras atque artes tradit eloquentiae: sophista est, apud quem dicendi exercitium discitur: orator est, qui in causis privatis ac publicis plena et perfecta utitur eloquentia* (Halm, 156. 19–25). Victorinus distinguishes the rhetor from the sophist, defining the latter as more narrowly focused on the practical part of speaking.

[16] Mariotti thinks the award to Victorinus was an abuse of the rule (*Ars grammatica*, 15–16).

the clarissimate.[17] The title given him in a tenth-century manuscript of *Adversus Arius*, *vir clarissimus* (the 'Right Honorable', as Hanson[18] translates it) indicates that Victorinus had been raised to the lowest rank of what had become the multi-levelled senatorial order. This kind of upward mobility was not at all unusual at that time for an honoured teacher, as we see, for instance, from the fact that his colleague, the grammarian Donatus, may have received the same elevation.[19] The statue was awarded to Victorinus—according to Augustine—as a teacher of the Roman aristocracy, for whom literary pursuits were both a badge of their class and a potential source of personal satisfaction. Victorinus' linguistic competence and intellectual interests allowed him to make not only Greek Neoplatonism but also much else in the realm of logic and dialectic available to Latins of his time and thereafter.[20] Now Plotinus could feed the hungry minds and spirits of the learned who, like Augustine and his friends, lacked sufficient Greek to attain a first-hand knowledge of philosophy.[21] We cannot fix with any certainty the relation of

[17] Michel Tardieu connects this with the award of the statue in 354 (*Recherches sur la formation de l'Apocalypse de Zostrien et les sources de Marius Victorinus* (Bures-sur-Yvette: Collège de France, 1996), 23). Perhaps this is the implication of Jerome's remark (quoted in n. 2) that the *insignes* were the awards of clarissimate to Rome's renowned teachers, the statue being something extra for Victorinus.

[18] Hanson, *Search*, 532 n. 3.

[19] Donatus' elevation to the clarissimate (see n. 17 above) has been doubted by Kaster (*Guardians of Language*, 276–8), because the abbreviation VC in the oldest manuscript of his commentaries on Terence is accompanied by the (largely) unsupported title *orator* (for the manuscript superscriptions, see Paul Wessner's Teubner edition of these works (Leipzig: 1902; Stuttgart: 1962), pp. vii–ix). The title *vir clarissimus* is given Victorinus in some of the headings to the manuscripts of *Adversus Arium* and the hymns, but is absent from his earlier secular works. For discussion and references see Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 31–2. A. H. M. Jones provides basic information on status elevation, including that of rhetors, in *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), i. 545–54. For more recent discussion of the senatorial order in this period, see André Chastagnol, *Le Sénat romain à l'époch impériale* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1992), ch. 16.

[20] It is particularly in regard to his secular works that Hadot identifies Victorinus as more of a 'Boethius before Boethius' than an 'Augustine before Augustine', as Harnack had put it (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 20). 'Victorinus was eclipsed by Boethius', Hadot elsewhere observes, and 'Boethius sought very intentionally to supplant him' through his translations ('Un vocabulaire raisonné de Marius Victorinus Afer', *SP* 1 (1957), 194–208, 201).

[21] *Conf.* 7. 9. 13 and 8. 2. 3; O'Donnell, i. 80, 89 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 121, 135). Even if these philosophical writings were intended for elite pagan groups, Christians were also among the interested parties, such as were found in Milanese Platonist circles. One need only think of the excitement Augustine registers in the Cassiciacum Dialogues about his Platonist readings (*Contra Acad.* 2. 2. 5), primarily those 'very few books of Plotinus' (*De beata vita* 1. 4). I accept Paul Henry's evaluation of the manuscript evidence for this passage (*Plotin et l'Occident*

Victorinus' translation project to his engagement with Christian writings that, according to Simplician, led to his increasing sympathy with the new religion. Scholars have generally followed the more probable path in dating the translation of the 'books of the Platonists' to a period prior to his growing attraction to Christianity.[22] The most likely scenario for the rhetor's intellectual odyssey would seem to involve an initial acquaintance with Christianity through the writings of pagan polemicists like Porphyry, which may have led in turn to a closer engagement with biblical and Christian theological works.[23] Whereas Christian reading apparently confirmed Porphyry's hostility to the faith, the same was not true for Victorinus.

If one accepts elements of Augustine's account, Victorinus' social location among the Roman upper classes led to reservations, when he contemplated confessing publicly the Christian truth he claimed privately to have already owned, at least by way of intellectual assent.[24] At length a conversion in the full sense of the term did take place, probably shortly after the award of the statue in 354, and not too close to his completion of the first four of his Trinitarian treatises in 359. Hadot gives the plausible range 355–7 for the conversion, 'perhaps in 356', he ventures.[25] He mentions but rejects

(Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1934), 82–5). For a general account, see Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 88–100. For further discussion of the Milanese circles, see Goulven Madec, 'Le Milieu milanais: philosophie et christianisme', *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique*, 88 (1987), 194–205; and Aimé Solignac, 'Il Circolo neoplatonico milanese al tempo della conversione di Agostino', in *Agostino a Milano* (Palermo: Edizioni Augustinus, 1988), 43–56.

[22] An exception to this is Paul Séjourné ('Victorinus Afer', in Vacant and Mangenot (eds.), *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15. 2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1950), 2887–2954), who maintains that nothing prevents us from thinking that he could have translated these Neoplatonic writings after his conversion (p. 2890). For general discussion of the *libri Platonicorum*, see P. F. Beatrice, 'Quosdam Platonicorum Libros' *VC* 43 (1989), 248–81; also Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 201–10; and the classic article by Paul Henry, 'Augustine and Plotinus', *JTS* 38 (1937), 1–23. More recent, focusing on the impact of these books on Augustine, is Thomas O'Loughlin, 'The *Libri Philosophorum* and Augustine's Conversion', in T. Finan and V. Twomey (eds.), *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and Christianity* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1992), 101–25.

[23] Augustine's report that Victorinus took to the study of Christian books should not be discounted: 'Simplicianus said Victorinus read holy scripture, and all the Christian books he investigated with special care' (*Conf.* 8. 2. 4; O'Donnell, i. 89 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 136)).

[24] *Conf.* 8. 2. 3–4; O'Donnell, i. 89–90. Augustine's various reports must be read in a critical light. See Hadot's discussion (*Marius Victorinus*, 235–52) concerning the *Confessions*' account of Victorinus.

[25] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 27–9, 270; previously he had conjectured 'in 355 or 356' (Hadot, SC 68, 14).

(rightly to my mind) Courcelle's suggestion that Victorinus could already have been a Christian in 354 when the statue was awarded. Why, asks Courcelle, should we think that Roman pagans would then have refused a statue to a Christian, or that a Christian would have refused to accept such an award?[26] Yet the only source that even pretends to describe Victorinus' conversion points in another direction, as J. J. O'Donnell has noted.[27] For the key phrase in the *Confessions* suggests that Victorinus was not a Christian at that time.[28] Simplician's report, via Augustine, implies that the rhetor's conversion involved a lengthy process that eventually culminated in a decisive *sociological* break—i.e. a decision to join a new community signalled by his acceptance of baptism. Thus I find it more plausible that this break would have occurred after the award of the statue. But could the conversion have been as late as 357? While the award of the statue in 354 gives us a *terminus post quem*, the *terminus ante quem* is more difficult to establish. All we are really sure of is that the first four Trinitarian treatises reflect the theological dossier drawn up by Basil of Ancyra and others in 358, without any trace of the events at the Council of Ariminum in October of 359. The question is how long it would have taken Victorinus to produce those four treatises (140 pages in the Vienna Corpus edition), which seem to have been finished in 359.[29] A conversion date of 357 is obviously not impossible in this light; but I prefer to place the event slightly earlier, leaving more time for study, reception of relevant documents, and writing. The fact that Augustine highlights the role of conscience in Victorinus' eventual move from sympathizer to catechumen suggests the possibility that one of the most dramatic moments of the doctrinal controversy at Rome—the arrest of the pro-Nicene bishop Liberius[30]—provoked a crisis of conscience on Victorinus' part. According to Simplician, the old professor of rhetoric, who had already indicated his private approbation of Christianity but declined to join the church, became 'afraid he would be "denied" by

[26] Courcelle, 'Du nouveau', 133–4.

[27] *Confessions*, ed. O'Donnell, iii. 13. The same point had been made by Werner Karig in his 1924 dissertation ('Des C. M. Victorinus Kommentare', 7).

[28] *statuam Romano foro meruerat et acceperat, usque ad illam aetatem venerator idolorum* (*Conf.* 8. 2. 3; O'Donnell, i. 89). Jerome's specification of Trajan's Forum (*Chron.* 354) is to be preferred to Augustine's vague 'Roman Forum' on the grounds that Courcelle has argued: viz. that Augustine had read this work of Jerome's ('Du nouveau', 133).

[29] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 278–9.

[30] See Élisabeth Paoli, 'Liberius', in Philippe Levillain (ed.), *The Papacy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), ii. 945–7. Paoli lists all the primary sources relevant to Liberius and the older literature, but does not give the more recent scholarly contributions. Thus she does not take account of the important article by T. D. Barnes mentioned in n. 49 below.

Christ "before the holy angels" (Luke 12: 9)'.[31] After an unexpected visit to Simplician to inform him of his decision, Victorinus enrolled as a catechumen. Given the opportunity to make his profession privately, he declined, preferring to confess the faith aloud in the church. As Augustine's recital of Simplician's report would have it, Victorinus received baptism in a way that seems to have caused something of a stir: 'the proud (*superbi*) looked on and were enraged, but the Lord God was the hope of your servant: Victorinus took no second thought for worthless things and crazy lies.'[32]

Augustine's depiction of Victorinus as having been deeply embedded in the anti-Christian pagan aristocracy in Rome has been subjected to an influential critique by Hadot. For this aspect of Augustine's portrait of Victorinus' conversion, Hadot maintains, reflects the late fourth-century intensification of hostilities between pagans and Christians, not the more pacific period prior to Julian's reign.[33] Augustine's characterization of Victorinus as a vocal defender of the traditional cults[34] is thus regarded as a retrojection of

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[31] ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 136.

[32] *Conf.* 8. 2. 4; O'Donnell, i. 90. Augustine's essentially literary depiction of a historical event, or group of events, cannot be taken literally here, as clearly we cannot expect Rome's elite pagans—the *superbi*—to have viewed the actual baptismal ceremony. Rather, Augustine has given a tableau, compressing, for dramatic effect, Victorinus' baptism and the reaction of the wealthy pagan families into one scene. To those who regard me as too credulous in accepting, at face value, certain elements of Simplician's report as presented by Augustine, I would ask the following question: Should we rather think that Augustine would freely invent or wildly exaggerate the matter which he places in the mouth of Simplician, then bishop of Milan, with whom Augustine did not cease to be in touch during the period of *Confessions* and *Ad Simplicianum*? For the general question of 'The Historicity of the *Confessions*', see Plumer's Appendix 3 of that title (*Augustine's Commentary on Galatians*, 242–8). I had expressed this opinion previously, related to the question of the extent of Augustine's study of Paul prior to his breakthrough of the late 390s in my article, 'Scripture at Cassiciacum', *AugSt* 27 (1996), 21–47.

[33] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 52–8, 235–52. Hadot admits that the incident as recounted by Simplician to Augustine is *tout à fait possible* (p. 249). The reconstruction he prefers, however, has been adopted by Robert A. Markus ('Paganism, Christianity and the Latin Classics in the Fourth Century', in J. W. Binns (ed.), *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 1–21), and is nicely summarized in his *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 29: 'Augustine, re-telling it, was unable to comprehend the ease with which the pagan rhetor had passed into the ranks of the Christians. His incomprehension made him represent Victorinus' paganism, anachronistically, in militantly anti-Christian terms, and his conversion to Christianity as a dramatic renunciation of his pagan past and a painful break with the circle of his aristocratic friends.'

[34] Victorinus defended the traditional gods 'with a voice terrifying to opponents' (*ore terricrepo*: *Conf.* 8. 2. 3; O'Donnell, i. 89 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 135)) and was a tool of the devil: 'Victorinus' tongue which he [*sc.* the devil] had used as a mighty and sharp dart to destroy many' (*Victorini lingua, quo telo grandi et acuto*

that later period under Theodosius. Unable to appreciate the vicissitudes of an earlier situation, Augustine 'attempts to reconstruct the psychology' of Victorinus' conversion, and thus creates what Hadot regards as the implausible motif of the rhetor's hesitation as being due to social pressure.[35] Previous scholarship had taken Augustine at face value on this point, substantiating this with the fact that the one reference to Christianity in Victorinus' pre-Christian work has the appearance of being an anti-Christian barb.[36] Hadot reads this instead as a sign of a Neoplatonic absorption of the New (Platonic) Academy's scepticism, relegating all reality below the moon—including religion—to the realm of opinion. He thus assimilates Victorinus to the type of the sceptical and tolerant philosopher typical of an aspect of fourth-century Roman paganism. This ties in with Hadot's understanding of the religious situation of mid-fourth-century Rome:

Before 357, Roman paganism is not in an open struggle with Christianity. There is rather a kind of symbiosis, even a syncretism between these two religious inclinations. Paganism remains faithful to its traditional form. It is a social and political tradition more than an inner conviction or piety.[37]

While this reconstruction of Victorinus' *via religiosa* is not implausible in light of some of his utterances in his commentary on Cicero, which betray an attitude similar to the sceptical-tolerant views later found in Symmachus' famous *Relatio*,[38] the hypothesis regarding the convert's allegedly easy transition is rendered somewhat weak in light of two factors involved in Hadot's reconstruction.[39] One pertains to the biography of the individual in question, the other to the larger social forces. First, there is a basic assumption in the picture of a Victorinus indifferent to matters of public religion. The epistemological waiver we find in his commentary on Cicero concerns the

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multos peremerat: *Conf*. 8. 4. 9 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 139)). Ramsey MacMullen upholds this picture of the pre-Christian Victorinus as 'a deeply religious man, even an evangelist for the cult of the gods' (*Christianizing the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984)).

[35] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 56, 249.

[36] See the discussion in Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire*, iii. 375. I argued previously that the passage in question from his commentary on *De inventione* (Halm, 232, 30–45) does not have to be read as hostile to Christianity (translation and discussion of the passage in Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 8–9).

[37] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 58.

[38] *Relatio ad Theodocium*, 3, in *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, ed. O. Seeck, vi, 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1961), 280–3). The philosophical motif that 'the truth is hidden' has been traced back to Porphyry by Pierre Courcelle ('Verissima Philosophia', in *Epektasis* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 653–9).

[39] Hadot's view received some gentle criticism on this point already in a very favourable review by A. H. Armstrong (*JTS* 23 (1972), 505–8).

demonstrability of absolute truth in the realm of religion; but this does not necessarily entail an annulment of loyalty to the traditional gods. Porphyry certainly did not draw such a consequence: he held a position which admitted the non-ultimacy of particular religio-philosophical traditions (see Augustine's quotation from his *De regressu animae* in *City of God* 10. 32), was unfavourable to animal sacrifice, yet vigorously defended Hellenism against Christianity. Victorinus may have rejected and opposed Christianity on similar grounds, for reasons, as Hadot himself has argued, of fidelity to the *mos maiorum*, the 'ancestral customs'.[40] It seems peculiar, on the face of it, to acknowledge Victorinus' reading, borrowing, and translating of Porphyry, and then to assume that he would not have partaken at all of the latter's distinct animus toward Christianity. A congenial opponent is still an opponent, particularly if speaking from the seat of learning. Perhaps we should not so definitively set aside what Augustine says, on the grounds that a counter-proposal is not improbable, and that Augustine can be shown to have had some reason of his own to tilt his sketch of Victorinus' conversion along the sharp lines of the later pagan–Christian divide.[41]

   Whether Victorinus' avowal of the kind of philosophical scepticism Hadot attributes to him made him an unperturbed pagan in a tide of Christianization is a question independent from whether his conversion caused ripples amongst unbelievers and a painful rift between him and the aristocratic circles whose sons he educated. Presumably Victorinus had attained his position and social elevation

[40] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 249. This does not entail that we grant Hadot's associated conclusion: 'So paganism for Victorinus was only a political-social conformism' (p. 58). I would not want to assume that reverence for the *mos maiorum* cannot be part of a genuine religiosity.

[41] Markus points to Augustine's change in attitude toward the Christian philosopher Mallius Theodorus: 'Theodorus was Augustine's foil to Victorinus: whereas Victorinus had been (in Augustine's view) the sign of contradiction [between Christianity and pagan culture], Theodorus was the philosopher who failed to appreciate the need to take sides in the world which had come into being around both of them' (*End of Ancient Christianity*, 30). True: if the speculative reconstruction is accurate, Augustine would indeed have had a motive to fictionalize his account and presumably embroider what Simplician had told him. But nothing prevents Augustine from using such an account as given toward the same literary and polemical purpose. Not all recent scholarship follows Hadot here. Plumer maintains the traditional portrait of Victorinus, noting the similarity between him and Augustine on this point: 'For both, ambition and honour had gone hand and hand with superstition; indeed their very skills in rhetoric had been used to promote superstition' (*Augustine's Commentary on Galatians*, 13). Plumer, like most scholars (including myself), does acknowledge 'an irreducible tension in the *Confessions* between incident and interpretation', but argues that 'in the case of the material on Victorinus we are fortunate in having a number of safeguards against uncontrolled speculation' (ibid.).

with the help of patronage, more likely pagan than Christian at this point. Whether the conversion created a break with these families—in so far as we may venture to speak from general considerations—would depend on their religious loyalties and how seriously they were taken. I am convinced by the evidence that T. D. Barnes has presented that we must grant the mid-fourth century a more substantial Christianization of Roman aristocratic circles than some have maintained.[42] None the less, I find it difficult to imagine that in Rome, where the pagan aristocracy was more deeply entrenched than elsewhere in the Empire,[43] this was a situation altogether free of tension. That Constantius began preferring Christians—after he 'inherited' the West in 352—for appointment to civic offices can scarcely be imagined to have caused no resentment among those accustomed to such prerogatives. If Constantius' anti-pagan legislation reached Rome in early 356,[44] we have additional grounds to suppose that a frictionless coexistence of pagans and Christians was unlikely in that city. Though rhetors were held in higher honour than grammarians,[45] they would still have been of somewhat marginal status—and dependent on the good will of those above them—

[42] See his 'Christians and Pagans in the Reign of Constantius', in *L'Église et L'Empire au iv siècle* (Vandœuvres-Genève: Fondation Hardt, 1989), 301–43; more recently, 'Statistics and the Conversion of the Roman Aristocracy', *JRS* 85 (1995), 137–47. Barnes concludes: 'It is illegitimate to construe the prominence of pagans in the decade 340–350 as reflecting a situation which also prevailed under Constantine or under Constantius after he obtained control of Italy and Africa in 352 and of the rest of the West in 353: there may still have been a majority of pagans among the *nobiles* of Rome, but both Constantine and Constantius ensured that the majority of those whom they appointed to the urban prefectures were Christian' (p. 144).

[43] The consensus of the previous generation, expressed here by A. H. M. Jones, requires modification, at least in the claim about the paganism of the Roman senate: 'In the West . . . the old families remained on the whole faithful to their traditional religion down to the end of the fourth century, and since they dominated Roman society, the senate at Rome was strongly pagan' ('The Social Background of the Struggle between Paganism and Christianity', in Arnaldo Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 17–37, 31).

[44] Barnes, 'Christians and Pagans', 332. Barnes makes the important point that not only was the aristocracy composed of both pagans and Christians in this period, but even among the former, there were differences in attitude toward the Christian emperors and their new religion: 'The eastern intelligentsia long continued to boast of outspoken pagans, as did the Roman aristocracy. But both bodies were divided. Many pagan intellectuals could accept the prohibition of sacrifice with equanimity, for Porphyry had argued forcefully that sacrifice was not necessary for worshipping the gods' (p. 330). For Augustine's description of Victorinus' fears about offending his friends to be true, all one need suppose is that Victorinus' patrons were among those less inclined to view the Christianization of the Empire as irrelevant to their traditional forms of life and prestige.

[45] Robert Kaster's *Guardians of Language* devotes its third chapter to 'The Social Status of the Grammarians', which includes much information about rhetors.

in the eyes of the senatorial aristocracy.[46] Augustine may indeed have retrojected elements of his own social or autobiographical situation back into this depiction of Victorinus; but the detail that the latter was in a delicate social position because his 'friends' were 'proud demon worshipers' ill fits Augustine's own context.[47] This aspect of the account from Simplician must be appraised quite apart from the question as to whether Victorinus had previously engaged in polemics against Christianity.

The exact date of Victorinus' baptism being unclear, we cannot be sure what bishop was then presiding at Rome.[48] Was Victorinus baptized under Pope Liberius in Easter of 355, before his exile on account of the Nicene cause (probably beginning during the summer of 355)?[49] Or was the impetus to enter the church—as opposed to continuing on the sidelines as an intellectual sympathizer—provided

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Apropos of the careers of Jerome and Augustine, Kaster notes how there were 'two important characteristics of the literary education[:] a marked geographic mobility and a close conformity to the patterns of upper-class life' (p. 21).

[46] Ibid. 208. Salzman characterizes the dynamics of the social relations of this class: 'Imperial grants of honor and office could bestow senatorial rank but did not necessarily confer the confirmation that peer acceptance and support did. Since aristocrats relied so heavily on one another for recognition, they held the keys to a highly detailed but unwritten code of honorable activity in the circles in which they moved. Thus the status culture of the senatorial aristocracy was a significant unifying system, weaker or stronger depending upon the individual's inclination and position in it' (*Making of a Christian Aristocracy*, 43). An interesting protest against the ideology of that class system is found in Ambrosiaster's *Quaest. LXXXI*. He is responding to a complaint that if Jews are born Jews and pagans pagans, why are not Christians also born thus, 'for senators beget senators'? 'But the senators' elevated sense of themselves has no merit in God's eyes (*sed senatorum dignitas non habet apud deum meritum*), nor does that nature—that is, substance— obtain any benefit. Rather, their sense of self turns only on their reputation and speech (*sed in sola fama et sermone dignitas vertitur*)....but this achieves nothing besides an opinion about their status (*dignitas*), just as those who are consuls, or those honored with statues, are rejoicing in something devoid of reality (*qui consules aut statuis honestantur, gaudent in vano*)' (CSEL 50, 138, 16–22).

[47] *Conf*. 8. 2. 4; O'Donnell, i. 90. A number of scholars have suggested that Symmachus' recommendation of Augustine, a Manichee, to the position of rhetor of Milan may have been a deliberate fly in the eye of Ambrose (Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 69–70). As a Manichee, Augustine's conversion to Catholic Christianity would not have been perceived as a betrayal in pagan circles to which he never belonged!

[48] I do not believe that we are entitled to make any inference on this score from Augustine's statement that 'Simplicianus used to say that the presbyters offered him the opportunity (*oblatum esse dicebat Victorino a presbyteris*) of affirming the creed in private, as was their custom to offer to people who felt embarrassed and afraid' (*Conf*. 8. 2. 5; O'Donnell, i. 90 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 136)). This sort of administrative detail would probably have been handled by presbyters, not the bishop.

[49] Barnes's presentation of the evidence has convinced me that we must date the arrest of Liberius to 355 and his return to 357 ('The Capitulation of Liberius

by the spectacle of the arrest of Liberius and his abduction under cover of night to the Emperor at Milan? If Victorinus was baptized in 356 or 357, would it have been under Felix, Liberius' archdeacon, who was ordained to replace the exiled bishop?[50] Felix, at any rate, 'was of a Nicene and anti-Arian mindset, as were the rest of the whole Roman clergy';[51] so no matter who baptized him, Victorinus would have been catechized into a *homoousion* faith at Rome.[52] Our sources give us little in the way of detail as to what happened in Rome while Liberius was in exile. Constantius' action against Liberius was much resented, Ammianus tells us, since the Christian populace of the city 'was on fire with love for him'.[53] The highly partisan *Quae gesta sunt inter Liberum et Felicem episcopos* records that the Roman clergy had sworn to accept no replacement for Liberius; thus Felix's ordination—apparently unsullied by any

and Hilary of Poitiers', *Phoenix,* 46 (1992), 256–65, also in the Variorum collection of Barnes's articles *From Eusebius to Augustine* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), p. 720). With this dating, Barnes also shows that Liberius signed not the so-called Second Creed of Sirmium ('The Blasphemy' of 357) but the First Creed of Sirmium of 351. Hanson had previously discussed this possibility (*Search*, 357–62), proposed by a number of scholars, 'perhaps', he suspects, 'because the alternative is so distasteful' (p. 362). Barnes's analysis, however, of the crucial passages from the fragments of Hilary's lost historical work seems decisive (Ser. B VII 8–9; CSEL 65, ed. Feder 169–70). In this light, Hadot's hypothesis (*Marius Victorinus*, 270) that Liberius brought to Rome, and so to Victorinus' attention, the Basilian dossier from the so-called Synod of Sirmium of 358—Barnes shows how the evidence does not support the notion that it was an actual synod—must be rejected, if indeed Liberius returned to Rome in 357.

[50] James T. Shotwell and Louise R. Loomis, *The See of Peter* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927), 581. For a clear narrative of these events, see Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 267–78.

[51] Thus Theodor Mommsen, who discusses these events with full reference to the primary sources in 'Die römischen Bischöfe Liberius und Felix II', in *idem*, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vi: *Historische Schriften* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1910), 570–81. T. D. Barnes (*Athanasius and Constantius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 118) follows Mommsen in preferring the witness of Sozomen (*HE* 4. 11. 11) and Theodoret (*HE* 2. 16) on the integrity of Felix to the accusations of Arianism levelled against him by Socrates (*HE* 2. 37) and Rufinus (*HE* 10. 23).

[52] This conclusion is mandated by the events surrounding the actions of the Roman see (and key allies like Eusebius of Vercellae) in the council that Constantius called at Milan in 355. See Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 115–18. Liberius had already appealed to the Nicene Creed in a letter to Constantius dated 353/4 and preserved in the fragments of Hilary's historical work (A VII 6; CSEL 65, 93.1 ff. (ET: Shotwell and Loomis, *See of Peter*, 559–63)).

[53] *Ammianus Marcellinus*, 15. 7. 10; Loeb, i. 164. This fits the picture provided by Theodoret (*HE* 2. 17) that when Constantius visited Rome in 357, he was met by a delegation of leading ladies who petitioned him for the return of their beloved bishop. The incident is also recorded in the *Quae gesta* (CSEL 35, 2. 3–8).

other irregularity[54]—did not play well with the laity, who wanted no part of him.[55] As the exact date of Victorinus' baptism cannot be determined, it suffices for our purposes to note that he entered the Roman Church during a time of ecclesiastical conflict, both within the city and in the Empire at large, due to the doctrinal disputes and the political machinations which accompanied them.

Whatever the particulars of Victorinus' conversion and baptism may have been, we do know that within a very few years of his entrance into the church, Rome's most prominent teacher of rhetoric took up the pen to serve the Nicene cause in the late 350s.[56] Indeed, according to a recent study, it is clear that Victorinus must be considered as 'standing in the Western category of Neo-Nicenes who are renewing and reclaiming *homoousios* as a way of reaching a solution to the problem of the Trinitarian Controversy'.[57] Drawing on documents and discussions from that controversy, including recent synodal creeds and party manifestos,[58] the professor of rhetoric composed a series of treatises which Jerome described as 'very obscure books written in dialectical fashion against the Arians, which are understood only by the learned'.[59] This does not quite do justice to the cleverly constructed frame of these works, which have none the less been rightly characterized by Jerome in regards to

[54] This is the conclusion of Mommsen, 'Die römischen Bischöfe Liberius und Felix II', 573. Mommsen observes that the report in *Quae gesta* (see next note) of an oath on the part of the Roman clergy finds confirmation in Jerome's *Chronicon* (Abr. 2366): 'The clergy swore that they would accept no other bishop' (*clerici iuraverunt, ut nullum alium acciperent*).

[55] CSEL 35/1, 1. 2: 'But on that day when Liberius set out into exile, the whole clergy—that is, the presbyters, the archdeacon Felix, even the deacon Damasus himself, and all the officers of the church—everyone, in the presence of the Roman laity, took a stand under oath that while Liberius lived they would in no way have any other pope. But the clergy, contrary to what was right (which was their minimal obligation), accepted—through the high crime of perjury—the archdeacon Felix who had been ordained bishop in Liberius' stead. This deed displeased the whole laity, who removed themselves from his following.'

[56] Hadot dates the earliest four treatises (the correspondence with 'Candidus') to 359 and the latest to 363 (*Marius Victorinus*, 278–80). In line with Hadot's earlier view, Hanson dates them to 357 or 358, assuming that Victorinus would have been able to react immediately to the 'Blasphemy of Sirmium'; the latest of them (*Adv. Ar.* III & IV, *De hom. rec.*) he dates to 362 (*Search*, 532–3).

[57] John Voelker, 'Marius Victorinus' Exegetical Arguments for Nicene Definition in *Adversus Arium*', *SP* 38 (2001), 496–502, 498.

[58] This includes the letter that Basil of Ancyra and a few other bishops with him wrote in response to the 'Blasphemy of Sirmium' of 357 (see n. 49 above), which is discussed by Joseph Lienhard, 'The Epistle of the Synod of Ancyra, 358: A Reconsideration', in Robert Gregg (ed.), *Arianism* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Patristics Foundation, 1985), 313–19. Lienhard notes the important role in this letter of the co-ordination of Pauline passages (Col. 1: 15–16; Phil. 2: 7; Rom. 8: 3) with the *crux interpretum* of the Trinitarian Controversy, Prov. 8: 12–30.

[59] *Vir. ill.* 101; cited in Mariotti, *Ars grammatica*, 4.

their difficulty. In these treatises, Victorinus' Neoplatonic Christianity[60] has been harnessed to refute the claims of Christians who would not admit the Nicene Creed's statement that Christ was *homoousios*—the same in substance—with the Father.[61] Despite Victorinus' opposition to anti-Nicenes[62] of several varieties, the portrait of his 'Arian' Candidus which emerges from the fictional correspondence is not that of a demonized heretic. Candidus, held by most scholars to be a didactic literary device, is depicted as being enormously learned in a philosophical way and as having genuinely thoughtful objections to the statement that the Son of God was 'born', and to attributing 'generation' to God. Moreover, Candidus is quite ready to cite Scripture in support of his theological opinion.[63] It is also with Scripture that Victorinus met Candidus at the beginning of both the treatises which present the fictional frame. In

[60] No normative theological judgement is implied by this phrase. Victorinus became a Christian and retained a number of his previous philosophical convictions—characteristic of Neoplatonism—about the nature of God, reality, and the human person. So too in our day we can speak on a purely descriptive level of Marxist Christians, capitalist Christians, democratic Christians, fascist Christians. The empirical reference in such cases is clear, quite apart from the normative theological issues thereby raised.

[61] For discussion in English, see Mary T. Clark's introduction to her translation of these treatises in the Fathers of the Church series (Marius Victorinus, *Theological Treatises on the Trinity* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1981)), as well as Robert Markus's contribution, 'Marius Victorinus', in A. H. Armstrong (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 333–40. Paul Henry's pioneering article is still worth attention, 'The *Adversus Arium* of Marius Victorinus', *JTS* NS 1 (1950), 42–55. Detailed discussion of Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises, their philosophical and historical context, is found in Hadot's various books and articles (see bibliography). Anton Ziegenaus has studied the treatises in *Die trinitarische Ausprägung der göttlichen Seinsfülle nach Marius Victorinus* (Munich: Hueber, 1972). Recently, however, has appeared the most important post-Hadot contribution to this area, by the late Matthias Baltes: *Marius Victorinus* (Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur, 2002). See also his summary presentation, 'Überlegungen zur Philosophie in den theologischen Schriften des Marius Victorinus', in T. Kobusch and M. Erler (eds.), *Metaphysik und Religion* (Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur, 2002), 99–120. I am very grateful to Professor Baltes for his kindness in furnishing me his works on Victorinus while at the end of a long struggle with cancer.

[62] This term is preferable to 'Arian', since 'what writers in the patristic era collectively called ''Arianism'' represents several distinctively different theological viewpoints. The result is that we are completely justified in designating the term Arianism a misnomer' (Daniel H. Williams, *Ambrose of Milan and the End of Nicene–Arian Conflicts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 1). Victorinus' contemporary opponents included not only the authors of the homoian 'Blasphemy of Sirmium' of 357 but also those who reacted against it—chiefly Basil of Ancyra—but rejected homoousian language. Cf. Hanson, *Search*, 343 ff.

[63] *Cand. Ep.* i. 10–11 (ET: Clark, 55–6); esp. his recourse to Acts 2: 36, Prov. 8: 22, and John 1: 3–4 (CSEL 83/1, 13).

the first of his two replies to Candidus, he opens by warning of the danger of speaking too audaciously when it comes to knowing and relating the things of God. In opening, he quotes Paul's ejaculation in Romans 11:33—'O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God'—and continues with the apostle's citation of Isaiah: 'For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?' (Rom. 11:34). Victorinus then poses his 'Arian' interlocutor with a rhetorical question: 'So you see the knowledge about God that this blessed man had? Or are you of the opinion that these your scriptures are meaningless?'[64]

Both sides of the controversy saw themselves as protecting Scripture and its traditional interpretation; all the parties saw themselves as more scriptural than thou. Thus it is a credit to Victorinus' historical understanding that he would depict Candidus as a sincere Christian, closing his letter with a pious and beautiful doxology: 'Our savior, a healing for all things: like a servant in working for our welfare, but a lord in the punishing of the sinners and the impious; he is indeed a glory and a crown for the righteous and the holy.'[65] The recourse of both sides to the inspired books, and particularly to John and Paul, was a given. All parties to the conflict carved out quotations from the Bible to fling at their opponents. Indeed, proof texting of this sort was identified as a serious problem by another major Latin warrior for the Nicene cause, Victorinus' somewhat younger contemporary, Hilary. The Gallic bishop, in his historical work on the Trinitarian Controversy, complained about how his opponents 'constructed a convenient arena for their own teaching under the apostle's name by removing a phrase from its apposite context'.[66]

Victorinus understood that the answer to a problem of scriptural interpretation had to be a better interpretation. Thus his Trinitarian treatises work to establish authoritatively a particular Christian dogma through an integral interpretation of all the biblical utterances pertaining to the question.[67] He pursues this method first in one of his earliest Trinitarian treatises, his second missive to Candidus (the final part of the work responding to his fictive Arian

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[64] *Ad Cand.* 1 (CSEL 83/1, 16, l. 17).

[65] *Cand. Ep.* i. 11 (CSEL 83/1, 14, ll. 19–22). Such a sympathetic portrait of this fictional Arian obviously did not prevent Victorinus from engaging in the kind of polemics typical of the controversy.

[66] *sed subtrahentes antecedentem consequentemque sententiam aptam doctrinis suis sub apostoli nomine perstruunt facultatem* (CSEL 65, 152, 5). Hilary is disputing his opponents' use of the phrase 'first-born of all creation' (Col. 1: 15).

[67] This is not the procedure of his commentaries, which in my view ought not be conceived primarily as polemical writings pertaining to the Trinitarian disputes (Ch. 5 discusses this issue at length).

opponent). This work, conventionally titled *Adversus Arium* IA, begins by defining the *sententiae* of the—anachronistically conceived—opposition, Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia (their translated letters were enclosed in the previous treatise, Candidus' second brief to Victorinus). Whether Christ be 'born' from or 'made' by God having been established as the crucial point,[68] Victorinus takes up his 'exordium', as he puts it, from Paul, with the great benediction and doxology of Ephesians 3: 14–21. He then launches into an exposition of relevant verses from John's Gospel and continues to make an inventory of Scripture for what amounts to forty-five pages of the CSEL edition.[69] Despite his extensive use of Neoplatonic terminology and thought in these works,[70] Victorinus regarded Scripture as foundational for theological discussion. He himself states this explicitly at the conclusion of this treatise, denying that what he has written 'is my own teaching' and claiming: 'all that I say is said by Holy Scripture and comes from Holy Scripture.'[71] While it is an exaggeration to say that for Victorinus exegesis *was* theology,[72] it would be more distorting to minimize the importance of Scripture and theology in his Christianity on account of the Neoplatonic elements which find a place in both his Trinitarian treatises and his exegetical work.[73]

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[68] A sign of his continuing concern regarding this point is found in his lengthy treatment of the phrase *factum sub lege* in his treatment of Gal. 4: 4 (see his comments on that verse in the translation).

[69] CSEL 83/1, 56–101 (ET: Clark, 91–133). The biblical quotations appear to be his own translations from the Greek (see Appendix 1 below).

[70] Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1968). While Hadot has attributed to Porphyry the fragments of a commentary on the *Parmenides* of Plato found in the Turiner palimpsest, Baltes has concluded that the Neoplatonic doctrine therein contained shows a stage of development to be located between Porphyry and Syrianus (*Marius Victorinus*, 122–5). The matter is clearly not settled, however, due to the appearance of a book by Gerald Bechtel (*The Anonymous Commentary on Plato's 'Parmenides'* (Bern: Paul Haupt, 1999)) concluding just the opposite: viz. that the doctrine of the Anonymous on *Parmenides* can be entirely derived from Middle Platonism! See the review by Lloyd Gerson (*Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 28 Feb. 2001) of Bechtel's work, which I have not examined.

[71] *Adv. Ar.* I 46 (ET: Clark, 165); CSEL 83/1, 139, 17–19.

[72] Rightly did the first modern student of his work, Gustavus Koffmane, observe: 'He just wants to be a biblical theologian' (*De Mario Victorino philosopho christiano* (Breslau: H. Lindner, 1880), 12). One needs to make the proviso that being a 'biblical theologian' does not entail being uninfluenced by other forms of discourse.

[73] Baltes's work sets out to examine the philosophical elements of Victorinus' Trinitarian writings, not piecemeal but as the work of a Christian theologian. He states in the introduction of his book: 'What follows is an attempt to bring the *entire* Marius Victorinus into view, the philosopher *and* the Christian theologian' (*Marius Victorinus*, 3).

The intensity of the Trinitarian Controversy that animated Christians of the fourth century sprang from a deep conviction on the part of all the parties involved that these were matters pertaining ultimately to salvation. These theological debates were not just questions of words and names, or of mere shadow-plays for deep political intrigues and ploys for power—aspects whose presence few scholars would deny. Nothing compels us, however, to regard a religious reading and a materialist reading as mutually exclusive (such would, of course, depend on the definition of 'religion' employed). All parties to the controversy tried to draw the emperor Constantius to their side. Coercions, recantations, accusations true and false, were all part of the picture.[74] The ugliness of some of the events can best be seen perhaps in Constantius' treatment of the centenarian Ossius of Corduba. After evading the Emperor for some time, the aged Spanish bishop was confined at the imperial court in Sirmium, threatened with violence, and probably beaten until he complied with Constantius and entered into communion with Valens and Ursacius, though apparently maintaining steadfast in his refusal to condemn Athanasius.[75] The bishops were not blind to the danger of appeal to secular powers, however much they were willing at times to accept help for their side. We can hear the early tones of alarm in a letter preserved by Hilary that Liberius wrote in 353 or 354 to Constantius: 'So what peace can there be, most serene emperor, if bishops are to be taken and forced, as is now being done in Italy, to submit to the judgments of such [heretical] persons?'[76] Hilary bewailed how 'hastily these things were thrust in our midst: corruption of the Gospels, a distortion of the faith, and a pretended [*simulata*] confession—a blasphemy!—of the name of Christ'. He recounts how his colleague Paulinus, bishop of Trier, was condemned by the Emperor to exile because he would not 'mix himself up with the perfidy and phoniness [*simulatio*][77] of these people'.[78] Other Gallic bishops at the Synod of Paris (in 360) wrote to their Greek counterparts and informed them how they had detected 'the devil's deceit and the clever conspiracies of the heretics against the Lord's church', and how concerned they were that 'many who were

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[74] See Hanson, *Search*, chs. 11–12. Manlio Simonetti's account of these events is found in ch. 8–9 of his *La Crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1975), chs. 8–9.

[75] Athanasius, *HA* 42–6 (ET: NPNF 2/4, 284 ff.). The notion that Ossius was coerced into signing has recently been contested by Jörg Ulrich, 'Einige Bemerkungen zum angeblichen Exil des Ossius', *ZKG* 105 (1994), 143–55.

[76] CSEL 65, 92, 5 ff. (ET: Shotwell and Loomis, *See of Peter*, 562).

[77] Compare Victorinus' comments on Gal. 2: 12–14, where the vocabulary of *simulatio* and *simulare* features prominently.

[78] These are Hilary's own remarks, which introduce some of the documents he cites in his lost historical work (CSEL 65, 102, 2–4, 9–11).

at [the synods of] Ariminum and Nice [in Thrace] were compelled to silence about *ousia* by the authority of your names'.[79] Lines of 'us and them' were constantly being drawn and redefined. Allies praised each other 'for remaining in the same confession and having no truck with the hypocrites'.[80] Perceived betrayals brought forth cries of outrage. Hilary's castigation of fellow bishops who had condemned Athanasius was not untypical: 'O true disciples of Christ! O worthy successors of Peter and Paul! O pious church fathers! O eager envoys between God and the people—you have sold the truth of Christ for human lies!'[81]

Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises breathe similar tones at places, particularly when he turns against Basil of Ancyra, by no measure a truly villainous fellow. Basil, upset as Hilary was by what the latter called the 'Blasphemy'[82] of Sirmium (the theological manifesto produced by Valens, Ursacius, and Germinius in 357),[83] attempted to bring peace to the moderate parties by substituting the term *homoiousios* ('like in substance') for the controverted Nicene *homoousios*. In this he was very different from Hilary, who, as Chadwick has observed, 'argued that the term *homoiousios* is far from being incompatible with the Nicene formula'.[84] Victorinus mocks the notion that this term was somehow more traditional:

Where was it hiding, where was it sleeping forty years ago, when the faith was confirmed, shutting out the Arians, in the city of Nicea by more than three hundred bishops? In this gathering of these men were present the leading lights of the church of the entire world. So where had that old doctrine [*sc.* of *homoiousios*] fled? If it did not exist, it was not overcome; and it is only now coming into existence. If it existed, either it was silent in the controversy, or it fled when faced with the official statement of the inquiry and of the truth. Perchance you too, O patron of this doctrine, were then not only alive but also a bishop. You held your tongue, both you, your associates, your disciples, and your fellow teachers. And the whole time afterward, through when the emperor was at Rome, you were present and

[79] CSEL 65, 43, 19 ff.
[80] From a letter of Eusebius of Vercelli to a fellow bishop, *c*.360 (CSEL 65, 46, 20).
[81] CSEL 65, 142, 5–8.
[82] *De synodis* 10 (NPNF 2/9, 6).
[83] Here I am following Barnes, who rejects referring to this document as a creed and the small gathering of bishops as a council (See Appendix 10 of his *Athanasius and Constantius*, esp. 231–2). A full account of the events is offered by Hanson (*Search*, 343–57), but is treated less comprehensively by Simonetti (*La Crisi*, 227–32), who, while still calling it a 'council', admits that 'relatively few [*ben pochi*] bishops were present' (p. 229).
[84] Chadwick, *Church in Ancient Society*, 279.

heard many things to the contrary [of your doctrine], being a table-companion[85] of these men whom you now anathematize. You became enraged [afterward], either because they composed a statement of the faith without you, or because you were compelled by officials to the defense of treachery.[86]

During these times of partisan conviction and theological passion, Victorinus was obviously quite moved by the threat to his newly adopted faith. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that the other dramatic events in Italy pertaining to the Trinitarian Controversy would not have had an impact upon him. Liberius, the bishop of Rome, had initially put up bold resistance to Constantius' demand that he sign the formula condemning Athanasius, a demand the Emperor had pressed upon Liberius' legates at the Council of Milan in 355.[87] If Victorinus had been baptized by Liberius in 355, he must have rejoiced when the latter rejected the gifts which the Emperor proffered him through the eunuch Eusebius.[88] Whether he had already been baptized or was still lingering on the outside as a sympathizer, whatever satisfaction he might have experienced at the arrest and exile of his bishop, Liberius, would have turned to disappointment and anger when the bishop, desperate to return after two years of exile in Beroe of Thrace, signed the formula demanded by Constantius condemning Athanasius, and broke communion with him.[89] If Victorinus did not personally witness it, he certainly would have heard about Constantius' visit to Rome in 357, replete with the festive military parade into that city when the Emperor—in the memorable words of Ammianus—looked like 'a statue of a man' (*tamquam figmentum hominis*).[90] Certainly our Christian rhetor of Rome would not have loved this ruler, living proof that a Christian Emperor was not always a good thing for

[85] *conviva exsistens istorum hominum quos nunc anathematizas*. I agree with T. D. Barnes, rather than Hadot, in the translation of *conviva* here (Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 143 n. 56).

[86] *Adv. Ar.* I 28. 15–29 ff. (CSEL 83/1, 103–4). The events Victorinus refers to here are discussed by Hadot, SC 68, 36, and SC 69, 783–6. His attitude toward Basil of Ancyra seems to have softened after the Council of Rimini in 359, as Hadot has observed (*Marius Victorinus*, 278–9). A sympathetic account of the theological concerns of the homoiousian party is provided by W. A. Löhr, 'A Sense of Tradition', in M. R. Barnes and D. H. Williams (eds.), *Arianism after Arius* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 81–100.

[87] For a probably idealized portrait of Liberius in the conversation with the Emperor which led up to his exile, see Theoderet, *EH* ii. 16 (ET: Shotwell and Loomis, *See of Peter*, 572–6). Cf. Sozomen, *EH* 4. 12 (ET: NPNF II. 2, p. 307).

[88] Hanson, *Search*, 340.

[89] See T. D. Barnes, 'Capitulation of Liberius and Hilary of Poitiers'; cf. Simonetti, *La Crisi*, 235.

[90] Ammianus Marcellinus, 16. 10. 10; Loeb, i. 246.

Christianity.[91] Victorinus' slighting remark in his comments on Ephesians 4: 22 about those who 'believe the king of the world is a god' may not have been intended only for pagan emperors.[92] All such speculation aside, we can be certain that the events that followed Liberius' return and the set-backs of the Nicene party at the Council of Rimini (359) outraged Victorinus.[93] At the council held in that city, the Western bishops, despite better intentions, were persuaded to sign a homoian creed which proscribed the word *ousia*.[94] In Hilary's words, 'worn out by the long delay and frightened by the emperor's threats, they condemned the sound faith which they had previously defended and accepted the perfidy they had previously condemned'.[95] This was the tone of controversies during which Victorinus composed his Trinitarian treatises, the latest of which was written in 362 or 363.

In these circumstances, it is probably true that the historical complex of the Trinitarian debates which gave birth to Victorinus as a Christian author will also have been, as Wiles has maintained, 'a major motive for the writing of his commentaries'.[96] But this second phase of Victorinus' Christian literary activity has also been linked by scholars to the attempts of the emperor Julian to return the Empire to a renewed version of the traditional paganism which could compete better with Christianity for the loyalty of the Empire's populace. Despite the half-century of Christian rule under Constantine and his sons, the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire was not a *fait accompli*, as was evident in the period following the accession of Constantine's nephew Julian to the throne after the death of Constantius in November of 361.[97]

[91] For Christian views of Constantius, see Wolfgang Hagl, 'Die Religionspolitik der Kaiser Constantin und Constantius II im Spiegel kirchlichen Autoren', in Gunther Gottlieb and Pedro Barceló (eds.), *Christen und Heiden in Staat und Gesellschaft des zweiten bis vierten Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Verlag Ernst Vögel, 1992), 103–29.

[92] Gori, 68, 19.

[93] For his reaction to this synod's proscription of the term *homoousios*, see *Adv. Ar*. II 3 and 9; *Adv. Ar*. IV. 4. 11; (CSEL 83/1, 173, 183–5, 228–9 (ET: Clark, 200, 210–12, 257). See Hadot's comments on these passages (SC 69, 902, 916, 986).

[94] Hanson, *Search,* 376–80.

[95] CSEL 65, 85, 15–17.

[96] Wiles, *Divine Apostle*, 11. For discussion of the issue, see Ch. 5 below.

[97] For a full discussion of Julian, see Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Julian* (London: Routledge, 1992; 1st edn. as *Julian and Hellenism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981). For a brief treatment of the events of Julian's reign, readers may consult the contributions of David Hunt in Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, xiii: *The Late Empire, A.D. 337–425* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 44–7. In what follows I draw freely on Hunt's account. See now Chadwick, *Church in Ancient Society*, 295–313.

One of the measures taken to restore the old gods to a new vitality was a rescript issued by the emperor Julian on 17 June 362. This law affected all those who held public chairs of rhetoric or grammar, and mandated that all such appointees be approved by the municipal councils and the Emperor.[98] As part of his move to reinstate the religious aspect of classical *paideia* replete with its civic sensibility, Julian wanted to exclude from the official teaching chairs those who did not endorse the official gods, seeking to inhibit the use of paganism's literary inheritance on the part of those who rejected the religious content of those traditions.[99] This decree was felt as illiberal, even by one of Julian's enthusiastic supporters, the pagan soldier and historian Ammianus, who described this order as 'a harsh thing which ought to be covered over by eternal silence'.[100] Among those teachers of literature and rhetoric who had turned against those gods so esteemed by the classical authors was Marius Victorinus. The exact circumstances of his resignation are lost, but we do know that he, like Prohaeresius at Athens,[101] stepped down from his professorial position in response to Julian's edict. Thus he preferred, as Augustine put it, to abandon his teaching position

[98] *Cod. Theod.* 13. 3. 5: *Magistros studiorum doctoresque excellere oportet moribus primum, deinde facundia. Sed quia singulis civitatibus adesse ipse non possum, iubeo, quisque docere vult, non repente nec temere prosiliat ad hoc munus, sed iudicio ordinis probatus decretum curialium mereatur optimorum conspirante consensu* (ed. Mommsen, 741). Despite Barnes's revision of the widely held notion that the Roman aristocracy was still largely pagan by the mid-fourth century ('Statistics and the Conversion of the Roman Aristocracy'), Julian obviously expected the municipal councils to do his will in this matter. Alexander Demandt has observed the irony that this decree never lost its force as Roman law, but was taken up by both the *Codex Theodocianus* and the *Codex Justinianus* (10. 53. 7), perhaps because 'the unalloyed legal text did indeed also allow for Christian supervision' (*Die Spätantike* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1989), 102). What is good for the goose is good for the gander!

[99] Thus Ernst Grasmück, 'Kaiser Julian und der θεὸς λόγος der Christen', in H. C. Brennecke, *et al.* (eds.), *Logos: Festschrift für Luise Abramowski zum 8. Juli 1993* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 297–327, 301.

[100] *Ammianus*, 22. 10. 7: *Illud autem inclemens, obruendum perenni silentio, quod arcebat docere magistros rhetoricos et grammaticos ritus christiani cultores* (Loeb, ii. 256). The irony is that Ammianus' failure to hold his own tongue on this matter allows us to see that not all proponents of the revived paganism approved of Julian's instituting a full-blown culture war.

[101] Thus Jerome, *Chron.* 363, Julian 2 (ed. Helm, 242–3; PG 19, 564): 'When the law had been promulgated debarring Christians from being teachers of the liberal arts, the Athenian sophist Prohaeresius left his school voluntarily, although Julian would have granted him a special concession that he, though Christian, might keep teaching' (*Prohaeresius sofista Atheniensis lege data ne christiani liberalium artium doctores essent, cum sibi specialiter Iulianus concederet, ut christianus doceret, scholam sponte deseruit*). That the official chairs of rhetoric were held at both Athens and Rome by Christians speaks volumes for the Christian appropriation of classical paideia.

rather than God's Word.[102] Several scholars have ventured that this may have been the occasion which spurred Victorinus to begin commenting on Paul.[103] For the emperor Julian, in a letter clarifying his rescript, had made the snide recommendation that Christian teachers 'betake themselves to the churches of the Galilaeans to expound Matthew and Luke'.[104] Whether Victorinus had conceived the idea of writing his commentaries prior to the resignation of his chair is a question to be discussed later.[105] We cannot date them more securely than to say that he began writing them not earlier than late 363 and before his death, which cannot have come much after the mid-360s, though we have no direct information about this.[106]

Other aspects of Julian's reform contributed to the politics of religion in the period immediately before Victorinus composed his commentaries. The death of Constantius in November of 361 probably first appeared providential to the Nicene party, likewise Julian's order allowing exiled bishops to return to their sees, however much Julian may have been motivated by his desire to have them continue their dissension, as Ammianus states.[107] Julian's attempts in the winter of 363 to have the Jewish temple rebuilt in Jerusalem[108] would not have been welcomed by Victorinus, wedded as he was to a sharply anti-Jewish version of his new faith. The born-again pagan Emperor, motivated by his desire to assert an ethnic theory of religion[109] as the surest means to shake the foundations of Christianity and revive the old traditions, was doubtless aware that this initiative of his would have been an affront to Christians. Indeed, it

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[102] *Conf.* 8. 5. 10; O'Donnell, i. 92. See Chadwick, *Confessions*, 139–40.

[103] This suggestion, first made by Koffmane (*De Mario Victorino*, 4), was taken up by Monceaux (*Histoire littéraire*, iii. 379) and finally by Hadot (*Marius Victorinus*, 285–6).

[104] Julian, *Ep.* 36, 423D [Bidez, *Ep.* 61] (ET: Wright, Loeb, iii. 121).

[105] Ch. 5 treats the matter at length.

[106] F. F. Bruce gives him a later date of birth ('*c*.300') and consequently a later date of decease ('*c*.370') than most scholars ('Marius Victorinus and his Works', *Evangelical Quarterly*, 18 (1946), 132–53, 133). The late date of birth is not supported by the study of Travis, 'Marius Victorinus: A Biographical Note'. It is unfortunate that Augustine's statement that he 'had heard [Victorinus] died a Christian' (*Conf.* 8. 2. 3 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 135)) has given rise to the notion that Victorinus had died shortly before Augustine's conversion; see the title of an article by Alberto Viciano and Massimo Stefani, 'Fuentes de la Especulacion de Mario Victorino (†387 ca.): "Un Status Quaestionis" de la Investigacion recente', in Josep-Ignasi Saranyana and Eloy Tejero (eds.), *Hispania Christiana* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1988), 111–21.

[107] *Ammianus*, 22. 5. 3–4; Loeb, ii. 202.

[108] For a fuller discussion of the incident with references to all the sources (pagan, Jewish, and Christian), see F. Blanchetière, 'Julien philhellène, antichrétien', *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 31 (1980), 61–81.

[109] Athanassiadi, *Julian and Hellenism*, 164–5.

was interpreted as a hostile act by Christians of that time and by the Christian historians who recorded the event.[110] Despite enthusiasm on the part of some Jews, and a promising beginning of the grand project, the construction was interrupted by an earthquake and the resulting fire, never to be taken up again.[111] To judge from the Christian reactions to Julian's attempt to restore the temple at Jerusalem, their hostility to his efforts was matched by their glee at the apparent divine portent which lay waste to whatever had been achieved in the brief period of construction.

Also within the purview of Victorinus' possible concerns may have been Julian's treatise *Against the Galilaeans*, composed at Antioch during the winter of 362. Here the apostate Emperor followed in the footsteps of other pagan polemicists against Christianity[112]—most importantly, Porphyry, who worked to equip himself with knowledge of the Christian scriptures. Julian also, because of his Christian upbringing, was armed with a thorough acquaintance with the Bible. Julian began his 'savage attack'[113] by inquiring 'why they preferred the beliefs of the Jews to ours; and what further, can be the reason why they do not even adhere to the Jewish beliefs but have abandoned them and followed a way of their own'.[114] Victorinus, whether or not he was familiar with the Emperor's critique—the same point had been voiced previously by pagan polemicists at least from the time of Celsus[115]—certainly provided an answer in his Paul commentaries: We do adhere to the laws of the biblical teaching, but

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[110] e.g. Theoderet, *HE* 3. 20; Socrates, *HE* 3. 20.

[111] Ammianus says nothing of the earthquake, but states that the project was abandoned due to 'terrifying balls of flame . . . bursting forth near the foundations of the temple' (23. 1. 3 (ET: Rolfe, Loeb, ii. 311)). Cf. the passages from the Christian historians cited in the preceding note.

[112] A. Meredith, 'Porphyry and Julian against the Christians', *ANRW* II. 23.2, 1119–49.

[113] So T. D. Barnes, 'Pagan Perceptions of Christianity', in *idem, From Eusebius to Augustine*, 231–43, 240.

[114] Julian, *Against the Galilaeans*, 43A (ET: Wright, Loeb, iii. 321).

[115] See Origen, *Contra Celsum* 5. 25, 33 (ET: Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 283, 289). The *Apocriticus* of Macarius Magnes (3. 30) reports a similar charge brought by a pagan critic, identified by Harnack with Porphyry (*Kritik des Neuen Testaments*, ed. and trans. A. von Harnack (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1911), 60, 5–10). These fragments from Macarius' treatise have been translated by R. Joseph Hoffman, *Porphyry's Against the Christians* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1994), 59. T. D. Barnes rejected the identification of Macarius' critic with Porphyry ('Porphyry *Against the Christians*', *JTS* 24 (1973), 424–42). Recently Elizabeth Depalma Digeser has argued (or re-argued the case) that the voice of the pagan critic comes from the anti-Christian, *Truth-Loving Discourse*

only as rightly understood by us![116] Such a response was in fact a traditional Christian answer to the kind of question put by Julian: 'Why is it that after deserting us you do not love the law of the Jews or abide by the sayings of Moses?'[117] Julian's question was largely rhetorical and polemical. For it was a foregone conclusion that one of the defining aspects of Christianity was a specific relationship to the Jewish Law defined by a series of hermeneutical moves, largely laid down already in the New Testament, and not least in the Pauline letters. Following Porphyry, one could seize the opportunity for an attack here as well. The apostle Paul, according to Julian, was a man 'who surpassed all the magicians and charlatans of every place and every time'.[118] Victorinus' defence of Paul presents him as both frank and faithful in his rebuke of Peter at Antioch—an incident seized upon by pagan critics[119]—and not inconsistent with his willingness to abide at times by the Jewish Law.[120] Whether or not Victorinus happened upon Julian's treatises *Against the Galilaeans* while writing his commentaries on Paul, we can be fairly certain that he read Porphyry's anti-Christian work or works.[121] Although the commentaries are not characterized by more than very occasional anti-pagan polemics, it is not implausible to suggest he may well

written by Sossianus Hierokles (reported by Lactantius, *Inst.* 5. 1. 12), just before Diocletian's edict of persecution in 303 (see her full discussion in 'Porphyry, Julian, or Hierokles?', *JTS* 53 (2002), 466–502).

[116] Victorinus' most succinct formulation of this comes in his comments to Eph. 1: 2 (Gori, 4, ll. 7–9): 'For it is not the Law, but the understanding adopted by the Jews about how to live, that he would repudiate' (*Non enim legem, sed intelligentiam vivendi acceptam a Iudaeis repudiat*). The right understanding of the Law involves knowing when certain of its provisions are no longer in force (see his comments to Gal. 5: 3 in the translation below).

[117] Julian, *Against the Galilaeans*, 305D (ET: Wright, Loeb, iii. 405; translation slightly altered).

[118] Ibid. 100A (ET: Wright, Loeb, iii. 341).

[119] Jerome in his commentary on Galatians (PL 26, 341AB [366A]) attributes this critique to Porphyry. Gal. 2: 12 was also exploited by the unknown pagan critic of Macarius Magnes's *Apocriticus* (3. 22; *Kritik*, Harnack, ed. 56, 25 ff. (ET: Hoffman, *Porphyry's Against the Christians*, 56)).

[120] See Victorinus' comments to Gal. 2: 4 and 2: 12–13 in the translation below.

[121] See P. F. Beatrice's, 'Le Traité de Porphyre contre les chrétiens', *Kernos*, 4 (1991), 119–38. Beatrice identifies the work supposedly entitled *Against the Christians* with a sure title by Porphyry, the *Philosophy from Oracles*, which Augustine was able to quote in a Latin translation in book 10 of the *City of God* because—according to Beatrice—this was among the works Victorinus translated (p. 137). If this suggestion were rigorously demonstrated, it would definitively eliminate the revisionist reconstruction of the pagan Victorinus as not particularly hostile to Christianity.

have incorporated into his interpretation of Paul elements designed to provide his audience with means of defending themselves against pagan attacks on Scripture and scriptural authorities.[122]

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[122] This is most clearly the case in his exegesis of Gal. 2: 11 ff. (see the notes on this passage in my translation here). Ralph Hennings has remarked 'how great the influence of Porphyry on Greek exegesis was' (*Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2,11–14* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 16). But we ought not to underestimate the influence of Porphyry on Latin exegesis—even prior to Jerome's work on Daniel— through Victorinus' commentaries on Paul, which (as Hennings concludes) 'must be read against the background of his acquaintance with Porphyry's polemic' (pp. 244–5). The attempt to respond exegetically to attacks of pagan intellectuals has been well documented in the case of Ambrosiaster by Pierre Courcelle, 'Critiques exégétiques et arguments antichrétiens rapportés par Ambrosiaster', *VC* 13 (1959), 133–69. Traces of Julian's anti-Christian polemics have been detected in Ambrosiaster by Lorenzo Perrone, 'Echi della polemica pagana sulla Bibbia negli scritti exegetici fra IV e V secolo', in Franca Ela Consolino (ed.), *Pagani e cristiani da Giuliano l'Apostata al sacco di Roma* (Messina: Rubbettino, 1995), 149–72.

3

The Apostle Paul in Fourth-Century Roman Art

A. THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIAN ART

'Every work of art is a child of its age', a great artist once confessed, 'and, in many cases, the mother of our emotions.'[1] Such a theory could be applied perhaps with some justice to texts, although one might want to include among their offspring other features of human experience beyond the emotional life. Kandinsky's dictum, at any rate, fits supremely the birth of Christian art in the 'visual culture' of ancient Rome. For the Roman world, according to art historian Jaś Elsner, 'theorized the visual more intensively than at any other time in antiquity'.[2] Cultural artefacts, if the redundancy of the phrase be permitted, have the peculiar feature of being both generated and generative, both product and producer. Art is born from life, as no one would deny, but art gives birth, in an indubitable way, to life of various forms. The same is obviously the case for words and texts, which would seem, given the Jewish origins of Christianity and the aniconic leaning of Judaism, to have a priority over images in Christianity. But within the historical context of Imperial Rome, amidst all its images and spectacles of power, it was probably inevitable that the religion named after the one confessed to be 'the image of the invisible God' (Col. 1: 15) would develop an iconography all its own, however much of it was adapted from available models.[3] For, as

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[1] Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, trans. M. T. H. Sadler (New York: Dover, 1977), 1. Kandinsky explains in what sense a work of art gives voice to the spirit of the age: 'Such an art can only create an artistic feeling which is already clearly felt' (p. 4).

[2] Jaś Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 11. Elsner explores the literary sources at depth in his earlier book, *Art and the Roman Viewer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[3] Thus Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*, 7: 'Despite the fact that Christian art (indeed, Christian culture) owed pretty well everything to the combination of its Graeco-Roman environment with its Jewish origins, I believe it to have become

Augustine asks in *On the Trinity*, 'who upon reading or listening to the writings of Paul the apostle, or of those which have been written about him, does not draw a picture in the mind of the countenance of the Apostle himself?'[4] Whatever forces underlay the tendency of the human mind to concretize its fleeting images through paint and stone, the visual remains of early Christianity are invaluable for understanding those whose lives, deeds, rituals, and productions constitute the religion.

The scholarship of the twentieth century made major strides in the critical appraisal of the art of early Christianity.[5] Much of this is the result of new archaeological discoveries which led to a critical sifting of earlier theories. A century ago, before the Great War, a consensus had reigned about art in early Christianity. Because no surviving Christian images can be dated to before the third century,[6] scholars had interpreted this apparent absence of images as reflecting a deep religious conviction. The church had remained without images, one supposed, for almost two centuries before succumbing to a fatal Hellenization (to put the thesis in the Harnackian version). As a scion of a resolutely aniconic Judaism—so ran the argument—early Gentile Christianity would have naturally abhorred cultic images as the filthy rags of an erstwhile paganism.[7] This anti-iconic attitude and practice would have followed not only from the Jewish inheritance but also from the early church's exclusive focus on the Word (a Protestant reading of history, if ever). But sometimes what is hidden comes to light, and what had counted as light then shows itself as darkness. In the aftermath of World War I, when some British soldiers engaged against the

(very early on) something distinctively, even radically, different.' In this connection he refers to the work of Sister Charles Murray (*Rebirth and Afterlife* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981)) and Elizabeth Malbon (*The Iconography of the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990)).

[4] 8. 4. 7 (trans. Stephen McKenna, slightly altered), St Augustine, *The Trinity* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1963), 251.

[5] An excellent collection of articles in this area has been edited by Paul Corby Finney, *Art, Archeology, and Architecture of Early Christianity* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993).

[6] A late second-century origin has been maintained for the earliest Christian art, a dating still ascribed by some scholars to the older material of the Roman catacombs, e.g. some of the frescos in the Priscilla catacomb (John Beckwith, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 2nd edn. (London: Penguin, 1979), 21). But the recent, definitive study of pre-Constantinian Christian art by Paul Finney rejects the early dating: 'No distinctively Christian art predates the year 200. This is simply a statement of fact' (*The Invisible God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 99).

[7] For the explosion of this myth, with a review of the textual evidence, see Sister Charles Murray, 'Art and the Early Church', *JTS* NS 17 (1966), 303–45; repr. in Finney (ed.), *Art, Archeology, and Architecture*, 215–57.

Bedouin were digging a trench near the ruins of an ancient city wall, the chance blow of a pickaxe brought to light a well-preserved wall-painting. This was in April of 1920. The scholarly world was informed and sprang into action. In 1928 a joint expedition by Yale and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters began excavating the ancient Roman garrison town of Dura Europos on the Euphrates (in modern Syria).[8] The most startling of the many rich finds there was a synagogue adorned with paintings of biblical scenes.

This discovery further shook the foundations of a venerable scholarly edifice, already tottering from the mosaic floors of a synagogue (a sixth-century structure at Beth-Alpha) that came to light in Palestine during World War I. Scholars were compelled to modify their understanding of art in Hellenistic Judaism: 'Not only were these unusual finds totally unanticipated by scholarly reconstructions of rabbinic Judaism of the period,' Joseph Gutmann has noted, 'but they actually challenged old theories that Judaism had never tolerated any visual art and that its laws strictly forbade such endeavors.'[9] For centred around the Torah niche of the Dura synagogue, extensive frescos cover the surviving interior walls, layered in some places like a palimpsest. The earliest decorative programme was more symbolic, containing fewer figures, many more of which were added around two decades later, when the synagogue was renovated. The biblical characters are mostly dressed in Persian style, with trousers. The important religious personages—Moses, prophets, and several unknown figures—are dressed in Graeco-Roman

[8] Ann Perkins, *The Art of Dura-Europos* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 1–2. Perkins's first chapter, 'The City of Dura-Europos', provides a brief sketch of the discovery and the events which led to the burial of these sites.

[9] Joseph Gutmann, 'Jewish Art and Jewish Studies', in Shaye J. D. Cohen and Edward L. Greenstein (eds.), *The State of Jewish Studies* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 193–211, 193. The pioneering work on ancient Jewish art was done in the last century by Erwin Goodenough, whose thirteen-volume *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953–68) contains some problematic aspects. See the review article by Morton Smith ('Goodenough's *Jewish Symbols* in Retrospect', *JBL* 86 (1987), 53–68) as well as Jacob Neusner's foreword to his one-volume abridged edition, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. ix–xxxvii. A richly illustrated collection of articles is Steven Fine (ed.), *Sacred Realm* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press and Yeshiva University Press, 1996). Prior to the third century CE, Jewish art was largely restricted to 'geometic and floral patterns'; from the third century onward, imagistic art, including pagan imagery, began to flourish, leading scholars to the consensus that 'the appearance of art among Jews is reflective of the overall accommodation with Hellenism that Judaism made during the later Roman and Byzantine periods' (thus Rachel Hachlili, 'Synagogues in the Land of Israel', in Fine (ed.), *Sacred Realm*, 113).

garb,[10] namely, tunic and pallium. The biblically based narrative programme of the synagogue departs markedly from the Jewish catacombs in Rome, whose frescos and inscriptions are largely non-figural, rather symbolic and 'decorative'.[11]

 Along with the synagogue of Dura, its Mithraeum, and other religious edifices, the excavators found a house adapted for Christian worship. Both the synagogue and the rather humbler house-church had been buried in 256, along with many other structures abutting the city's wall, to reinforce the fortifications. The attempt by Dura's Roman garrison to hold the besieging Sassanian army at bay was in vain; but their efforts preserved the sites for the benefit of later generations. The discovery of a house-church, still the earliest example, was a significant find even without the frescos of the baptistery, which preserves the earliest non-funerary Christian art, unsurprisingly in a ritual context. The better-preserved and more impressive murals found in the synagogue (about three-fifths of the full decorative programme survives) depict a variety of biblical scenes with significant narrative elements.[12] These archaeological discoveries opened the way for the tantalizing hypotheses concerning the relation of Christian art to Jewish precedents to be more forcibly posed. The iconographic similarities in the depiction of biblical stories led a number of scholars to posit earlier Jewish exemplars—illustrated copies of the Septuagint—for the decorative schemas of both religions' cult places.[13] However, as the earliest surviving illustrated Christian codices of the Old Testament do not date before the sixth century, the hypothesis lacks the kind of

[10] Perkins, *Art of Dura-Europos*, 62, 120–1.

[11] For descriptions of these, see Appendix 6. 2 in Finney, *Invisible God*, 247–63.

[12] I use 'narrative' here in the restricted sense proposed by Kurt Weitzmann, which 'limits the narration in pictures to a type of cyclic illustration whereby one episode is divided into a number of phases that quickly follow each other in almost cinematographic fashion' (Kurt Weitzmann and Herbert L. Kessler, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990), 5). Part I of this work contains Weitzmann's descriptions of the Dura panels with a comparison to the (later) Septuagint miniatures. For colour reproductions of some of the frescos from the synagogue at Dura, along with general discussion, see André Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (New York: Odyssey Press, 1968), 5–77.

[13] Kurt Weitzmann, 'The Illustration of the Septuagint', in Joseph Gutmann (ed.), *No Graven Images* (New York: Ktav, 1971), 201–31. The evidence for Weitzmann's hypothesis, stronger than its opponents tend to admit, is conveniently summarized in *idem*, 'Narration in Early Christendom', *American Journal of Archeology*, 61 (1957), 83–91; repr. in Finney (ed.), *Art, Archeology, and Architecture*, 405–13. Illustrated Septuagint manuscripts have been argued to be behind the iconographic programme of the Via Latina catacomb by Lieselotte Kötzsche-Breitenbruch, *Die neue Katakombe an der Via Latina in Rome* (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1976), 103–9.

evidence which would convince the more sceptical among scholars.[14] None the less, early Christian art's noted preponderance of Old Testament scenes (in a fixed and relatively small number) over those from the New Testament has been explained as a result of a readily available selection of Jewish exemplars, not necessarily from book illustrations but perhaps from workshops which cut gem stones for signet rings.[15]

Whatever may have been the origins of much of the content of the earliest Christianity iconography, in no sense did Christian art begin *ex nihilo*, although we cannot deny that it did begin, in a certain sense, *de novo*. Scholars have long understood that when Christian images first became recognizable, it was not a new art. There was nothing 'naive' or 'primitive' about it: the earliest Christian art made use of current iconographic conventions.[16] The borrowing of technical elements of style and the adaptation of symbolic imagery facilitated the expression of the new content, familiar from preaching and catechesis to the earliest Christian viewers. The Good Shepherd, the image of the sturdy herdsman shouldering an often rather hefty sheep, is probably the best example of a Graeco-Roman image adapted by early Christians.[17] As a species of Roman imperial art, early Christian art contains decorative elements native to that world.[18] Vines, cherubs of various sorts, and bucolic imagery were the bread and butter of Roman artisans and are found in both Jewish and Christian contexts. Symbolism in funerary settings appears particularly intentional: the peacock expressed the hopes of pagan

[14] 'There is no need to assume that the artists [of Dura] were using an illustrated book as a model for their programme', states Elsner (*Imperial Rome*, 215); but, to be fair, Weitzmann and others do not assume their case but argue it. The theory is not without support; see Heinz Schreckenberg and Kurt Schubert (eds.), *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early Medieval Christianity* (Assen, Maastricht, Minneapolis: Van Gorcum and Fortress Press, 1992), 189 ff. (the chapters constituting part II of the volume, 'Jewish Pictoral Traditions in Early Christian Art', provide full discussion and recent biography).

[15] Thus Theodor Klauser, 'Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der christlichen Kunst IV', *JAC* 4 (1961), 128–36; repr. in Finney (ed.), *Art, Archeology, and Architecture*, 140–57. Klauser's full series of articles under this title are found in the same journal (1958–67). He has summarized his conclusions in 'Erwägungen zur Entstehung der altchristlichen Kunst', *ZKG* 76 (1965), 1–11.

[16] Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 41–3.

[17] For discussion and reproductions, ibid. 123–41.

[18] As Grabar has put it, 'from its beginnings Christian imagery found expression entirely, almost uniquely, in the general language of the visual arts and with the techniques of imagery commonly practiced within the Roman Empire from the second to the fourth century' (*Christian Iconography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. xliii). Yet Grabar also states that—presumably owing to elements of their content and context—'Christian works anterior to the Peace of the Church (313) constituted a foreign element in the body of Roman works produced in the second and third centuries' (*Early Christian Art*, 4).

and Christian alike for the afterlife. Formal and material elements of Roman art were borrowed for Christian purposes, as were the settings. If Christianity did not adopt the Roman taste for monumental architecture until toleration made it possible, and the building programme of Constantine and his family made it actual, Christianity had already in the previous century adopted the practice of adorning the places where their dead were laid to rest outside the city walls.[19] Due to the nature of the ground on which it lay, Rome has preserved a great proportion of the third-century Christian art we now possess (along with a high percentage of the Christian inscriptions from the period). The sarcophagi and catacomb paintings from Rome and its environs, and also Naples, have survived because of their underground location in the catacombs.[20] The soft rock called tufa, which lies just under the topsoil in those areas, permits easy tunnelling and then hardens into relatively solid rock when exposed to air. The catacombs, many of them adjacent to shrines of the martyrs, continued to be used throughout the fourth century, thus preserving much of the Christian art we possess from this period.

   Images of Christ and the saints were created for Christian consumption and comprehension; thus they offer a window on to the visual world of the Christianity of the time and place. While the lines of connection between texts and images are not always explicit or direct, one can admit the principle that some relation between the two obtains, more or less ascertainable in view of the available evidence. The relationship between texts and images, however, is significantly closer than the relationship between texts and other non-symbolic pieces of material culture. For symbolic artefacts have essentially expressive purposes and obviously presuppose communities capable of understanding the symbolism. The attempt to enhance the study of Victorinus' commentaries through an examination of the images of Paul[21] dating from that period relies on what

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[19] A good introduction is Robert Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1988), 18 ff. For detail on Constantine's constructions at Rome, see Richard Krautheimer, *Three Imperial Capitals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 7–30.

[20] Our first literary evidence for the existence of these catacombs is the notice in Hippolytus (*Ref*. 9. 11; 10. 27) that during the papacy of Zephirinus (199–217) the supervision of the extramural underground burial chambers was entrusted to the Roman deacon Callistus, who succeeded Zephirinus to the Holy See and whose name those catacombs still bear. See Finney, *Invisible God*, ch. 6, for discussion and bibliography pertaining to the person of Callistus and the catacomb.

[21] The scholar who has done the most comprehensive work on ancient Pauline iconography is Pasquale Testini, in a series of articles: 'Osservazioni sull' iconografia del Cristo in trono fra gli apostoli', *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte*, 11/12 (1963), 230–300; 'Gli apostoli Pietro e Paolo nella più antica iconografia cristiana', in Salvatore Garofalo (ed.), *Studi petriani* (Rome:

I hope is a modest presupposition of a 'mutual dependence of verbal and visual modes of religious expression'. This presupposition has been thus formulated by Robin Jensen in her recent *Understanding Early Christian Art* to facilitate interchange between textual and iconographical scholarship. Stumbling-blocks need to be removed from both sides. Iconographic evidence should not be man-handled by textual scholars tempted to relegate it to a secondary or merely illustrative status. On the contrary, 'visual art often serves as a highly sophisticated, literate, and even eloquent mode of theological expression.' As symbolic forms of communication, images contain multiple possibilities of interpretation, much as do texts, each in its own language.[22] Both texts and images, then, must be understood in the same theoretical light, since both arise out of, and point to, the realities of the religious world of their creators. The art-historical evidence, Jensen cautions, should not be put in the pigeon-hole of 'popular culture', in contrast with the supposedly more élite textual productions.[23] For it was not that Christian images were exclusively intended for the unlettered, as if those who could read wanted no part of them.[24] The Christians who interred their dead in carved

Istituto di Studi Romani, 1968), 105–30; 'L'Apostolo Paolo nell' iconografia cristiana fino al VI secolo', in *Studi Paolini* (Rome: Istituto di Studi Romani, 1969), 61–93; 'L'Iconografia degli apostoli Pietro e Paolo nelle cosidette ''arti minori'' ', in *Secularia Petri et Pauli* (Rome: Istituto di Studi Romani, 1969), 241–323. For more recent studies, see Fabrizio Bisconti, 'L'Origine dell'iconografia di Pietro e Paolo', in *Pietro e Paolo* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2001), 393–401.

[22] Thus Jensen: 'at the very least visual imagery never merely retold or condensed a text into corresponding pictorial language, but rather made meaning in its own right—by using symbols and allegories already present in written expression (narratives, commentaries, etc.) in such a way as to become a communication mode in itself—one that paralleled, commented upon, and expanded the text, rather than simply amplifying or serving the text' (*Understanding Early Christian Art* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 5). See the favourable review of Jensen's work by Everett Ferguson, *JECS* 10 (2002), 143–4.

[23] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 3. Jensen is consciously working to counteract a too programmatic application of the famous statement by Gregory the Great in opposing a cleric who sought to destroy images of the saints: 'what writing presents to readers, a picture presents to the unlearned who view it, since in the image even the ignorant see what they ought to follow; in the picture the illiterate read' (*Ep.* 13; PL 77, 1128C). Gregory's statement was clearly not intended to give the original purpose of Christian representations but to oppose someone who 'burning with an ill-considered zeal' would destroy images of the saints on the ground that they ought not to be objects of worship (*quod, inconsiderato zelo succensus, sanctorum imagines sub hac quasi excusatione, ne adorari debuissent, confregeris*).

[24] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 29. The Klauserian thread appears in Testini's work: 'If we consider with all due attention the phenomenon that we have on the one side such a contradictory attitude concerning images on the part of

sarcophagi or had their resting-places adorned with frescos clearly had both the means and the desire to do so. Yet, while only the relatively well-off could afford such funerary ornamentation,[25] the painted baptistery at Dura Europos tells us that even modest house-churches could be decorated. Thus Christian images were designed to be comprehended by the whole community; accordingly, we should probably assume a relationship between iconography and catechesis. The important, if obvious, point is that religious images and the means to interpret them depended on common and socially mediated experiences.[26] Not only did the reading and interpretation of Scripture affect the production of images, but the same cultural forces that conditioned the interpretation of Scripture also flowed into the creation and reception of a distinct Christian iconography.[27] The 'visual theologies' of these images would in turn feed back into the reading of the sacred texts themselves. This is not to say that iconic meanings are ever 'fixed' apart from the viewer, creative misconstruals often being an important part of the history of both images and ideas.

The intent of this section is to draw on art-historical evidence pertinent to the question of the role of the apostle Paul in Roman Christianity of the mid-fourth century and the context of Victorinus' commentaries on Paul. First I shall present a general sketch of Paul's entry into Christian iconography, then look into a catacomb discovered in Rome in 1955. The superb appointments of this catacomb suggest that it belonged to a cultural milieu similar to the circles which Victorinus would have frequented as professor of rhetoric to Rome's élite. Finally, we shall examine at some length the new ternary compositions of Christ with Peter and Paul at his sides, which began to appear *c*.350 and thus present the most important type of Roman Pauline iconography for Paul during the second half of the fourth century.

the clergy, the church fathers, and the Christian populace, then on the other, the propensity of the artisan to take up from the start the language of the day . . . it seems to me necessary to suppose a connection between the aversion to images and the absence of portraits and statues from the beginning up until the third century' ('Gli apostoli', 107). However, it seems to me a priori difficult to attribute a promiscuous lust for images to the masses, who possessed neither the ample spaces for the art nor the means to employ artisans.

  [25] Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 9–10.
  [26] A point well made by Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 93.
  [27] Elsner's view of patristic commentators's use of typological exegesis: 'The results of such complex typological connections were transmitted directly and fluently to (often illiterate) Christian believers in works of art and in sermons' (*Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, 8).

B. Pauline Iconography

The art historian Ruth Sullivan maintains that Victorinus' commentaries on Paul 'fed this expanding interest in Pauline studies in that city and beyond'.[28] Both texts and images point to a spiking of interest in Paul at this time; indeed, it was only in the early fourth century that Paul emerged iconographically as a distinct figure. He becomes recognizable amidst a group of apostles, as Peter previously had, having gained the individual traits that signalled his identity.[29] Christians in Rome especially celebrated Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles, particularly alongside Peter. For both Peter and Paul had been martyred in Rome, where the presence of their relics naturally enhanced the prestige of the Roman church. The see of Peter would soon come to assert an authority of corresponding weight in all matters concerning the church universal; Christian Rome's co-founders and patrons, these two martyred apostles, played an important role in the articulation of the early papacy's claims to special authority.[30] Paul's status as a martyr, particularly in Rome, meant that he was always more than an author of epistles and a master of Christian teaching. The first images of him, probably from the opening decades of the fourth century, are thus products of his spiritual effects, so to speak, themselves a reflux of his earthly career. The stories—true, fictive, and somewhere in between—about the apostle to the Gentiles are found in apocryphal as well as canonical acts. They captured the imagination of the early Christian mind, and were eventually incorporated into Christian art. Because Peter had also died a martyr at Rome, the deaths of the two apostles united them, especially in the minds of Roman Christians. Hence the earliest images of Paul are tied to those of Peter. The relics of both generated a cult of the apostles in Rome, at multiple sites, where inscriptions and images accumulated, invaluable testaments to the piety surrounding the *principes apostolorum*, the chief apostles. A legend, first witnessed by the famous verses of Pope Damasus there inscribed,[31] held that after the Neronian persecution the remains of both Peter and Paul were laid to rest outside the city, at the later site of

[28] Ruth Sullivan, 'Saints Peter and Paul', *Art History*, 17 (1994), 59–80, 75.

[29] At the same time we must also observe that 'even within an individual artistic period the type is not constant' (Ernst von Dobschütz, *Der Apostel Paulus*, ii (Halle: Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1928), 40).

[30] See Henry Chadwick, 'Pope Damasus and the Peculiar Claim of Rome to St. Peter and St. Paul', in *Neotestimentica et Patristica* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 313–18.

[31] The notice devoted to Damasus in the *Liber Pontificalis* (p. 43) states: 'At the Catacombs, the place where lay the bodies of the apostles St Peter and St Paul, he adorned with verses the actual tablet at the place where the bodies lay' (trans. Raymond Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis)* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), 29).

the catacomb of San Sebastiano on the Via Appia.[32] Excavations have indeed revealed the existence of a martyrium there, dated to the second half of the third century, where Christians celebrated the honour of the martyr-apostles.[33] Peter and Paul also had their own individual memorials, which likewise claimed to hold their relics. These latter shrines became the sites of Constantine's churches devoted to these saints: to Peter at the Vatican (the basilica of 'old' St Peter's), and to Paul on the Via Ostiense (now San Paolo fuori le mura).[34] The cult of Peter and Paul at Rome entered the calendar of the liturgical year (as early as 258); the anniversary of their martyrdom being celebrated on 29 June, first at the joint memorial to them at the catacombs (*ad catacumbas*) on the Via Appia Antica.[35] This is now the site of San Sebastiano, where fragments of a sarcophagus preserving their two marvellous heads were found. Constantine had laid the foundations at that site for a church in their honour, the *basilica apostolorum*, constructed sometime between 312 and 345.[36] Damasus had verses inscribed there celebrating these two apostles of Rome as 'her own citizens', and referring pilgrims to the new resting-places of the twin Christian re-founders of Rome.[37] During the fourth century the city marked out sacred time and space for Paul. A 'growing confluence of iconography and rite' displayed the 'deep esteem felt for Paul and Peter'.[38]

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[32] See Henry Chadwick, 'St Peter and St Paul in Rome', *JTS*, NS 8 (1957), 31–52.

[33] For a discussion of the question of the translation of the relics of the chief apostles and the results of the excavations at S. Sebastiano, see Daniel Wm O'Connor, *Peter in Rome* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 126–58. More recent discussion with references to the newer literature is supplied by Leilia Cracco-Ruggini, 'Pietro e Paolo a Roma nel tardoantico e le tradizioni dell' "urbs" arcaica', in *Pietro e Paolo* 373–92, 376. A convenient description of the archeological findings (with diagrams and bibliography) can be found in Graydon Snyder, *Ante Pacem* (n. p.: Mercer University Press, 1985), 98–104.

[34] Snyder (*Ante Pacem*, 105–15) gives a summary (with illustrations and bibliography) of the results of the excavations in St Peter's that reveal the pre-Constantinian site held to be the grave of Peter. Constantine's modest church dedicated to Paul was replaced by Pope Siricius (384–98) with a magnificent basilica, largely intact until the fire of 1823 (Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture*, 106). For Constantine's founding of churches in Rome, see Davis, *Book of Pontiffs*, pp. xix–xxvi.

[35] This earliest literary evidence comes from the *Depositio martyrum*, *c*.336, first published under Pope Damasus (366–84) in Filocalus' *Chronograph of 354* (see Michelle R. Salzman, *On Roman Time* (Berkeley: University California Press, 1990), 42–7).

[36] John M. Huskinson, *Concordia Apostolorum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 81. Thus Constantine may have not seen the completion of the basilica.

[37] Chadwick, 'Pope Damasus and the Peculiar Claim'. For further discussion of the Damasus inscription, see O'Connor, *Peter in Rome*, 103–10.

[38] Luba Eleen, *The Illustration of the Pauline Epistles in French and English Bibles of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 9.

Like the more ancient graffiti at the shrine to Peter and Paul on the Via Appia Antica *ad catacumbas*,[39] bronze medallions of these saints depicted tête-à-tête reveal the importance of the chief apostles precisely as Roman martyrs. Struck at Rome as souvenirs for pilgrims, they highlight the motif of *concordia*.[40] Perhaps best translated as 'singleness of heart', *concordia* was also a favourite theme of the miniature portraits of these two apostles, gilded on the base of glasses.[41] *Concordia* was an important Roman political concept, as was its equivalent, *homonoia*—'like-mindedness'—to Greeks.[42] As martyrs, as witnesses to the resurrected Christ, and as guides to the life of the resurrection, the chief apostles had a special place in funerary settings, in image and in word. The hope of a certain Victor is simply expressed by an early graffito on a wall of the covered cemetery on the Via Appia: 'Paul and Peter—pray for Victor!'[43] Despite the evident conflict depicted in Scripture between these apostles at Antioch (Gal. 2: 11–21), the unanimity of Peter and Paul was an unshakeable object of faith for the catholic church. Peter and Paul quite simply had to have resolved the problem between Gentile and Jewish Christians which broke out in the church at Antioch. Otherwise, how could Christ have worked through both, which he surely did, bringing them together in the end with the crown of martyrdom?

John Huskinson's *Concordia Apostolorum: Christian Propaganda at Rome in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries* has correlated this theological postulate of *concordia* with the rising popularity of the apostle Paul in the Roman iconographic programme.[44] The depiction of the chief apostles *in concordia*, expressing the harmony in the gospel between these two apostles, was not a motif restricted to Rome. In

[39] Examples cited and translated by Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, 141–3.

[40] Von Dobschütz is critical of the assumption that the famous report of Eusebius (*EH* 7. 18 (ET: Williamson, 234)) to have seen portraits of Christ and the apostles, including Peter and Paul, will take Pauline iconography back into the third century (*Der Apostel Paulus*, 3, 13). Von Dobschütz was also sceptical about the early dating of the bronze medallions of Peter and Paul made for sale to pilgrims who came to venerate these Roman martyrs. Grabar (*Christian Iconography*, 68) maintained that some of these date from the third century (e.g. his fig. 163, from the Vatican Museo Sacro).

[41] See the superb reproductions of these, along with other examples of Pauline iconography mentioned below, in Angela Donati (ed.), *Pietro e Paolo* (Milan: Electra, 2000), figs. 84–92. A full presentation of this material is C. R. Morey, *The Gold-Glass Collection of the Vatican Library with Additional Catalogues of Other Gold-Glass Collections*, ed. G. Ferrari (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1959).

[42] For a comprehensive treatment of this concept, see the article by Klaus Thraede, 'Homonoia', in *RAC* xvi. 176–289.

[43] Photography of graffito in Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture*, 40 (fig. 23).

[44] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 62.

fact, the pairing of the apostles in literary sources is more character-
istic of the Eastern communions (including the Syriac and Arme-
nian) than those of the Latin West. Indeed, it may be that 'the West
learned from the East to see Peter and Paul as a pair of apostles'.[45]
Yet it became particularly significant in Rome, since its imagery was
influenced in no small wise by the fact that this city, still the sym-
bolic centre of the Roman Empire, claimed those apostles as its own,
due to their martyrdom in that city.[46] The theme of the apostles'
concordia is graphically expressed by the image of the reunion of
Peter and Paul, on the probably apocryphal occasion of the latter's
arrival in Rome. The chief apostles are presented in an embrace
similar in form, and thus in some way meaning, to the famous
porphyry monument of the Diocletian tetrarchs.[47]

Scenes with Paul unaccompanied by other Christian luminaries
are comparatively rare in early Christian art. Even his conversion on
the road to Damascus has no exemplar earlier than a miniature
which goes back to a sixth-century original.[48] Nevertheless,
'[p]assages in Augustine and Prudentius point to the possibility
that there were multi-episode representations of the Pauline Con-
version sequence in monumental art.'[49] A great variety of objects
which feature images of Paul in the company of Peter or Thecla
testifies to the religious significance of Paul. Alongside funerary and
church art, many small decorated objects—gold glasses, ornate ves-
sels, medallions, ivory carvings, reliquaries, and the like—bear his
image. Symbolism on quotidian objects had to be easily compre-
hended—e.g. the bronze lantern in the form of a sailboat with Paul at
the helm and Peter in the bow.[50] Another representation of Paul as

[45] See Ferdinand R. Gahbauer, 'Petrus und Paulus in Rom', in *Pietro e Paolo*,
155–67, 167.

[46] Charles Pietri, 'Concordia Apostolorum et Renovatio Urbis (Culte des mar-
tyrs et propagande pontificale)', *Mélanges d'archaeologie et d'histoire*, 73 (1961),
274–322.

[47] See Herbert L. Kessler, 'The Meeting of Peter and Paul in Rome', in William
Tronzo and Irving Lavin (eds.), *Studies on Art and Archeology in Honor of Ernst
Kitzinger*, Dumbarton Oaks Papers 41 (1987), 265–75. This image may not be
earlier than the (probably) fifth-century frescos on the left nave wall of S. Paolo
fuori le mura. For fuller discussion of the S. Paolo cycles, see Eleen, *Illustration of
the Pauline Epistles*, 1–10.

[48] Ernst Dassmann, *Paulus in frühchristlicher Frömmigkeit und Kunst* (Opladen:
Westdeutscher Verlag, 1982), 25–32, 37 (fig. 4). A late-fourth-century ivory dip-
tych (the Carrand diptych) is one of the exceptional images where Paul appears
without other biblical or Christian luminaries (ibid. 45, fig. 17).

[49] Eleen, *Illustration of the Pauline Epistles*, 7 (referring to Augustine, *ser.* 315,
PL 38, 1434; Prudentius, *Tit. Hist.* (Loeb, ii. 368–9)).

[50] For discussion and reproductions of these images, see Testini, 'Gli apostoli',
127–8 (fig. XVII). The view that it is Christ at the helm and Peter up front has been
maintained.

helmsman is found on a Roman sarcophagus, where the easily recognizable apostle pilots a boat bearing the dear departed.[51] Words alone could not flesh out the apostles sufficiently: some Christians clearly wanted physical tokens to make the person and power of Paul, and other holy persons, more tangible in their daily lives.

There is no doubt but that the new legal, social, and material situation of Christianity under Constantine contributed greatly to the flourishing of Christian imagery both in public life and in private life through the manufacture of household objects with Christian images.[52] When Constantine began his monumental building programme to honour the God who had brought him victory in battle, he also opened up space for Christian artistic compositions on a hitherto unknown scale. The new material appearing at this time has led art historians to distinguish two phases of early Christian pre-Justinian iconography: the time before 312 and the period from Constantine to the beginning of the reign of Justinian in 527. Jensen describes the pre-Constantinian iconographic programme as subsisting of three main elements:

first, those derived from classical, pagan prototypes that had been adapted to express aspects of the Christian faith; second, religiously 'neutral' images of essentially decorative quality, but that were probably understood to carry particular Christian symbolic significance; and third, narrative-based themes or cycles that were drawn from favorite biblical stories.[53]

Images included in this latter category, particularly of New Testament figures, often combine elements in such a way that they function 'more as composite symbols than as narrative illustrations'.[54] Jonah, for example, a favourite image of the earliest period,[55] united the all-important ideas of sin, repentance, and deliverance, much as depictions of biblical miracles would have done. Apart from the popular scene of his baptism, Christ appears primarily as miracle-worker and teacher, as in the biblical account.[56] Peter finds his place here too, in a variety of scenes from the Gospels and the various books of Acts, canonical and apocryphal.[57]

[51] See Marcel Simon's discussion of this fragment and its interpretation, 'L'Apôtre Paul dans le symbolisme funéraire chrétien', *Mélanges d'École française de Rome*, 50 (1933), 156–92.

[52] See Finney, *Invisible God*, 110–32. Finney has argued in reference to the common clay lamps that the change in iconographic content of quotidian objects is a significant indicator of demographic shifts, i.e. of the growth of the Christian population.

[53] Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 17.

[54] Ibid. 19.

[55] Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, 45–9.

[56] For a convenient listing of the motifs of pre-Constantinian Christian art, ibid. 43.

[57] A superb full-length study of Petrine iconography is Manuel Sotomayor's *S. Pedro en la iconografia paleocristiana* (Granada: Facultad de Teologia, 1962).

Along with the new content in Christian iconography from the time of Constantine, the art which Christians consumed reflected a larger general stylistic shift which did not originate with the new religion. Art historians generally identify the fourth century CE as the period when the naturalism of classical Greek art, born in the fifth century BCE, began to wane significantly. The formal and stylistic features characteristic of the Middle Ages—a tendency to abstraction and symbolism—began to establish themselves as a dominant style.[58] Yet this stylistic shift toward 'expressionism' was already under way in Roman imperial sculpture of the third century.[59] This is the case for religious art as well: the symbolic quality of Mithraic iconography runs parallel to that of Christian imagery; both represent a break from the public and naturalistic art of the early principate.[60] Elsner has described this iconographical shift as the reflex of a larger movement of religious sentiment:

In a culture which subjected the artifacts it produced to increasingly complex symbolic, exegetic and religious interpretations, art was expected to stand for symbolic and religious meanings rather than to imitate material things. Not only was the mimetic illusionism of naturalistic art no longer necessary to late-antique culture, but its very attempt to deceive was a barrier for those who sought truth of religious edification in images. Art became 'abstract' or 'schematic' not because of a decline in taste or skill, but because viewers, patrons—in fact, the collective taste and subjectivity of the culture—wanted it that way.[61]

Strong intimations of a 'general move towards initiate and exegetic modes of interpreting art' are apparent in the art of the third-century Christian catacombs; the fourth century, however, brought other iconographic changes based on other social transformations. By the middle of the fourth century we find not only an enlargement of the repertoire of the biblically based images but also the production of new 'dogmatic images' in response to the doctrinal conflicts.

But the greatest social transformation of the period—the legitimization of Christianity through the Christianization of the em-

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[58] J. Elsner, 'Art and Architecture', in Cameron and Garnsey (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Ancient World*, xiii. 736–61, 736. For Elsner's full discussion of the late antique transformation of art and culture, see also his *Art and the Roman Viewer*. There he argues that the shift from 'naturalism' to 'abstraction' involved 'the gradual elimination of the self-ironising (even "post-modern") elements in Roman imagery in favour of a different kind of religious frame of cultural intepretation—a frame overwhelmingly scriptural' (pp. 8–10).

[59] Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, *Roma, la fine dell'arte antica*, 2nd edn. (Milan: Rizzoli, 1976), 5–8.

[60] Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*, ch. 6: 'From Literal to Symbolic' (on Mithraic art, pp. 210–21).

[61] Ibid. 18–19.

perors—created the greatest impact on Christian art.[62] The surviv-
ing repertoire confirms a definite change, both in the subjects repre-
sented and the manner of representation. It has become an accepted
conclusion of scholarship to maintain an 'interpenetration of Chris-
tian and imperial imagery' generally, but especially in the case of the
important ternary scene called *traditio legis*. In these depictions 'a
Christ figure of often openly imperial type hands the Law to S. Peter
and S. Paul'.[63] This general perspective on the image, found in the
standard manuals of the subject, fits a larger pattern in historiog-
raphy and theology which sees Christianity as having suffered a sea
change when the emperors became Christian. This view of Christian
images of the late Constantinian period has become so well estab-
lished in the scholarship that dissenters can present it as a slouching
orthodoxy. The strong challenge to this 'Emperor mystique'
mounted recently by Thomas Mathews in his *The Clash of Gods*
has been found problematic upon review.[64] But Mathews is not the
only one to think that the scholarly world has been a little bedazzled
by the imperial iconography. Others have voiced the plaint that 'the
old thesis of the history-of-religions school'—the notion that the
iconography of Christ was dependent upon the imagery of the Em-
peror and the imperial cult—has been inappropriately applied
here.[65] Yet there was clearly a signal change in Christian iconography

[62] Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 12–34.

[63] Martin Kemp (ed.), *Oxford History of Western Art* (Oxford: Oxford Univer-
sity Press, 2000), 70–1.

[64] Yet aspects of Mathews's case seem persuasive to me, though admittedly
I am not a specialist in the field. He lays out the issue generally in ch. 1: 'The
Mistake of the Emperor Mystique', in *The Clash of Gods*, rev. edn. (Princeton:
Princeton University Press, 1999). Peter Brown's review of the first edition (*The
Art Bulletin*, 77 (1995), 499–502), though critical, is not without sympathy for
Mathews's book, which he regards as 'the work of an art-historical Donatist'.
Brown is critical chiefly of what he regards as Mathews's facile dismissal of the
invaluable work of his predecessors—Ernst Kantorowicz, Andreas Alföldi, and
André Grabar—in their insistence on what he has dubbed the 'Emperor Mystique'.
Brown admits that it is possible 'to share Mathews's skepticism of an overly
"imperial" interpretation of representations of Christ's entry into Jerusalem with-
out subscribing to the alternative he suggests', and indeed concludes by praising
Mathews for not letting us 'doze off again in the comfortable embrace of received
wisdom'. In her review of the work (*JTS* 47 (1996), 703–5), Sister Charles Murray
admits that the theory of imperial influence 'was certainly due for re-examination',
but that 'to dismiss imperial imagery completely is not supported by the evidence'.

[65] A similar but less global critique than Mathews's has been argued in regards to
the *traditio legis* scene by Klaus Berger, 'Die traditionsgeschichtliche Ursprung der
"Traditio legis" ', *VC* 27 (1973), 104–22, 104: 'even in the case of an inappropriate
object, the old thesis of the history-of-religions school gets constantly revived: the
conception of Christ is to be comprehended essentially as a carry-over from the
imperial cult.' Part of Mathews's case has been adopted by Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen
('Traditio Legis?', *Cahiers archéologiques*, 47 (1999), 5–37), who states baldly: 'In

during the reign of Constantine, as Reiner Sörries has argued in a study of the 'Christus-Rex' image on sarcophagi of the fourth century. For although there was always sufficient scriptural basis for early Christians to have resorted to royal imagery in their depictions of the Christian messiah,[66] we do not, Sörries notes, find Christ as 'King and Lord of All' until the second third of the fourth century. The earlier images of the catacombs reveal Christ the miracle-worker, the Good Shepherd, the Saviour—'at all events the Teacher, never a king'.[67] Something had happened to make the parallel symbolisms plausible and pervasive.

  The origins and development of apostolic iconography, on the other hand, are less controversial, if not altogether clear. The first depictions of the apostles were probably created in the Eastern parts of the Empire, where the artistic differentiation of Peter and Paul seems to have occurred earlier than in the West.[68] Surviving images of Paul are rarely—and insecurely—dated before the middle decades of the fourth century. The two mentions by Eusebius of portraits of Christ, Peter, and Paul (not necessarily in combination) permit us to assume the presence of images of Paul in the earlier part of that century.[69] Thus Christian art was at least a century old when Paul first became a recognizable figure amidst Christ and the disciples. Previous depictions presented the disciples entirely *en bloc*; such scenes pre-dated—and laid the ground for—the acquisition of identifying characteristics on the part of the chief apostles.[70] Peter was the first of Christ's followers to star in a variety of biblical and apocryphal scenes permitting the informed viewer to discern him.[71] Such is the case with the earliest image of Peter, practically the only one before the fourth century,[72] from the baptistery at Dura

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my estimation the representation of Christ as a ruler has nothing to do with the emperor' (p. 15).

  [66] Patristic authors did not hestitate to amplify this aspect of biblical language, and referred to Christ as both *rex* and *imperator*; see Klaus Wessel, 'Christus Rex', *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 68 (1953), 118–36, 120.

  [67] Reiner Sörries, 'Das Bild des Christus-Rex in der Sarkophaplastik des vierten Jahrhunderts', in G. Koch (ed.), *Studien zur frühchristlichen Kunst*, ii (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 139–59, 146.

  [68] Testini, 'Gli apostoli', 111.

  [69] *EH* 7. 18. 4 (ET: Williamson, 234) and a letter to Constantine's sister (PG 20, 1547). Testini refers to both passages ('Gli apostoli', 111), but is sceptical about claims to recognize the faces of Peter and Paul in works from the early part of the century, e.g. the sarcophagus of Praetextatus (ibid. fig. I, 2), dated *c*.320, where two apostles flank an orant in the centre of the piece.

  [70] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 6. The Domitilla catacomb's Crypt of Ampliatus contains a fresco of Christ and the apostles, none of whom have individual features.

  [71] Testini, 'Gli apostoli', 108–16.

  [72] Ibid. 109. Testini nicely expresses the earliest significance of Peter alongside Christ: 'from the beginning [of Christian iconography] the apostle is figured as a

Europos. There Peter has not yet acquired his definitive features, but is recognizable from the scene itself, where Christ reaches out to grasp Peter's outstretched arm to save him from the waves. The stabilization of Peter's portrait was well under way on Roman sarcophagi of the early fourth century: a popular trilogy of Petrine scenes (the denial of Christ at cock's crow, the escape from prison, his arrest and martyrdom, etc.) appears in connection with the end of the Diocletian persecution.[73] Paul makes his debut with Peter on 'Passion sarcophagi'[74] showing aspects of their martyrdom, often according to the details supplied by apocryphal Acts.[75] The general outlines of Paul's physiognomy may have been derived, at least in part, from the description of the late-second-century *Acts of Paul and Thecla*: 'a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat hooked, full of friendliness'.[76] However dubious the historic value of this description may be, the beard casts him as the well-known philosopher type, to which Peter had previously been assimilated in some depictions.[77]

Somewhat earlier than most of these passion sarcophagi with Paul are frescos featuring him in the Roman catacombs. These paintings present Paul among the Twelve—a nice case of theology trumping both history and Scripture. It is not on the margins of the group that Paul stands, where one might expect an additional figure, such as the

symbol of faith, as the person, namely, who sums up in himself the weakness of human nature but at the same time is called, by the will of the Lord, to express the unconditional faithfulness of one who believes in the saving power of the Master.'

[73] Bisconti, 'L'origine dell'iconografia di Pietro e Paolo', 394–6.

[74] See Sotomayor, *S. Pedro*, 101–13, for discussion and classification of the passion sarcophagi.

[75] Peter on his own had featured on Roman sarcophagi from the early fourth century; only exceptionally does Paul join his fellow Roman martyr in this medium before the middle of the century (Huskinson, *Concordia*, 3). Testini notes the exception to that dating: viz. a slightly earlier portrait (*c*.340) of the two martyrs before Nero on the 'passion sarcophagus' of Berja, now in the National Archeological Museum of Madrid ('Gli apostoli', 115). The Praetextatus sarcophagus mentioned above (n. 69) may be another exception.

[76] *Acts of Paul* (§3), in Wilhelm Schneemelcher (ed.), *New Testament Apocrypha*, ii, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 239.

[77] H. P. L'Orange, 'Plotinus-Paul', in *idem*, *Likeness and Icon* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1973; orig. 1958), 32–42. At times Paul's pointed beard seems to have been 'corrected' and trimmed by sculptors to fit the rounded shape favoured by the philosopher type, as Bisconti has observed ('Cristo e s. Paolo in un frammento di sarcofago dalla tricora orientale di S. Callisto', *RivAC* 69 (1993), 7–24, 19). Paul is also sometimes depicted as bald, perhaps in accordance with the aforementioned description in the *Acts of Paul*, which may be the source of Clement of Alexandria's claim that Paul was bald, a statement related by Jerome in his comments on Gal. 1: 18 (PL 26, 354A).

replacement for Judas, Matthias, to be. Rather, he gains his status in relation to the chief apostle. 'If Peter makes his appearance in the history of Christian art alongside Christ,' Testini notes, 'Paul is born alongside Peter, at first timidly in a council scene of the apostles's gathering.'[78] Without totally discounting the influence of the description of Paul in the *Acts of Paul*, one can see that in regard to the finer elements of portraiture, 'the representation of the apostle to the gentiles was born reconstructively in antithesis to that of Peter'.[79] The physiognomical traits given each clearly mark out differing personalities and temperaments; there was precedence in non-Christian, classical depictions for providing distinguishing traits to two figures of an ensemble.[80] The application of this technique of antithetical portraiture to Peter and Paul was developed in scenes of the apostolic college in funereal media during the early fourth century, but was destined for bigger scenes in the apses of the great new basilicas and churches of the time.

The development of apostolic iconography can be seen in a number of frescos in the catacomb of Domitilla in Rome. Several of these paintings date prior to 350, being thus illustrative of this first stage of the images of the apostles.[81] Christ is centrally seated among his disciples in a scene known as *Christus magister*, 'Christ the Teacher'. The accompanying imagery of books and scrolls, open and closed, make this designation uncontroversial. This composition builds on the meanings apparent in the mid-third-century catacomb frescos of anonymous figures with scrolls or books.[82] In a development from these scenes of *Christus magister* with the disciples *en bloc*, a new composition has Peter and Paul, the *principes apostolorum*, assuming prominent positions on Christ's right and left, clearly distinguished in status from the other disciples or apostles. One of these scenes in the Domitilla catacomb contains an identifiable Paul. In the Crypt of

[78] Testini, 'Gli apostoli', 115. Here he is following F. Gerke, 'Petrus et Paulus', *RivAC* 10 (1933), 307–29: 'Ist Petrus in der ersten Hälfte des Jahrhunderts mit Christus sozusagen von der Kunstgeschichte geboren, so Paulus in der zweiten mit Petrus' (p. 328).

[79] Bisconti, *Temi di iconografia paleocristiana* (Vatican City: Pontifio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 2000), 240. An English version of this richly illustrated handbook would be of service to students of early Christianity.

[80] Manuel Sotomayor, 'Petrus und Paulus in der frühchristliche Ikonographie', in *Spätantike und frühes Christentum* (Frankfurt am Main: Das Liebieghaus, 1983), 199–210, 204. As examples, he mentions sarcophagus no. 395 of the Museo Torlonia in Rome and the so-called Plotinus sarcrophagus in the Museo Profano Lateranense, as well as no. 50 in the same collection.

[81] Testini, 'Osservazioni sull' iconografia del Cristo', 247–51. For the chronological priority of the *collegium apostolorum* scenes of the catacombs to those on sarcophagi, see Johannes Kollwitz, 'Christus als Lehrer und die Gesetzesübergabe an Petrus in der konstantinischen Kunst Roms', *RQ* 44 (1936), 45–66, 55–6.

[82] Discussion and examples in Testini, 'Osservazioni', 236–7.

the Small Apostles, Christ sits on a high-backed chair surrounded by the twelve apostles.[83] Peter and Paul flank their master; their heads are ringed by a halo, or nimbus.[84] Both apostles are recognizable thanks to their facial hair. Peter stands on Christ's right hand, with a full head of hair and a short beard; Paul is at Christ's left side, balding with a long pointed beard. A similar presentation of Paul as a guide to life, a philosopher in word and deed, is found on the sole surviving section of a fresco, in the same catacomb, in the cubicle of the grave-digger Diogenes. There stands a bearded Paul, almost completely bald and with eyebrows meeting, holding a closed scroll (*rotulus*) in his right hand.[85] To his left is an open *capsa*, a container for scrolls in which five scrolls are visible. Whether or not the five scrolls represent the Torah, the five books of Moses (and so by metonymy also all of Scripture), the *capsa* probably has the same significance as the *cista* (a box for books): the entirety of Scripture.[86] The meaning of Paul holding a scroll, probably signifying his letters,[87] with the Scriptures close at hand, will have been lost only on the dimmest of ancient viewers. The apostle and his letters are portrayed in the context of the whole Bible. Paul is a guardian of the Christian Bible, of which his letters are a major and essential part. The image of the apostle with his books takes on the associations

[83] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 5 (reproduction of fresco on p. 7, fig. 2); Testini, 'Osservazioni', 246 (fig. 18); Giuseppe Wilpert, *Le Pitture delle catacombe romane* (Rome: Desclée, 1903), i. fig. 155, 2.

[84] The nimbus, or halo, seems to have developed as a convention in the depiction of the gods of the Graeco-Roman world, most often in the form of rays radiating from the head of a divinity. It adorns the imperial heads on Antonine medallions, as well as the coins of the Diocletian tetrarchy (Testini, 'Osservazioni', 240). This was transferred to images of Christ: e.g. the 'Christ as Helios' found in the Vatican grottoes (reproductions of this oldest Christian mosaic: *EEC*, ii. 1054, fig. 234; Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture*, 39, fig. 22; also in Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art*, 43, fig. 9). In the fresco of the Domitilla catacomb under discussion, the nimbus does not take this 'ray-like' form, but appears as a solid halo.

[85] Colour reproduction in Wilpert, *Le Pitture delle catacombe romanie*, ii (Rome: Desclée, 1903), fig. 182; black and white in *EEC* ii. 1060, which dates it to the late third century. If correct, this is one of the oldest images of Paul, although Wilpert dated it to *c*.348.

[86] See Fabrizio Bisconti, 'Sull'unità del linguaggio biblico nella pittura cimiteriale romana', in C. C. Marcheselli (ed.), *Parola e spirito* (Brescia: Paideia, 1982), 731–40, 739.

[87] The fact that his epistles seem to have circulated in the form of a codex is no objection to this. The iconography of the scroll probably related not to the actual form of the Pauline letters but to the élite preference for the scroll as the classical form of the book. For discussion of both scroll and codex, and the Christian preference for the latter, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), ch. 2: 'The Early Christian Book'.

resident in the familiar representation on pagan sarcophagi of the philosopher studying a text. Paul was the *doctor mundi*, the 'Instructor of the World'—to use the epithet given him by the imperial dedicatory inscription found in the remains of the ancient basilica at Ostia.[88]

C. CULTURE OF ELITE ROMAN CHRISTIANITY IN THE VIA LATINA CATACOMB

Described by Testini as 'one of the most expressive images of ancient Christian art',[89] the fresco of Christ and Paul reproduced on the jacket of this book is not the whole picture. The apostle Peter stands on the other side of Christ, hidden from sight by a concrete foundation pile sunk by the construction crew who first burst into unsuspected chambers below and discovered the hidden catacomb. The imposing two-thirds of the fresco that can be photographed has often been reproduced. One easily senses what must have been the power of the composition as a whole. Sections of the catacomb are contemporaneous with Victorinus' period of Christian authorship, and are representative of the highly literate social milieu in which he, as *rhetor urbis Romae*, would have circulated.[90]

This catacomb was discovered in 1955 in Rome by a construction team installing support piles for the enlargement of an apartment building on the Via Dino Compagni near its intersection with the Via Latina. After the destruction caused by the new piles, and the unfortunate if unsurprising looting, the site was brought to the attention of the Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, which hastened to excavate the site.[91] What was discovered after some hard

[88] 'Theodosius began and Honorius completed a church consecrated by the body of Paul, the teacher of the world [*aulam doctoris mundi sacratam corpore Pauli*]': cited by Testini, 'L'Apostolo Paolo', 59 n. 53.

[89] Testini, 'Gli apostoli', 124.

[90] Associating with one's social betters may be presumed in the case of rhetors, as this has been well documented for grammarians (Kaster, *Guardians of Language*, ch. 6: 'The Social Relations of the Grammarians'). Augustine was unhappy about the obligation to cultivate his patrons: 'when should we go to pay respects to our more influential friends, whose patronage we need'? (*Conf*. 6. 11. 18; O'Donnell, i. 68 (ET: Chadwick, 105)).

[91] Ferrua's full report was published in 1960: *Le Pitture della nuova catacomba di Via Latina*, Monumenti di antichita cristiana, 2/8 (Vatican City: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana). A second edition, with splendid reproductions, was translated into English (with updated bibliography) by Iain Inglis as *The Unknown Catacomb* (New Lanark: Geddes & Grosset, 1991). Besides Ferrua's work, there are now several studies of the catacomb's iconography: Kötzsche-Breitenbruch, *Die neue Katakombe an der Via Latina in Rom*; Josef Fink, *Bildfrömmigkeit und Bekenntnis* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1978); William Tronzo, *The Via Latina Catacomb* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986). Frederick P.

digging is perhaps the single richest site of late Roman painting. The archaeologist who directed the excavation, Antonio Ferrua, dated the catacomb's initial construction to *c*.315, and most of the burials to before 360.[92] The catacomb was not for the common use of the Roman church, as were most Roman sites of this nature; rather, it was probably owned by a restricted group of families, certainly to be numbered among the city's élite.[93] The iconographic programme consists largely of Christian images, accompanied by a number of cycles and individual scenes from pagan mythology. The whole structure is heavily decorated throughout, to the extent that it 'suggests a picture gallery rather than the catacombs as we have hitherto known them'.[94] Of the obviously Christian material, the usual predominance of Old Testament characters and stories obtains; scenes belonging to the first stage of the catacomb's existence are often repeated in more recently dug chambers. The presence of 'pagan' images in areas of the catacomb does not necessarily mean that the religious affiliation of the departed was not Christian. As the figures of pagan mythology were an integral part of the literary culture of upper-class Christians, the determination of religious identity is a judgement call based on both content and context of the paintings.[95] The Hercules scenes found in Cubiculum N constitute the most extended cycle of painting drawn from pagan mythology. Ferrua accordingly concluded that this section of the catacomb (cubicles

Bargebuhr's *The Paintings of the 'New' Catacomb of the Via Latina and the Struggle of Christianity against Paganism* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1991) was published posthumously, in a rough state, by J. Utz for the Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften (Philosophisch-historische Klasse). Bargebuhr's work seems to have reached its present state in 1968; thus it does not take account of any of the monographs on the catacomb that appeared subsequently.

[92] Ferrua, *Unknown Catacomb*, 158.

[93] Ferrua estimates that *c*.400 people were buried over a period of 50 years in the catacomb's 325 tombs (*Unknown Catacomb*, 156). 'Furthermore, in none of the large public catacombs of the fourth century does one find so many empty spaces and walls without burials as in this one. This confirms that it was not a burial place open to all but was reserved for the members of privileged families.'

[94] Erwin Goodenough, 'Catacomb Art', *JBL* 81 (1962), 113–42, 114. He provides a summary description of the paintings (without reproduction) in their various categories.

[95] The classical revival in artistic style that we connect with the pagan holdout circle of Symmachus and friends makes itself felt in the art commissioned by Christian élites of Rome (see Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, 186–97). Kathleen Shelton, in her discussion of the Carrand diptych (in which Paul features looking very much the philosopher), wryly observes that it 'would be ever so much easier on the ancients if the modern observer could simply master the lesson of the Esquiline Venus, namely, that what is classical is neither by definition nor by practice necessarily anti-Christian or pagan' ('Roman Aristocrats, Christian Commissions', *JAC* 29 (1986), 166–80, 166).

H–O) was the burial chamber for a single aristocratic family, the
entire catacomb being jointly owned by several such large and
wealthy families. The presence of both pagan and Christian imagery
led him to suppose that at least some of these families included both
Christians and pagans.[96] Although this claim has not gone chal-
lenged, on the ground that pagan mythological figures were often
given Christian interpretations (*interpretatio christiana*) in that
period,[97] the existence of other sites of mixed burials prevents us
from ruling out this possibility in the case of the Via Latina cata-
comb.[98]

The hypothesis of a large family grouping with non-Christian
members is by no means improbable. We know that such families
existed in Rome, even later in the century, when frictions between
pagan and Christian were greater (Jerome has left us a warm depic-
tion of one such family[99]). In his study of the iconography of the Via
Latina catacomb, William Tronzo has argued that 'in the context of
the conventions of aristocratic Roman funerary decoration', we are
seeing the use of Christian imagery by 'a circle in which Christianity
was not a deep-seated tradition but a relatively recent innovation'.[100]
This last point has important implications, which do not require
Tronzo's *interpretatio christiana* for the allegedly pagan imagery. If
the catacomb was the possession of a recently converted family, as he
has suggested, this would seem to increase the probability of pagans
in such a family. This fits the gradual process of the Christianization
of the Roman aristocracy during this period. The catacomb's scenes
from pagan mythology attest, moreover, to the same level of culture
we find in the overtly Christian frescos, as most commentators have
recognized.

Among the paintings devoid of obvious Christian indicators is the
spectacular fresco dubbed 'The Medicine Lesson' by Ferrua.[101]
This name may be a misnomer, being but one possible interpretation
of what is without doubt the most debated single scene in the entire
catacomb. This scene is found in one of the side-chambers off Hall I

[96] Ferrua, *Unknown Catacomb*, 157–9. Hadot argues that this family was part of
a Neoplatonic milieu (*Marius Victorinus*, 244–5).

[97] Fink (*Bildfrömmigkeit*, 31 ff.) maintains an *interpretatio christiana* for the
scenes in the Via Latina catacomb drawn from pagan mythology.

[98] See Josef Engemann, 'Altes und Neues zu Beispielen heidnischer und chris-
tlicher Katakombenbilder im spätantiken Rom', *JAC* 26 (1983), 128–51.

[99] His letter to Laeta attempts to undermine the loyalty of her father Albinus
(the family's pagan patriarch) to the old religion through the charms of a grandchild
Paula (*Ep.* 107. 1, written in 403; Loeb, 339).

[100] Tronzo, *Via Latina Catacomb*, 69. Tronzo makes his argument specifically
with respect to Cubiculum O.

[101] Reproduction in Ferrua, *Unknown Catacomb*, 121–4. For discussion of vari-
ous proposals, see Fink, *Bildfrömmigkeit*, 19–26, and Bargebuhr, *Paintings*, 82–6.

(a roughly hexagonal room with four individual side-chambers, entrance, and egress) and symmetrically opposite the arcosolium with a ternary scene of Christ between the two apostles. This imposing fresco depicts a group of men, all clad in pallium and tunic, sitting on a bench in a semicircle around a central figure, whom we will call the Master. The elevated status of this central figure is obvious from his greater stature and imposing bearded mien; wearing only the pallium, thus with his upper torso uncovered, the Master is the very image of the philosopher. The group sitting is arranged around a smaller figure on the ground, who is nude, whose 'stomach is a red blotch which looks as though it had been cut wide open, or burst'.[102] On the immediate left of the Master (interpreted by Ferrua and others as the physician hypothetically there interred), one of the seated group wields a stick or wand which he applies just above the wound to the supine figure. All interpretations of this composition acknowledge its strongly hierarchical and didactic character, due to the contrast between the Master and the other figures. The chamber across the main section of Hall I is similar to it at least in this regard, although there we find an image which was becoming very popular around the mid-fourth century: Christ seated between his chief apostles, Peter and Paul. Both of these paintings—of Masters with their disciples—have a strongly numinous quality, at least in part due to the high quality of the artistry; they thus match their surroundings in this most extensive sub-unit of the entire catacomb. The vault ceiling of the central structure Ferrua describes as 'made up of six webs separated by palm branches' which 'meet in the middle'; the tondo of the vaults contains 'the bust of a beardless youth dressed in a low-girdled green and light blue cloak, holding a scroll close to his chest with both hands'. Of the paintings in the six sections created by the webs, one is badly damaged, two others are completely destroyed, and the other three contain more youths accompanied by various imagery of books and scrolls. The walls of the central area contain further imagery suggesting a preoccupation with learning: two old men and two youths, all carrying scrolls.[103] The generally religious atmosphere of Hall I is deepened by the programme of its other two chambers, containing orants—male and female—and a scene of Job and his wife.[104]

This imagery makes a purely professional reading of 'The Medicine Lesson' somewhat anomalous in its immediate context. Various objections have been raised to such an interpretation, whether we

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[102] Goodenough, 'Catacomb Art', 128.
[103] Ferrua, *Unknown Catacomb*, 114–19.
[104] Good description by Fink, *Bildfrömmigkeit*, 17–18, who has examined the catacomb directly.

suppose the scene to be a lesson in anatomy or a surgical procedure —on a figure, incidentally, whom Ferrua admits seems more alive than dead. Could the meaning of this powerful painting consist only in showing the dear departed in his professional capacity, as if all he sought in life was to be remembered as that faithful healer who taught his art? While this possibility cannot be discounted as utterly implausible, the primary problem with the professional reading of the scene lies in the demand to harmonize it with a funerary setting. An underground burial chamber is not a sculpture garden, where visitors would be unsurprised to happen upon the likeness of a one-time lord of the house. The putatively pagan material elsewhere in the catacomb betrays the preoccupations appropriate to the funerary location. In fact, the same leitmotif is present in all the imagery, whatever its origin: 'the rescue from death into life', as Schumacher has noted.[105] The cycle of Hercules stories in Room N includes the scene where he returns from Hades, bringing back Alcestis, the wife of Admetus, who died for him: 'the symbolism is clearly that of hope for the future life'.[106] Although it is hard to deny the possibility of an *interpretatio christiana* with Hercules as a type of Christ, it is none the less more difficult in the case of this material, when we know that during this period there existed élite Roman families with both pagan and Christian members. Families included several generations; and many families of senatorial rank in Rome were brought into the church only after the Peace. If we reject a Christian reading of 'The Medicine Lesson', then it needs to be brought into the orbit of pagan religious concerns commensurate with its setting. Some of the details of the scene—the lifting of the head and the eyes—have provided grounds for some scholars to suspect that we have some kind of revivification here, which opens the way for a Christian interpretation of the scene in which the mysterious Master is none other than Jesus.[107]

[105] W. N. Schumacher, '*Reparatio vitae*: Zum Programm der neuen Katakombe an der Via Latina zu Rom', *RQ* 66 (1971), 125–53, 143, 150. In a second study of the catacomb ('Die Katakombe an der Via Dino Compagni und römische Grab-kammern', *RivAC* 50 (1974), 331–72), Schumacher abandons his attempted *inter-pretatio christiana* of the pagan scenes and accepts Ferrua's hypothesis that pagans and Christians were indeed buried together in the same catacomb (see Engemann, 'Altes und Neues', 143–50, for criticism of the *interpretatio christiana* of the scenes from pagan mythology).

[106] 'Whoever did this', writes Goodenough of the Hercules decoration in this chamber, 'was a rich man, for only two burials without inscriptions were made in the whole room' ('Catacomb Art', 126).

[107] Thus Goodenough (ibid. 129) reports being unable to decide 'between seeing the man on the ground as being Judas or a reviving corpse. In either case, the great group in the Robe [i.e. tunic and pallium] seem to me Christ and the Twelve.'

Among those who have objected to the professional interpretation as inadequate for the funerary context, Pierre Boyancé has brought to bear evidence suggesting that this composition depicts a philosopher's demonstration of the separability and immortality of the soul.[108] The basis for this conjecture is a passage in Proclus' commentary on book X of Plato's *Republic* (appropriately, on the Myth of Er), where Proclus refers to a treatise *On Sleep* by one of Aristotle's students, Clearchus of Soles. In that lost book, Clearchus mentioned a demonstration of the soul's separability from the body by the use of a wand on a sleeping boy.[109] Boyancé points out how his reading makes sense in light of the detail, reported by Ferrua, that fits poorly with the suggestion of an anatomy lesson or surgery: none of the 'students' in the picture are actually looking at the figure on the ground; rather, their gaze is directed, like that of the central figure of the 'Master', to some point in mid-air above the supine figure. On the other hand, as Josef Fink argues, it is difficult along the lines of Boyancé's theory to account for the wound in the stomach. Having rejected his own earlier suggestion that the scene is depicting the Raising of Lazarus, Fink proposes to identify the prone figure with King Asa of Judah (1 Kgs. 15: 23–4); this would explain the seemingly damaged foot in the picture. The central figure on the bench would then be God the Father, appropriately placed with respect to God the Son, between Peter and Paul in the opposite chamber.[110] However, Boyancé's reading recommends itself both by the match between certain iconic and textual details (the wand, the age of the supine figure) and by the proposed context of the Neoplatonism cultivated by élite Romans. Victorinus' translation of Porphyry's *Introduction to Aristotle's Categories* (as well as possible translations of Aristotle's *Categories* and *On Interpretation*) is an important witness, he argues, to the currency of Aristotle in Latin Neoplatonic circles.[111] If one pinned one's hopes for the afterlife on a belief in the immortality of the soul, it would be of obvious significance to demonstrate that the soul's life did not in fact demand its union with the body.

Turning from this mysterious painting to the one on the other side of Hall I, we see a ternary scene of Christ with Peter and Paul. This,

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[108] Pierre Boyancé, 'Aristote sur une peinture de la Via Latina', in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, vol. 4, 234 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1964), 107–24.

[109] For translation and discussion of the passage from Proclus (G. Kroll (ed.), *Procli Diodochi in Platonis Rem Publicam Commentarii*, ii (Leipzig: Teubner, 1901), 112, 25 ff.), see Boyancé, 'Aristote sur une peinture', 112–15.

[110] Fink, *Bildfrömmigkeit*, 19–26.

[111] Boyancé himself refers to Victorinus in this connection: 'Aristote sur une peinture', 119–21.

as Huskinson has noted, is 'probably the earliest example of the two apostles standing *in concordia* to be found in catacomb painting'.[112] Christ is enthroned upon a vaguely sketched seat with a covering; the two apostles stand to his sides on a level below him. Both are dressed similarly in tunic and pallium, and hold closed scrolls in their right hands.[113] The solemn, dark-bearded Christ gestures with his raised right hand (an orator's gesture with the two forefingers extended) in the direction of Paul, while with his left he holds an open scroll.[114] Standing on the side of Christ near to the scroll, Peter does not receive it, although he has the position on Christ's left characteristic of many of the ternary images of the period, especially the *traditio legis*. This is in keeping with the generally accepted dating of the fresco, *c.*360, which puts it in the neighbourhood of important early examples of the motif on sarcophagi. Unfortunately we cannot carry out comparisons of important details of the fresco (particularly the manner of Christ's wielding the scroll), because of the obstructing concrete pile. What we can see tells us that the artisan who created this section of the catacomb was up-to-date on the current images of Christ. The quality and style of the catacomb's art places it with the same stylistic movement—the *stilo bello*, or 'beautiful style'—of one of the most famous pieces of ancient Christian funerary sculpture, the Junius Bassus sarcophagus.

The solemnity of Christ in this fresco has led Fink to classify the painting under the heading of *maiestas Domini*, 'Majesty of the Lord'. He maintains that this is 'a central, or altogether the central theme' of this most extensive complex of the entire catacomb, ex-pressed here by an image arising from Matthew 20: 23—'to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give'—under the influence of imperial portraiture.[115] In the case of this fresco in the Via Latina catacomb the imperial iconography seems minimal (restricted to the halo, if that); the dominant image is that of *Christus magister*, no matter whether we see this as a scene of instruction or commission. The teacher in this fresco has the appearance of a philosopher; on the other hand, his halo and paternal beard may serve to indicate divinity. Noting the parallels with depictions of the philosopher with his students, Lucien de Bruyne has offered a reading of this fresco in which the saints are pictured not so much in their capacity as apostles but as disciples. Christ, with his orator's

[112] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 9.

[113] Pictures and descriptions in Ferrua, *Unknown Catacomb*, 118–21.

[114] I am dependent upon Ferrua, *Le Pitture*, 69 ('con la sinistra tiene un rotolo aperto') for this detail, almost entirely ignored by the many others who mention this fresco.

[115] Fink, *Bildfrömmigkeit*, 18. Here he also suggests, not implausibly to my mind, that this fresco may have had its original in the apse of Old St Peter's.

gesture, is the only one speaking in the composition; Peter and Paul 'are represented in a passive attitude'. The artist, 'by appealing to their quality as disciples, simply wants to characterize them as the chief guardians of the Gospel given by the Word'.[116] De Bruyne also accounts for a detail by this interpretation: neither Paul nor Peter is acclaiming Christ with the usual right hand, as we see in so many other figurations of the apostles on apses, sarcophagi, and in the catacombs. But I cannot see that their vocation as apostles is thereby excluded. Christ is the divine teacher: Peter and Paul have absorbed his lesson—hence the closed scrolls they hold in identical poses— and are ready for their missions. This fresco clearly presents both Peter and Paul as the recipients of divine revelation. One could hazard that the proximity of Peter to the open scroll in Christ's left hand, and that of Paul to Christ's gesturing right, serve to indicate the former apostle as the (static) repository of revelation and the latter as charged with the (dynamic) preaching of the revealed message. Such a message is surely implied by later depictions of a similar scene in which Christ gives Peter the keys and Paul the scroll of the law.[117]

The Via Latina catacomb clearly belonged to that level of Roman society which put a premium on letters and sent its sons to study grammar with Donatus and rhetoric with Victorinus. Such recently Christianized circles no doubt also stood in need of a teacher, the apostle to the Gentiles. Therefore they also, by the scientific *and* religious standards of the time—to speak anachronistically—stood in need of an authoritative interpretation of the letters of Paul.

D. CHRIST BETWEEN PETER AND PAUL

The magnificent fresco of Christ and his two chief apostles found in the Via Latina catacomb is an image typical of the marked shift in Christian iconography which took place after the half-century mark. In the second half of the fourth century, the standard compositions with Peter, long featured in a variety of biblical and apocryphal scenes, became infrequent or abbreviated. Peter began to appear in new scenes, in which Paul plays an essential role. The popular depictions of *Christus magister* with the full complement of his followers—including Paul—give way to presentations of Christ seated with a reduced number of apostles, often with Peter and Paul in prominent positions. Testini regards these intermediate

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[116] Lucien de Bruyne, 'L'Iconographie des apôtres Pierre et Paul dans une lumière nouvelle', in *Secularia Petri et Pauli* (Rome: Istituto di Studi Romani, 1969), 80.

[117] e.g. the 'Sarcophagus of the Twelve Apostles' in S. Apollinare in Classe (picture in Testini, 'Gli apostoli', fig. 11).

compositions, which emphasize the chief apostles, as the key to the interpretation of the later ternary scenes, which are thus an attenuated image (*imago brevis*) of the earlier full scenes. The iconographic development begins with Christ the Teacher and his disciples, who sometimes have the appearance almost of schoolboys; there follow more solemn depictions of the gathered apostolic college enthroned with Christ as a 'heavenly council'.[118] The ternary scenes with Christ between Peter and Paul, handing down the Law or holding a cross, are the ultimate evolution of the earlier scene—at least along the lines of the argument that they are an *imago brevis* of the full group. Christ's seat undergoes its own evolution, according to Testini, for the *Christus magister* seated on his teacher's *cathedra* becomes assimilated to the image of an enthroned emperor. This is the source of the *Christus imperator* images, where Christ takes on the appearance of a sovereign on his royal throne (*solium regale*).[119]

On the other hand, some scholars have argued that the ternary images have separate lines of descent from the depictions of Jesus with the group. Christa Ihm, in her comprehensive study of the programmes of early Christian apses, has derived the latter depictions ('Christ the Teacher and the Heavenly Church', in her typology) from two different non-imperial scenes: either the traditional picture of an assembly of philosophers, or that of the clergy's council in the apse of the basilica. Images which hail from imperial iconography she classifies under the heading 'Imperial Christ and the Heavenly Empire', which has two main subdivisions, which correspond to variants of imperial portraiture: one a courtly scene, of the Emperor on a royal throne; the other a military or triumphal scene, where the Emperor appears as a field commander in the midst of his troops.[120]

The influence of imperial iconography has long been maintained by a majority of scholars for the scenes denominated *traditio legis*. According to Ihm, this scene (which she describes more fully under the head of 'The Law-Giving Christ stands between the devoted Apostles') is 'the most important in the category *Christus imperator*'. As such, it belongs to the second classification of the 'imperial Christ' images: namely, 'Christ as Emperor amidst his army'.[121] The term 'traditio legis' was first coined by Count Grimouard de

[118] Testini, 'L'Apostolo Paolo', 66–7. Thus the scene of Christ enthroned between the two apostles bears the same significance as full depiction of the apostolic college (von Dobschütz, *Der Apostel Paulus*, 4).

[119] Testini, 'Osservazioni', 251–2.

[120] Christa (Belting-) Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom 4. Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts*, 2nd edn. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 5–12.

[121] Ibid. 33–9, 33.

St Laurent in 1858 to describe a group of images found on sarcophagi, gold glass, and mosaics where Christ hands a scroll to Peter.[122] The composition was thus denominated in somewhat loose connection with the inscription found on several of these images: *dominus legem dat*, 'the Lord gives the Law'.[123] It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that everything about that short sentence has been disputed except that *dominus* means Christ! There is agreement at least on the Roman provenance of the *traditio legis*, whence it spread throughout Italy and to a lesser extent into the provinces.[124] The restriction of its range to Rome, northern Italy, and Gaul is significant for the interpretation of the image.[125] Although some of the data and their dating is disputed, the evidence of the sarcophagi indicates that the motif arose *c.*360–370.[126] This decade spans the later years of Pope Liberius and the early period of Damasus, and thus coincides with the work of the first two Latin commentators on Paul, Victorinus and Ambrosiaster. The temporal and geographical correlation of these iconic and textual aspects of Pauline reception history has been noted by a number of scholars, who have cited material from these and other commentators to support their readings of the *traditio legis* and similar images. Victorinus' comments on Galatians 1: 13, which presents the commissioning of Peter and Paul to their diverse fields of Jews and Gentiles, are, as Charles Pietri has noted, 'the first sketch of a theme for which Christian imagery and literature would promise a grand future'.[127] On account of this Pauline passage, the theme superimposed itself on the ternary image of Christ standing or enthroned between the chief apostles,

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[122] Grimouard de St Laureut, 'Le Christ triomphant et le don de Dieu', *Revue de l'art chrétienne*, 2 (1858); cited in Walter Schumacher, 'Dominus legem dat', *RQ* 54 (1959), 1–39, 2 n. 4.

[123] Schumacher explictly rejects the title *traditio legis*: 'The interpretation of the scene proposed by G. de Saint-Laurent as "traditio legis" does not, in any case, allow the individual aspects of the image to be harmonized with late antique iconography' ('Dominus legem dat', 2).

[124] For discussion, see Sotomayor, *S. Pedro*, ch. 4; Geir Hellemo, *Adventus Domini* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), ch. 3, with full bibliography.

[125] Klaus Wessel, 'Das Haupt der Kirche: zur Deutung ausgewählter frühchristlicher Bildwerke', *Archäologischer Anzeiger*, 65/6 (1950/1), 298–323, 303.

[126] This is the dating given in the most recent study of the *traditio legis*: viz. Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 6. Rasmussen's article focuses on the *traditio* scene of S. Costanza and the simple version on the silver box (perhaps a reliquary) found at Thessalonica.

[127] Pietri's two-volume opus *Roma Christiana* contains extensive discussion of the *traditio legis* in connection with the development of Petrine primacy at Rome (*Roma Christiana* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1976), ii. 1414–42, here, i. 286). Hellemo (*Adventus Domini*, 85–6) cites Ambrosiaster on Gal. 2: 7–9 and Eph. 2: 4, although the comments of Victorinus on these verses make the same points applicable to the iconography in question.

who can stand for their respective mission fields or 'churches', often symbolized by two women. However, this 'ethno-ecclesiastical' aspect of the Peter–Paul symbolism, despite rich textual witnesses, is not clearly present until the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth (in the apse mosaic of S. Pudenziana). This theme presupposes the basic ternary scenes of *Christus magister*, *Christus imperator*, and *traditio legis*. The latter composition particularly merits examination, as it presents Peter and Paul under distinct iconographic auspices, notwithstanding the motif of *concordia* implicit in the whole arrangement.

The *traditio legis* is found in a variety of media, but mostly on sarcophagi. The core image presents Christ standing between Paul and Peter; additional elements are characteristically present in a variety of combinations (lambs, palm-trees, phoenixes, and a mini-mountain of Paradise on which Christ stands and from which four rivers flow).[128] Peter stands on Christ's left side, and receives the end of a scroll held out in his direction by the Lord. Paul is on Christ's right, and acclaims him with a raised right hand. Some earlier pieces from the beginning of this development—the Junius Bassus sarcophagus and Lateran 174—show Christ *enthroned* between Peter and Paul with an open scroll or codex in his left hand (other variations exist).[129] But in the examples accompanied by the type-defining inscription (*dominus legem dat*), Christ is standing (the exceptions are late, and explicable as hybrids).[130] The presence of very similar versions of the scene in which Christ is seated, however, creates additional difficulties of interpretation, since then we have parallels from imperial iconography of an enthroned emperor handing over something. There is another related image, where a seated or enthroned Christ delivers the keys to Peter on his right: the *traditio clavium*. This 'handing over of the keys', a clear reference to Matthew 16: 18–19, also developed in Rome and expanded from there during the same period, though without attaining the great success of the *traditio legis*.[131] Another variant of the basic ternary scene

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[128] Lists of the various representations of this motif, the majority of which are on sarcophagi, are provided by Rasmussen ('Traditio legis?', 5), Sotomayor (*S. Pedro*, 127–30), and Franz Nikolasch ('Zur Deutung der "Dominus-legem-dat"-Szene' *RQ* 64 (1969), 35–73, 71–3).

[129] This includes scenes where Christ sits and hands Paul a scroll on his right (full list and discussion in Sotomayor, *S. Pedro*, 125 ff.).

[130] The Concordius sarcophagus of Arles has Christ with an open codex in his lap bearing the key phrase. Rasmussen regards this scene as a hybrid between the *traditio legis* and the *Christus magister*. The fresco found in Cubiculum A47 of the upper catacomb of S. Gennaro in Naples has Christ enthroned with an open scroll bearing the inscription, but is dated to the early sixth century (Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 8–10).

[131] Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, ii. 1442 ff.

appears on sarcophagi, where Christ holds a cross and stands be-tween Peter and Paul.[132]

The origin of the *traditio legis* has been variously claimed to lie in funerary sculpture or apsidal mosaics.[133] The issue is of dubious resolve, largely on account of the uncertainties concerning essential pieces of evidence. The earliest surviving apse mosaic with this image—that of S. Costanza—cannot be securely dated to the con-struction of the mausoleum (which would put it earlier than the sarcophagi with the same design). On the other hand, a perhaps crucial piece of evidence is no longer extant: namely, the apse mosaic of Old St Peter's and the central scene of the frieze below it.[134] The copies we possess of the apse's design prior to the demolishing of the basilica in 1592 naturally contain all the restorations and additions made since the fourth century, for which reason no reconstruction of the original design can be regarded as completely reliable. However, the axial-symmetric composition of the *traditio legis* has been regarded as an indication that the scene was native to a basilica, where the Christ in the middle of the picture would be on a line with the altar and the bishop's seat.[135] But based largely on the fact that almost all the examples of the scene are from sarcophagi, a strong claim is made for its origin there, in relief sculpture, where aspects of imperial iconography on triumphal arches would have supplied its prototypes.[136] On the other hand, the way the *traditio* scene is given an architectural background in the central niche of

[132] There are several varieties of this: e.g. the 'Christus-Victor' sarcophagus from Arles, the Probus sarcophagus, and the Lateran 106.

[133] See the articles in three successive volumes of *Römische Quartalschrift*: Wal-ter Schumacher's 'Dominus legem dat', *RQ* 54 (1959), 1–36; *idem*, 'Eine römische Apsiskomposition', *RQ* 55 (1960), 137–202; and M. Sotomayor's 'Über die Her-kunft der "Traditio legis"', *RQ* 56 (1961), 215–30. Full discussion of the matter by Cäcilia Davis-Weyer, 'Das Traditio-Legis-Bild und seine Nachfolge', *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 12 (1961), 7–45. Further contributions are cited below. Huskinson's *Concordia* provides the fullest discussion I have encountered in English.

[134] For other aspects of the decorative schema, and the close relationship to the art in the original San Paolo fuori le mura, see Herbert L. Kessler, ' "Caput et Speculum Omnium Ecclesiarum" ', in William Tronzo (ed.), *Italian Church Dec-oration of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Uni-versity Press, 1989), 119–46.

[135] Davis-Weyer, 'Das Traditio-Legis-Bild', 37.

[136] G. Francovich was the first to argue for its origins in sarcophagal sculpture ('Studi sulla scultura Ravennate I', in *Felix Ravenna*, fasc. 26–7 (1958), 126–36). Sotomayor dates Lat. 174 *c*.360 (earlier, in his view, than the *traditio* mosaics of S. Costanza) and presents trenchant arguments that the *traditio legis* developed in the passion sarcophagi ('Über die Herkunft', 225–9). For discussion of the various theories, see Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, 65–71, who concludes that '[t]he protype for the fully-developed traditio scene remains unknown even though we assume that it has existed within the field of monumental apsidal decoration' (p. 71).

columnar sarcophagi has been regarded as evidence for a monumen-
tal prototype,[137] whether from the apse of Old St Peter's or the
Lateran basilica built by Constantine.[138] At any rate, the earliest
examples of this, or the kindred motives in apses, are not extant; and
the old mosaics which do survive have suffered reconstruction.
Given the central place of Peter and Paul around Christ in this
composition, it is significant that one of the earliest, if not the
earliest, *traditio legis* on a sarcophagus we possess is from San
Sebastiano,[139] the site of the Constantinian *basilica apostolorum*. Its
apse presumably featured those apostles with Christ.

   The most discussed of the three remaining monumental examples
of the *traditio legis* from the early period is found in the rotundal S.
Costanza in Rome.[140] This church has traditionally been regarded as
the original mausoleum of Constantine's daughter Constantina (d.
354); its much restored apse mosaics are generally dated before the
death of Constantius in 361.[141] However, recent archaeological ex-
cavation has called both these supposed verities into question; and
the apse mosaics of S. Costanza may be as late as the early fifth
century.[142] The niche of the southern apse of this mausoleum con-
tains a mosaic which displays Paul on Christ's right and Peter on his
left. Peter, bowing to Christ, catches with cloaked hands[143] the end
of an open scroll which Christ tenders in his direction. The unrolled
part of the scroll contains an inscription which originally—the

[137] Ihm, *Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei*, 129: 'The fact that in the
sculptural examples Christ is always depicted in front of an apse-like architectural
backdrop confirms the appropriation of the theme from monumental painting.'

[138] These two sites have been maintained as possible sources by Peter Franke,
'Traditio Legis und Petrusprimat', *VC* 26 (1972), 263–71, 270.

[139] Reproductions of WS 149 are also found in Ihm, *Programme der christlichen
Apsismalerei*, fig. XI, 1; Davis-Weyer, 'Das Traditio-Legis-Bild', 13; Sotomayor,
'Über die Herkunft', fig. 13.

[140] The other examples are S. Giovanni in Fonte (Naples, *c*.400) and an apse
fresco of the Grottaferrata catacomb (late fourth century). See Ihm, *Programme
der christlichen Apsismalerei*, 128. Colour reproductions of the apse mosaics of
S. Costanza in Joseph Wilpert and Walter Schumacher (eds.), *Die römischen Mosai-
ken der kirchlichen Bauten vom IV.–XIII. Jhd.* (Freiburg: Herder, 1976), fig. 1
(black and white in W. F. Volbach, *Early Christian Art*, trans. C. Ligota (New
York: Abrams, 1962), fig. 33).

[141] Thus Schumacher, 'Eine römische Apsiskomposition', 147–8.

[142] See Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 21–3 and related notes, for the most recent
discussion.

[143] This detail of the image has aspects of imperial imagery or religious reverence
(Schumacher, 'Dominus legem dat', 5–6). I have not found any mention in this
connection of the roughly contemporaneous Jewish notion that the canonical Scrip-
tures—as opposed to other texts—are those that 'soil the hands' (for this expression,
from Mish. *Yad.* 3: 5, see Julio Trebolle Barrera, *The Jewish Bible and the Christian
Bible*, trans. Wilfred Watson (Leiden and Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brill and Eerd-
mans, 1981), 165–7).

mosaic was heavily retouched in later restorations—probably read the standard *dominus legem dat*: 'The Lord gives the Law'.[144] (The reconstruction of the original reading is dependent upon a number of other similar representations with the same or very similar inscriptions.[145]) The inscription is an obvious first clue for the interpretation of the scene; the far more numerous depictions without it testify to their creators' confidence in the lucidity of the image by itself. Although the scene cannot be immediately derived from any single narrative in the New Testament, scholars have maintained a 'historical' element to the depiction, which, Hellemo asserts, 'plays upon and makes allusions to biblical accounts'. No mere illustration of a biblical scene, the image brings together biblical elements functioning 'as allusions which are combined and organized on the basis of an overall objective'.[146] Most important in this regard are the Gospel narratives which present Peter in his capacity as the chief apostle; secondary, it seems to me, are the various texts concerning Paul which present him as a recipient of a direct revelation from the resurrected Christ. The relationship of the image to these narrative texts does not make this a narrative image.

The same can be said of the central scene above the Torah niche in the Dura Synagogue, where David sits enthroned flanked by two standing figures, whose Graeco-Roman garb (worn only by the main religious figures on these walls) distinguishes him from the mass of others wearing Persian costumes. Kurt Weitzmann's elucidation of the non-narrative character of this Jewish image applies as well to the *traditio legis*: 'In order to do justice to this three-figure composition it must be stressed that its character does not point to a narrative event, but to a rather static, or one may say hieratic representation not bound by space or time.'[147] This is not to deny that this kind of image bears a relation to narrative texts that may have some historical bearing; the point is to recognize that the image is not illustrative of a text, but is a transhistorical representation of a theological reality. The *traditio legis*, like the Mithraic depictions of the tauroctone (bull sacrifice), is primarily symbolic rather than

[144] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 33–4 (fig. 18). The inscription presently reads: *dominus pacem dat* (references in Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, ii. 1437 n. 1). Cf. Kollwitz, 'Christus als Lehrer', 60.

[145] Rasmussen lists the other examples of this motif bearing similar inscriptions ('Traditio legis?', 8–9).

[146] Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, 78–9. Hellemo speaks here of 'gospel stories', but I think it is indisputable that elements of the Pauline letters and Acts contribute to the scene.

[147] Weitzmann, *Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue*, 91 (figs. 3, 127, 128). This fresco, on the upper central panel above the Torah niche, is unfortunately among the worst preserved of that syngogue's paintings. Hence one can hardly make out the scene in most reproductions: e.g. Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, fig. 66.

literal or historical.[148] The 'truth' that Christ has given the Law to
Peter and Paul is a theological rather than historical statement; the
perception of this 'truth' is therefore dependent on the viewer's
interpretive frame, which, as I have emphasized above, is itself
supplied by a community context.

   Whether the *traditio legis* originated in apse mosaics or on sar-
cophagi, the composition was clearly a viable communication in
either space. But if the hypothesis of its origins in the apse of Old
St Peter's is abandoned and the (later) dating of S. Costanza is
admitted, then the first examples of it are indeed found on funerary
sculpture. Scholars arguing for the birth of the *traditio legis* in this
setting integrate the eschatological-apocalyptic symbolism accom-
panying the three main figures into an understanding of the 'law'
being transmitted: Christ gives the religious law, now taught by the
apostles and their successors; the observance of this law has an
obvious relevance to the hopes of the deceased for the afterlife.[149]
The power of the apostles lies in their status as martyrs, hence the
best witnesses to the resurrected Christ and his teaching. It is as such
that they appear on sarcophagi. Hence we see the *traditio legis* first
on passion sarcophagi, as previously discussed; the earliest examples
of these date to the first part of the fourth century, being obvious
indices and commemorations of events of the great persecutions
under Diocletian and Galerian (303–11).[150] These passion sarcoph-
agi feature not only scenes of the apostles' arrest, trials, and execu-
tions, but also narrative moments from the many apocryphal Acts of
the apostles. Roman workshops drew scenes from the apocryphal
Passio Petri to depict the arrest of Peter and his striking the rock to
produce water, a feature whereby he was assimilated to Moses, the
prototypical law-giver (and receiver).[151] After the Peace of the
Church, by the middle of the century, the triumph of Christ was
expressed in a new representation: the *crux invicta*, or 'victorious
cross'. A cross stands at the centre of these sarcophagi (in the

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[148] Elsner's analysis of the Mithraic cult-image seems fully applicable to the
Christian one: 'Thus the reference of the tauroctone is not in any literal sense to a
historical space or time (what may have been done in this world by real people) nor
is it to the ritualisation of this world (to any actual sacrifice or ritual performance).
The referent of the scene where Mithras kills the bull—the space to which it points
and where its "reality" is located—is not in this world at all, but is in a mythic and
eternal space and time which may carry many meanings' (*Art and the Roman
Viewer*, 214).

[149] Berger, 'Der traditionsgeschichtliche Ursprung der "Traditio legis"', 107.

[150] *Realia* from the period help us date the material. On one such sarcophagus the
arresting soldiers wear the *pileus pannonicus* (a cylindrical leather hat) of Diocle-
tian's soldiers (Huskinson, *Concordia*, 13–14).

[151] Augustine's *Serm.* 351. 4 states [Moses] *figura fuit Petri* (cited in U. Brocco-
li's article 'Peter, Iconography', in *EEC*, ii: 677).

position of Christ in many other ternary scenes) to symbolize the resurrection, the 'victory' of clear relevance for the religious meanings of funerary art. The *crux invicta* also appears in scenes with Peter (Lateran 171) or both chief apostles (e.g. the sarcophagus Lateran 164 depicting the arrest of Peter and the execution of Paul). Not infrequently—and in all media—Peter carries the cross, the sign of his co-passion with Christ, in *traditio legis* scenes.[152] But because Peter is on the receiving end of Christ's scroll, we have in this an additional Moses–Peter typology, made possible by prominent passages in the Gospels where Jesus makes Peter the rock, the gate-keeper, and the shepherd of the Christian flock.

Two of the earliest appearances of the *traditio legis* on Roman passion sarcophagi—if we admit the variant of a seated Christ under the heading of *traditio*[153]—date from shortly after the mid-century and are akin in style: Lateran 174 and the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus.[154] The former is a columnar sarcophagus with a central scene of a beardless Christ, flanked by two beardless figures and seated between the two columns which define the central niche. He holds open a scroll to Peter on his left, while his head tilts in the direction of Paul, who acclaims him with an outstretched right hand. It is very close to other depictions of the *traditio legis*, save for the sitting Christ, found also on the Junius Bassus sarcophagus. This most famous of Christian sarcophagi was discovered in 1595 or 1597 in the Vatican grottos, and is reckoned among the masterpieces of Roman funerary sculpture. Its two registers have rather different portraits of Paul: one in a ternary scene with Christ in the centre of the upper register and the other the arrest of the apostle on the lower register. The inscription dates the death of this *praefectus urbi* to 25 August 359. Both the burial site and the quality of the workmanship of this superb example of *bello stilo* sculpture befit the

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[152] Examples of this latter on sarcophagi are the fragment of the columnar sarcophagus of S. Sebastiano, the 'city gate' sarcophagus of Louvre Borghese, and the columnar one of Marseille; see also the cover of the Pola casket and the graffito of a loculus cover from the Priscilla catacomb (reproductions in Davis-Weyer, 'Das Traditio-Legis-Bild', 13–16, 20). Peter also carries the cross in the *traditio legis* in the fresco of the catacomb *ad decimum* of the Via Latina and in the vault mosaic of the baptistery of the cathedral of Naples (reproduced in Wilpert and Schumacher, *Die römischen Mosaiken*, fig. 11; also in Testini, 'Gli apostoli Pietro e Paolo', 113, 121), as well as on the silver casket from Thessalonika and the gold glass housed in Toledo, Ohio (see Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 7–9).

[153] On this point, see Weyer-Davis, 'Das Traditio-Legis-Bild', 7–13. She regards the *traditio legis* as 'an element foreign to sarcophagal sculpture', on the ground that the scene seems designed for an area of greater dimensions (p. 10).

[154] For full discussion of the latter, see Malbon, *Iconography of the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus*, esp. 49–54. Sotomayor considers Lat. 174 to be the older of the two ('Über die Herkunft', 225–9; *S. Pedro*, 141–3).

high rank of the recent convert. The central scene of the main (front) panel of the sarcophagus is the *traditio legis*, albeit with a sitting Christ; the centrality of this depiction must be taken as an obvious 'compositional clue' to the meaning of the whole.[155] Christ is young and beardless (such an 'Apollonian' Christ was favoured in the Constantinian period), sitting enthroned over heaven between the two apostles. With his left hand he tenders a half-open scroll to Peter; with his right he holds out a closed one to Paul. The heads of both apostles have been influenced by a variant of the philosopher image: namely, the 'Plotinus-type of portrait',[156] obviously a persuasive motif for the literate classes for whom philosophical study and religious seeking were a unified whole.

The 'throning *traditio*' (so-called for the sake of argument) of the Junius Bassus sarcophagus has in common with Lateran 174 an undeniable element of imperial iconography. On both these sarcophagi, Christ is enthroned with his feet upon an anthropomorphic Coelus (the Roman sky-god, sometimes called *Jupiter caelestis*), clearly a sign of his universal reign.[157] This interpretation follows from the presence of this same Coelus figure beneath the feet of the imperial colleagues on the arch of Galerius.[158] The incorporation of this imperial imagery into the variant (sitting) *traditio legis* scene, according to the author of a standard handbook, 'makes the point, in hieratic manner, that Christ as emperor through his victory over death gives the New Law in eternal sovereignty'.[159] On this line of interpretation, the transmission of the 'law' to Peter derives from imperial models for the handing over of official documents. An important, though somewhat later, piece of evidence for this is the Missorium of Theodosius, dated to 388. This big silver dish has an embossed design presenting the emperor Theodosius enthroned between his (subordinate) imperial colleagues and delivering with his right hand a *rotulus* to an imperial official.[160] This last detail

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[155] In her discussion of the Junius Bassus sarcophagus's 'compositional clues' (*Iconography of the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus*, 7–10), Malbon notes how '[a]t the center are depicted two views of the seated Christ' (p. 9). In the register below the *traditio*, there is an *adventus* scene (Paul's arrest is also featured on the lower register, where his bald head stands in notable contrast to the hirsute 'Paul' of the central niche).

[156] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 22–4. See also L'Orange, 'Plotinus-Paul', 40–2.

[157] Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, 25.

[158] Reproductions in Grabar, *Christian Iconography*, fig. 110; also in Volbach, *Early Christian Art*, fig. 3.

[159] Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, ii (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1972), 5–6, quoted in Malbon, *Iconography of the Sarcophagus of Junius Bassus*, 50.

[160] Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, 84–5 (reproduction of the Missorium also in Volbach, *Early Christian Art*, fig. 55). Elsner had previously registered the theory that the Emperor is receiving, not delivering, a document (*Art and the Roman Viewer*, 267).

resembles more the *traditio clavium* (Peter receiving the keys on Christ's right),[161] or the later *traditio legis* scenes from Ravenna, which have a hand off to Paul on the right.[162] For these latter, the Missorium is an appropriate parallel: an enthroned Christ invests Peter with the keys and appoints Paul the principal teacher of the church. Making sure that both apostles, in separate scenes, receive something from Christ's right hand is perhaps a clarification of elements more ambiguously presented in the single image of *traditio legis*.

The chief problem in the interpretation of the *traditio* seems to me to lie in accounting for the relationship between the representations of Christ giving the Law on a throne between Peter and Paul and those that show Christ standing between them. A convenient expedient would be to sever any link between the sitting and the standing compositions, which would remove the *traditio legis* from the orbit of the court ceremonies where the Emperor sits.[163] If Christ is standing, the imperial models indicate that there can be no 'handing over of the Law' in the sense given by certain interpretations of the scene.[164] This insight must be rigorously pursued, but the variant posture in the same scene must also be explained. In the imperial parallels often adduced from the Arch of Constantine, the posture of the central figure—the Emperor—is determinative of the meaning of the whole scene. The Emperor sits when handing something over: a commission or a decree, as in the Missorium, or coins for the crowd, as in the scenes of *largitio* or *sparsio*.[165] The standing pose on the Arch, however, which shows the Emperor surrounded by his officials in an address to the people—the *adlocutio* scene[166]—

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[161] For discussion of this motif, see Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, ii. 1442–59, and Sotomayor, *S. Pedro*, ch. 2.

[162] Discussed by Schumacher, 'Dominus legem dat', 30–9 (reproductions in Volbach, *Early Christian Art*, figs. 174–5, 178).

[163] Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 16. He explicitly opposes the older line of argument that Lat. 174 is 'one of the most important witnesses for the development of the *traditio legis* from imperial iconography because here a *seated* Christ holds the open scroll'. Rasmussen rejects this theory of origin on the grounds that Lat. 174 is problematic, whether because (following Davis-Weyer) we take it to be a blend of features from the *traditio* and the Junius Bassus scene or because it is a forgery of the early seventeenth century (thus K. Wessel, 'Der siebennischige Sarkophag in den Grotten von St Peter', *Pantheon*, 27 (1969), 120).

[164] Schumacher is particularly emphatic about this, 'Dominus legem dat', 8.

[165] For the portrait from the *Calendar of 354* of Constantius in an act of *sparsio*, see Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, 83 (fig. 54). For the *largitio* scene on the Arch of Constantine, see Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 14, or *idem.*, *Christian Iconography*, fig. 116.

[166] See Schumacher, 'Dominus legem dat', 2–4, for references to the material and older literature; reproductions of scenes from the Constantine Arch, fig. 2,1 and 2 (found also in Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 202; Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, 18).

corresponds to another kind of delivery: namely, of speech. This must be the clue to the *traditio legis*, if we take seriously the imperial iconography. But a total severance of the two different postures in apparent *traditio* scenes—particularly as regards any genetic account of them[167]—is made difficult by the evidence of the Bassus sarcophagus and Lateran 174, where we have scenes of a seated Christ with elements of the *traditio*. The problem is made more acute by these two works being dated earlier than any undisputed examples of *traditio legis*. So, despite Schumacher's protest against any derivation of this scene from the earlier, well-documented 'figure of a seated *Maiestas* with a scroll acclaimed by the apostles',[168] it may be precisely that the artists, reaching to express a notion that was not exactly paralleled by an imperial image, began with a sitting posture—reminiscent of both *Christus magister* and the enthroned *Christus imperator*—and moved to a standing one. In any case, the meaning of the scene will have to be shaded differently based on the posture of Christ.

It is difficult to maintain two different lines of descent, each corresponding to a separate imperial pose, on account of the crossover features of the two sarcophagi under discussion. Although that of Junius Bassus lacks the typical unfurled scroll caught by Peter, the scene is not merely that of Christ sitting between the two apostles with a codex or scroll in his left hand (such as was probably in the apse of Old St Peter's). In the cramped conditions of a single niche, Christ seems almost to be nudging Peter with the scroll, pushing it on him in its doubled-over condition (the ancient 'book-marker' hold, often treated as a symbol of interrupted reading). Lateran 174 is more clearly in the orbit of the *traditio*, as Christ holds both ends of the half-open scroll with its characteristic loose part being received by Peter.[169] In light of these problems it may be better to classify the central scene on the Junius Bassus sarcophagus under the head *maiestas Domini*, allowing that both it and the *traditio* have essentially 'equivalent' themes.[170] While I agree that these motifs present the three main characters under similar auspices, the action and position of the chief figure present distinctions not

[167] Schumacher lays great weight on this ('Eine römische Apsiskomposition', 163).

[168] Ibid.

[169] Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 16.

[170] This is the view of Bisconti, who dates the passion sarcophagi with the *traditio* motif 'from the years 340–350' (*Temi di iconografia paleocristiana*, 50–3). Bisconti agrees with those who find the beginning of this iconography on sarcophagi: 'The theme which sees the Christ as a *rex*, an *imperator*, and a severe *iudex* who promulgates the law and consigns it to his closest officials flows from funereal sculpture into other pieces of evidence, likewise funereal, such as in the apse-mosaic of the mausoleum of Constantina' (p. 51).

to be overlooked. There is no doubt, however, about the complementarity of the scenes, due to their presence on the famous sarcophagus from S. Ambrogio in Milan, probably of the late fourth century. Its front features a sitting Christ with an open codex, with Peter on his right and perhaps Paul on his left; on the back of the sarcophagus we see the standing Christ with Paul on his right hand and Peter near the unfurled scroll on his left.[171] The inclusion of Christ in both postures certainly indicates the complementarity of the two scenes of 'the apostolic assembly organized around a seated Christ the Teacher or a standing Christ the Emperor', which, Bisconti maintains, 'provide two equally meaningful versions of Christological visions'.[172]

Apart from the debates surrounding the origin of the *traditio legis*, Huskinson maintains that 'its basic message is clear':

the two Roman apostles, Peter and Paul, stand as witnesses to the, initially young, Christ, triumphant in Heaven. There is a similar function performed both by this motif and the *crux invicta*: both bear witness that on the final day of judgment those who have followed Christ's Law, like Peter and Paul, will rise again. Where the *crux invicta* was often flanked by scenes of the double martyrdom of the apostles, the *traditio legis* is invariably flanked by the apostles, Peter and Paul: *both* apostles, not one, receive the Law from Christ, the ultimate Law-giver.[173]

I agree with Huskinson that both apostles receive the law, as this would appear to be indicated by the scroll that Paul holds; yet we must still clarify what the 'law' is and why it is Peter who receives from Christ the open scroll. Gleaning from imperial iconography that the standing Christ must signify an oral delivery (and not merely the transmission of a document), the 'law' means the revelation which Christ gives to his apostles. This 'law of Christ' entails—according to the most important precedent in Exod. 20: 22—a recording of a spoken Word. Thus the *lex Christi* can be identified with the Gospel as such, the teaching of the Christian religion which encompasses both theology and practice.[174] Peter received this law during his earthly ministry and again after the resurrection (Acts 1: 3; 10: 9–16); Paul received it through a direct revelation from the resurrected Christ. The standing posture of Christ indicates his active delivery of the teaching, whence it is no accident that the

[171] Reproduction of the St Ambrose sarcophagus in *EEC,* ii. figs. 170–1, and Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 261–3 (figs. 290, 293).

[172] Bisconti, *Temi di iconografia paleocristiana*, 54.

[173] Huskinson, *Concordia*, 25.

[174] References to scholarly discussion and patristic texts in Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 11–13.

ancient depictions of the Sermon on the Mount present him teaching on his feet.

Along the lines of the interpretation of the standing Christ suggested by the imperial analogues, the 'giving of the law' is not equivalent to a simple 'deposit' with Peter, such as could be asserted without controversy in the case of the *traditio clavium*. The standing position of Christ has a more active meaning, as many scholars since Schumacher have recognized:[175] the 'giving' is a revealing of himself in the glory of his resurrection, a theme appropriately accompanied by eschatological symbolism and the apostles who are witness to that resurrection.[176] The eschatological aspect of the motif clarifies why this was a popular scene for sarcophagi. But highlighting the presence here of 'a solemn theophany of the resurrected Christ who marks the commencement of a new reign, that of Christ and the church',[177] entails no denial of other aspects of the scene. Elements of this theophany have led Klaus Berger to argue for an interpretation of the *traditio legis* which clarifies the recurrent theme of the scroll in light of apocalyptic texts where scrolls symbolize visionary revelation. Reading the scene of *traditio legis* against the backdrop of such texts, Berger concludes:

The function of the representation consists in this—to represent Peter and Paul as normative, legitimate authorities and to demonstrate the divine origin of the commandments and teachings which one attributes to them. The *Sitz-im-Leben*—particularly in the representation on sarcophagi— consists in showing that the teaching, commandments, and promises which were transmitted by Peter and Paul are legitimate precisely because they are of divine origin.[178]

This aspect of the ternary image highlighting an authoritative transmission of the teaching is also present in the scenes with Christ sitting between his apostles and holding an open codex or scroll. There is, however, a slightly different emphasis: namely, upon his capacity as a teacher, *Christus magister*. When there are present

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[175] Schumacher, 'Dominus legem dat', 29: 'Christ is presented not only in the glory of Paradise nor only as Lawgiver, but he is at the same time the One Who Appears (*der Erscheinende*), as the New Testament knows him, the Self-Revealing One of the primitive church's expectation.' Following Schumacher's insistence on reading the postures according to the imperial models, Rasmussen states the conclusion in lapidary fashion: '*Traditio legis* zeigt aber den Geber, der damit kein Geber sein kann, stehend' ('Traditio legis?', 11).

[176] Moving away from Schumacher's notion that the composition has as its primary aspect a historical element (viz. in the self-revelation of Christ to his chief apostles), Nikolasch has championed the primacy of the eschatological motif ('Zur Deutung', 38–48).

[177] Yves Christe, 'Apocalypse et "Traditio Legis"', *RQ* 71 (1976), 42.

[178] Berger, 'Die traditionsgeschichtliche Ursprung', 107.

additionally traces of imperial iconography (the throne over Coelus), another shade of meaning comes to the fore, denominated by scholars as *maiestas Domini*: Christ, enthroned in his resurrected glory and role as Lord of All, is the source of the 'law' which his chief disciples impart and protect. In this sense both Peter and Paul are depicted as recipients of the divine revelation, which is the same for both, albeit they receive it in different capacities. None the less, Peter's position with respect to the scroll—the explicit, published revelation—should not be overlooked. Accordingly, I agree with the scholars who insist that the *traditio legis* highlights Peter, though not in such wise as to be tantamount to a full theory of the primacy of Peter *qua* Roman See. Both aspects of the *traditio*, on this line of interpretation, correspond to Victorinus' depiction of Paul as the receiver of unmediated divine revelation and his emphasis upon the agreement of Paul's gospel with that of the Jerusalem apostles, especially Peter, in whom 'the foundation of the church has been laid, as is written in the gospel'.[179]

A number of details from the ternary scenes of Christ with Peter and Paul are suggestive of the latter's special role on account of his canonical letters. In the *traditio legis* located at the centre of the front of the sarcophagus Lateran 174, Christ tenders an open scroll to Peter with his left hand;[180] but, as Sullivan has pointed out, 'this emphasis on Peter as recipient of the Law is nonetheless undermined here by the turn of Christ's head in the direction of Paul'.[181] But attempts to argue for a primacy of Paul in the *traditio legis* based on his position at Christ's right hand (normally the undoubted place of honour, see Matt. 20: 21–3) founder on the failure to understand that the positions of the apostles relative to Christ are dictated by the special demands of the iconographic motif. Recalling that Peter begins on Christ's right in the *Christus magister* scenes (and that when Paul first appears here, he is on Christ's left), we can retrace the evolution of the image which puts Peter on Christ's left not only in the ternary *traditio legis* but also in scenes with the larger gathering of the apostles. What were originally two different scenarios, with Paul (one in the ternary image with Peter, another alongside the full group of apostles) in two different positions relative to Christ, began to influence each other. This interaction eventually produced the hybrid where Peter and Paul are shown along with the whole

[179] Thus Victorinus on Gal. 1: 18 (see also his comments on Gal. 1: 12 and 2: 7).

[180] The necessity for Peter to be on Christ's left is explained by Berger as an influence of the scene in Rev. 10: 2–6, where the revealing angel (already identified with Christ by Victorinus of Pettau in his commentary on this book (ed. Hausleiter, CSEL 49, 88, 1–7)) takes an oath with his right hand held upright, all the while holding a book with his left (Berger, 'Der traditionsgeschichtliche Ursprung', 108).

[181] Sullivan, 'Saints Peter and Paul', 71.

apostolic college, with Paul having retained from the *traditio legis* scene his position on Christ's right. The arrangement in the *traditio legis* required Peter to receive the scroll on Christ's left hand, if for no other reason than that Christ must gesture with his right to signify speech. Thus the key to the position of the two apostles relative to Christ lies in the necessity that Christ *gesture with his right hand* and so hand the scroll with his left to Peter, who must then be on that side.[182] For Greek and Roman orators the right hand was the default hand for gesturing; while certain gestures might entail the use of both hands, one never gestured with the left hand alone, as Quintilian makes clear.[183] This kind of imagery for Christ assimilates the Galilean ex-carpenter to the figure of the learned and authoritative teacher, whose two prize students are prepared to transmit his teachings, which have been reliably recorded. Thus there is no reason to interpret Paul's position on Christ's right in the *traditio legis* as a sign of preference for him.[184]

This can be confirmed by what we know about the apse mosaic of Old St Peter's in Rome. If the general design of the late sixteenth-century sketch found in Giacomo Grimaldi's description of the basilica can be trusted to some extent, Christ sat enthroned in the apse holding a codex in his lap with his left hand and gesturing with his right, positioned between his chief apostles. The two apostles acclaim him with raised right hands, Paul on Christ's right and Peter on his left.[185] Surely, if this position relative to Christ were meant to

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[182] Overlooked by later scholars, von Dobschütz mentions in a footnote that this explanation ('with the right hand Christ must make a gesture of blessing, thus he has to hold the scroll of the law in the left hand') was furnished already by Grimouard de St Laurent, *Guide de l'art chrétienne*, ii. 107 ff. (*Der Apostel Paulus*, 52–3 n. 39). Where Grimouard and von Dobschütz find Christ raising his right hand in a blessing, along with many scholars I see an orator's gesture. H. P. L'Orange regards the blessing gesture as derived from the oratorical ('Sol Invictus Imperator' in *idem, Likeness and Icon*, 325–43, 326).

[183] *Manus sinistra numquam sola gestum recte facit; dextrae se frequenter accomodat* (*Inst*. 11. 3. 114; Loeb, iv. 304). Previously in his discussion of gestures, he indicates implicitly that the right hand is the hand for gesture when he describes another gesture *quo nunc Graeci plurimum utuntur, etiam utraque manu* (11. 3. 102; Loeb, iv. 298).

[184] The question of the two apostles' positions *vis-à-vis* Christ is complex and need not be rehearsed here. For recent discussion, see Sullivan, 'Saints Peter and Paul', 69 ff., who interprets it as a preference for Paul; see also von Dobschütz, *Der Apostel Paulus*, 5 ff., and Kollwitz, 'Christus als Lehrer', 55–7. Sotomayor passes over the problem a bit lightly by regarding the non-*traditio* ternary scenes with Paul on the right of Christ as late and influenced by the apostles' position in the *traditio legis* (*S. Pedro*, 124).

[185] This drawing is reproduced in Sullivan ('Saints Peter and Paul', 72), who notes that Augustine used Gal. 1: 1 to present Paul as Peter's equal (CSEL 84, 57, 1–7), but does not refer to Victorinus' extended discussion of that verse. Pietri considers that Grimaldi's sketch contains too many later accretions of detail to

indicate a preference for Paul, it would not have been found in the Constantinian basilica built over the shrine to St Peter! Nor was the apse mosaic a *traditio legis* scene (unless one supposes a very heavy-handed medieval restoration which sat Christ down and turned his open scroll into a book), where the receiver of the open scroll must stand on Christ's left for reasons already related. However, because the inverse positions of the apostles relative to Christ appear very frequently in non-*traditio* scenes of Christ flanked by apostles,[186] the position of Paul on Christ's right in ternary scenes with a seated or enthroned Christ is deeply puzzling,[187] and perhaps explains why some experts persist in maintaining that Old St Peter's did indeed originally contain a *traditio legis* as its apse mosaic.[188]

Whatever the reason for this positioning of the chief apostles around Christ in the apse of Old St Peter's at a period prior to the development of the *traditio legis*, the fact is that, despite the place of Peter on Christ's left in the *traditio*, he is more nearly connected to Christ due to the scroll which is the defining mark of the image. Christ is at the centre: the viewer's attention moves next to the

support the numerous hypotheses claiming this apse mosaic as the archetype of the *traditio legis* (*Roma Christiana*, ii. 1414–17). Grimaldi's chronicle has been edited by R. Niggl, *Descrizione della basilica antica di S. Pietro in Vaticano, Codice Berberini latino 2733* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1972). A fresco in the grotto of St Peter's, a copy of the same apsis mosaic, presents a similar image (reproduction in Schumacher, 'Eine römische Apsiskomposition', fig. 22, 1).

[186] e.g. the Probus sarcophagus from the Vatican with Christ holding a cross as a staff, flanked by Peter on his right, and holding an open scroll with his left in proximity to the balding apostle generally identified as Paul (reproductions: Grabar, *Early Christian Art*, 257 (fig. 285); Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, 100–1 (fig. 36)). In a chamber of the Domitilla catacomb, there is a poorly preserved mosaic of Christ (dated to the mid-fourth century) enthroned with Peter on his right and Paul on his left, bearing the inscription *Qui filius diceris et pater inveniris*: 'You who are called Son are found to be the Father as well' (for recent discussion and references, see Michel-Yves Perrin, 'La Paternité du Christ', *RivAC* 77 (2001), 481–518; reproduction, 489).

[187] Rasmussen likewise regards the position of Peter in the *traditio* as determined by the actions of Christ's hands, but he also notes that in many scenes of *Christus magister*, Peter and Paul have the same position relative to Christ (he provides a list of such scenes: 'Traditio legis?', 33 n. 69). He attempts to solve this problem by resorting somewhat apologetically to an explanation given by the tenth-century bishop of Ravenna, Peter Damian (*De picturis principium apostolorum*, PL 145, 591–4). For Damian, Peter exemplifies the *vita activa* and Paul the *vita contemplativa*, a 'higher manner of life', which accordingly puts him at Christ's right hand. Despite the fact that this distinction derives from the monastic theology of the Middle Ages, Rasmussen concludes that '[i]t is indeed quite possible that a rationale such as this . . . is the basis for the fact that in the *traditio legis* Peter and Paul are positioned in this immediately surprising fashion' ('Traditio legis?', 17–18).

[188] Richard Krautheimer maintains that the 'theme of that figural [apse] mosaic was in all likelihood . . . the *traditio legis*' ('On the Inscription in Old St Peter's', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 41 (1987), 317–29, 318).

unrolled scroll he extends in his left hand to Peter. This is particularly clear when Peter also holds a cross—instrument of his death and passion, as on the Pola casket or the 'city gate' sarcophagus from San Ambrogio in Milan.[189] Thus any interpretation of the image must explain the central action where Peter catches the end of the scroll with cloaked hands. This special position of Peter led scholars of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth to maintain that the *traditio legis* was a piece of papal propaganda, such as we otherwise associate with the papacy of Damasus and his successor, Siricius.[190] But as the image appears to date to the previous decade, the interpretation of Petrine primacy has found only a few recent supporters. If Petrine, i.e. Roman, primacy had been the point of the scene, it would have been perfectly possible to depict Peter alone with Christ, along the lines of the image on the Missorium of Theodosius, where a single high official on the left of the Emperor 'receives from him his scroll of authority'.[191] Yet it is difficult to deny the 'specifically Roman character' of the image of the two martyr-saints joined *in concordia* around Christ. This conclusion is assured, as Peter Franke, a recent advocate of the Roman primacy reading of the image, has joined others in pointing out, by the fact that 'the geographical range of the *traditio legis* stays restricted to the western parts of the Empire'.[192] Franke rightly argues that any interpretation of the *traditio legis* must account for the *traditio* being precisely to Peter, and that this feature has been somewhat neglected by scholars who have laid emphasis upon the eschatological character of the scene to the point of erasing what he considers the intimately conjoined reference to the primacy of Peter.

   Despite the controversial nature of the last claim, all interpreters of the *traditio legis* are united in regarding the scene as an image of authoritative transmission, however this is further inflected. Prima facie, the authority of Peter is emphasized through his reception of the unfurled scroll. That this was part of the original intention of the scenes seems evident from a series of fifth-century sarcophagi from Ravenna which show Paul alone as he receives a scroll from Christ,[193] much as St John receives the Law on the triumphal arch dedicated to him in that same city, then the capital of the Western

189 Pictures in Hellemo, *Adventus Domini*, figs. 23, 47.
190 Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 14–15.
191 Huskinson, *Concordia*, 115.
192 Franke, 'Traditio Legis', 267. Exceptions to this rule are the famous Pola casket and the silver box with an embossed *traditio legis* scene discovered at Thessalonika in 1966 during a road construction. Connections between both of these objects and Rome are speculative but suggestive; see Rasmussen, 'Traditio legis?', 21.
193 Huskinson, *Concordia*, 28–9.

Empire.[194] The interchangeability of the recipient in these clear derivatives of the *traditio legis* strongly suggests that the ancient fabricators and viewers regarded it as a scene about the transmission of authority. There seems little reason to deny that Rome would have a special interest in Peter in asserting its authority in doctrinal matters, or to claim that Paul could ever contend there for primacy of position with the rock on which Christ built his church. Moreover, there is iconographic evidence to suggest a reaction by the church of Constantinople against Rome's self-serving Petrinism, resulting in 'a special vogue' for Paul.[195] This Roman Petrinism notwithstanding, the *concordia* scenes so popular in that city shows them precisely as peers in their martyrdom; yet this does not negate the different positions they otherwise have.

There is one sense in which the iconography of the late fourth and early fifth century may point to a preference for Paul *qua* apostle to the Gentiles. Through what I call the ethno-ecclesiastical motif of the grand apse mosaics of Santa Pudenziana and Santa Sabina in Rome, an association, heavily documented in the literary sources, is forged between Peter and Paul and the 'churches' of the Jewish and Gentile Christians. Controversial, however, is Franke's use of the iconographical and patristic evidence to argue that the joint appearance of the apostles *per se* indicates them as 'representatives of the Jewish and Gentile churches'.[196] While the mosaics of the two Roman churches just mentioned witness to this motif *c*.400, it is more problematic to read the same message into the ternary scenes created around the middle of the fourth century and shortly thereafter, as they lack the explicit symbolism. None the less, because of the overwhelming evidence from Latin Christian authors of the period—and particularly the commentators on Paul, including Victorinus—we may hazard that Peter and Paul may well have been understood by Christian audiences, accustomed to sermons on the theme, to signify the mission to the Jews and that to the Gentiles. The identity issues of the church surrounding its Jewish origins and predominantly Gentile constituency would have given actuality to the theme.[197]

[194] Kollwitz, 'Christus als Lehrer', 62.

[195] Thus Ernst Kitzinger, 'A Marble Relief of the Theodosian Period', in *idem*, W. Eugene Kleinbauer (ed.), *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1976), 1–31, 17.

[196] Franke, 'Traditio Legis', 269.

[197] This interpretation, without exclusion of the strong eschatological element, has been most strongly maintained by Franz Nikolasch, who makes the fullest use of Latin commentaries on Paul to interpret the *traditio legis*; unfortunately, he seems to have confused Marius Victorinus, to whom he ascribes an early fourth-century date, with the bishop of Pettau ('Zur Deutung', 51).

Despite the many differences—historical, literary, and symbolic—between Peter and Paul, the art-historical record in Rome testifies overwhelmingly to the fact that Christians in that city saw them in harmony and delighted in the depiction of them *in concordia*, a Castor and Pollux of Christian iconography, as Davis-Weyer has suggested.[198] This was certainly the case for Catholic Christians, although we know of heterodox groups in Rome who loved the one and hated the other: Marcionites, Manichaeans, and perhaps those responsible for the pseudo-Clementine literature.[199] But unlike the case of the Dioscuri twins, where one was immortal and the other mortal, Peter and Paul were Roman martyrs and both—according to Revelation and therefore according to biblically based popular piety—were raised to life already alongside their Lord, immune from fear of the 'second death' (Rev. 20: 4–6).

The image of Christ between his two chief apostles—each 'chief' over his respective field of mission—has two aspects: transmission of authority and unanimity of will. Sub-themes are the content of the teaching and the witness of the martyr-apostles to 'the event'. Thus the *traditio legis* and other such ternary scenes take place in heaven, the chief apostles enjoying the company of the resurrected Christ, while their churches carry on the work below. Thus the 'eschatological' aspect of the image should not be separated from the 'ecclesiastical': the Lord Jesus Christ has given a definitive teaching; Peter has caught hold of it, to keep it holy (hence his veiled hands). To keep the gospel intact and holy at Rome in the mid-fourth century meant, above all, resistance to those who opposed the Nicene Creed as the sufficient standard of Trinitarian orthodoxy.[200] The eventual triumph of the 'anti-Arians' in Italy had been prepared by several vociferous Italian bishops who deplored Liberius' cave-in to Constantius and did not cease their resistance. One can well imagine that Peter, who denied Jesus to save his own hide yet was put in charge of Christ's flock, was a very meaningful figure in this context.

[198] Davis-Weyer connects this interpretation of the chief apostles with the 'new stars' (*nova sidera*) of Damasus' verses and notes how 'Damasus' poetic comparison appears to have found no following in Rome. That is understandable, if one considers that his epigram arose at a point in time in which the conception of the Roman founder-apostles as twins had already begun to be dissolved in favor of one emphasizing the dominant position of Peter' ('Das Traditio-Legis-Bild', 31–2).

[199] For the latter, see ch. 3–4 of Simon Légasse, *L'Antipaulinisme sectaire au temps des pères de l'Église*, (Paris: Galbalda, 2000).

[200] Schumacher regards the Trinitarian controversies as a signal factor in the ternary images: 'Viewed from the perspective of the depiction in Old Saint Peter's [Christ enthroned in the apse above with the *traditio legis* in the frieze below], there seems to be expressed in it the official position of the Roman spheres of influence: The Logos reveals his own divine nature—that of the Christ—to the chief apostles' ('Eine römische Apsiskomposition', 199).

   Paul, like Peter, was a Roman martyr and teacher of the Roman church of the first rank. I see no evidence that orthodox Christianity ever saw Paul in competition with Peter for 'the keys', whether one takes these to signify the Roman See or simply the power of the church—symbolized by Peter—to remit sins.[201] Their complementarity is the primary meaning of the many images of them *in concordia* hailing from Rome. This *concordia*, however, never denied their *differentiae*. Paul could not be a symbol of the whole church, or even of the Roman See, as Peter was or later became. Yet there was a very material reality to Paul's continuing presence that Peter could not match: namely, the considerable proportion of the New Testament constituted by his epistles. Paul—and this is significant with regard to his place in the *traditio legis*—the 'Paul' of the canonical Pauline corpus, is the early church's great interpreter of the *lex Christi*. As Klaus Wessel pointed out in 1950, 'the conception of Christ's teaching as a new law is first sounded by Paul' (Gal. 6: 2).[202] Peter had a symbolic significance for the church universal as well as a special meaning for the Roman church of the mid-fourth century; Paul, for his part, was likewise a Roman martyr and co-founder of the Roman church, but he was above all the church's teacher and spiritual director, his letters forming the most substantial source of directions for Christian living. This is implicit in the *traditio legis*, however much it emphasizes Peter. For Paul, as he acclaims Christ with his right hand, always holds a scroll in his left: he has been primed by Christ in a special revelation; but his gospel is the same as that of Peter and the others. Paul's epistles are thus authoritative in combination with the gospels (Peter) and the whole of Scripture. This latter is signified in many pictures by *capsa* at the feet of Christ or elsewhere. In so far as Peter and Paul are an *imago brevis* of the whole group of apostles signifying the universal church, the *traditio legis* is primarily an image of an institutionally vested divine power. Notwithstanding certain eccentricities, the Latin exegetes of Paul—Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Jerome, Augustine, and Pelagius—all agree in presenting this apostle as the great teacher of the church and of the church's way of salvation.

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[201] Sotomayor rejects claims for Roman primacy in the *traditio legis* (for him it is a scene of revelation and testimony of the authentic witnesses), and argues instead for the alternative just mentioned in the case of the *traditio clavium*: Peter alone has 'the quality of being the unique individual who can represent the whole church' (*S. Pedro*, 167).

[202] Wessel, 'Das Haupt der Kirche', 302.

4

Exegesis and Interpretation in Victorinus' Commentaries

Victorinus' method of commenting on the Pauline letters is revealed in the sense he attaches to the word *interpretatio*: to articulate the meaning of the text. To the biblical text itself, and to the 'meanings' or 'truths' derived from the text, he grants total authority, fully presupposing that the audience shares this canonical standpoint. With the confidence of an experienced critic, and with the occasional 'God willing', Victorinus focuses almost exclusively on Paul's intentions, what he meant and why. But the meanings Victorinus finds in the apostle's epistles are not always obvious or univocal, particularly when he treats the biblical citations embedded in Galatians and Ephesians. There he employs 'interpretation' and 'interpret' when facing a judgement among multiple meanings. Indeed, Paul's allegorization of passages from the Old Testament gave him licence to pursue this interpretive option.[1] As a strict explication of the text, Victorinus' commentary on Galatians makes an implicit claim to be a re-presentation of the letter and its main thrusts: Paul's gospel is of divine origin, so all other versions of it must be rejected; Paul's gospel agrees with the teaching of the apostles in Jerusalem; Paul stands up for the truth of the gospel against Peter, who wobbled at the advent of the circumcision party and left Gentile believers in the lurch; justification is by faith and not the works of the Law, as arguments based on experience, reason, and Scripture demonstrate; with the coming of Christ, the Law of the Old Testament is sublated—cancelled, and on a 'higher' level, preserved; the new life in Christ is a life guided by the Spirit in light of the life and teachings of Christ. Early Christian exegetes always recognized the strongly situational character of Galatians,[2] and Victorinus is no exception. His exegesis is primarily directed at ascertaining the meaning of the

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[1] See his comments on Eph. 5: 32–3 (Gori, 85–6; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 107–8, 220–3). His remarks on Gal. 4: 24, where Paul allegorizes the story of Sarah and Hagar, illustrate what Victorinus understood by allegorical interpretation.

[2] e.g., Tertullian's comments in *Adv. Marc.* 5. 2. 2 (CCSL I, 666, 23–7; ET: ANF 3, 431 ff.).

text in light of the situation. Historical elements not directly related to his recasting of the letter's persuasive aims fall outside the scope of Victorinus' commentary, so go unmentioned, contrary to the practice of other more comprehensive commentators.[3]

Despite Victorinus' largely historical description of Paul and the issues of his churches, his commentaries also contain at least a cursory account of the deep matters touched on by the Pauline text.[4] His theological exegesis is therefore inescapably philosophical, because he brings the metaphysical philosophy of his world-view to bear upon the text. This is congruent with the status of a religious text that presupposes the 'real' status of super-sensible entities, arguably a feature of any theological commentary. While this application of a philosophical schema—apparent also in Victorinus' commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*[5]—could be regarded as an illegitimate importation of an alien conceptuality into a defenceless text, this procedure is arguably no different in kind from that of modern theological commentaries which assume that the utterances of a biblical author can retain their integral meaning within the modern world-view of the commentators and their audiences. Victorinus' forays into technical philosophical or theological discussion, occasioned by the wording of the text, seem less prominent in his work on Galatians than in that on the other two epistles (the lengthiest are the remarks on Eph 1: 4 and Phil. 2: 6–11); this impression, however, is at least in part due to the loss of his comments on Gal. 5: 19–6: 2. What survives, however, is enough for us to gather that Victorinus had included here a philosophical disquisition on the nature of flesh and spirit. Galatians 4: 6 ('They cry Abba, Father!') elicits from our commentator a remarkable passage on the calling of the soul by and to the triune God. Victorinus' combination of close textual analysis and theological amplification in light of a Neoplatonic schema is a signal feature of his commentary on Paul.

[3] Jerome devotes the prologue to the second book of his commentary on Galatians to geographical and ethnological observations about that people, a practice of the grammarians commenting on secular literature (PL 26, 353C–357A [379B–382C]).

[4] This is clearest from the preface to the second book on Ephesians (Gori, 60; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 88). See my discussion of this passage below, p. 114.

[5] Karlhermann Bergner's 1993 Heidelberg dissertation (Fakultät für Orientalistik und Altertumswissenschaft) has demonstrated how Victorinus imported his philosophical concern into his commentary on Cicero via the concept of *sapientia*. More important to Victorinus than the transmission of Cicero's rhetorical teaching, Bergner has concluded, was 'providing to his students a basic philosophical knowledge and understanding, which was, moreover, largely that of Neoplatonic philosophy' (*Der Sapientia-Begriff im Kommentar des Marius Victorinus zu Cicero's Jugendwerk De Inventione* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1994), 15).

This philosophical element has often been considered to be an intrusion into an otherwise 'literal' commentary. Yet it is coherent with the theory he articulated in his commentary on *De inventione*: interpretation constitutes an account of things (*res*) in language (*nomina*).[6] But this correspondence theory of truth[7] applied to letters requires a grasp not only of the situation of the letter and the apostle's response, but also of the objects of the apostle's discourse: God, Christ, the gospel, grace, and salvation. A misunderstanding about the nature of these realities could not but have unfortunate consequences. Thus the Galatians, as Victorinus clarifies when remarking on Gal. 2: 14, 'were poorly interpreting the gospel' (*male evangelium interpretabantur*) in using the names of the Christian realities, the *nomina*, quite apart from any true grasp of the *res* in question, the gospel.[8] Applying the wrong *hypothesis* about the fundamental realities to the biblical text brought no small dangers, as Irenaeus clearly noted in his contestation for the faith against gnostic Christians.[9] For in the fourth century it was clearly possible to be devoted to Paul's letters and not share Victorinus' commitment to the articulation of Christianity consonant with the Nicene Creed, which presupposed a referent to the term 'Christ' not accepted by all Christians of the time.

Beyond these philosophical excursions, which reveal the lineaments of Victorinus' integration of Christian theology into a comprehensive picture of reality, several themes recur prominently in the commentary on Galatians. These complexes of issues raised by the Pauline text are places where Victorinus offers more than his usual simple textual exposition and shifts into emphatic theological assertion and application. The presence of such areas of 'actualiza-

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[6] The distinction comes from his commentary on *De inventione* (Halm, 182, 1–15, and 230, 20–4; see Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 38–9, 68–9).

[7] Thus Robert Berchman, 'Porphyry and the Patristic Origins of New Testament Criticism', in Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec (eds.), *Origeniana Sexta* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), 657–73, 668 n. 43. Berchman argues that in light of 'Porphyry's searing critique of the Bible' (p. 669), 'later Fathers like Jerome and Augustine proposed a highly articulated system of biblical interpretation which occasioned the gradual recognition of the incompatibility of allegorical [coherence] theories of scriptural interpretation with straightforward [correspondence] modes of scriptural interpretation' (p. 672). Victorinus' exegesis of Paul treats Porphyry's objections as refutable by a more careful reading of the text.

[8] Gori, 121, 5.

[9] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1. 8. 1 and 1. 9. 1–3 (ET: ANF 1, 326, 329–30). On this point, see Richard A. Norris, Jr, 'Irenaeus' Use of Paul in his Polemic Against the Gnostics', in William S. Babcock (ed.), *Paul and the Legacies of Paul* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), 79–98, 89. See also David A. Balás, 'The Use and Interpretation of Paul in Irenaeus's Five Books *Adversus Haereses*', *The Second Century*, 9 (1992), 27–39.

tion' have been identified by Basil Studer as the 'fundamental trait of patristic exegesis'.[10] One such area is Victorinus' concern to offer scriptural support for a Nicene conception of Christ. The other two arise directly from core aspects of Galatians, and are intimately related. At the risk of simplifying, I circumscribe the areas under the heading of the anti-Judaizing polemic and justification by faith.[11] These themes will be examined in Chapter 5. Here we shall examine the formal and methodological aspects of Victorinus' commentaries, which must provide the basis for any attempt to relate text to context.

A. FORM OF THE COMMENTARY AND ITS OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE

Victorinus' commentaries on the Pauline epistle contain a number of invariable formal features. They begin with brief prefaces, followed by quotations of the Pauline text and a line-by-line exegesis of that matter, interrupted occasionally by summaries of sections of the letter or by digressions to treat more technical theological or philosophical issues. The complete text of the epistle in question appears in the commentary. This is the rule among Paul commentators of the early church, to which Augustine and Ephrem are exceptions, presenting only those portions of the letters they have selected for comment. Victorinus, instead of translating the Greek himself, as he did when quoting Paul in his Trinitarian treatises,[12] made use of an up-to-date Vetus Latina text of the Pauline letters as the basis for his commentaries.[13] To be useful to the life of the church, his work

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[10] Studer, 'Die patristische Exegese', 91.

[11] The treatment of this latter theme seems especially desirable in light of the fact that a recent, authoritative history of the doctrine passed over Victorinus in silence, despite a lively *fin-de-siècle* scholarly discussion of the possibility that Victorinus' Paul commentaries, through Augustine, may have contributed significantly to the development of this doctrine in the Latin church. Alistair McGrath's *Iustitia Dei*, i: *From the Beginnings to 1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) provides a short section entitled 'The Pre-Augustinian tradition' (pp. 17–23), where he claims that '[t]he earliest known Latin commentary upon the Pauline epistles is that of Ambrosiaster'. Yet Harnack had treated Victorinus' Paul commentaries in his history of doctrine (*Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 5th edn. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1932), iii. 32–6; ET: *History of Dogma*, trans. Neil Buchanan (New York: Russell & Russell, 1958), v. 33–7), as he had also done at length in his important article 'Geschichte der Lehre von der Seligkeit allein durch den Glauben in der alten Kirche', *ZThK* 1 (1891), 82–178. It is unfortunate that McGrath's revised edition of *Iustitia Dei* (1998) did not make amends on this point.

[12] See Appendix 1, 'The Order of the Commentaries'.

[13] He used a Latin text of the epistles which Frede has classified as text-type **I** (*Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften* (Freiburg: Herder, 1964), 138, 146. Cf. Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 15–16.

needed to elucidate the exact language which people were accus-
tomed to hearing in church, so to avoid the stumbling-block of
Jerome's Vulgate, which aroused such a furore among the laity.[14]

Victorinus' commentary on Galatians, like that on Ephesians,
consists of two books. Whereas the latter commentary was easily
divisible along the lines of the letter itself (a clear division between a
doctrinal and a hortatory section[15]), Victorinus breaks his work on
Galatians in the middle of what he considers the letter's argumen-
tative section (chapters 3–4). Finding 3: 21 ('What then? Is the law
opposed to the promises?') to be a point of digression within the
larger discussion of the role of faith and the Law in justification, he
ends his first book with his comments on 3: 20. Much of the last part
of his first book on Galatians is lost due to a substantial lacuna in the
manuscript tradition, depriving us of his analysis of verses 3: 10–20.
Victorinus made use of the division of these commentaries into two
books,[16] probably necessitated by their length, to remind his audi-
ence of the main themes of each epistle. Thus, whereas the first book
on Ephesians ended on a note stating the goal of the Christian life on
earth,[17] Victorinus closes the first book on Galatians with a restate-
ment of the proposition behind the whole letter: 'justification and
liberation come about through Christ, and not through the law of
deeds.' The opening of the second book on Galatians also contains a
brief recapitulation of the epistle's main point given at the beginning
of the first book.

The prefaces with which each commentary opens are a regular
feature of the genre,[18] which we find in a lengthier form in Victor-
inus' commentary on Cicero.[19] Some of the material included in his
prefaces to the epistles appears to have been derived from the pro-

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[14] The Vulgate Latin epistles are a revision of the VL text made not by Jerome
but by an unknown translator. For a brief treatment of the Vulgate, see H. D.
Sparks, 'Jerome as Biblical Scholar', in P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (eds.), *The
Cambridge History of the Bible*, i. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970),
510–41, esp. 517–26. More recent bibliography is found in J. K. Elliot, 'The
Translations of the New Testament into Latin: The Old Latin and the Vulgate',
ANRW II. 26. 1, 199–245.

[15] Gori, 1, 8–10 (ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 44).

[16] Philippians is an exception to this rule, being composed of only one book, no
doubt due to the shorter length of the letter relative to both Galatians and Ephe-
sians.

[17] He makes the break after commenting on 4: 8, concluding thus: '. . . that we
might have concord and keep the peace, no discord disturbing our soul' (Gori, 59,
20–2; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 87).

[18] Discussed in Di Berardino and Studer (eds.), *History of Theology*, i. 301.

[19] He analyses Cicero's opening of the second book of *De inventione*, which
begins with an anecdote, thus: 'the whole preface [alt., 'every preface'] is a likeness,
as it were, of what we are about to say' (*Omnis praefatio quasi similitudo est ad id,
quod dicturi sumus*; Halm, 257, 33).

logues to the VL translations of the epistles (the so-called Marcionite Prologues).[20] Although these prologues for the most part contained material obtainable from a simple reading of the epistles themselves, they occasionally provided additional information, such as where the letter was written or which of Paul's associates delivered it. As they are the one written source which we can be sure Victorinus drew on in composing his commentaries,[21] I quote the entirety of the pre-Vulgate prologue to Galatians:

The Galatians are Greeks. They received the word of truth for the first time from the apostle, but after his departure they were harassed by false apostles, with the result that they turned to the Law and circumcision. Writing to them from Ephesus, the apostle summons them back to faith in the truth.[22]

Victorinus reiterates in his preface the claim that Paul wrote to the Galatians from Ephesus, stating it as a matter of hearsay, not undisputed fact. Our sample of Victorinus' prefaces is unfortunately even

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[20] See my fuller discussion of the matter in Appendix 1. A brief overview with bibliography can be found in the *ABD* article 'Marcionite Prologues to Paul' by J. J. Clabeaux (iv. 520–1). The first stop for critical discussion is Nils Dahl, 'The Origin of the Earliest Prologues to the Pauline Letters', *Semeia*, 12 (1978), 233–77.

[21] The commentaries have turned out to be a poor field for *Quellenforschung*, research into an author's sources. Raspanti has expressed the general consensus in a pointed formulation: 'the sources of Victorinus' commentary cannot be identified because they never existed' (*Esegeta*, 95). The exception to this may be Origen, although the evidence is not clear enough to make a strong claim. Apart from Origen's work, Greek commentaries earlier than Victorinus (for which still see C. H. Turner, 'Greek Patristic Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles', in James Hastings (ed.), *A Dictionary of the Bible*, extra vol. (New York: C. Scribners Sons, 1909), 484–531) are no longer extant apart from fragments from the catenas (cf. Karl Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der Griechischen Kirche* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1933/2nd edn, 1984)). As regards the commentary on Galatians, we are hindered by the loss of Origen's works on this book (both a commentary on the letter and book X of his *Stromateis*; see Jerome's commentary, PL 26, 308B [333A]). A few fragments from Origen's commentary on Galatians survive in Rufinus' translation of Pamphilus' *Apologia* (PL 17, 584–90); parallels with Victorinus' commentary on Galatians will be cited *ad loc.* in my translation. The attempt to triangulate to what Origen said based on Jerome's and Chrysostom's commentaries on Galatians does not provide a very secure basis to establish whether Victorinus may have used Origen. The parallels between Victorinus and Origen on Ephesians (based on the catena fragments) are either commonplaces or too superficial to make a strong case for literary dependence (see Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 165, 180, 207, 219, 227, 232).

[22] *Galatae sunt Graeci. Hi verbum veritatis primum ab apostolo acceperunt, sed post discessum eius temptati sunt a falsis apostolis, ut in legem et circumcisionem verterentur. Hos apostolus revocat ad fidem veritatis scribens eis ab Epheso* (Latin text of the prologues in Dahl, 'Origin of the Earliest Prologues', and Karl Schäfer, 'Marius Victorinus und die marcionitischen Prologe zu den Paulusbriefen', *Rbén* 24 (1970), 7–16, 7–8).

more limited than that of his commentaries, since in the case of his work on Philippians, the manuscripts lack the preface and his comments on the first sixteen verses. The prefaces to Galatians and Ephesians both employ the term *summa*,[23] 'main point', to describe the overall thrust of the letter. The preface to the commentary on Galatians provides a brief overview of the historical circumstances surrounding the letter, an analytical summary of its contents, and a sketchy outline of the order of the arguments within the letter. The statement of the *summa* functions as a hermeneutical key to the exegesis of the entire letter, and reveals Victorinus' conception of the situation Paul faced as he set himself to compose a letter to the Christians of this particular location.[24] While the *summa* to his commentary on Galatians provides a historically accurate[25] if partisan appraisal of the situation revealed in the letter (that 'the Galatians are going astray' through taking on Jewish practices, especially circumcision), this procedure miscarries in the Ephesians commentary. There, misguided by the anti-Judaizing prologues, Victorinus' description of the situation (that 'the Ephesians too appear to have been misled by false apostles into adding Judaism to the Christian teaching') sets him on a path he attempts only weakly to sustain in his commentary to that epistle.[26] The prefaces are thus intended to orient the reader both to the situation—what contemporary rhetoricians call the 'rhetorical situation'[27]—and to the apostle's response.

Victorinus' frequent reiterations of what he first stated in the preface concerning the Galatians' Judaizing errors[28] reflect the importance he attributes to the situation and authorial intention as the key to reading Paul's epistles. This emphasis corresponds to what the philosophical commentators on Plato and Aristotle called the σκοπός ('aim' or 'purpose'), which appears to have been a fixed feature of that genre from the third century CE onward. Once the *skopos* of a treatise has been established, Ilsetraut Hadot has noted,

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[23] Greek exegetes employed the term *hypothesis* for the same thing (Di Berardino and Studer (eds.), *History of Theology*, i. 301).

[24] Rightly has Lohse noted 'that he had, after all, set himself the goal of working out the original intention of the letters that he exposited' ('Beobachtungen zum Paulus-Kommentar', 361).

[25] i.e., according to the standards of modern scholarship.

[26] See Appendix 1 for further discussion. Cf. also my remarks and references in Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 115–16.

[27] See George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 34–5. The term 'rhetorical situation' was coined by Lloyd Bitzer, 'The Rhetorical Situation', *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (1968), 1–14.

[28] e.g. his opening comments on 1: 3; on 1: 6; 1: 13; 3: 1; at the opening of his second book; on 4: 9; 4: 27; 5: 17.

'each word or phrase of the treatise will be interpreted as a function of that purpose, to the exclusion of every other possibility of interpretation'.[29] The common procedure of establishing the author's general intention as the hermeneutical key notwithstanding, Victorinus' prefaces to the Pauline letters are much reduced versions of what we find in the Greek commentators on Paul or in the prefaces of the philosophical commentators and Latin grammarians.[30] Raspanti is probably correct to regard Victorinus' neglect of the normal schema for prefaces (found in the commentaries of his contemporaries Servius and Donatus) as 'a conscious choice'.[31] We do not know whether Victorinus provided a lengthier preface to the first of the commentaries—assumed to be Romans—or to the entire series, such as we find in Theodoret's commentaries on the complete Pauline corpus.[32] Based on the evidence we do have, he appears to have sought to keep the prefatory material brief and to get on with the exposition of the text. The Latin commentators seem generally to have favoured short prefaces, as we see in Ambrosiaster, Augustine, and Pelagius. Theodore of Mopsuestia's preface to his commentary on Galatians (in the surviving Latin translation) is more than a third longer than what we find in Victorinus. Chrysostom too includes a greater amount of introductory material, albeit in his opening comments on the first two verses of the letter, which function in lieu of a preface proper. Jerome's rather lengthier prologues reflect his own more literary pretensions, as well as the practices of the Greek commentators upon whom he draws heavily in his own work.[33]

Victorinus' lengthy preface to his commentary on Cicero's *De inventione*, containing a digression on the soul's immortality and

[29] Ilsetraut Hadot, 'Les Introductions aux commentaires exégétiques chez les auteurs néoplatoniciens et les auteurs chrétiens', in Michel Tardieu (ed.), *Les Règles de l'interpretation* (Paris: Cerf, 1987), 99–122, 106. Based on the presence in the preface to Origen's commentary on the Song of Songs of elements similiar to those found in later Neoplatonic commentaries, she demonstrates that the interpretive schema we find in the latter already existed in the mid-third century (111 ff.). For a discussion (with references to late antique authors) of σκοπός as authorial intention in ancient hermeneutics, see the superb article 'Hermeneutik' by Jean Pépin in *RAC*, xiv. 722–71, 759.

[30] e.g. the length of Donatus' *praefatio* to his commentary on Terence's *Andria* is six pages in the critical edition (*Aelii Donati Commentum Terenti*, ed. Paul Wessner (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1962), i. 35–40). His prefaces to the other plays of Terence are roughly comparable.

[31] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 37.

[32] PG 82, 36–42. One can observe the current exegetical terminology at the end of his preface to his series, where he says that he will lay out the *hypothesis* of each letter in its place and will state the *skopos* of the letter to the Romans at the beginning of that commentary (44B).

[33] Origen's preface to his commentary on Romans takes up more than four full columns of the Migne edition (PG 14, 833–8).

definitions of key concepts, differs in this regard from the brief
prefaces to the Paul commentaries, which would seem to reflect a
will to minimize. This is evidently one of the features of his exeget-
ical methodology that underwent transformation ('a process of sim-
plification' in this case), along with the change in the material
commented on, from a school text on rhetoric to sacred writings.[34]
Raspanti has observed how Victorinus works throughout the open-
ing sections of his commentaries to orient his readers by means of
reminders about the movement of the whole; thus the first sections
of the commentaries contain a proportionally greater amount of
material—largely of an introductory nature and repeating points
made in the preface—than the latter sections of the commentaries.
Thus the space devoted to Gal. 1: 1–2: 21 is approximately twice as
great as that allotted to chapters 5 and 6 of Galatians, which contain
the same number of verses.[35] Some of that extra material derives
from lengthy clarifications of the individual verses, but most of it
consists in summaries of the early sections of the epistle that Victor-
inus treats as distinct rhetorical units.

  Like modern biblical exegetes, Victorinus attempts to discern
subsections of the epistle. In his commentary on Ephesians, he
simply divided the body of the letter into a dogmatic first part and
a second part consisting of moral teaching, much as do modern
scholars.[36] He found a more complex literary structure in the letter
to the Galatians, where his programmatic remarks scattered
throughout his commentary indicate that he would outline the letter
as follows:

  I. opening of the epistle (1: 1–12)
 II. narrative sections:
     (a) main narrative (1: 13–2: 16)
     (b) narrative admonition (2: 17–21)
III. arguments that justification is based on faith (3: 1–5: 1a)
 IV. exhortations (5: 1b–6: 17)
  V. epistolary conclusion (6: 18)

Thus, apart from the opening and conclusion of the letter, Victor-
inus conceived the body of the epistle to be a tripartite structure. We
will examine each of these parts to see how he regards these sections
working to achieve the communicative aim of the whole.

  The first part of the letter's opening (1: 1–5) contains the normal
epistolary elements ('who writes, with whom, and to whom'), which

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[34] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 113.
[35] Ibid. 97–8.
[36] See the outline in the *ABD* article on Ephesians by Victor Furnish (ii. 535–42, 536).

Victorinus compares to the openings of Romans and the Corinthian correspondence.[37] The salutation with its doxology he also identifies as a standard epistolary feature.[38] Victorinus does not label Paul's opening with the technical rhetorical terms (*exordium, principium,* or *proemium*) found in other patristic exegetes.[39] Ambrosiaster,[40] Jerome,[41] and Augustine[42] all employ the terms *proemium* and *exordium* in their commentaries on Galatians, just as Theodore of Mopsuestia,[43] John Chrysostom,[44] and Theodoret do.[45] Despite an apparent disinclination to label it thus, Victorinus' analysis of 1: 6–12 presents this passage as fulfilling some of ancient rhetoric's prescription for an *exordium*.[46] Although he does not read the opening verses as performing the usual task of the exordium (to render the audience well-disposed, attentive, and docile[47]), in his analysis

[37] Gori, 96, 5–7 (on Gal. 1: 1).

[38] Gori, 98, 52–3.

[39] For a full disussion of this, see my article, '*Narratio* and *Exhortatio* in Galatians according to Marius Victorinus Rhetor', *ZNW* 91 (2000), 107–35.

[40] On Gal. 3: 1, Ambrosiaster observes that 'he made use of a proemium' (CSEL 81/3, 29–30). Lest we be surprised that the anonymous commentator thought Paul could put a *proemium* after the *narratio*, and not at the beginning of the letter, we should attend to what the fourth-century Latin rhetor Julius Victor wrote: (§421): 'It is clearly possible to place a proemium after the narratio sometimes' (*plane potest nonnumquam post narrationem prooemium poni*; *Ars rhetorica* ed. R. Giomini and M. S. Celentano (Leipzig: Teubner, 1980), 68, 6).

[41] *tale sumpsit exordium: 'Paulus apostolus, non ab hominibus . . .'* (PL 26, 311D [335D]); *In aliis Epistolis, Sosthenes, et Silvanus, interdum et Timotheus in exordio praeponuntur* (313A [337B]).

[42] *Exp. Gal.* 1. 8 (ET: Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 127). Drawing attention to Paul's address in Gal. 1: 6, Augustine wrote: *Hoc exordio causae quaestionem breviter insinuavit* (CSEL 84, 56, 22).

[43] *Theodori Episcopi Mopsuesteni in Epistolas B. Pauli Commentarii*, ed. H. B. Swete (Cambridge: University Press, 1880), i. 9, 12. Thus Theodore considers 1: 6 to be the beginning of the *principium*, as the Latin translation has it.

[44] PG 61, 611. Cf. Janet Fairweather, 'The Epistle to the Galatians and Classical Rhetoric: Parts 1 & 2', *Tyndale Bulletin*, 45 (1994), 1–38, 8. Fairweather amply demonstrates Chrysostom's recourse to rhetorical language and ideas in his commentary on Galatians; but her opening statement—'all post-Reformation application of classical rhetorical analysis to the Pauline epistles is a revival, conscious or unconscious, of a method already to be found *fully developed* in the expository works of the early Church Fathers' (p. 2, my emphasis)—is perhaps overly pointed. The differences that obtain between the procedures of ancient exegetes and modern 'rhetorical critics' derive largely from their radically different standpoints and goals; to say 'fully developed' in such light understates the problem.

[45] On 1: 1 he remarks: 'Right away the proemium disproves the slander that has arisen' (Εὐθὺς τὸ προοίμιον τὴν γεγενημένην ἐλέγχει διαβολήν; PG 82, 461A).

[46] Victorinus' reading of these verses is very close to the way in which Joop Smit ('The Letter to the Galatians: A Deliberative Speech', *NTS* 35 (1989), 1–26) describes them as the *exordium* of a deliberative speech (pp. 9–11).

[47] Cicero, *De inv*. 1. 15. 20; Loeb, 40; *Rhet. Her*. 1. 4. 7; Loeb, 12.

they do 'prepare the audience'[48] for what will come in the rest of the letter. Thus the theme of the divine authority of Paul's gospel (developed at length in his comments on 1: 1 and 1: 11–12) anticipates Paul's further discussion of this in the first part of the narrative section. The shock Paul registers in 1: 6–10 also fits with the kind of the material Cicero considered fit for the *exordium*, where 'perplexity and astonishment' sounded a powerful note to let the audience know you are unshaken by your opponent and ready to respond boldly. The weighty statements of 1: 11–12 also fulfil the demand that the *exordium* contain much in the way of the speaker's seriousness and intentions.[49] This is indeed how Victorinus analyses the section following immediately after the opening salutation and prayer. These verses contain two elements: first, Paul's reaction to what the Galatians have done, with a condemnation of opponents and commendation of self (1: 6–10); then a statement about the source and nature of Paul's gospel (1: 11–12). Victorinus highlights how the apostle thus opens the letter by dealing with the 'rhetorical situation'—that the Galatians are receiving another gospel—and setting out the major bone of contention: whether there *is* any gospel other than the one Paul preached to them. Verses 11–12 answer that question, and at the same time establish the agenda for the first part of the narrative immediately following. Paul, in Victorinus' analysis, has introduced the main points of the whole letter in his opening, which is indeed one possible strategy that Quintilian suggests for the *exordium*.[50]

While Victorinus' disinclination to use technical rhetorical terminology such as *exordium* or *principium* for the opening of Galatians is evident, his use of the term *narratio*, or 'narrative' (one of the official *partes orationis*, 'parts of a speech', according to ancient rhetorical theory[51]) could be construed as an exception to this pat-

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[48] Quintilian, *Inst*. 4. 1. 5: 'The sole purpose of the *exordium* is to prepare our audience in such a way that they will be disposed to lend a ready ear to the rest of our speech' (*Causa principii nulla alia est, quam ut auditorem, quo sit nobis in ceteris partibus accomodatior, praeparemus* (trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb, ii. 9)).

[49] Cicero, *De inv*. 1. 17. 25 and 1. 18. 25; Loeb, 48–50. Victorinus clarifies the sense of the requirement stated in this last passage (*Exordium sententiarum et gravitatis plurimum debet habere*) in his commentary on that work: 'But let us take this to mean [that the exordium ought to have] very many ideas and strategems and that these same also be weighty' (*sed hic accipiamus sensus atque inventiones plurimas atque easdem graves*; Halm, 200, 14).

[50] Quintilian, *Inst*. 4. 1. 26: 'We shall then occasionally introduce certain points from the main questions into the *exordium*, which will exercise a valuable influence in winning the judge to regard us with favour' (*Aliqua ergo nonnunquam, quae erunt ad conciliandum nobis iudicem potentissima, non inutiliter interim ex quaestionibus in exordio locabuntur*; ET: Butler, Loeb, ii. 19).

[51] Cicero, *De inv*. 1. 14. 19; Loeb, 40.

tern. The term, however, would not need to have been understood according to its technical meaning to make sense to the audience. Thus he begins his comments to 1: 13 ff. by stating that 'the point of his narrating about himself' (*summa huius de se narrandi*) is this, and then goes on to repeat his *summa* about the Galatians adding Jewish observances to their Christianity. Paul's autobiographical narrative (*narratio de se*), sets out to prove that by the standards of the apostle's divinely given gospel any such additions are unwarranted, and even pernicious. Victorinus delineates the boundaries of the narrative section as extending from 1: 13 to 2: 16; this question is much disputed by modern scholars, who tend to conclude the *narratio* at 2: 14 or 2: 21.[52] The function of Paul's narrative is to establish the authority of Paul's gospel, and so convince the Galatians that they must repudiate the 'other gospel' (1: 6) which has been propagated among them by outside agitators. Verses 17–21 of chapter 2, where Paul switches from describing his encounter with Peter at Antioch to address the Galatians, Victorinus labels as an admonition which is also a *narratio* (apparently because 2: 19–21 contains the apostle's quasi-narrative description of his religious transformation).

The section beginning with chapter 3 consists of 'other arguments that justification comes about based on Christ and not based on the Law or on works'.[53] These arguments, involving appeals to the Galatians' own experience, logical proofs, and biblical *exempla* (all of which have been construed by modern scholars as elements of the 'proof section', or *probatio*, of ancient rhetorical theory) continue up until 5: 1a, if we can take his next comment as introducing a new section. For at 5: 1b Victorinus notes that 'an exhortation had to be added'. It is not immediately evident whether by *hortatio* he means an entire section or just this particular verse; the former seems likely, in that at 5: 15 he again refers to an *exhortatio*. His comments on 5: 17–26 are unfortunately missing, due to a lacuna in the manuscript text; but at 6: 4 he speaks further of *magnae exhortationes*. Similar language suggests that he considered the hortatory section to continue until the penultimate verse of the letter (see his comments to 6: 9, 6: 10, 6: 15, and 6: 17). The final verse (6: 18), which contains a prayer and a blessing, he simply calls the *conclusio* of the letter, which we cannot therefore identify with the final part of a rhetorical speech known in Latin as the *conclusio* or *peroratio*.[54] How

[52] See the handy table of the different rhetorical outlines proposed by modern exegetes for Galatians in Antonio Pitta, *Disposizione e messaggio della Lettera agli Galati: Analisi retorico-letteraria* (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1982), 33–5.

[53] He states this in the summary of the whole letter he gives in his remarks to 1: 13 (Gori, 107, 75–6).

[54] *Conclusio fit epistolae. Precatio est et benedictio ut gratia sit* (Gori, 173, 2–3). Cicero, *De inv.* 1. 52. 98; Loeb, 146.

thoroughly Victorinus conceived the letter as an argumentative unity is shown by his treatment of this final verse, where he accentuates one last time the grace of Christ. This is in general representative of the way in which he reads the letter's every detail as designed to address the problems confronting Paul as regards his wayward converts in Galatia. His presentation of the structure of the letter as designed to combat precisely this situation allows him to apply the historical context of Galatians to the problems in the church of his day.

B. Exegetical Method

Just as Victorinus delineates the large sections of the letter in light of the situational key, so too he analyses the smaller units—words, phrases, clauses, sentences—in terms of the epistle's general purpose. Even when the relationship of individual units to the aim of the whole is not obvious, he works to find a way to forge the link.[55] Our commentator breaks the text down into sense units of unequal length, sometimes as long as three (modern) verses, sometimes only a short clause. He proceeds from the general thrust of the unit to the specifics of the phrasing whereby the meaning is communicated and the apostle's persuasive intentions are realized. Raspanti has shed light on this aspect of Victorinus' commentaries by recourse to the concepts of macro- and micro-structure. Each commentary has a macro-structure: the core concepts are first mentioned in the preface and then further developed in the more expansive opening comments before Victorinus goes on to an explanation of the rest of the text. Corresponding to the macro-structure of the whole there is a parallel micro-structure in his treatment of the individual lemmata, or units of text, bitten off for explanation. As Raspanti has observed,

our author proceeds normally in commenting with a summary individuation of the themes of the various passages of the Pauline epistle, to which he appends brief paraphrases, brief definitions, classifications, and schemas which relate the individual verses to the general contents on the basis of which the verses are explained.[56]

For all his focus on the 'thematic cores' of the letters,[57] Victorinus does not neglect the work of the grammarian. Syntactical or lexical

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[55] e.g. his treatment of 4: 9 (see Ch. 6 below, *ad loc.*), where he begins by admitting that 'beggarly elements of the world' refers to paganism, and follows this line of thought for a while before coming back to his situational interpretive grid where everything must refer to the problem of Judaizing (Gori, 125, 25–9).

[56] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 98.

[57] Ibid. ('i nuclei tematici').

ambiguities are clarified before proceeds to his deeper analysis. Victorinus constantly signals transitions of thought or connections between verses to the reader by formulae such as *adiungit*, *adiecit*, *subiungit* ('he has added'), *exponit* ('he explains'), *declaravit* ('he has made clear'), *ostendit* ('he has shown'). If the verse under treatment opens a discrete section of the epistle, he indicates this to the reader by offering an outline such as we find at the beginning of his discussion of the narrative section. Occasionally, Victorinus refers to the Greek to elucidate the sense of a word, or to variant manuscript readings in both Greek and Latin versions.[58] But the bulk of his explanation of the biblical text consists in paraphrase, a technique taught by the *progymnasmata* of the rhetorical schools prior to the students advancing to the exercise of the declamation.[59] Victorinus' paraphrasing involves restating and clarifying the various elements of the text, its ideas, arguments, and persons concerned, along with their actions and intentions.[60]

The techniques and forms of textual explication which Victorinus employs in his commentaries have been usefully catalogued by Raspanti: paraphrases of several types, definitions, glosses, internal references, digressions, repetitions (discussed earlier in connections with the prefaces), classifications, and schematizations.[61] As his presentation is more thorough and better articulated than previous attempts, I shall for the most part be tracing the outlines of his discussion here. Following Albrecht Locher, Raspanti identifies several types of paraphrase, observing that recourse to this form of

[58] He cites the Greek for purposes of clarification of Gal. 1: 10 and 4: 4, and refers to variant readings in both Greek and Latin manuscripts in his discussion of Gal. 2: 5. Along with references of this sort, the commentaries on Ephesians and Philippians—due to their more philosophical content—contain a greater sprinkling of Greek technical terms: λόγος, νοῦς, ὄν, πλήρωμα (see the index of Greek terms provided by Gori at the end of his CSEL edition of the commentaries).

[59] A full study of this has been made by Michael Roberts, *Biblical Epic and Rhetorical Paraphrase in Late Antiquity* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1985).

[60] It is interesting to observe that with the Renaissance, one finds 'the growing use of paraphrase as a means of explaining the text'. Victorinus' preference for this technique would have been for its communicative efficacy. As M. Silva says: 'The great advantage of paraphrase is that it allows the expositor to focus on the text in its wholeness and particularly on the flow of the argument' (*Explorations in Exegetical Method*, 36).

[61] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 113–30. The 'classifications and schematizations' he discusses (pp. 128–30) are found frequently in the commentaries on Ephesians and Philippians, though not in the one on Galatians. They consist in numerical schemas and itemizations that aid the reader's comprehension, distinctions between species and genus, and the division of theoretical and practical precepts, the latter being again subdivided between 'what is to be done and what is not to be done' (*quod faciendum et quod non faciendum*). For examples of these in the Ephesians commentary, see Cooper, *Metaphyics and Morals*, 119, 174, 183, 192, 197, 206–7, 209, 212–13, 230.

exegesis 'reduces to a minimum the [commentator's] intervention in the text and puts the audience in contact with the living voice of the apostle'.[62] Locher's article[63] focused on a prominent aspect of Victorinus' commentaries: namely, a form of paraphrase in which the commentator appropriates the first-person singular of the apostle. This type of paraphrase Locher refers to as *ex persona Pauli*, and he distinguishes it from an *ex persona Victorini* paraphrase in which the author preserves the normal distinction between the commentator and the text commented upon. This last, normal type of paraphrase comes in two varieties: one in which the scriptural verse is followed by the comment without any syntactical connection between the two; and another where the verse and the comment are syntactically connected.[64] Locher has also recorded a number of instances where, within the confines of a single sentence, the commentator switches from a paraphrase *ex persona Pauli* to one *ex persona Victorini* (or vice versa). An example of this switch from third-person to first-person is found in Victorinus' comment on Gal. 1: 1–2: 'As he [*sc.* Paul] said that God resurrected Christ from the dead, Christ therefore taught me [*sc.* Paul].'[65] The most frequent type of paraphrase is the one introduced by various formulae of saying—*inquit, dixit*, etc. Additionally, Victorinus will, without such formulae, offer paraphrases with verbal formulations equivalent to what the text commented on contains.[66] He often has recourse to the phrases *hoc est* or *id est* to present his paraphrase of Paul's meaning.

Victorinus' most striking form of paraphrase is his adoption of the apostle's first-person form whereby he speaks *ex persona Pauli*, from the person of Paul. The point of this procedure is surely to achieve what Raspanti describes as its effect: 'as if Paul were himself explaining, in the first person, his own letters to Victorinus' audience; and this was the most adequate manner to refute, by means of the apostle's direct authority, whoever was making ill use of his text— that is, heretics and adversaries of the faith'.[67] The general effect created by this artful stylistic feature has been aptly described by Locher as a 'blending of learned bible-commentary with lively homi-

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[62] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 113.

[63] Albrecht Locher, 'Formen der Textbehandlung im Kommentar des Marius Victorinus zum Galaterbrief', in M. von Albrecht and E. Heck (eds.), *Silvae* (Tübingen: M. Niemayer, 1970), 137–43.

[64] Locher (ibid. 140) refers to Victorinus' treatment of Gal. 1: 6 as an example of the former and his citation of the first part of 1: 7 as an example of the latter. This last illustrates how the custom of supplying chapter and verse numbers on the part of modern editors and translators of patristic commentaries inadvertently breaks up the unity of the comment.

[65] This example of the phenomenon was furnished by Gori, CorPat, 5 n. 14.

[66] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 114.

[67] Ibid. 115.

letics'.[68] This oral feel of the commentaries, attributed by Locher to their 'being written as spoken, if not simply dictated',[69] is appropriately described by Raspanti as a 'fictive orality'.[70] This stylistic feature of his paraphrase—the adoption of the apostle's first person—allows Victorinus to shift what literary critics call the point of view. On the one hand he facilitates his reader's entrance into the text from a third-person point of view: he quotes the text, makes the necessary grammatical and contextual clarifications, discusses any difficulties in understanding and then offers the homiletic paraphrase, often then moving into the apostle's first person. At that point Victorinus as narrator has achieved the first-person point of view, and his relationship with the reader is accordingly altered for the moment. They are being addressed directly as the Galatians; and the commentator has taken on the role of the apostle Paul to them. Yet, because the effect is accomplished without drawing attention to itself, the reader—understanding the shift in reference—does not take umbrage about being addressed as a wayward Galatian with whom the apostle is quite vexed. This technique enables Victorinus to make his point and simultaneously delight his readers, who will understand the vehemently evangelical vociferations to come from the mouth of Paul.

There are sufficient grounds to believe that ancient readers would not have experienced this shift in point of view as harsh or disruptive. A late antique Roman audience was accustomed to hearing speakers take on various personas. Cicero describes this kind of figure as an 'impersonation of persons, an extremely effective method of amplification'.[71] The declamation, an exercise widely used in the rhetorical schools to prepare students to speak at law, could involve giving a speech as a particular historical figure at some crucial juncture.[72] Other types of speeches required students to take on the persona of a mythical figure: this was the ἠθοποιία (ēthopoiía) or the 'dramatic characterization'[73] and paraphrase exercise, as when

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[68] Locher, 'Formen der Textbehandlung', 143.

[69] Ibid. 142.

[70] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 145. He attributes the second-person address in the commentaries as well as the first-person paraphrase to their 'didactic genre'. The notion of a *genus didacticum* was developed by Melanchthon to describe the genre of Christian writing in a manner equivalent to ancient rhetoric's threefold division of genre (juridical, deliberative, epideictic), as C. J. Classen has pointed out ('Paulus und die antike Rhetorik', *ZNW* 82 (1991), 1–33).

[71] *De Oratore* 3. 53. 205: *personarum ficta introductio, vel gravissimum lumen augendi* (ET: E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham; Loeb, 163).

[72] Marrou, *History of Education*, 276–9. See Quintilian 2. 10 for his views on this exercise (Loeb, i. 273–9).

[73] Thus Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 164. The ἠθοποιία, however, seems to have a larger range of meaning; see Josef Martin, *Antike Rhetorik* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1974), 291–2, for discussion with references to primary texts.

the young Augustine had to become Virgil's Juno (*Aen.* 1. 36–49) with a prose rendition of her 'raging and sorrowing', as Augustine put it.[74] Familiar with these oral and literary conventions, a late antique audience would not have been discomforted by Victorinus' shift into the persona of Paul, however strange this may strike modern readers. Chrysostom's use of the same figure in his commentary on Galatians[75] (unnoted by scholars who have discussed Victorinus' types of paraphrase) would seem to indicate that the practice was not that unusual and derived from the rhetorical schools, of which John was an adept before his withdrawal from that world. The same is extremely common in Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on Galatians—perhaps not coincidentally another Antiochene exegete who was also a student of the famous pagan rhetor of Antioch, Libanius. Ephrem's Syriac commentaries on Paul display the same back and forth from first person to third person as Victorinus'.[76] Among other Latin commentators, Pelagius occasionally offers a rewording of the text in the apostle's first person,[77] as does Jerome.[78] Victorinus' heavy use of this figure is so striking that I consider it possible that Jerome's grudging admission of his eloquence (*quamvis eloquens*: 'however eloquent he be'[79]) is a reference to this appealing literary technique.

Alongside Victorinus' use of paraphrase as a tool for clarifying the sense of the lemmata is his recourse to definition in explicating certain terms of the text. Not for naught was he the author of a treatise entitled *De definitionibus*.[80] Although definition as an exegetical tool is there much reduced in comparison with his commentary on Cicero,[81] Victorinus does not neglect it in his Christian exegesis. Definition is clearly an indispensable component for se-

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[74] *Conf.* 1. 17. 27; O'Donnell, i. 13 (ET: Chadwick, 19).

[75] PG 61, 611–82. This first-person paraphrase, alternately singular and plural, with and without the formulaic λέγων or φησιν is found in the following passages: to Gal. 1: 9–10 (624–5); 1: 15–16 (628); 2: 6–7 (637–8); 2: 10–15 (639–42); 2: 18–20 (645–6); 3: 6 (650); 4: 10–12 (658); 4: 12–18 (659–60); 5: 10–12 (667–8); 6: 14–17 (679–80).

[76] See Alfons Fürst, 'Origenes und Ephräm über Paulus' Konflikt mit Petrus (Gal. 2,11/14)', in Manfred Wacht (ed.), *Panchaia* (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1995), 121–30, 125.

[77] e.g. on Gal. 5: 13 (Souter, 334, 12–14) and 6: 11 (341, 12–13).

[78] On Gal. 5: 10 (PL 26, 321C [346A]).

[79] The remark stands at the beginning of Jerome's commentary on Galatians, where he criticizes Victorinus, his only Latin predecessor in commenting on Paul, for being too occupied with secular learning to know anything about the Bible (PL 26, 308A–D [332B–C]).

[80] Victorinus, *De definitionibus*, ed. T. Stangl, in *Tulliana et Mario Victoriana* (Munich: Max Wild, 1888) and reprinted in Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 331–62.

[81] As Raspanti points out (*Esegeta*, 117). See also pp. 48–9 for his discussion of definition in the commentary on Cicero.

curing an understanding of the *res* of the *nomina*.[82] We can see this in a number of places in his commentary on Galatians: his comments on 1: 11–12 go to great lengths to secure the sense of the prepositional phrase *secundum hominem*; in 1: 13 he explains the locution *conversatio* as *actus vivendi*; the 'flesh and blood' of 1: 16 is defined as 'the entire exterior person'; the word 'gospel' in 1: 6 is defined with an implicit etymological reference to the Greek as 'something good and advantageous for us'. Examples could be multiplied, especially in the commentaries to Ephesians and Philippians, which are richer in philosophical digressions.[83] A variation of his method of definition by explanatory paraphrase consists in brief glosses on individual words introduced by formulaic phrases such as *hoc est* and *id est*.[84] Examples of this can be found in Gal. 1: 24, where he glosses the sense of the words 'magnified' and 'expropriated' found in 3: 1. The continual resort to glosses, 'although not very pleasing from a literary point of view', as Raspanti observes, 'was highly efficacious for the rhetor's goals of simplicity and clarity'.[85]

With regard to the internal references found throughout the commentaries, Alexander Souter has aptly characterized Victorinus' authorial habits: 'there is perhaps no other ancient writer who refers so often to utterances of his own, past, present, or future. In all I have counted some eighty such references in these three commentaries.' Victorinus' procedure of referring to his Trinitarian treatises in his commentaries indicates that 'he felt an inner connexion to subsist among his various expositions of Christian truth'.[86] Raspanti has identified three types of internal[87] references: to passages from Pauline epistles other than the one presently commented on; to passages within the same epistle previously discussed; and to earlier treatments in his own writings, whether to the commentaries or the Trinitarian treatises.[88] Sometimes the reference to parallel aspects of

[82] See Raspanti's discussion of *res* and *nomina* (ibid. 38–9, 48–9, 80).

[83] Raspanti cites a number of these (ibid. 117–19).

[84] Clearly *esse* means *significare* in these instances, which meaning, incidently, Zwingli famously maintained at the Marburg Colloquy (1529) against Luther concerning the interpretation of the words of institution, *hoc est corpus meum* (Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 336).

[85] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 121. He catalogues a variety of Victorinus' glosses (pp. 119–21).

[86] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 23.

[87] Strictly speaking, the references to the Trinitarian writings cannot be considered 'internal', whereas the references to other passages from Paul can be so denominated, in so far as the Pauline biblical text itself was contained in the commentary series.

[88] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 121–5.

other epistles is designed to highlight the uniqueness of the passage under analysis, as is the case in his comments on Gal. 1: 1, where he compares it to the opening of Romans and the Corinthians correspondence. At times the reference can be extremely vague. Commenting on Gal. 1: 9, he seems to refer to an earlier discussion—perhaps in his commentary on 1 Corinthians—concerning the meaning of the term *anathema*; likewise, in defining the term 'redeemed' in Gal. 4: 5, he refers to 1 Cor. 7: 39 and Rom. 7: 2 for examples of what this means. The references to other Pauline letters can include direct quotations, as in his comments on Gal. 4: 7 (where he quotes a phrase from Rom. 9: 16) or his invocation of Rom. 8: 30 determined by the presence of the word *vocavit* in Gal. 5: 8. Such references can be occasioned not just by similar vocabulary but also by identical thematic elements, as with his reference to 1 Cor. 8: 1 while discussing Gal. 6: 10. Internal references to the same commentary also occur, as when he refers back to his own comments on 4: 6 when discussing Gal. 4: 9. Explicit references to his other commentaries on Paul arise in his remarks on Gal. 4: 14, 5: 6, 5: 14, and 6: 14.[89] Victorinus' frequent recourse to the entirety of the Pauline letters reveals his characteristic exegetical mode of 'interpreting the particular in light of the general', a feature which Raspanti regards as part of the programme to oppose the often decontextualizing use of Scripture by heretics.[90] The references to his Trinitarian treatises, found mostly in the commentaries on Ephesians and Philippians, serve the purpose of offering deeper understandings of the matter touched upon in the commentaries; the absence of such references in the Galatians commentary can be attributed to the fact that this letter does not contain the kind of material requiring a more profound treatment.[91] These varieties of internal reference reveal the pedagogical intention of their author, who wrote for—or hoped for—a zealous readership desirous of building up a sound foundation of Pauline theology based on the commentator's integral appropriation and explanation of the entire corpus of Paul's epistles. That the commentaries on Paul abound in internal references, by comparison with his commentary on *De inventione*, where they are quite rare,[92] may be explicable in terms of Victorinus' engagement in a kind of sacral pedagogy where the goal of his readership's attaining mastery of this portion of Scripture would far surpass in importance his aims as a professor of rhetoric.

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[89] See Ch. 1 n. 2 for exact references to Gori's critical edition.
[90] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 122.
[91] Ibid. 124.
[92] Raspanti counts only three such strictly internal references in his commentary on Cicero.

Notwithstanding Victorinus' intensive focus on the Pauline corpus as an integral whole, the statement of Souter is apt: 'What especially distinguishes them from other (later) commentaries is that scripture is rarely quoted in illustration of scripture.'[93] But I cannot follow this great scholar in finding reason, on that basis, to confirm Jerome's judgement—'none too harsh, it would seem'—that Victorinus 'was totally ignorant of the holy scriptures' (*scripturas omnino sanctas ignoravit*). One could not expect the recent convert to have the kind of scriptural knowledge that made walking concordances out of the Alexandrian exegetes favoured by Jerome, such as Origen and Didymus; but it would none the less be an error to attribute Victorinus' exclusive concentration upon Paul in his commentaries to a matter of default and to his no doubt scanty acquaintance with the Old Testament, which is unsurprising, given the lateness of his conversion. Rather, we must understand this feature of his exegetical work as a conscious methodological choice. Victorinus' primary goal—to explain the meaning and import of the Pauline letters for a contemporary audience—could best be accomplished by explicating Paul on the basis of what Paul himself said. Calling to mind other scriptures would distract from the immediate task; but he is not shy about quoting or referring to passages from various Pauline letters while engaged in the explication of a particular one.

Manlio Simonetti has connected Victorinus' almost exclusive focus on the text and situation of the immediate letter at hand to the methods of the rhetorical schools[94]—though this is not to say that Victorinus treats Sacred Scripture just as he did Cicero's school text.[95] Beyond the individual exegetical techniques employed in his commentary on the latter (which also found place in his treatment of the Pauline epistles), Victorinus applied to Paul an expository principle first developed in connection with legal and literary texts. Ancient literary critics articulated a method of explaining authors internally, e.g. explaining Homer from Homer—to borrow the phrase from the title of an article illustrating this method that anticipated a fundamental axiom of modern biblical scholarship. Christoph Schäublin has shown how this methodological principle, formulated *sine expressis verbis* by Attic writers, worked its way into Hellenistic rhetorical theory and ultimately into Cicero's *De inventione* (2. 40. 116 ff.) via Hermagoras.[96] There Cicero treats the

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[93] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 22.

[94] Manlio Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria: un contributo alla storia dell'esegesi patristica* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1985), 239–40.

[95] A point well made by Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 130–1.

[96] Christoph Schäublin, 'Homerum Ex Homero', *Museum Helveticum*, 34 (1977), 221–7.

resolution of controversies based on a written law (*controversiae ex scripti interpretatione*), and details how to argue against opponents who maintain that the written statute is ambiguous. Victorinus' comments on the passage are instructive:

Now these are [Cicero's precepts]: in the first place, that we should deny the text is ambiguous and provide instruction on the usual force of that expression; next, that we should examine the words that precede or follow, from which we may gather what the true meaning is; next, that we should scrutinize the person of the writer so that what he meant could be understood from other things—his sayings, deeds, writings, disposition, and life; next, that we should scrutinize the whole text, lest we overlook some utterance which could either help our case or work against our opponents. Next one must state that what the opposition would understand to be the meaning is less likely than what we ourselves understand.[97]

All of these methods for gaining the sense of an authoritative text can be found in his commentaries on Paul. Indeed, several can be illustrated from his treatment of the opening verse of Galatians. Arguing that the phrase 'through Jesus Christ and God the Father' indicates to the reader that Christ is God, Victorinus refers to how his unnamed opponents use this phrase to deny Christ's divinity; he goes on to show how these words more clearly support his opinion. He clarifies why Paul in his greeting includes 'all the brothers who are with me' by comparing the greetings in Romans and Corinthians, which make no such mention of 'all the brothers'. When dealing with the textual variants of Gal. 2: 6 (whether or not to read a negative particle) Victorinus argues that we should not take the *non* to be part of the original text, because both 1 Corinthians and Acts testify that it was indeed Paul's habit to 'yield for an hour in submission' when time and circumstances demanded. This reference to parallels in other Pauline epistles shows that he considers the *corpus Paulinum* to be the 'whole text' from which clarifications of individual passages can be drawn. His discussion of the phrase *factum sub lege* from Gal. 4: 4 labours to show that his interpretation, consonant with a Nicene understanding of Christ, is more convincing than other options. Victorinus evidently regarded sound exegetical method as essentially a formal procedure which could be applied with good results to Scripture just as it had been to secular legal texts.

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[97] *Sunt autem haec: primum ut negemus ambiguum et doceamus locutionis ipsius consuetudinem; deinde ut superiora verba et interiora consideremus, ex quibus colligamus, quae sit vera sententia; deinde excutiamus personam eius, qui scripsit, ut ex ceteris dictis eius, factis, scriptis, animo atque vita, quid senserit, possit intellegi; deinde excutiamus omne scriptum, ne in aliquo verbo aut nos adiuvet aut inpugnet adversarios: deinde dicendum id, quod adversarius intellegat, minus commode fieri, quam quod nos intellegamus* (Halm, 290, 27–33).

While Victorinus' method of interpreting authors with respect to their corpus of writing conformed to the academic procedures developed by the schools of the day, it was a notable departure from the tradition of Christian commentary. Origen's work exemplifies a standard feature of this tradition: an individual scripture must be explained by recourse to relevant, usually lexical parallels from the entirety of Scripture, whereby potential conflicts could be resolved. This manner of proceeding, reminiscent of rabbinic discussion, had its rationale not only in the theological desideratum to assert the unity of scriptural truth. It was also necessary in order to combat heretical rejections of the Old Testament (e.g. Marcion's *Antitheses*) or pagan attacks upon Christianity which often exploited discrepancies between the Gospels or between the Old Testament and the New.[98] The tradition of Christian commentary, which first attained a level of methodological sophistication at the hands of Alexandrian and Antiochene exegetes, involved not only philological clarifications of the text (a technique of Latin grammarians and rhetors as well) but also discussion of the interpretive options explored by earlier exegetes.[99] Victorinus' almost[100] complete neglect of this latter task may have been the thing that earned his commentaries the disdain of Jerome,[101] who considered a comparison of opinions to be the essence of commentary both sacred and secular.[102] Victorinus

[98] For the question of Porphyry's anti-Christian polemics, see Ch. 2, n. 112, 116, 118, 119.

[99] Cf. Caroline P. Bammel, 'Die Pauluskommentare des Hieronymus', in *Cristianesimo Latino e cultura Greca sino al sec. IV* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1993), 187–207, 206 (now republished with her other articles in *idem*, *Tradition and Exegesis in Early Christian Writers* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995). It is these two characteristics of Jerome's work that led Bammel to consider him the first *wissenschaftlich* Latin commentator. A strong case can be made for giving Victorinus the title instead if we recognize that there were different and competing ideas of what exactly counted as *wissenschaftlich* during the period.

[100] Occasionally he will provide interpretive alternatives, as when he tries to decide whether the 'weak and beggarly elements' of Gal. 4: 9 are things pagan or Jewish. In this case he opts for an interpretation that makes sense within the context of the whole of the letter (Gori, 145, 25 ff.). Frequently he refers to ambiguities in the text, but his resolution of them occurs on the level of the text and not with reference to a community of interpreters.

[101] Thus Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 94, referring to Jerome's remark in his commentary on Galatians (see n. 79 above). The assumption here is that Jerome had read his predecessor's works in Rome (prior to his departure for the Holy Land, where he composed his own commentaries on Paul) and found them lacking in this regard.

[102] See Jerome's remarks in his controversy with Rufinus, *Ep. adv. Ruf.* 11. 9–14 (*Saint Jerome: Dogmatic and Polemical Works*, trans. J. Hritzu (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1965), 176): 'For it is the custom of commentators and the rule of exegetes to set forth the various views in their exposition, and to expound the view that is approved either by themselves or by others. And this procedure is adopted, not only by interpreters of Sacred Scripture, but also by the

was by no means opposed to considering options where the text presents them; indeed, he points them out. But his apparent disinterest in consulting and confronting systematically the opinion of other exegetes—ironically, a non-academic aspect of his commentaries—may be not only a sign of confidence in his own handling of text but also a corollary of the methodological principle of interpreting Paul by Paul. It is thus a choice of genre: he offers a certain kind of commentary, presumably because it served his aim. By simply presenting his own reading of the text (and he does *not* regard it as merely one among many possible valid readings), which can involve confronting alternative interpretations given rise to by textual ambiguities,[103] Victorinus creates a form of commentary very close to the text. This has the effect of keeping the commentator's interjections at a minimum, a feature that can be appreciated by a comparison of his works on Paul with those of the often rambling Jerome.[104] To the learned presbyter from Stridon, Victorinus' mode of proceeding in the exegesis of Paul without recourse to predecessors will have seemed foolhardy and arrogant, not the way 'we Christians' do things. This seems to be the tenor of Jerome's remarks when, after denouncing Victorinus as ignorant of the Scriptures, he trumpets his own humbler intention to follow Origen in the interpretation of Galatians.[105] To do so was, for Jerome, the natural choice of anyone respectful of—and knowledgeable about—the Greek biblical exegetes.

C. Genre of the Commentary

Strictly speaking, 'commentary' constitutes a literary genre, of which various species are distinguished by formal characteristics.

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commentators of secular literature, Latin as well as Greek' (*Hic est enim commentariorum mos et explanantium regula, ut opiniones in expositione varias persequantur et quid vel sibi vel aliis videatur edisserant. Et hoc non solum sanctarum interpretes Scripturarum, sed saecularium quoque litterarum explanatores faciunt, tam latinae linguae quam graecae*; CCSL 79, 83). The 'Victorinus' Jerome refers to in ch. 14 of the same epistle as a translator of Origen is Victorinus of Pettau (Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 283).

[103] See, e.g. his discussion of a *lectio duplex* concerning the case (nominative or genitive) of *spiritus* in Eph. 2: 2 (Gori, 30, 46) and Gori's comments thereupon (ibid. 403). See Victorinus' comments on Gal. 2: 9 as an instance of his consideration of alternative interpretations.

[104] Thus Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 94.

[105] 'What then? Would I therefore be stupid and rash, so as to promise what was not possible for him [*sc.* Victorinus]? Hardly. Rather, being more capable in the matter, as I seem to myself, more cautious and warier—being conscious of the feebleness of my powers, I have followed the Commentaries of Origen' (*Quid, igitur, ergo stultus aut temerarius, qui id pollicear quod illo* [*sc.* Victorinus] *non potuit? Minime. Quin potius in eo, ut mihi videor, cautior atque timidior, quod imbecillitatem virium mearum sentiens, Origenis Commentarios sum secutus* (PL 26, 308B [332C]).

The most obvious *differentia* of ancient commentaries is the degree of comprehensiveness embraced. At one pole we have *scolia* and exegetical *quaestiones* (e.g. Porphyry's *Homeric Questions*); at the other we have full treatments of the text commented on, such as we find in Neoplatonic commentaries on Plato or in Origen on Romans.[106] Similar to this complete sort, though briefer, is Victorinus' commentary, which treats the full text of the epistle. His commentaries are also running expositions of the biblical text, which distinguishes them from the fullness of Origen or the brevity of Pelagius. It is in this light that I propose to evaluate Victorinus' own designations of his work as 'a simple commentary' or 'a simple explication of the words' (*commentatio simplex* or *expositio simplex verborum*).[107] Souter understood this language to indicate a stylistic designation:

It is well known that his usual style is obscure, 'only to be understood by learned men' as Jerome puts it, but here he has clearly made an effort to write more plainly, more down to the level of the ordinary educated Christian. This has been observed by one of the best modern students of his work, Koffmane.[108] The strange thing, of course, is that one of the first rhetoricians of his age should write obscurely at all. But such is the fact. The style he here employs is what the rhetoricians themselves called the ἰσχνόν, *tenue*, the plain, unvarnished, unadorned style. He himself speaks of his work in one place as *commentatio simplex* (1273C). There is therefore not very much to say about his style.[109]

Of the properly stylistic characteristics of Victorinus, Souter goes on to mention two: 'the coupling of synonymous words' and a favourite emphatic device, the 'triple beat' (e.g. 'to acknowledge, guard, and preserve'; 'ruler, Lord, and chief'), which on one occasion is extended to a quadruple beat, in his comments on Gal. 4: 8.[110] Certainly Souter is correct in his characterization of Victorinus' writing style as *tenue*, the plain style (Hellenistic literary criticism had laid down threefold and fourfold divisions of style[111]); nor

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[106] A good description of the variety of ancient exegetical forms is found in G. Dorival, 'Sens de l'Écriture-Pères grecs', in Henri Cazelles and André Feuillet (eds.), *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*, fasc. 67, 425–42, 431–2.

[107] Respectively, in the preface to the second book on Ephesians (Gori, 60, 16) and on Gal. 4: 18 (Gori, 151, 24). Also *simplex expositio* on Eph. 1: 11 (Gori, 18, 25).

[108] Koffmane, *De Mario Victorino*, 11: 'Our author's style of speaking is very obscure and intricate so that one hardly believes it to belong to a rhetor. But the difficulty of his arguments and the philosophical terminology excuse him, for in his commentaries the style is much clearer.'

[109] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 28.

[110] On Gal. 6: 8: *etenim caro corrumpitur et hic est eius exitus ut corrumpatur, putrescat, pereat, intereat* (Gori, 168, 9–10).

[111] The threefold: *gravis, mediocris, extentuata* [sc. *figura*] (*Rhet. Her.* 4 .8. 11; Loeb, 252). Cicero in *De oratore* gives three styles of *oratio*: 'the full and yet

should we be unduly concerned about applying categories developed for oral delivery to written composition, if we follow Quintilian's views on this.[112] Souter's suggestion that Victorinus' cultivation of the plain style is to be connected with the audience he envisioned for the commentaries is surely sound.[113] Such a consideration on Victorinus' part would follow from ancient rhetorical theory, which took the nature of the audience into account for its stylistic prescriptions.[114]

Consideration for the audience, however, was a factor in the composition of a literary work not merely in respect of style. Awareness of social location, of levels of education, of the intellectual and spiritual capacities of the readers played a role in both pagan and Christian commentaries, as is well known.[115] It is in this regard that Victorinus' own designation of his exegetical work as *simplex* should be understood. Although Hadot had previously clarified the matter (that *simplex* signifies a basic understanding of the commented text without pretension of complete discussion),[116] a number of scholars have subsequently argued that these phrases refer to the *type* of exegesis: namely, a literal treatment of the Pauline text. Following a suggestion by Gori,[117] made previously by Monceaux,[118] Raspanti takes *simplex* to refer not to style but 'to a specific type of exegesis: his is not an allegorical or typological exegesis but a *commentatio simplex*—that is, a literal comment'.[119] The basis for this claim is

rounded style of oratory, the plain style [*tenuis*] that is not devoid of vigor and force, and the style which combine elements of either class' (3. 52. 199; ET: Sutton and Rackham, Loeb, 158). Quintilian gives a similar division (*Inst*. 12. 10. 58; Loeb, iv. 482). Four different 'simple' (i.e. uncompounded) styles (*charactēres*) are discussed by the *Peri hermeneias* of Demetrius: 'the plain, the grand, the elegant, and the forceful' (ἰσχνός, μεγαλοπρεπής, γλαφορός, δεινός; *On Style*, 36; ET: Innes, Loeb, 373). The ἰσχνός or 'plain style' is discussed in §§ 190–239 of this treatise). Closer to Victorinus' time is the fourth-century rhetor Iulius Victor (*Ars Rhet*. 438): 'There are three kinds of elocution: the vigorous, which the Greeks call "weighty"; the plain, which the Greeks call "spare"; and the medium, which Greeks call "middle" (*Elocutionis genera sunt tria, vehemens, quod Graeci* βαρύ, *tenue, quod Graeci* ἰσχνού, *medium, quod Graeci* μέσον *dicunt*)' (ed. Giomini and Celentano, 92, 12–14).

   [112] Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 12. 10. 49–57 (Loeb, iv. 476–82).
   [113] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 28: 'here he has made an effort to write more plainly, more down to the level of the ordinary educated Christian'.
   [114] Cicero, *De orat.* 3. 54. 211–12 (Loeb, 168).
   [115] Dörrie, 'Zur Methodik antiker Exegese', 136–7.
   [116] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 290.
   [117] 'Such *simplicitas* is not meant to be understood, I believe, only as an attribute of the literary genre *commentatio*—namely, the *genus humile*—but also as a specific characteristic of Victorinus' exegesis: not allegorical, neither mystical nor spiritual' (Gori, CorPat, 9 n. 33).
   [118] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire*, 405.
   [119] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 99.

probably the fact that similar vocabulary is found with that meaning in other Latin Christian authors: Tertullian[120] uses *simpliciter* to indicate the literal sense (*Pud*. 9. 3); Hilary opposes *simpliciter intellegere* to *typice intellegere* (*Myst*. 2. 11); and Ambrose speaks of *simplex interpretatio* as a first level of understanding (*In Luc*. 4. 43).[121] While I am in agreement with Raspanti in his conclusion that the expression *expositio verborum simplex* indicates 'the core of the exegetical method already utilized by our author in his pagan period . . . to stabilize the meaning of the words, the *res* of the *nomina*',[122] I am not convinced that *simplex* means 'literal' here,[123] if by

[120] J. H. Waszink ('Tertullian's Principles and Method of Exegesis', in W. Schoedel and R. Wilken (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979), 17–31) cites Tertullian (*De anima*, 35) protesting against Carpocrates' distortion of a gospel saying and asserting to the contrary that 'it must be understood in its simple sense' (*simpliciter intellegendum*). Waszink clarifies that this usage was determinative for the Latin tradition: 'The expression *simplex intellectus*, which afterward was adapted by Jerome and Rufinus in order to denote the *intellectus corporalis* in the threefold interpretation of Holy Scripture, certainly goes back to the term απλότμζ of the old Christian interpretation of the Bible' (p. 20).

[121] I owe these references to the excellent article of Martine Dulaey, 'Sens de l'Écriture-Pères latins', in *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*, fasc. 67, 442–53.

[122] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 100.

[123] As proof Raspanti cites Victorinus' comment on Eph. 4: 28, where he thinks the commentator uses the adjective *simplex* to refer to the simple, literal meaning of the verse—that Christians should work and not steal—after having supposedly given too broad an interpretation (all sin equals stealing), as Gori (CorPat, 409) pointed out earlier. But it strikes me that Gori, followed by Raspanti, is misreading Victorinus here. Rather, Victorinus is saying that what is put in the text in its simple form (*de simplici*) was intended to mean the whole range of related phenomena. Thus, although Paul said 'Let him that stole steal no more', he added—lest anyone think that stealing alone was excluded—'rather let him labor by working with his hands'. This last phrase, according to Victorinus, was 'expressed in simple form' (*simplex dictum*), such that other forms of work (which he enumerates) are also meant, even though they are not strictly speaking done with the hands (see my translation, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 97). Raspanti is correct that '*simplex* stands to indicate the literal sense' (*Esegeta*, 100); but he errs in not seeing how Victorinus is claiming that the bald manner of Paul's expression must be understood as a synecdoche, a trope which signifies the whole by a part. The 'plain' or 'literal' meaning for Victorinus demands an understanding of the figural nature of what was said *simplex*, i.e. the 'literal' meaning of the text—stealing versus manual labour—is not what the author of Ephesians, according to Victorinus, had in mind. Similarly, he acknowledges in his treatment of Eph. 5: 31 a surface level of meaning, which—as Origen would agree—retains validity pertaining to the citation of Gen. 2: 24: 'It has been stated thus both by us and by Paul, in accord with the simple meaning of the matter' (*hoc, ita ut res est simpliciter, sic et a nobis dictum et a Paulo*); but he then goes on to clarify that by the addition of 5: 31, Paul indicates that the point of the citation from Genesis 'indicates something beyond that simple meaning' (*ultra quam simplicitas ipsa indicavit* (Gori, 85, 2–3). That Victorinus does not hestitate to elucidate this deeper meaning, despite his claim to be writing a *commentatio*

'literal' we intend to exclude an approach which assumes various levels of meaning, which Victorinus does not hesitate on occasion to indicate and expound in brief. Similar hermeneutical procedures are found among other patristic exegetes. Commentators of the Antiochene 'school', despite their polemics against Alexandrian allegorism, left room in their hermeneutical theory and practice for the spiritual meaning, obtained via *theoria*, to shine through the letter.[124] This was one way of articulating a theory of theological exegesis that respected the conventions of secular literary criticism. The Latin rhetors who came into the church were naturally equipped with language to refer to their own interpretive activities. Augustine's *Literal Commentary on Genesis* (*De Genesi ad litteram*) is certainly not 'literal' in the modern sense of the word. In classical Latin, *ad litteram* means 'verbatim';[125] Augustine employs it to indicate that he will question the text minutely for its implications for the broad theological world-view, which is, of course, deeply informed by all the rest of his knowledge about the world. Victorinus does not, at any rate, use this traditional vocabulary to indicate the 'literal sense' in his commentaries, for reasons to be discussed below. The force of Victorinus' characterization of his own procedure must obviously be ascertained from its use in context.

In his comments on Ephesians 1: 11, following upon a brief discussion of how Christ is the will of God, Victorinus refers to having treated the matter satisfactorily in other books (the Trinitarian treatises). He concludes his exegesis of the verse thus: 'Here we ought to be content with a simple exposition (*simplici expositione*), holding on to this fact with a religious awe: that Christ is the will of God.'[126] Likewise, at the opening of the second book on Ephesians, he excuses himself from providing the necessarily lengthy treatment of the weighty matter that came up in the text on the grounds that

simplex, indicates that the qualification *simplex* signifies the renunciation of lengthy philosophical elaborations concerning the matters touched upon by the biblical text.

[124] See de Margerie, *Introduction to the History of Exegesis*, i. ch. 7 and Karlfried Froelich's introduction, in *idem*. (ed. and trans.), *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984). Diodore of Tarsus, in the prologue to his *Commentary on the Psalms*, explains the distinction between *theoria* and *allegoria* in the former's inclusion of the historical sense of a passage, a sense eliminated by allegory (Froelich (ed. and trans.), *Biblical Interpretation*, 85–6). See Bradley Nassif's article which surveys the scholarship on Antiochene hermeneutics and points out some typical fallacies about it: ' ''Spiritual Exegesis'' in the School of Antioch', in *idem* (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 343–77.

[125] See the definition given in the entry in *OLD*, 1036, 4b (citing the example of Quintilian, *Inst*. 9. 1. 25).

[126] Gori, 18, 25–7.

'the magnitude of the task prohibits putting that sort of discussion into the sort appropriate to our doing a simple commentary' (*qua [parte] commentationem simplicem facimus*). He then goes on to state that he would like to do another work on the subject when he is 'freed from the necessity of interpretation'.[127] 'Interpretation' clearly means a verse-by-verse commentary that deviates from that task only for brief digressions necessary to grasp the import of the subject-matter. A *commentatio simplex* thus entails the renunciation of lengthy philosophical elaborations concerning the matters touched upon by the biblical text. This is confirmed by some re-marks on Galatians where he characterizes his own work in a dis-cussion of the phrase 'until Christ be formed in you' (4: 18). After giving a brief account of the meaning—that the soul, making use of reason, can receive Christ so that he or the Spirit can grow within and enable it to 'obtain the salvation of the eternal light'—Victorinus states that this explanation is sufficient for his present type of dis-course, which 'contains a simple exposition of the words' (*expositio-nem verborum simplicem tenet*). It is not a matter of treating the text 'literally' or 'allegorically'; the question is rather to what depth one will go. He concludes his treatment of the passage by noting that he has elsewhere offered a deeper, more adequate exposition of the matter.[128] In his commentaries digressions from textual exposition none the less do occur, passages where Victorinus indicates that he will treat certain deep issues only summarily; these have been dubbed by scholars 'philosophical excurses'.[129] Such excurses are less marked in the commentary on Galatians, with exception of one short such passage in his remarks on 4: 6 and probably in his comments on 5: 19 (this is one of two substantial lacunae in the work). The consistency of Victorinus' readiness to digress only briefly into these philosophical issues, coupled with his constant assurances of having treated the matters more fully elsewhere,[130] suggests that he regarded *commentatio simplex* as a species of genre

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[127] Gori, 60, 14–20 (ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 88). He then intro-duces the first verse of his second book: 'So now we will about such things in a simple and brief manner, by way of pointing out the meaning (*Nunc igitur simpli-citer admonendi modo ista breviterque dicemus*).'

[128] Gori, 151, 23–8.

[129] Lohse, 'Beobachtungen zum Paulus-Kommentar', 360–1. These philosoph-ical passages have been isolated and printed with notes in an appendix by A. Baron, *L'Inno cristologico Phil. 2,5–11 nell'esegesi di Mario Vittorino* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1994).

[130] On Phil. 2: 6 he writes: 'Now, what the form of God is . . . I have also touched upon the matter fully here in the letter to the Ephesians, and I have treated it more fully and abundantly in other books' (Gori, 188, 17–19); similarly on Phil. 2: 9–11: 'even if it is a matter of a major discussion and a major teaching, nonetheless we will briefly point out what sort of thing is indicated' (Gori, 191–2, 8–10).

commentary, one with a limited and clearly delineated scope of expositing the text without deviation. The fact that the excurses— given rise to by the biblical text[131]—none the less find place in the commentaries shows that he thought them essential for the establishment of 'the thematic platform as a basis for interpreting the Pauline text'.[132] That 'thematic platform' is the philosophical world-view (a largely post-Porphyrian Neoplatonism[133]) which includes both a theological ontology and what can be best expressed as his *Seelenmetaphysik*, his 'metaphysics of the soul'.[134] The presence of these excurses in his commentaries on Paul indicates that Victorinus thought that a rudimentary comprehension of the philosophical framework was not beyond the needs or capacities of his audience. This conviction will have been responsible for what kind of commentary on Paul he decided to write.

The question of whether Victorinus' exegesis can rightly be denominated 'literal' is an issue independent of my objection to the claim that Victorinus wrote 'literal' commentaries on Paul based on his use of the term *simplex*. Both questions, however, involve a larger issue, recently discussed at length by Frances Young: that traditional categories such as 'literal' are inadequate for conceptualizing the approach of early Christian exegetes to the sacred text.[135] The term is often used in relation to Victorinus' commentaries on Paul, and is not without descriptive value, e.g. in Simonetti's statement that Victorinus' 'own interest is for the strict and literal

[131] Rightly Lohse: 'One notices that he treats these questions as a whole only where a certain occasion may have been given from the exposited text' ('Beobachtungen zum Paulus-Kommentar', 360).

[132] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 126. Raspanti also observes that the reduced number of these digressions (in comparison to the commentary on Cicero) actually increases their importance by being thereby more striking to the readers and 'offering them the hermeneutical key with which to interpret the rest of the text'.

[133] See Ch. 2, n. 70 above.

[134] It is perhaps not out of place to remark that the philosophical background of Victorinus' Paulinism is no more of a foreign body in, or deformation of, Paul's theology than the scientific world-view of the apostle's modern interpreters. Neoplatonism, one could argue, actually has far more in common with Paul—in its supposition of a 'spiritual world' of a higher ontological status than this vale of tears—than the modern anti-modernist world-views of the conservative theologians who continue to speak of a 'biblical' world-view in opposition to a 'Hellenistic' or 'Platonist' one. The enduring contribution of Rudolph Bultmann lies precisely in delineating that we moderns, by virtue of our modern consciousness, quite simply cannot possess the biblical world-view of Jesus or Paul (see ch. 1 of his *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1958), esp. 15–16), even if we succeed in understanding them.

[135] Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2. I am grateful to one of the anonymous readers at Oxford University Press for pointing out the relevance of Young's book to my critique of the term 'literal' in the first draft of this work.

comprehension of the text'. This approach should not, he argues, be considered simply as a reaction to excessive allegorization, such as we find among the Antiochenes; rather 'this fundamental literalism . . . is explicable as resulting from the transference into the Christian arena of the interpretive criteria which had for so many years engaged Victorinus on classical texts'.[136] Thus Victorinus' exegesis can be considered as embodying what Kelly has called the 'authentically Latin approach', whose 'exponents . . . anticipated, or at any rate, were working on parallel lines with the Antiochene school'.[137] Ancient commentators used the term 'historical' and a variety of other equivalents for 'literal';[138] and such terms can indeed be employed to describe Victorinus' painstaking attempts to grasp and express the apostle's intentions.[139] However, the claim that *commentatio simplex* means a 'literal commentary' can engender misunderstandings if we thereby suppose Victorinus to have chosen this form instead of some other available option, some 'spiritual' approach to the Pauline corpus. As Wiles has noted, '[t]he basic divergence between an allegorical and a more literal approach to Scripture is far less relevant to the interpretation of Paul's writings than it is to that of the Old Testament or of the Gospels.'[140] No ancient exegete of Paul totally neglects the 'literal' sense of the epistles, for the Christian interpretation did not require abandoning the 'letter' to be of ready application.[141] Non-literal forms of interpretation—the 'spiritual sense' widely understood—arise only when

[136] Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, 92. Victorinus' adaptation of techniques of reading from the rhetorical schools brings him close to the Antiochene exegetes, who did the same.

[137] Kelly, 'The Bible and the Latin Fathers', 48. We can easily recognize the parallel tracks of the Latin approach and the Antiochene school if we consider that the description Frede gives of the exegetical method of the Budapest Anonymous, which he regards as heavily influenced by the Antiochenes, also fits the *modus operandi* of the other Latin commentators on Paul (*Ein neuer Paulustext*, i. 205–18).

[138] Philo used the terms τὸ ῥητόν and ἡ λέξις, along with similar combinations, to express the literal sense (see Pépin, 'Hermeneutik', *RAC*, xiv. 750). Origen's full treatment of the matter is found in the fourth book (chs. 2–3) of *De Principiis* (ET: *On First Principles*, trans. G. W. Butterworth (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), 267–87). The most recent critical edition of this work, *Origenes Vier Bücher Von den Prinzipien*, ed. Herwig Görgemanns and Heinrich Karpp (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976) supplies the Greek fragments alongside the Latin of Rufinus' translation, so that one can easily observe both the Greek hermeneutical vocabulary and the Latin equivalents.

[139] So Koffmane, the first modern student of his commentaries: 'On many passages he presents . . . the sound historical sense' (*De Mario Victorino*, 11).

[140] Wiles, *Divine Apostle*, 10.

[141] What Young says about the Antiochene exegetes also applies to Victorinus: 'For the Antiochenes, the narrative logic, the plain meaning, the "earthly" reality of the text read in a straightforward way, was the vehicle or "ikon" of deeper meanings of a moral and dogmatic kind' (*Biblical Exegesis*, 211).

the cleft between text and reader has widened so as to require these forms of interpretation to maintain a meaningful reading of the text.

The term 'literal' generally receives its sense in opposition to a 'spiritual' reading of the text, whether this latter be construed as allegorical, tropological, moral, or anagogical.[142] Although the Pauline letters do contain instances where Paul himself gives such 'spiritual' or non-literal reading of scriptural passages (and patristic commentators recognized this as establishing a precedent for how they should deal with the Old Testament books), the ancient exegetes' goal of applying the Pauline epistles to practice and doctrine did not require allegory or some other hermeneutical manœuvre. We can see this common perception in Ambrose's response to Simplician's letter asking him to preach on some passages in Paul. 'Since in many places Paul explains himself in his own words, the result is that the one treating [his letters] finds nothing of his own to add; and should he wish to say something, he would be performing the role of the grammarian more than that of the critical scholar.'[143] Thus 'saying something' about Paul's letters for Ambrose meant merely clarifying what the apostle himself intended to communicate, which he saw as tantamount to the grammarian's work. True, the task could be more complex if one engaged in a constant comparison of Paul's utterances with other scriptural sayings with a view toward harmonizing and synthesizing them (as in Origen's commentary on Romans); none the less, such a procedure did not do away with, but presupposed, the work of clarifying, restating, and applying what Paul himself said, uninspiring though this may have seemed to Ambrose.[144] It was only the Valentinians and other gnostic Christians who practised a thoroughly non-literal interpretation of Paul, having little concern for what Young has identified as the 'Antiochene interest in the narrative coherence of the text', which is also characteristic of Victorinus' exegesis.[145] Gnostic Christian readings

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[142] See Wiles's discussion of 'Origen as Biblical Scholar', in P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (eds.), *Cambridge History of the Bible*, i. 454–89, 467–8.

[143] *Proxime cum veteris amoris usu familiaris inter nos sermo caderetur, delectari te insinuisti mihi, cum aliquid de Pauli apostoli scriptis coram populo ad disputandum adsumerem, quod eius profundum in consiliis vix conpraehendatur, sublime in sententiis audientem erigat, disputantem accendat, tum quia in plerisque ita se ipse suis exponat sermonibus, ut is, qui tractat, nihil inveniat, quod adiciat suum, ac si velit aliquid dicere, grammatici magis quam disputatoris fungatur munere* (*Ep.* 7, 1 (= Maur. 37); ed. O. Faller, CSEL 82, 43–4, 3 ff.; PL 16, 1130A). The translation of this section of epistle 7 (= Ep. 54, 268 ff.) in the Fathers of the Church series is not reliable.

[144] After declining to play the role of grammarian in exegeting Paul, Ambrose accedes to Simplician's wishes by giving a wide-ranging philosophical and above all pastoral elucidation of the practical import of 1 Cor 7: 23.

[145] Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 163. Victorinus' pursuit of an epistle's main point (*summa*) in all its parts (e.g. on Gal. 4: 3, 9–10) aligns him more with the Antiochene

of the apostle took as their interpretive basis not the context established by the epistles themselves but their own underlying hypotheses,[146] the origins of which remain a matter of scholarly debate.

Despite the fact that scholarly discussion constantly resorts to the terms 'literal' (or 'historical') and 'spiritual' as constitutive of the basic types of exegesis throughout the patristic and medieval period (threefold and fourfold schemas are also acknowledged[147]), the

than the Alexandrian understanding of the relation of text to referent. Young describes the difference of their basic approaches as 'a distinction between ikonic and symbolic *mimēsis*': 'what I call ikonic exegesis requires a mirroring of the supposed deeper meaning in the text taken as a coherent whole, whereas allegory involves using words as symbols or tokens, arbitrarily referring to other realities by application of a code, and so destroying the narrative, or surface coherence of the text' (p. 162). It is worth noting that Porphyry reacted violently to Origen's allegorical treatment of the Old Testament, as we see in a passage from *Against the Christians* preserved and discussed by Eusebius (*HE* 6. 19. 1–9; Loeb, ii. 55–9). This aspect of Porphyry's critique has been the object of numerous studies: G. Binder, 'Eine Polemik des Porphyrius gegen die allegorische Auslegung des Alten Testaments durch die Christen', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 3 (1968), 81–95; Giancarlo Rinaldi, 'L'Antico Testamento nella polemica anti-cristiana di Porfirio di Tiro', *Aug* 22 (1982), 97–111; Philip Sellew, 'Achilles or Christ? Porphyry and Didymus in Debate over Allegorical Interpretation', *HTR* 82 (1989), 79–100.

[146] Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1975), 4–7. Ernst Dassmann has attempted to show that contrary to Tertullian's oft-repeated depiction of Paul as the *haereticorum apostolus*, the gnostic dependence on Paul should not be overstated ('Paulus in der Gnosis', *JAC* 22 (1979), 123–38). Klaus Koschorke, however, has subsequently demonstrated the truth of the traditional conclusion that there was none the less a 'specific affinity for Paul' on the part of Christian gnostics ('Paulus in den Nag-Hammadi-Texten', *ZThK* 78 (1981), 177–205, 201). That second-century gnostics appealed heavily to Paul is evident from Irenaeus (see Giuseppe Costa, 'Principi ermeneutici gnostici nella lettura di Paolo (Lettera ai Galati) secondo L'*Adv. Haer.* di Ireneo', *Rivista biblica*, 34 (1986), 615–37), the probably Valentinian 'Prayer of Paul' from the Nag Hammadi corpus (ET: Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 303–5), and Clement of Alexandria's *Excerpts from Theodotus* (critical text and ET by R. P. Casey, *The Excerpta ex Theodoto of Clement of Alexandria* (London: Christophers, 1934)).

[147] Glen W. Olsen, 'Allegory, Typology, and Symbol: The *Sensus Spiritalis*', *Communio*, 4 (1977), 161–79, 357–84, 165. Cf. the fourfold division mentioned by Augustine in *De utilitate credendi* 3. 5: 'The whole Old Testament Scripture, to those who diligently desire to know it, is handed down with a four-fold sense— historical, aetiological, analogical, allegorical (*secundum historiam, secundum aetiologiam, secundum analogiam, secundum allegoriam*). Don't think me clumsy in using Greek terms, because in the first place these were the terms I was taught, and I do not venture to pass on to you anything else than what I have received. You will notice that among us Latins, there are no words in common use to express these ideas. . . . In Scripture, according to the historical sense, we are told what has been written or done' (ET: *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, trans. John Burleigh, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), 294). It is apparent from this and the discussion that follows that the fourfold division was developed to describe the modes of reading

application of this terminology to Victorinus' treatment of Paul is not unproblematic. Notwithstanding the fact that his exposition of the Pauline letters proceeds in what we might not inaptly call a historical or literal manner, a number of passages show his readiness to apply 'non-literal' techniques of reading when the text or his philosophical proclivities demand it. Victorinus' comments on Eph. 2: 13–17 are instructive. Although his opening remarks on this verse betray his awareness that the issue is indeed that of the Gentiles being 'made near in the blood of Christ', the bulk of his remarks are devoted to his metaphysics of the soul, to the reuniting of souls with higher spiritual powers. Only when he comes to the end of this treatment of these verses does he return to the literal/histor-ical meaning of the passage as referring to Jews and Gentiles.[148] Much as did Origen,[149] Victorinus thought that there could be both a historical meaning and a spiritual meaning built upon it; an adequate exegesis had to render an account of both to be true to 'the' meaning of the biblical text. Nor did he limit this principle to the places where Paul himself allegorizes, such as Gal. 4: 24, a passage Simonetti noted as an instance of allegory within a largely literal commentary.[150] At times, when a literal reading made no sense, Victorinus, just like Origen,[151] engaged in a spiritual interpretation of individual terms in the text; his treatment of the 'flesh and bones' of Eph. 5: 30 is a case in point.[152] In the Galatians commentary a number of passages clearly show his importation of a philosophical schema into the text of Paul.[153] Moreover, Victorinus' discussion of

the Old Testament which early Christian exegetes found Christ and the apostles already employing in the New Testament (*De util.* 3. 6).

[148] See my translation and commentary on this section in *Metaphysics and Morals*, 69–72, 164–8.

[149] Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et esprit* (Paris: Aubier, 1950), esp. ch. 3: 'Le Sens littéral'. See also Gerard Watson, 'Origen and the Literal Interpretation of Scrip-ture', in Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (eds.), *Scriptural Interpretation in the Fathers* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), 75–84.

[150] Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria*, 240.

[151] It is difficult to believe that our commentator, having access to church 'libraries' and able to read Greek, had no contact with Origen's work. Formulations similar to those in Victorinus' commentaries can be found in Origen's polemic against literal understandings of Scripture in *De prin.* 4. 3 (ET: Butterworth, 288–312) and his commentary on Rom. 1: 5 (PG 14, 850C–851C; ET: Schreck, i. 71–3). Jean Daniélou has detected in Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises traces of Origen's *Commentary on John* (*RechSR* 41 (1964), 127–8).

[152] Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 106–7, 218–19.

[153] The remnant of his comments on 3: 20, following a lengthy lacuna, allows us to detect his assumption of a spiritual *ecclesia* (cf. also his comments on Gal. 4: 26), in contradistinction to the earthly, historical one (Gori, 131). Seeing that this distinction is not requisite for what we would consider a 'literal' understanding of Gal. 3: 20, I can hardly see how we should apply the label 'literal' to a commentary

Gal. 4: 23–4, where he admits introducing a different interpretation, illustrates his own awareness about his procedure in providing a further allegorical reading on top of Paul's own allegorizing.[154] A literal commentary—namely, one that sought only to reproduce the 'letter' of the text—would not present another meaning in such a self-conscious manner.[155] Raspanti's attempt to argue that *commentatio simplex* means a 'literal' commentary, at any rate, is at odds with his own praiseworthy formulation that the rhetor was aware of the fact that his method of commenting was a *'riscrittura del testo'*.[156] Whether Victorinus' 'rewriting of the text' in light of his own philosophical categories 'misinterprets or distorts' the meaning of Paul—which Raspanti emphatically denies—is another question.[157]

Another objection to the employment of the term 'literal' as a description of Victorinus' commentaries arises from the hermeneutical language he himself employs. Behind every manner of commenting on a text, quite apart from the material presuppositions of the commentator, necessarily lies a theory of interpretation, a hermeneutic shaped by the larger presuppositions and intentions of the author. In the case of Victorinus, these are in full view, thanks to his polemics against those who interpret badly and misconstrue the meaning of the text, i.e. the truths revealed by Sacred Scripture. His generalized attacks on this wrong-headed exegesis are expressed by a dichotomy stated frequently throughout his commentaries. His exegesis of Paul contains polemics against reading the Scriptures in a 'fleshly' (*carnaliter*) or 'corporeal manner' (*corporaliter*) or with a 'corporeal understanding' (*corporali intellectu*).[158] This terminology

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that insists on importing such extraneous material. Another instance of this is found in his remarks on Gal. 4: 6, where again a philological-philosophical apparatus is invoked to move the reader to a more profound understanding of the passage.

[154] *Ipsam tamen allegoriam interpretatur aliter Paulus* (Gori, 153, 3). See my translation of this passage, *ad loc*. The shift in meaning which Victorinus introduces is not great. Whereas Paul interpreted the pairs Sarah/Isaac and Hagar/Ishmael as 'two covenants' (4: 24), Victorinus takes them to mean two different 'peoples', viz. Christians and Jews, thus introducing a slight rewrite of the Pauline text to address a contemporary concern.

[155] Victorinus' willingness to write in—as it were—another level of meaning conveyed by the passage from Genesis which Paul quotes indicates a basic orientation toward the realities attested in the text. With Paul he is intent on conveying the gospel; his technical abilities are the means to the higher end. As such, the truths he expounds are not merely historical, and cannot be served by a merely literal exegesis.

[156] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 57.

[157] Ibid. 147.

[158] For examples of his use of these latter terms deriving from *corpus*, see the preface to the first book, as well as his remarks on Gal. 1: 12 and 4: 27. Terms built from *caro* ('flesh') are more frequently employed. In the first book of the commentary on Galatians, I count eighteen such locutions, where a verb or noun of knowing or perceiving is modified by such adverbs, adjectives, or prepositional constructions

is similar at least lexically to Alexandrian exegesis, which spoke of the σῶμα τῶν γραφῶν, the 'body of the scriptures' (Philo, Clement, Origen).[159] The kindred expression 'flesh of the scripture' (σάρξ τῆς γραφῆς) occurs in Origen's hermeneutical discussion in *On First Principles*, which Rufinus rendered as 'the body of the scriptures' (*corpus scripturarum*) and glossed as 'the common historical understanding' of the text (*communis et historialis intellectus*).[160] In Origen's system, while this level of simple understanding may sometimes be true, there are times when there is no historical sense, which pushes the interpreter to a spiritual understanding in any case. Victorinus' polemic against understanding *carnaliter* is also found in Origen, who faults Jews, heretics, and 'simple' Christians for sticking to a literal understanding (πρὸς τὸ ψιλὸν γράμμα) of the Bible instead of reading in accordance with the spiritual realities (κατὰ τὰ πνευματικὰ).[161] For Victorinus, as for Origen,[162] the polemic against certain ways of treating the sacred text is key, whether this polemic be directed against Jews or against heretics. For both, the right understanding of Paul's letter involves appropriating his way of reading Scripture—the Old Testament—which is anything but literal.

Victorinus' hermeneutical vocabulary derives—whether mediately or immediately—from the corresponding Greek terms which Christians applied to exegesis.[163] The use of the term πνευματικῶς by Paul himself (1 Cor. 2: 14) was a basis for later Christian writers to employ it, the opposite mode of understanding correspondingly denominated σωματικῶς or σαρκικῶς.[164] The Latin *spiritaliter* and

(e.g. *secundum carnem*). This is not counting the many recurrences of formulations referring to actions or way of life, e.g. *vivere carnaliter/spiritaliter*. Victorinus' hermeneutical use of the term *corporaliter* must be distinguished from the metaphysical sense, occasioned by its use in Col. 2: 8–9, where the term is given as a literal translation of σωματικῶς. When he quotes this verse in *Adv. Ar.* 2. 3 (CSEL 83/1, 174, 32–4; ET: Clark, 201), Victorinus offers οὐσιωδῶς as a paraphrastic translation, to make his Trinitarian point.

[159] See Fearghus Ó Fearghail, 'Philo and the Fathers', in Finan and Twomey (eds.), *Scriptural Interpretation in the Fathers*, 39–59, 54–6.

[160] *De prin.* 4. 2. 4 (Görgemanns and Karrp, 708; ET: Butterworth, 276).

[161] *De prin.* 4. 2. 2 (Görgemanns and Karrp, 700; ET: Butterworth, 271–2).

[162] See Karen J. Torjesen, 'The Rhetoric of the Literal Sense', in W. A. Beinert and U. Kühneweg (eds.), *Origeniana Septima* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 633–44.

[163] See Rev. 11: 8, where the term signifies a figurative mode of understanding: τῆς πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης, ἥτις καλεῖται πνευματικῶς Σόδομα καὶ Αἴγυπτος (KJV: 'And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt').

[164] The former term, *sōmatikōs*, is employed in Col. 2: 9 in what I take to be the original sense: viz. as referring to a substance and not merely a mode of understanding. The latter adverb is post New-Testamental, first recorded in Ignatius, *Eph.* 10. 3 (W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 4th edn. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 750).

its Greek equivalent are in a sense a 'natural' way to describe mental processes when, through the influence of Greek-speaking Judaism, the human being—or the highest elements thereof—came to be called 'spirit'.[165] 'Spirit' simply did not have this sense in Greek philosophical parlance: *pneuma* for Stoics and Neoplatonists was a material reality, hence was not to be used as a synonym for intellect, *nous*.[166] Yet, for the Christian Victorinus, 'the terms *nous, logos,* and *spiritus* become synonyms',[167] a clear case of his adaptation to biblical language. Paul's use of *pneumatikōs* in 1 Cor. 2: 14 refers to an operation of the human mind or spirit, and could thus be easily adapted to an exegetical usage, to refer to a way of reading the sacred text. The phrase 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual' (2: 13, KJV) is sufficiently vague to hold this sense, particularly when the following verse mentions 'the things of God . . . which are spiritually discerned'. It does not take much spiritual discernment to make an exegetical application of this language, as we see in Origen's commentaries on Paul.[168] In Latin, the term *spiritaliter* occurs in Christian literature from Tertullian on, who uses it in

[165] Key to this development was the Septuagint, which translated the Hebrew *ruach* (generally meaning either the divine or the human spirit) as *pneuma* (as in Ps. 31: 5, 'Into thine hand I commit my spirit' (KJV)). Because of this biblical basis, Philo was ready to call soul 'indiscriminately *psyche* or *nous* or *pneuma*, despite the different meaning these terms have in certain systems of philosophy' (Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Philo* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), i. 102).

[166] On the Stoic *pneuma*, see Anthony Long, *Soul and Body in Stoicism* (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1980), 3–10. For the conception of the astral, pneumatic (material) vehicle of the soul important to Neoplatonists from Plotinus onward, see E. R. Dodds's appendix, 'The Astral Body in Neoplatonism', in his translation of Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963; orig. 1933), 313–21. The only time Victorinus uses *spiritus* in this philosophical, non-Christian sense is in *Adv. Ar.* 1. 61 (CSEL 82, 163, 6–11), when he relates a series of opinions on the constitution of the human being (the first is Platonic, the second Aristotelian, the third involves the pneumatic vehicle as an interface between body and soul, the fourth is his own, which he relates to Matt. 24: 39–41). This aspect of Victorinus' thought has been analysed extensively by Massimo Stefani, 'Sull'antropologia di Mario Vittorino', *Scripta theologica*, 19 (1987), 63–111, 71–94.

[167] Stefani, 'Sull'antropologia di Mario Vittorino', 86 n. 132.

[168] One example is from the catena fragments on 1 Cor., which have preserved Origen's remarks to 1 Cor. 9: 9–11, where he states of the verse quoted by Paul from Deut. 25: 4, that 'the utterance is understood spiritually (πνευματικῶς) according to the divine apostle' (§ XLI, ed. Jenkins, *JTS* 9 (1908), 511). Another example is from Rufinus' translation (4. 8) of Origen's work on Romans. Although there is no Greek text for this passage, the technical terminology is clear enough from the Latin: *Si ergo carnaliter sapias . . . aut si de legis intellectu carnaliter et non spiritaliter sentias . . . per sapientiam carnis inimicus effeceris Deo* (PG 14, 989A; 'So if you are wise in a fleshly manner . . . or if your knowledge derives from an understanding of the law in a fleshly and not a spiritual manner . . . you are made into an enemy through the wisdom of the flesh').

exegetical[169] and other applications, just as do later Latin authors, to signify modes of life or understanding—whether of Scripture or of the sensory world.[170] Victorinus' reception and enthusiastic appropriation of such terminology was doubtless conditioned by commonalities he saw between Christian theological conceptions of the human person and certain traits of his philosophical anthropology. At times in his commentaries on Paul there appears the philosophical, particularly Neoplatonic, identification of the problem of the unreliable nature of sense perception and the limitations inherent in any such knowledge of this level of reality.[171] One senses from his exegetical writings that he regarded the primary source of error in both life and doctrine as deriving from understanding things *corporaliter*, 'in a fleshly manner'.[172] The resulting misunderstandings concern both textual and 'real' objects, be it the nature of Christ or the meaning of the precepts laid down in the Law.[173]

Since Victorinus' employment of this vocabulary is built upon Paul's own use of such language, we must ask, apropos of the present question, why Victorinus made this lexical choice. Why wouldn't he just have reproduced the hermeneutical terminology of 2 Cor. 3: 6, where the apostle speaks of the 'letter' that 'kills', opposing to it the 'spirit' that 'gives life'? While modern biblical commentators may not be as convinced as ancient exegetes that Paul's terminology here refers to the Greek allegorical method practised by Philo,[174] we know that Victorinus was familiar with the parallel and prior articulation of Paul's 'spirit and letter' dichotomy found in Roman law (the *genus* [sc. *controversiae*] *de scripto et sententia*[175]). Thus we must

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[169] Tertullian, *De oratione* 6. 2 (CCSL 1, 261, 5–7; ET: ANF 3, 683).

[170] The opening of the pseudo-Cyprianic *De montibus Sina et Sion* contains a good example of the exegetical sense: 'The things which have been written figuratively in the Old Testament, are to be understood spiritually (*spiritaliter*) in the New Testament' (ed. G. Hartel, CSEL 3/3, 104, 13–14).

[171] See his remarks in this translation on 1: 12 and 2: 20. His comments on Eph. 1: 4 provide the most comprehensive discussion in the commentaries of the 'metaphysics of the soul' undergirding his mistrust of things material and a material way of understanding (ET: *Metaphysics and Morals*, 46–51, and my discussion, 122–35).

[172] This aspect of his thought is clearly related to Porphyry's sentiment, 'Everything bodily is to be avoided' (*omne corpus fugiendum est*), quoted and combated by Augustine (*City of God*, 12. 27; ET: Bettenson (London: Penguin, 1984), 507).

[173] See his comments on 1: 11 for the former and 2: 19 for the latter.

[174] Victor Paul Furnish (*II Corinthians*, The Anchor Bible 32A (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 199–200) denies this connection, rejecting the conclusion of Robert Grant (*The Spirit and the Letter* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), 50–1), who has provided a useful survey of the 'letter/spirit' distinction in the Graeco-Roman world (ibid. 1–40).

[175] Cicero, *De inv.* 1. 13. 17 (Loeb, 34). Quintilian speaks of the 'legal question' *scripti et voluntatis* (*Inst.* 3. 6. 61; Loeb, i. 440); this is the terminology Victorinus

suppose him to have had some reason to avoid simply employing Paul's own terminology in his discussion of the correct reading of Scripture. On the face of it, he clearly preferred his own oft-repeated formulation of that distinction as between *understanding* in two opposing modes: *carnaliter/corporaliter* or *spiritaliter*. Here we really miss Victorinus' work on 2 Corinthians, where he no doubt went into great detail on this matter. In light of Paul's own statement that 'the letter killeth', one can easily imagine why Victorinus would avoid terminology suggesting that the meaning of Scripture could be ascertained by a 'letter-oriented' approach. The axis 'literal–spiritual'[176] is poorly suited to describing an exegetical procedure that sees the 'letter' as the bearer of spiritual meaning—a spiritual meaning, moreover, that has not been imposed by an allegorical reading. This has long been recognized by students of the history of exegesis. Karl Schelke has well expressed the problem of which Victorinus was certainly also aware: 'True though it is that one must take the Word literally (*das Wort wörtlich nehmen*), it is nonetheless the case that letters and words manifestly do not by a long shot constitute the entire truth of the Scripture. Rather one can miss the living truth by sticking with the letter.'[177]

Victorinus' approach to the Pauline epistles resembles the *theoria* of the Antiochene commentators in seeking the spirit through the

adopts in his commentary on Cicero, *De inv*. 1. 13 (Halm, 193, 23). Waszink has identified Tertullian's recourse to this form of argument ('Tertullian's Principles and Methods of Exegesis', 22–3). The terms ῥητός and διάνοια were used by the Greek rhetors (and from there by Philo), which Paul represented by his coinage γράμμα and πνεῦμα (2 Cor. 3: 6), according to an article by Boaz Cohen first published in 1957, 'Letter and Spirit in Jewish and Roman Law', now in H. A. Fischel (ed.), *Essays in Greco-Roman and Related Talmudic Literature* (New York: Ktav, 1977), 109–35.

[176] Ernst von Dobschütz has pointed to the way in which John Cassian (*Coll*. 18. 8; ET: C. Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 160) makes a twofold division between *historica interpretatio* and *intellegentia spiritualis*, this latter being subdivided into three: *tropologia, allegoria, anagoge* ('Vom vierfachen Schriftsinn', in *Harnack Ehrung* (Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1921), 1–13, 2). Victorinus' approach resists this division between a historical and a spiritual reading, at least as far as it concerns the Pauline epistles. There is some analogy to this in the way in which Porphyry assumes that Homer's cave (*Od*. 13. 102–12) is both an actual cavern and bears an *authorially intended* 'spiritual' meaning (see Porphyry's *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, 3–4 and 36; ET: Lamberton 22–3, 40). The difference lies in the nature of the text being commented on—epic poetry versus a letter—but the hermeneutical assumption remains the same: the inspired author, while dealing with reality on a concrete physical or historical level, is at the same time communicating deeper truths. Still, Victorinus' philosophical interventions are infrequent, e.g. his comments on Gal. 4: 6; most of the time he is content to find the 'spiritual truths' that modern scholars readily admit Paul intended.

[177] Schelke, 'Von alter und neuer Auslegung', 213.

letter.[178] Yet how much can one get out of the letter and it still be a 'literal' commentary? The philosophical excurses fit uneasily in this categorization, in any event. But indeed, could a 'literal', i.e. non-philosophical, treatment of Paul produce the Trinitarian theology Victorinus finds in the text? Or is this another exception to his 'literal' treatment of Paul's epistles? Hadot's description of Victorinus' exegetical method, 'philosophical-rhetorical', is more apt.[179] This designation covers the material and the formal side of the commentaries. The method is rhetorical in its use of the techniques of clarification, paraphrase, and amplification worked out by the secular grammarians and teachers of rhetoric. In terms of content, however, it is undeniably philosophical, with his 'philosophical excurses' where Victorinus lays out a comprehensive world-view in which Paul's religious message can be understood to cohere with the nature of reality. But neither the method nor the philosophical content obscures the fact that Victorinus' commentary is primarily a theological exegesis, written 'from faith for faith'.

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[178] See de Margerie, *Introduction to the History of Exegesis,* i: ch. 7: 'History, ''Theoria'', and Tradition in the Antiochene School'.

[179] Hadot: 'le caractère général de son commentaire le distingue tout à fait des commentaires traditionnels. On peut dire que sa méthode est rhétorico-philosophique' (*Marius Victorinus*, 289). Cf. H. Karpp, 'Bibel IV', in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980), vi. 48–59: 'The Latin authors gave preference to the allegorical method for the most part, but they often conjoined it with a typological and philologico-rhetorical exposition' (p. 54).

5

Situating Victorinus' Commentaries on Paul

The scholarship of the last 120 years has generated a number of hypotheses for situating Victorinus' work on Paul. These fall into two groups, roughly speaking. There are those that take the author's own soteriological concerns as formative for his activity as a commentator. Others regard the historical situation—both internal doctrinal struggles and the socio-historical changes entailed by the Christianization of Roman culture—as the primary determinant. But these are the pure types; in reality many scholars have incorporated elements of both types of hypothesis to generate more nuanced theories. Before discussing the specifics of these hypotheses, I will mention a number of general, theoretical considerations that will guide my own attempt to come to a better appraisal of the evidence. We may presume without controversy that, in writing his commentaries, Victorinus had regard for a certain audience in a certain situation. In so far as this 'situation' would have been at least in part a product of his own perspective, we can to some extent reconstruct it—that is, his framing of the situation—through reading his commentaries as texts aimed at persuasion. His goals as an author are structured by his appraisal of what might be helpful for the audience in that situation.[1] Werner Erdt has approached this complex of problems by breaking down the question of why Victorinus chose to write Paul commentaries into three factors: the occasion for their composition (the *konkreter Anlass*); the *Sitz im Leben* or life-setting of the intended audience; and the question concerning the author's reason or motivation for writing commentaries (*die Ursache*).[2] The first factor, the historical occasion, can be elucidated through the dating of the commentaries along with a reconstruction of the significant events of that time and place. The identification of

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[1] Aristotle observes that a speech (λόγος) has three components: the speaker, the subject of the speech, and the audience (*Rhet*. 1. 3. 1 (1358b); Loeb, 33). This aspect of ancient rhetoric clearly applies as well as oral discourse.
[2] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 86–93. For Erdt the third of these, *die Ursache*, which he also refers to as *die Motivation* (p. 97), is the most significant factor (p. 93).

a historical situation as the occasion for a literary work does not entitle us to the claim that we have uncovered the motivation for it. This is particularly true in the case of a commentary that is first and foremost an engagement with the biblical text and makes scant reference to the external world.[3]

In this regard, Victorinus' commentaries on Paul present a more difficult case than his Trinitarian treatises. These earlier Christian works situate themselves in a context by drawing on documents and making reference to contemporary persons and events. The treatises are invaluable for revealing aspects of their author's intellectual life: his didactic practices, his philosophical predilections, and his theological positions in the doctrinal controversies of the mid-fourth century. This and other contemporary or near-contemporary material allows us to reconstruct a picture of the events of Victorinus' time that could have contributed to his motivation in writing the commentaries some few years later. Yet none of this external data can alone answer the question concerning the commentator's envisioned audience and his general intentions in writing them. The commentaries themselves are of primary weight in this. The author of the most recent work on them has argued against a tendency he identifies in a number of previous studies to neglect the importance of the doctrinal controversies for their genesis.[4] For Giacomo Raspanti, the Trinitarian Controversy is the single most significant

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[3] An astute discussion of the problems surrounding the attempt to situate commentaries in their historical context is given by Clemens Scholten. His article, 'Titel-Gattung-Sitz im Leben', in G. Schöllgen and C. Scholten (eds.), *Stimuli* (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1996), 254–69, I encountered only after the present work was at its final stages.

[4] Raspanti begins by criticizing Werner Steinmann (*Die Seelenmetaphysik des Marius Victorinus*, (Hamburg: Steinmann und Steinmann, 1991)) and the present author on this very point (*Esegeta*, 15–19). Erdt's study, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, comes off better, as it sets out from the conviction—one I share with Erdt and Raspanti as well—'that it was not a philosophical interest that pushed Victorinus to comment on Paul but rather his own historico-theological and personal situation'. Erdt sees the commentaries as Christocentric and containing only indirectly an anti-Arian thrust; Steinmann, Raspanti maintains, 'affirms that in the commentaries the anti-Arian tendency appears to be generally without significance', such that Victorinus comments on Paul motivated solely by the philosophical-theological issues arising from his Neoplatonic metaphysics of the soul. Raspanti found this tendency confirmed in my 1992 Columbia University dissertation (a translation of Victorinus' commentary on Ephesians). This, he somewhat hyperbolically states, made 'no reference to the Arian problem'. While I did not grant the Arian controversy the status of primary *motive* for Victorinus' composition of commentaries on Paul (and this is precisely the bone of Raspanti's contention), the individual remarks within the commentary which address relevant Trinitarian issues were duly noted, there being five such references in total. Although my previous work does fall under the shadow of Raspanti's criticism in the way it depicts the Paul commentaries as an expression of their author's wider philosophico-religious concerns, I never

factor for understanding Victorinus' composition of commentaries on Paul. While I agree, in a qualified sense, with Raspanti that 'the thematic centers of the *Commentarii in Apostolum* succeed in being fully intelligible only when connected with the problematic issues that the Arian controversy had aroused',[5] I am less clear that this historical context emerges as the pre-eminent factor from an evaluation of the commentaries' form and content, as he claims. In a commentary on the Pauline epistles, arguments from content are often equivalent to arguments based on the tendencies of the commentator's Paulinism. Victorinus' appropriation of the Pauline corpus contains three such prominent features from which one can make extrapolations to the historical context: his metaphysics of the soul, his concern for Trinitarian and Christological issues, and the thematic complex we could call 'Christ and the Law'. This last, in turn, has two intimately related faces: justification by faith and Victorinus' vehement anti-Judaizing and potentially anti-Jewish polemics.

Any attempt to link text and world via the *author's motivation* will employ some pattern of assumption in evaluating the textual data. These assumptions take on greater importance to the degree that the text in question does not anchor itself in the so-called real world and the author engages largely in textual discourse. Scholars are then forced to 'read back' from the text to the world: e.g. to infer an opponent's position from the author's counter-argument, a procedure dubbed 'mirror-reading'.[6] The inherent precariousness of the manaeuvre, is enhanced, however, when the text is a commentary that does not engage with the adversaries' positions beyond the barest mention that they exist and are wrong.[7] Thus there is an

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endorsed the anachronistic notion that Victorinus would have asserted and privileged a private sphere of faith as somehow distinct from the communal sphere of the church's faith. Thus on p. 26 of the revised, published version of the dissertation (*Metaphysics and Morals*) I state, in a judgement that concurs largely with a significant aspect of Raspanti's own conclusions, that the intent of his 'exegesis of the Pauline corpus [was] to provide the less learned with systematic treatments of authoritative books', and that 'Victorinus' self-conscious use of Scripture in a polemical [i.e. anti-Arian] context as determinative of the boundaries of the Christian community suggests that the old rhetor did not fail to appreciate the social and political aspects of his new faith'.

[5] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 83. Following Erdt, he identifies these 'thematic centers' (*nuclei tematici*) as 'faith and the Christological interest in its soteriological function'.

[6] Appropriate cautions for this have been well stated by John Barclay in 'Mirror Reading a Polemical Letter', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 31 (1987), 73–93.

[7] This, of course, is a feature not merely of commentaries: e.g. one of the persistent difficulties in attempting to ascertain who the opponents of the author

obvious difference between overtly polemical exegetical works like Origen's *Commentary on John* (a response to a commentary on that gospel by the gnostic Christian Heracleon)[8] or Augustine's *On Genesis Against the Manichees*, and the commentaries of Victorinus. The latter refer almost exclusively to the world of the characters in the text: the Galatians, Paul, and his Judaizing opponents. This difficulty is to some extent compensated for by one facet of Victorinus' 'text-immanent'[9] approach: namely, the marked pronominal shifts we encounter throughout his commentaries. Victorinus' switching back and forth from the standpoint of an exegete talking about Paul in the third person to the apostle's own first person has the effect of allowing him to address his audience more directly and authoritatively. At the same time, this technique creates a kind of 'audience in the text' which corresponds, if not to a 'real' audience, at least to Victorinus' imagined audience, into which the author has breathed the life of his own concerns.

This pronounced formal aspect of Victorinus' exegesis, discussed at length in the previous chapter, makes his commentaries on Paul good material for using concepts which literary critics have developed to explore literature from the standpoint of the reader, through whose activity texts takes on meaning. Reader-response criticism[10] has for some time been welcomed by biblical exegetes looking to supplement the traditional, tried-and-true methods of historical criticism. Although literary critics developed the theory and terminology to aid in the analysis of fictional narratives, the concepts have also been applied to the largely historicist ends of biblical studies.[11] Literary theory having begotten a brood of readers of many names and heads,[12] I will follow in the main Stanley Stowers's terminology

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of the Pastoral Epistles are is that the author engages in polemics without the kind of argument which actually reveals something of the opposing positions (see Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 643, 659, 665). This contrasts strongly with the undisputed letters, e.g. 1 Cor. or Gal., which feature both polemics and argument.

[8] See the introduction to the first volume of Ronald E. Heine's translation in the Fathers of the Church series, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John* (Washington: Catholic Unversity of America Press, 1989).

[9] The term is Erdt's: Paul 'is taken on his own terms . . . and interpreted in a text-immanent manner (*textimmanent interpretiert*)' (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 94).

[10] For an introduction, see J. P. Tompkins, 'An Introduction to Reader-Response Criticism', in *idem* (ed.), *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

[11] e.g. Jack Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 31–40; Warren Carter and John Paul Heil, *Matthew's Parables* (Washington: Catholic Association of America, 1998), 1–22.

[12] Good orientation in one of the major literary critics, Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978; Germ. orig. 1976),

in his *A Rereading of Romans*, which is already adapted to the needs of those with questions about readers beyond the text.[13] Because 'readers' in Christian antiquity did not necessarily possess their own copies of the books but heard them read aloud, some prefer to refer to the implied reader as the 'authorial audience'.[14] This caveat applies to the reading more of Scripture than of commentaries, although the latter would probably have been read to small groups engaged in the study of the sacred text.

Of 'readers' in the sense thus qualified, one set is real in the conventional meaning, and the other two are products of the text as laid down by the author: 'the empirical reader, the encoded explicit reader, and the encoded implicit reader'.[15] The empirical reader is whoever in fact reads the text, whether ancient or modern. The empirical readers of Paul's letter to the Galatians are both those to whom it was addressed and any others who happened to read it.

27–38. According to Iser, two basic categories obtain. There are 'real' readers and 'hypothetical' readers, the latter divided into 'contemporary' readers and the more dubious 'ideal' reader. 'Real' readers are those whose reactions were recorded in reviews or other historical documents. But, as Iser points out, the further back in time one goes, the more obviously the status of even the 'real' reader becomes a reconstruction. Thus 'there are three types of "contemporary" reader—the one real and historical, drawn from existing documents, and the other two hypothetical: the first constructed from social and historical knowledge of the time, and the second extrapolated from the reader's role laid down in the text' (p. 28). The last is the 'encoded reader' in Victorinus' text who can help us shape the rough features of his intended audience as presumed from the historical conditions. Iser also discusses the 'intended reader' of Erwin Wollf ('Der intendierte Leser', *Poetica*, 4 (1971), 141–166), whose concept makes clear why the theory is useful to historical critics: 'Thus the intended reader, as a sort of fictional inhabitant of the text, can embody not only the concepts and conventions of the contemporary public but also the desire of the author both to link up with these concepts and to work on them—sometimes just portraying them, sometimes acting on them' (Iser, *Act of Reading*, 33).

[13] *A Rereading of Romans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 21–2. Stowers refers to Susan Suleiman and Inge Crosman (eds.), *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980). The apparently simplified schema presented by Stowers does not correspond exactly to any of the varieties of audience-oriented criticism discussed by Suleiman in her introduction to the book.

[14] Carter has drawn the term 'authorial audience' from P. J. Rabinowitz ('Whirl without End: Audience-Oriented Criticism', in G. D. Atkins and L. Morrow (eds.), *Contemporary Literary Theory* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 81–100), which he finds more suited to his aims in ascertaining Matthew's historical audience (see Carter's good discussion of these issues, *Matthew's Parables*, 9–14). As Carter states, '[t]he use of the term "authorial audience" therefore moves beyond a focus almost exclusively on the text to incorporate the socio-historical experience and cultural conventions assumed to be familiar to the audience but not elaborated in the text. . . . Our approach, then, is a corrective to the often held assumption that narrative, reader-response or audience-oriented work is ahistorical' (p. 12).

[15] Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 21.

This audience, obviously, is not a product of the text itself but a contingency of history. This is why empirical readers must be distinguished sharply from encoded readers, for only the latter are purely products of the text and thus able to inform us about the author's mind and intentions. The encoded explicit reader 'is the audience manifest in the text . . . the reader explicitly inscribed in the text'.[16] The letter to the Galatians presents examples of this, where the encoded reader is explicitly addressed: e.g. 'You foolish Galatians' (3: 1)—just one of many places where the apostle turns to his audience with the second person. The encoded *implicit* reader is not an entirely novel idea, according to Stowers, but has elements of the literary critic's 'ideal' or 'competent' reader. There is a 'reader' implicitly encoded in any text, in the sense that any communication depends on sharing certain ideas or conventions that need not be stated explicitly. This reader can thus be detected by asking what kind of information or knowledge the author presupposed the readers to have such that the whole of the communication would be intelligible. For the original recipients of Paul's letters, a certain amount of knowledge was presupposed—say, about Judaism and its scriptures, God, Christ, Paul himself, genre and literary conventions. The absence of a thanksgiving at the opening of Galatians (cf. Rom. 1: 8; 1 Cor. 1: 4; 2 Cor. 1: 7, 11; Phil. 1: 3; 1 Thess. 1: 2; Philem. 4) may have been felt as a stinging blow by them, much as modern recipients of a business letter would be discomforted by the lack of a 'dear' in the usual 'Dear Sir or Madam'. Stowers highlights the significance of the distinction between the empirical audience and the encoded reader(s) by pointing out that while our knowledge of the former is 'speculative'—by which I assume he means dependent on a reconstruction from evidence external to the text—'the encoded audience is always a rhetorical strategy of the text'.[17] Thus the 'reader' who emerges from a careful reading must be understood as a construction deriving from the commentator's own concerns and intentions. As Jack Kingsbury has put it, 'the implied reader is that imaginary person in whom the intention of the text is to be thought of as always reading its fulfillment.'[18] This is what makes the concept useful for historical questions, at least in studying the positions of a particular author.

Tackling the question of the 'authorial audience' in our case demands dealing systematically with Victorinus' speaking *ex persona Pauli*, addressing the Galatians in the second person plural. This rhetorical strategy involves his re-creation of the Galatians, their actions and state of mind, as a mirror in which his audience could see themselves and thus allow themselves to be addressed

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[16] Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 21.
[17] Ibid. 22.   [18] *Matthew as Story*, 38.

directly by the apostle. When Victorinus-as-Paul addresses the 'you-as-the Galatians', we should not identify this 'you' as the encoded explicit reader, e.g. in his comments to Gal. 3: 2: 'So when I preached the gospel to you, you received the Spirit based on the hearing of faith; so it was not based on the works of the Law.' This kind of second-person address applies clearly to the Galatians, and not to Victorinus' target audience. A similar case is found in his comment on 4: 9, essentially a paraphrase: 'And from this point, is he accusing them so as to say, after you came to know God through the gospel as I gave it, *how are you turning back again to infirm* things?'[19] The encoded explicit reader must rather be sought in the first person plurals, where the commentator tacitly identifies himself with his readers as people who share things in common. What have they foremost in common? Being Christians concerned to apply Scripture to their own lives. One sentence from his comment on Phil. 3: 12 presents us with Victorinus' evaluation of his own role as commentator: 'Calling to mind something about himself, he has added this in a rather forceful manner; but our job is to apply to ourselves what Paul says about himself.'[20] Here Victorinus is directly telling his audience how 'we'—that is, he and his imagined audience—should be reading the scripture. Explicit appeals to the encoded readers such as this are not infrequent in the commentaries, and serve the purpose of bringing home to his audience the point of the commentator's exegesis.

The encoded implicit reader, however, is a 'reader' to whom the author does not refer but who is presupposed in the act and manner of composing the text. The implicit reader is encoded in the text as an audience with certain abilities or knowledge, without which the author could not expect to be understood. The identification of the encoded implicit reader can help us make inferences about the author's *intended* audience, which is likely to have some overlap with the original empirical audience. This readership has been discussed under the heading of *Sitz im Leben*. Erdt followed Lohse in rejecting Wolfgang Wischmeyer's suggestion[21] that the commentaries were

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[19] *et hinc accusat ut dicat: postea quam cognovistis deum per evangelium a me datum, quomodo convertimini iterum ad infirma?* (Gori, 145, 7).

[20] *Fortius hoc adiecit de se quidem memorans, sed nostrum est ad nos revocare quod de se Paulus dicit* (Gori, 207, 2). This kind of first person plural is different from the far more frequent authorial plural generally utilized by Victorinus in place of the first person singular. The other 'we' explicitly invoked by Victorinus is the 'we' of Paul, or of Paul and his co-workers.

[21] Wolfgang Wischmeyer, 'Bemerkungen zu den Paulusbriefkommentaren des C. Marius Victorinus', *ZNW* 63 (1972), 108–20. On the basis of this identification of the audience, Wischmeyer maintained that Victorinus had an 'ambivalent position' in both pagan and Christian communities ('ambivalente Stellung innerhalb und ausserhalb der Gemeinde'; p. 111).

direct attempts to propagandize philosophically oriented pagans. He credits Wischmeyer, however, for having 'pointed to the question concerning the *Sitz im Leben* and therewith also the motivation of Marius Victorinus' exegesis of Paul'. Erdt's formal analysis of the commentaries indicates that they, like Victorinus' commentary on Cicero, are of a 'pedagogical nature' and contain formulations 'which betray the teacher engaged in instruction':

From the side of the form as well, the assumption presents itself thus: that Marius Victorinus wrote the Paul-commentaries precisely in order to bring the apostle's ideas in an easily comprehensible fashion to his contemporaries, and probably thereby to his students.

The fact that the letters of Paul are presented in the form of a *commentatio simplex* weighs against Wischmeyer's suggestion that they were intended for a philosophically educated audience. But amidst Erdt's otherwise perceptive depiction, he retains the aspect of Wischmeyer's proposal which regarded the commentaries as missionary literature:

The character of the commentary is thus expressly pedagogical and reminds one of a lecture in an auditorium. The scholar here facilitates for readers, whom he may in part have imagined as his students, an entry to Christianity through an exposition, moreover, of those very biblical writings which he regarded as particularly important: the letters of the apostle Paul.[22]

Although Erdt maintains that Victorinus chose the genre of commentary as a better form of 'introduction to Christian theology' than a systematic treatise which would require philosophical elucidation of the scriptural topics, he does not claim that the commentaries were directed to non-Christians in particular. Rather—and I certainly concur here—given that 'many a person of this time converted to Christianity without having come to closer grips with the Holy Scripture beforehand', such types will have been offered access to an important part of the Bible through the work of a man whose engagement with the Latin classics made him the ideal person to present a graded approach.[23] This *Sitz im Leben*, established by Erdt on the basis of the pedagogically tailored, formal aspects of the commentaries, fits well with the kind of social concerns and self-consciousness that we would expect in a Roman rhetor, as I have argued previously.[24]

This identification of the *Sitz im Leben* (that is, of the intended readership in a specific social location) allows Erdt to infer a corresponding intention on the part of Victorinus to reach such an audi-

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[22] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 93.   [23] Ibid. 96.
[24] Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 10–15, 22–4.

ence. However, because this audience is a product of inferences made from the formal consideration of the commentaries, this imagined readership itself cuts only a skeletal figure when it comes to situating it in a living historical context. Since Erdt's *Sitz im Leben* was derived from a largely formal consideration of the commentaries, the whole question of the *konkreter Anlass*, the precise historical occasion, was judged by him to be of lesser significance[25]—and this is why Raspanti has accused Erdt and others of neglecting the relevance of the Trinitarian Controversy. Raspanti claims that his own formal analysis demonstrates the centrality of the doctrinal debates to our understanding of the commentaries. Yet Raspanti himself confesses a difficulty: 'they do not contain . . . explicit mentions of the Arians.'[26] He attempts to overcome the obvious problem this poses for his hypothesis by maintaining that in numerous cases Victorinus 'indirectly polemicizes against the Arians'.[27] We must, then, review the passages which bear on this issue. A number of areas of relevance have already been identified by scholars under a variety of headings. I shall follow Erdt, according to whom the commentaries are as a whole notable for a 'marked Christological interest'. He has subdivided this into 'Christological explications' (some with and some without an anti-Arian edge) and a 'Christological and soteriological concern that comes to light all over' and finds particular expression in Victorinus' utterances concerning the salvific sufficiency of faith in Christ.[28]

The plan, then, of this chapter is the following. First I will discuss the dating of the commentaries. Secondly I shall examine the passages of the commentaries that appear to relate to the Trinitarian Controversy. The third section will focus upon Victorinus' treatment of justification by faith, to see if this pronounced aspect of the commentaries can be linked to any part of the historical context.[29] This central tenet of his soteriology comes sharply to expression in the commentary on Galatians and is bound up with—and must be treated alongside—Victorinus' animus against what he would see as

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[25] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 93.

[26] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 73. He cites in a footnote (91 n. 112) Gori's claim that the absence of an explicit naming of opponents notwithstanding, 'obviously the Arian heresy . . . could not but be constantly in his attention' (Gori, CorPat, 409).

[27] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 76.

[28] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 215.

[29] I will not attempt to deal with the full range of topics that pertain to Victorinus' soteriology, topics Erdt has covered at length (ibid. 120–96). Thus I will not discuss Victorinus' anthropological notions, generally regarded under the heading of the 'metaphysics of the soul'. This aspect of his thought is only marginally present in the commentary on Galatians, and does not affect the question of Victorinus' audience or motivations. Steinmann has dealt comprehensively with this topic in his *Die Seelenmetaphysik*.

a 'Jewish' religiosity. This element is a prominent feature of the commentaries, noted in all studies of them, albeit with differing evaluations of its import. To anticipate the results of the following analysis: my study of the commentaries has led me to the conclusion that through these works Victorinus sought to address a wide range of concerns which cannot simply be subsumed under the conception that these works have a primarily anti-heretical purpose. Without denying the anti-heretical element, I hope to offer a more satisfactory picture of what Victorinus attempted in his commentaries on Paul: a complete, if basic, guide to the entirety of the Christian life.

A. THE DATE OF THE COMMENTARIES

Our ability to fix a date for Victorinus' commentaries on Paul rests upon two other dates, both of which contain a measure of uncertainty. Almost all scholars agree[30] that the commentaries were written after the Trinitarian treatises were finished, which gives us a *terminus a quo* of late 363 or 364.[31] The *terminus ad quem* is furnished by Victorinus' death, which most scholars place in the middle of that same decade.[32] Accordingly, Victorinus would

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[30] The exception being Raspanti, whose arguments will be discussed at length below.

[31] This date depends in turn on dating the latest of the Trinitarian treatises, *De homoousio recipiendo*, to 363. Hadot has observed that this short treatise strikes a pacific note in several places, most notably in the opening two sentences: 'I marvel that the single basis of understanding among us still remains a matter of contention. We all understand correctly, but we are still not joined together' (CSEL 83, 278, 2–40). He maintains that 'such a situation could correspond well enough to the efforts at reunification that took place in the West around 362–363' (*Marius Victorinus*, 280). He cites the letter (found among the fragments of Hilary's historical work, CSEL 65, 158) from the bishops of Italy to the bishops of Illyria urging the latter to rescind their agreement to the creed they signed at Rimini in 359. Victorinus' little work, which seems to be a résumé of the rest of the treatises, indeed appears to correspond to a changed situation (note, e.g., his parenthetical remark: 'For we want peace with everybody' (*pacem enim volumus cum omnibus*); CSEL 83/1, 283, 15), although he ends with a clear sense that there are some people who are so wrongheaded in their theology that there can be no discussion with them ('For about those people who say [Christ] is unlike [God], one should not even talk, nor about those who maintain that those who treat the matters we are talking about are patripassionists'; ibid. 284, 32–5). If this first category of heretics is an allusion to the Anomoeans, as Hadot suggests (SC 69, 1057), then Victorinus is indeed very up-to-date. We need not suppose his acquaintance with writings of Aetius or Eunomius (on whom see Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)): the the view that Christ was unlike God (ἀνόμοιον κατ᾽ οὐσίαν) was condemned by the fifth, seventh, and ninth anathemas of the Synod of Ancyra in 358 (Hahn, 92; the synodal epistle is preserved by Epiphanius (*Pan.* 73. 2–11) and discussed by Lienhard, 'Epistle of the Synod of Ancyra, 358'; Hanson, *Search*, 350–7; and Simonetti, *La Crisi*, 239–41).

[32] F. F. Bruce pushes it later, to *c*.370 ('Marius Victorinus and his Works', 215). Marcia L. Colish (*The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*

appear to have begun to compose them during the brief reign of Jovian (late June 363 to early January 364) and the early part of Valentinian's rule.[33] Along these lines, I do not see that we can date the commentaries more precisely than to the mid-, possibly late, 360s.[34] This yields a slightly different picture, in terms of historical context, from a dating to the earliest years of that decade. Jovian and Valentinian having been at least personally inclined to the position of the Nicene party,[35] Erdt has proposed that the commentaries were composed 'in a time when the immediate danger of Arianism had already been removed'.[36] While the recent study of Daniel Williams has shown that the homoian party had greater vitality on Latin soil in this period than previously realized,[37] Erdt's claim that the commentaries would have arisen when the Nicene party in the West was at 'a more advanced stage of an offensive movement' need not be rejected. As Williams himself notes, 'the period of the 360s allowed the pro-Nicene movement to consolidate the revitalization programme it had begun under Julian.'[38] The struggle for an understanding of the faith compatible with the Creed of Nicea was by no means over; but externals had changed in this matter, significantly if not entirely, from the time Victorinus wrote the Trinitarian treatises to the period of the commentaries' composition.

However, the data concerning the two phases of Victorinus' activity as a Christian author, as laid out here, have been construed

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(Leiden: Brill, 1985), ii. 131), gives a date of 'around 361'; this is impossible in light of the fact that we know Julian's edict of June 362 resulted in his resigning his position (see Ch. 2 nn. 98–104 above).

[33] I am following John Curran's account in ch. 3 of Cameron and Garnsey (eds.), *Cambridge Ancient History*, iii.

[34] Thus Erdt, who maintains they will have been composed after 363 (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 88).

[35] Socrates, *HE* 3. 24 and 4. 1; Sozomen, *HE* 6. 3–6; Theodoret, *HE* 4. 1–8.

[36] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 79.

[37] See Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, ch. 3. Williams (pp. 6–7) is contesting the views both of the older scholarship and that of H. C. Brennecke (*Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 1), who claims that 'the political relationships in the West never permitted the rise of a Western homoian imperial church, which probably would indeed never really have been able to establish a footing there'.

[38] Williams, *Ambrose of Milan*, 71; Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 35. Jovian's short reign after the death of Julian set the stage for this, as this new emperor was a supporter of the homoousian faith (Socrates, *HE* 3. 24). This situation favourable to the Nicene party continued in the West during the rule of Valentinian, who, despite his Nicene leanings (ibid. 4. 1), maintained a mild policy of religious toleration (see *Ammianus*, 30. 9. 5: 'he took a middle stand between the differences of religions (*inter religionum diversitates medius stetit*) . . . he left the parties untouched, leaving them as he found them').

differently by Raspanti. He challenges the prevalent notion[39] that
the commentaries were in some sense a product of the leisure Vic-
torinus had after stepping down from his professorial chair. To the
contrary, 'nothing gets in the way of hypothesizing that the African
rhetor had conceived the idea of composing commentaries on Paul
already prior to 362 and therefore that his decision was not in any
way bound to Julian's edict'.[40] But whether Victorinus in fact
planned the commentaries while working on the theological treatises
is not a demonstrable hypothesis, based on the data we have. Erdt's
point that the lack of reference to the commentaries in the treatises
indicates that we are dealing with two distinct phases of authorship
seems unassailable.[41]

   For his contention that Victorinus had already conceived the idea
of commenting on Paul while still at work on the Trinitarian treatises,
Raspanti offers three lines of support. First, there is the wide variety
of interests manifest in the rhetor's writings from the pre-Christian
period. This propensity 'pushed him continually into initiating new
undertakings, new works which would investigate thoroughly the
issues that from time to time he came up against'. Proof for this
pattern continuing into his Christian period lies in the way his earlier
anthropological and soteriological issues (evident in his translation of
the 'books of the Platonists') 'remain a little on the margin' in the
Trinitarian treatises but are revisited at greater depth in the Paul
commentaries.[42] While Raspanti gives a correct assessment of Vic-
torinus' omnivorous mind and authorial habits,[43] I am unconvinced
that the soteriological and anthropological themes were in fact mat-
ters of secondary importance in the earlier treatises. As dogmatic and
polemical works, they maintain a focus on the point at hand; but the
question of the nature of Christ—the key issue—was for Victorinus

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[39] See Ch. 2 n. 103 above.

[40] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 71.

[41] Erdt (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 82–5) is very clear: 'Most importantly, more-
over, we have absolutely no signs that any of his Paul-commentaries lay before him
during the composition or even at the revision of the theological writings' (p. 84).
Erdt's argument does not depend on our accepting—as he does—Hadot's initial
suggestion that Victorinus revised the theological treatises after they were all
completed (SC 68, 60–70). Hadot, unremarked by Erdt, retracted this suggestion
as unnecessary to account for the patterns of self-citation in the Trinitarian treatises
(*Marius Victorinus*, 258, esp. n. 17).

[42] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 71.

[43] That this is not an improbable portrayal of Victorinus' personality is given
some weight by the manner in which he muses to himself in the preface to the
second book of his Ephesians commentary that he 'ought to do another book'
treating the advent and return of Christ, as these points cannot be discussed at
length in a *commentatio simplex* (Gori, 60, 12–21).

precisely a soteriological matter.[44] Moreover, Massimo Stefani had already documented the presence of significant anthropological and soteriological dimensions in Victorinus' *Adversus Arium*.[45]

Raspanti's second line of argument maintains that if the commentaries were begun only after Julian's edict required Victorinus' dismissal in 362, there would not have been enough time for him to complete so lengthy a work as a commentary series beginning with Romans and extending at least through Philippians. This consideration is based on the not unreasonable supposition that Victorinus died around 366. But the exact date of his death and his speed of composition elude us equally; thus this argument cannot be construed as probative in any sense. The third line of support for the hypothesis is closely connected with the second: namely, that this massive commentary work would have been greatly facilitated if the rhetor had already conceived the intention to write commentaries during the period of the treatises' composition and had compiled material toward that end.[46] This seems just as shaky as the second ground; nor does the rough quality of the commentaries suggest an elaborate, painstaking manner of composition. What would such a preparation have entailed? Not an outline, since this is more dispensable in commentaries than in any other genre. It is obvious that Victorinus had studied the Pauline epistles before the composition of the Trinitarian treatises, making notes on passages of direct relevance—but nothing is revealed by that about the commentaries, except that he had already realized the importance of the Pauline corpus. Although none of these three arguments can sustain his hypothesis of Victorinus' having planned a commentary series on Paul prior to the completion of the Trinitarian treatises, Raspanti does succeed in showing that his theory is no less probable than Hadot's suggestion that the decision to comment on Paul was linked to Julian's edict against Christian teachers. Such speculations lie at best in the realm of the 'not improbable', which is why this kind of reconstruction of motives, limited by insufficient external data, is inherently weaker than arguments from the structure and themes found in the text.

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[44] e.g. *Adv. Ar.* I 28 (CSEL 83/1, 102–3, 1–7); *Adv. Ar.* II 1 opens with a confession of God the Father and God the Son, and then makes the soteriological link: 'our whole religion, our whole hope and faith, is in Christ' (*tota nobis religio est et spes tota et in isto fides*; CSEL 83/1, 168, 5–10). *Adv. Ar.* III 3 shows the essential connections between his doctrine of Christ in both divine and human nature and salvation (CSEL 83/1, 195–7; ET: Clark, 224–6). Many more examples from these treatises could be brought forward on this point.

[45] Stefani, 'Sull'antropologia di Mario Vittorino'. Raspanti was apparently unaware of Stefani's article or his dissertation, 'L'Antropologia di Mario Vittorino' (Pamplona, 1986).

[46] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 71.

B. The Commentaries and the
Trinitarian Controversy

Victorinus' care throughout the commentaries to provide his audience with a sufficient, if not exhaustive, understanding of the nature of Christ is patent. In these works we can, at a minimum, identify an extension of the same set of concerns for doctrinal clarification prominent in the Trinitarian treatises. That these issues were never far from his mind is clear from the way in which 'under a misapprehension about Paul's main point he often gives his explanations an anti-Arian edge'.[47] Thus it is difficult to disagree with Maurice Wiles that the doctrinal debates which gave birth to Victorinus as a Christian author seem also 'to have been a major motive for the writing of his commentaries'.[48] Wiles's formulation significantly assumes a plurality of motivations, of which the 'anti-Arian' is only one. Raspanti's position is less qualified:

If one adopts a unified perspective in the consideration of the two Christian works of Victorinus, it emerges plainly that the *Theological Treatises* and the *Commentaries* shed light on each other and constitute two different way-stations of a single conceptual journey. In that case, the motivations which induced Victorinus to comment on Paul will appear clear—that is, polemical exigencies and doctrinal exigencies, both anti-heretical.[49]

But does what we actually read in the commentaries permit such a global inference? It may be possible, at any rate, to maintain a 'unified perspective' on the whole of Victorinus' Christian works even apart from subscribing to Raspanti's theory about the motivation for their composition.

There are three passages where Victorinus clearly employs language from the Nicene Creed. First, his comments on Gal. 1: 11 contain the phrase 'through whom all things were made' (*per quem omnia facta sunt*),[50] as part of a definition of Paul's gospel. He draws no attention to it, but goes on to explain that Paul's expression 'in a human manner' (*secundum hominem*) refers to the error of maintaining that Christ is 'a human being, as some people think' (*ut quidam putant*). This remark could be a reference to Photinus' teaching,[51] condemned by the ninth anathema of the First Council of Sirmium in 351: 'If any should say that the son from Mary was only a human

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[47] Karig, 'Des Caius Marius Victorinus Kommentare', 88.
[48] Wiles, *Divine Apostle*, 11.
[49] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 63.
[50] This cannot simply be regarded as a loose quotation of John 1: 3, *omnia per ipsum facta sunt* (Vlg.).
[51] Hanson, *Search*, 235–8.

being, let him be anathema.'[52] Concern for this sort of low Christ-
ology re-emerges in his comments on Phil. 3: 18–19, where he
elucidates Paul's words about the 'enemies of the cross of Christ,
whose end is destruction'. The enemies of the cross are 'those who
do not believe in the gospel. . . . For some have said Christ was a
human being, rather than having been in a human being. Others
deny that he was in any way born in the flesh. Others deny he was
crucified.' While the latter two opinions suggest gnostic ideas (and a
number of passages in the commentaries seem designed to combat
the docetic notion that Christ assumed merely the *phantasma*—as he
puts it—of a human being[53]), the first characterization is extremely
general and thus could encompass either Jewish-Christian views or
those associated with Photinus. This latter, after all, was lauded in a
letter by the emperor Julian for never bringing one whom he be-
lieved was God 'into the womb'.[54] Victorinus could also have had
pagan opponents in mind with this. For Porphyry, as Augustine says
in the *City of God*,[55] had an oracle from Hecate which paid Christ
the back-handed compliment of being 'a most devout man' (*piissimus
vir*), whose soul having become rightfully immortal, Christians ig-
norantly worship. Since Victorinus does not name his actual oppon-
ents in connection with these erroneous low Christologies, his aim
does not seem to be to direct polemics against specific heretical
groups, but rather to signal the errors themselves to his readership.

Two traces of familiar credal phrases occur in his commentary on
Ephesians. Victorinus remarks on Eph. 3: 9: 'from God, who as
Father is first, is begotten Christ, who is light and from light, and
God from God, who is Jesus, who is God from God'.[56] Aware that
the ambiguities of speaking of the Father as God and then Christ as
God can lead to misunderstandings, the ex-rhetor goes on to add a
prophylactic qualification: 'Let no-one suppose me to be talking
about another God; but the structure of language demands this
form of expression.' Despite the clear echo of the Nicene 'God

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[52] Hilary, *De syn.* 27 (text of creed in Hahn, §90).

[53] See his remarks on Phil 2: 7: 'Those who say he was a ghost (*phantasma*)
because of this phrase *in the likeness of a human being* are not to be heard. Rather the
saying refers to God, and to the Logos itself as formed in the likeness of human
being through the assumption of flesh (*sed ad deum refertur et λόγον ipsum formatum
per carnis adsumptionem in similitudine hominum*)' (Gori, 189, 63–6; cf. 190, 80–5).

[54] Julian, *Ep.* 55 (ET: Wright, Loeb, iii. 189).

[55] Augustine, *Civ. dei* 19. 23 (CCSL 48, 691, 60; ET: Bettenson, 884–90).
Augustine himself identifies this view with that of a 'Photinian heretic, one who
acknowledges Christ only as a man, not as God also'.

[56] Gori, 47, 15–18: *A deo, qui pater est primus, genitus est Christus qui est lumen et
ex lumine et deus ex deo, qui Iesus est, qui deus ex deo est. Nemo me velut alterum deum
dicere existimet, sed et ordo loquendi flagitat.* Cf. Hilary's Latin translation of the
Nicene Creed, *De syn.* 84 (PL 10, 536A; Hahn, §74).

from God, light from light' (Victorinus has reversed the order of the credal phrases), it is difficult to suppose that he has in mind here contemporary anti-Nicenes, who also abhorred a polytheistic interpretation of the Trinity. Even the homoians, whom he had explicitly opposed in his earlier works, rejected language of 'two gods', as evidenced in the Blasphemy of Sirmium of 357.[57]

Further in the same commentary (on 5: 2), Victorinus seeks the meaning of a phrase: 'But what does *he loved [you] and handed his own self over for you* mean?' *Eadem substantia, unum et voluntate*, he exclaims, which we must translate somewhat expansively: 'The substance being the same, they are one also in respect of will.'[58] What seems to have brought him to this utterance is that the verse from Ephesians about Christ handing himself over recalls to him Rom. 8: 32 (which he quotes immediately following), where God is said not to have spared his own Son, and to have handed him over. Victorinus is pointing to the fact that the Scriptures can describe both God and Christ as the authors of that action, such that from this common activity one can deduce that they are of the same substance, *unum et voluntate*. Is this what Michel Barnes has described as 'Pro-Nicene doctrine', an advanced understanding of the Nicene Creed appearing first in the mid-350s, which argues that 'because the Father and the Son have the same power as one another, they have the same nature'?[59] At any rate, Victorinus includes this phrase as

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[57] *duos autem deos nec posse nec debere praedicari* (Hilary, *De syn.* 11; Hahn, §91).

[58] *Eadem substantia* is Victorinus' way of rendering ὁμοούσιος. Cf. his *De homo-ousio* 2: *Recte dicitur eiusdem esse substantiae, hoc est* ὁμοούσιον (CSEL 83/1, 280, 18–19).

[59] Michel R. Barnes, 'One Nature, One Power', *SP* 29 (1997), 205–23, 215. Barnes wants to reserve the term 'pro-Nicene' for this particular kind of theological formulation; other scholars use the term in the more general sense, e.g. R. P. C. Hanson, 'The Arian Doctrine of the Incarnation', in R. C. Gregg (ed.), *Arianism* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Patristics Foundation, 1985), 181–211, 192. Michel Barnes's student, John Voelker, is presently completing a dissertation at Marquette University entitled 'The Trinitarian Theology of Marius Victorinus: Polemic and Exegesis'. Voelker argues that points in Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises (esp. *Adv. Ar.* I 37–9) contain aspects of this 'pro-Nicene' theology that go beyond 'neo-Nicene' positions (see ch. 5 of the dissertation, subsection 'Victorinus' One Substance, One Power Statements'). A brief version of his argument is contained in the published version of the paper Voelker gave at the 1999 Oxford Patristics Conference, 'Marius Victorinus' Exegetical Arguments'. Voelker disagrees with scholars like Jörg Ulrich, who admit the presence of 'neo-Nicene' terminology in Victorinus but deny him the possession of a genuine neo-Nicene understanding. See section on Victorinus in Jörg Ulrich, *Die Anfänge der abendländischen Rezeption des Nizänums* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 245–63. Ulrich concludes: 'And the few times that he mentions and cites the phrase μία οὐσία—τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις it has no discernible influence on his understanding of the Trinity' (p. 259). For recent contributions on the debated issue of 'neo-Nicenism', see Christoph Markschies, 'Was ist latein-

part of a positive formulation of what he takes to be Paul's meaning; that is, he does not present the matter polemically.

The opening salutations in Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Ephesians both furnish the opportunity for a Trinitarian gloss. The phrase from Gal. 1: 1, *Paul an apostle not by men*, receives an additional qualification from Paul: 'Likewise, because he learned [the gospel] through Christ, he has added *not through a human being*, lest Christ be accounted a human being, as he is by some heretics and blasphemers.'[60] Again, his exegesis works to ward off the unacceptable low Christology, which, in his formulation of it, was not characteristic of the views of anti-Nicene parties.[61] Continuing his consideration of the verse, he avers that the phrase *but through Jesus Christ* was added to mean 'through God, through Christ as God'.[62] However, he admits that the further addition *and [through] God the Father* has in fact given rise to 'certain people saying that Christ has hardly been called God by Paul'. He then assures his audience:

However, we have shown that in many places Christ has been called God also by Paul. Here too one may understand it as well. Certainly, if it was said in regard to Christ's calling him that Paul was not an apostle through human beings, and the phrase *but through Christ* was included, whence God is understood (the Father is also present in the Son), one must understand that Christ is also God. But since what God does, God does through Christ, as we have shown in many places, the text accordingly states *through Jesus Christ and God the Father*.[63]

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isher ''Neunizänismus''?', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 73–95, and Manlio Simonetti, 'Dal Nicenismo al Neonicenismo', *Aug* 38 (1998), 5–27.

[60] Gori, 97, 29–30. Paul's greeting in this letter was commonly employed to demonstrate the divinity of Christ, e.g. by Origen and Ambrosiaster (see Ch. 6. below, on Gal. 1: 1–3).

[61] Hanson provides a good synthetic account of the 'Arian' doctrine of Christ (*Search*, 100–22): 'Arianism in all its characteristic form always assumed that revelation and redemption on the part of God necessitated a reduction or a lowering, so that they had to be undertaken by a being who, though divine, was less than fully divine' (p. 100). Further, he describes 'two ideas which might almost be said to be the characteristic marks of Arianism, the acceptance of a *soma apsychon* and the rejection of a *psilos anthropos*, or in other words the doctrine that the incarnate Word took to himself a body without a soul or mind and the conviction that he was not ''a mere man'', but God inhabiting a body' (p. 110). So the Arians were in agreement with Victorinus on this latter point; and he is also not unaware of their disagreement on the former issue, as we see from one of his Trinitarian treatises: 'For could it be that he [*sc.* the Logos] accepted the *form* of a human being but not the substance of a human being?' (*Adv. Ar.* I 22; CSEL 83/1, 91, 13).

[62] Gori, 98, 34.

[63] Gori, 98, 35–43.

This passage is typical of Victorinus' theological exegesis: he identifies the false interpretation and then corrects it on the basis of his better—truer to the text—reading. Apart from calling those who purvey a low Christology 'heretics and blasphemers', he shows little interest in these opponents. Are 'Arian' opponents in view here? Candidus, however, whom we may take to portray what Victorinus considered to be typical Arian traits, did not deny but rather affirmed Christ to be called God.[64] Those the commentator calls 'heretics' here hold the opinions which in the theological treatises he associates with Photinus and Marcellus of Ancyra, certainly no Arians![65] The 'blasphemers' he mentions, if not identical with the 'heretics', may well be pagans like Porphyry who disputed the notion that Christ was a god.[66]

The opening verse of Ephesians, *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God*, allows Victorinus to focus on the phrase 'will of God' and define both key terms: 'God is Power itself (*ipsam potentiam*), might, the substance of the entire Fullness; but Christ—that is, the Logos who was in Christ—is the will of God.'[67] After a brief demonstration of how God and God's will are 'inseparable and yet somehow separable' (*inseparabilia ... et tamen quasi separabilia*), Victorinus goes on to a deeper topic which certainly lay at the heart of the Trinitarian Controversy:

At the same time this too must be looked at rather carefully: how the Son exists and how the Father exists. For although the begetting (*generatio*) is not known, an analogy is nonetheless to be grasped: by a certain birth, as it were, of the mind, by a thought, the will that has been conceived breaks forth and is poured out. For surely the thoughts of the soul are, in a manner of speaking, its children. Further, because God with his all-encompassing thought has one will, there is for that reason one single Son.

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[64] *Cand. Ep.* I 11 (CSEL 83/1, 8–10): 'So let no-one choke on accepting Jesus as a work of God, made perfect in every way, a god by the power of God' (*Nullus igitur velut insuave accipiat Iesum opus esse dei omnimodis perfectum, dei virtute deum*). Victorinus correctly represents the 'Arian' position that Christ was made by the power of God, his own view by contrast being that Christ is the power of God. Clark unfortunately mistranslated this passage, omitting that 'Candidus' was calling Christ 'God' here: 'Let no one then consider it difficult to accept that Jesus is the absolutely perfect effect of God by the power of God' (*Theological Treatises on the Trinity*, 56).

[65] See especially *Adv. Ar.* I 45 (CSEL 83/1, 136, 7–14; ET: Clark, 163).

[66] See Michael B. Simmons, 'The Function of Oracles in the Pagan–Christian Conflict during the Age of Diocletian', *SP* 31 (1997), 349–56. Simmons concludes: 'the doctrine of the deity of Christ was a central theme in the pagan–Christian conflict during the age of Diocletian' (p. 356).

[67] Gori, 3, 13–14.

The admission that the *generatio* is unknown is followed by an insistence that we can and must come to some approximate know-ledge of it through analogy (*similitudo*).[68] His insistence on grasping the divine begetting, if only analogically, is obviously related to the Trinitarian debates. The exact nature of this 'begetting'—and what it entailed about the Begotten—was key to the whole controversy. Victorinus presented this issue as a major part of his fictive epistol-ary debate with his representative 'Arian', Candidus.[69] Ursacius and Valens had wanted to proscribe any discussion of the begetting of the Son at Sirmium in 357. After rejecting any mention of οὐσία or *substantia* as unscriptural and referring to what is beyond human ken, the document drawn up there attempted to remove the discus-sion of the begetting from the theological table: 'Nor would anyone', it states, 'be able to relate the birth (*nativitatem*) of the Son, about whom it is written *Who will relate his generation?* [Is. 53: 8]. It is clear that the Father alone knows how He begot his Son, and the Son [alone knows] how he was begotten by the Father.'[70] Victorinus' comment here on the opening verse of Ephesians could be an answer to this, especially since it is clear that his short treatise *De homoousio* takes exception to the Sirmium use of that verse from Isaiah 53, on the basis that the divine revelation permits us to discuss what human being could not otherwise understand.[71] He grants the ultimately mysterious character of the divine begetting, but then argues that we can and must use an analogical approach in which inappropriate ideas appertaining to begetting are screened out. The commentary

[68] This is the passage that Hadot has claimed influenced Augustine in his psychological analogies in *De trinitate* ('L'Image de la Trinité', 432). See my discussion of this passage in *Metaphysics and Morals*, 117–19. I had not then noticed how a similar formulation was employed by Origen in the second book of his commentary on John, cited in Pamphilus' *Apology* (PG 17, 583B): 'But the Son was born from the very mind of the Father, just as a will is born from the mind' (*natus est autem ex ipsa Patris mente, sicut voluntas ex mente*).

[69] See the *First Epistle of Candidus*, esp. 10 (CSEL 83/1, 12, 2–5; ET: Clark, 55): 'That the Son of God, who is the "Logos with God," Jesus Christ, "through whom all things were made and without whom nothing was made," is, not by God's begetting but by God's operation, the first and original effect of God' (*Quoniam dei filius, qui est* λόγος *'apud deum', Iesus Christus, 'per quem effecta sunt omnia et sine quo nihil factum est', neque generatione a deo, sed operatione a deo, est primum opus et principale dei*). Victorinus' answer on this point is contained in his *Ad Cand.* 29–31 (CSEL 83/1, 44–7; Clark, 80–3).

[70] Statement preserved by Hilary, *De syn.* 11 (Hahn, §91).

[71] Victorinus, *De hom.* 4: 'But they are deceiving you. I'm talking about those who don't understand the mode of generation and say "the Lord's birth—who can tell of it?". In the first place, the "who" (meaning, "nobody") can be taken to refer to human beings. Now, the Holy Spirit can both tell and instill it. Whence I too have ventured to speak about it by the permission of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ' (CSEL 83/1, 282, 2).

thus works to build up a positive understanding of the faith without any polemical attack on opponents. We should note that Origen had already invoked proofs for Christ's divinity from the openings of both Galatians and Ephesians.[72]

However, Victorinus' comments on the phrase from Gal. 4: 4 (*born of a woman, made under the Law*) seem clearly intended to combat those who would dispute the Nicene Creed's assertion that the Son was 'begotten, not made':

Made under the Law. The greatest error is spawned under authority of this phrase. People get a sense from this passage that the Son was not begotten, but made, because Paul said *God sent his Son, born of a female, made under the Law*. It matters a great deal, however, whether he said the Son was 'made' or *made under the Law*. It is something different for a son who was already a son to have been sent, especially when he was a begotten son. But when he was *born of a female*, he can be said to have been *made*, but *made* to this end: that he be *under the Law*. What is the significance, however, of his saying *made under the Law*? That he was not to be born amidst the Gentiles, but among the Jews, within the teaching and Law of Moses.[73]

Thus his exegesis dispels any attempt to conceive of Christ as made or created—which was the position of Arius in the first phase of the controversy, not a teaching shared by later anti-Nicenes such as the homoiousians or the homoians. It is significant that he reaches this anti-Arian exegesis in a clear and simple fashion: namely, by focusing on the entire phrase in question so that 'made' is understood to be said not absolutely but qualified by the prepositional phrase. He had previous touched upon this verse in passing in *Ad Candidum*, although there the theological reasoning is more complex, and the exegetical solution found in his commentary is entirely absent.[74]

The Christological hymn in Philippians is an obvious place for any exegete to stake out Trinitarian and Christological positions. Here we find Victorinus working to combat any suggestion that Christ became the Son only with the Incarnation:

The catholic teaching says that both the Father and the Son always existed (*et semper fuisse patrem et semper filium*); thus it is both to be said and to be understood. Nevertheless, since among us this error is born, that would hold the λόγος never to be called Son prior to having descended to flesh, this

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[72] Cf. the fragment from Origen's commentary on Galatians in Pamphilus' *Apologia* on Gal. 1: 1 (PG 17, 584A–B) with Victorinus' comments on that verse. Wiles thinks that Victorinus 'follows up a suggestion of Origen [see *JTS* 3 (1902), 235, 13–14] by hypostatizing the concept of the will of God in Eph. i. 1 and developing it in a manner designed to bring out the divine status of Jesus' (*Divine Apostle*, 91).

[73] Gori, 140, 89 ff.

[74] *Ad Cand.* 29 (CSEL 81/1, 44).

statement does not run along these lines but contains its own proper interpretation.[75]

Gori notes how Victorinus attempts here to ward off aspects of the low Christologies of Marcellus and Photinus,[76] whom he excoriated by name several times in his Trinitarian treatises for their understanding of the Incarnation.[77] The formula *et semper fuisse patrem et semper filium* is a conflation of the phrases that Alexander of Alexandria had used, which Arius in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia said he could not tolerate.[78] Victorinus' solution to the problem posed by the phrase from Phil. 2: 9—*God gave to him a name*—is to argue that 'only the name will have accrued [later], the same reality will have existed even before'.[79] This is typical of how Victorinus' commentaries address issues that arose in the Trinitarian controversies. The genre of commentary allows him to offer authoritative doctrinal positions that he regards as orthodox (whence the phrase just quoted about the *catholica disciplina*) and in line with the Nicene articulation of the faith. Opposing positions are presented as faulty understandings of the biblical text, though we should note that he allows that these errors are born *apud nos*, 'among us'—certainly a more generous way of dealing with doctrinal diversity than we find among many supporters of the Nicene Creed in this period.

The confession of Christ as God, Victorinus takes to be so central to the Christian faith that he recognizes its presence even among those whose religious practices he does not commend. We see this in his remarks on Gal. 1: 12.

Those who are already following Christ ought not, ought not take it in such a way so as to understand that Paul received a revelation from a human being because it was stated that Jesus Christ revealed it. Even the Galatians had received Christ as both God and Son of God. The rest of what they add they received from a human source, whether those who have persuaded them or from Moses himself who gave the Law.[80]

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[75] Gori, 192, 28 ff. Souter has well said of this section of the commentary, 'it is excessively difficult to make out, and a very good exercise' (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 25). Victorinus' exegesis of the Christological hymn has been fully treated by Baron, *L'Inno cristologico*.

[76] Gori, CorPat, 432.

[77] See *Adv. Ar.* I 22 and I 28 (CSEL 83/1, 91, 21 and 104, 33; ET: Clark, 125, 134–5) and Hadot's comments, SC 69, 771.

[78] ἀεὶ θεός ἀεὶ υἱός, ἅμα πατήρ ἅμα υἱός—'Always God, always Son' and 'Father and Son together at the same time' (Theodoret, *HE* 1. 5. 1; GCS 19, p. 26, l. 8). The letter is also preserved by Epiphanius, *Pan.* 69. 7 (ET of full document in E. C. Hardy and C. Richardson (eds. and trans.), *Christology of the Later Fathers*, 329–31).

[79] Gori, 193, 48 ff.

[80] Gori, 104, 19–24.

His comments on Gal. 4: 6 also reflect the notion of Christ as both God and power of God:

But because you are God's sons, God sent the Spirit of the Son into your hearts. Behold the full array of these three Powers, operant through their one power and one Godhead. For God, says Paul, who is the Father, sent the Son, who is Christ. Christ in turn, who is himself the power of God and is God himself. . . . [81]

This exegesis is clearly of a piece with Victorinus' attempt to ground a Nicene Trinitarian theology in Scripture. To the extent that the positive statement of this position is intended to exclude alternative understandings, there is indeed an anti-heretical aspect to Victorinus' Pauline exegesis. Accordingly, one could say that Victorinus' encoded implicit reader is a Christian for whom a knowledge of the correct beliefs about Christ, as derived from Scripture, is a clear desideratum. But it is one thing to declare that Victorinus envisioned an audience with one such need among others, and it is entirely another to argue that this particular doctrinal exigency constituted the dominant motivation in the mind of the author. My objection to Raspanti's theory stems from the fact that the commentaries contain much more than such anti-heretical prophylaxes. Thus it seems a dubious procedure to pare down our reconstruction of the author's purposes to a single complex when the texts themselves present a more variegated picture. When dealing with a commentary, we should keep in mind that the scriptural exegetes of the fourth century engaged in commenting on the text for its own sake, however much they may also have had their eyes on certain aspects of their world.

C. Justification by Faith and the Anti-Judaizing Polemic

It is not accidental that the earliest scholarship on the commentaries, dating from the late nineteenth century, should have fastened on justification by faith, the chief point of Reformation theology. A worthy product of British Victorian scholarship, the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, included an article by Charles Gore on Victorinus. Gore drew heavily on the commentaries to reconstruct Victorinus' Trinitarian, anthropological, and ecclesiastical thought,[82]

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[81] Gori, 142, 2–5.

[82] Charles Gore, 'Victorinus', in *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, iv (London: John Murray, 1887), 1129–38. The value of Gore's article should not be obscured by his attribution of the main lines of Victorinus' Neoplatonism to Plotinus, not Porphyry, as Hadot has argued at length in *Porphyre et Victorinus*. However, Hadot's identification of Porphyry as the author of the commentary on Plato's

making the important observation that these works contained elements seemingly independent of the author's noted Neoplatonism. Victorinus, he concluded,

is an intensely ardent follower of St. Paul, devoted to St. Paul's strenuous assertions of justification by faith. Indeed, he uses very strongly solifidian language and (by anticipation) very strongly anti-Pelagian language. This element in his teaching is most remarkably emphatic in his commentaries.[83]

While Gore's judgement that Victorinus' reading of Paul was in anticipation anti-Pelagian was not to be universally accepted, in pointing to this aspect of the rhetor's interest in Paul, he laid the groundwork for an approach to the commentaries which saw them primarily as an expression of the author's soteriological concerns. Gore's suggestion that there was a 'closer connection than has been yet noticed between him and St. Augustine'[84] was taken up by Adolph von Harnack. As he expressed the point in his *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 'we are astonished to find him a perfect Christian Neoplatonist, and an Augustine before Augustine'.[85] Harnack made Gore's claim central to his evaluation of the importance of Victorinus' Paul commentaries to the history of Christian doctrine: 'No-one before Augustine emphasized justification from faith and recognized the meaning of faith so energetically as this rhetor.'[86] The phrase *sola fides*—absent *ipsissima verba* in Paul's letters but found in an anti-Pauline formulation in James 2: 24 (οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον; Vlg. *non ex fide tantum*)—makes a significant

Parmenides (whose fragments the Turin palimpsest contained) has been strongly contested by Matthias Baltes (see Ch. 2 nn. 61 and 70).

[83] Gore, 'Victorinus', 1137.

[84] Ibid. 1138.

[85] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v, trans. Neil Buchanan (New York: Russell and Russell, 1958), 35 n. 1.

[86] Adolf von Harnack, 'Geschichte der Lehre', 158–9. The great scholar then immediately qualifies this assertion: 'To be sure, in this he also still falls short of the correct understanding of Paul to the extent that when it comes to the "works of the Law" he often thinks only on the Old Testamental ceremonial ordinances.' Reinhold Schmid, however, has noted an important exception to this last statement in Victorinus' comments on Eph. 2: 3. As Schmid put it in his dissertation, 'not only do the ceremonial works fall under the curse, but also the good works of Christianity . . . the higher religious duties, chastity, and abstinence are unable to provide a basis for merit; whoever relies upon them is lost' (*Marius Victorinus Rhetor und seine Beziehungen zu Augustin* (Kiel: Uebermuth, 1895), 63). The 3rd edn. of Harnack's *Dogmengeschichte* (the basis of the English translation), takes account of Schmid's work; but while Harnack admits that 'Schmid has brought forward weighty arguments', he does not consider them altogether successful (*History of Dogma*, v. 37).

appearance in Victorinus' commentaries on Paul.[87] Harnack's inves-
tigation of the history of *sola fide* in the early church shows how any
such representations of Paul's teaching were generally regarded as
dangerous and productive of moral laxity; and it was not until the
fourth-century rediscovery of Paul that this Pauline notion of faith
emerged in a positive light—if only to be submerged again after the
Pyrrhic victory of the Pelagian Controversy, brilliantly to rise anew
from Luther's pen (thus the decidedly Protestant perspectives of
Harnack and Holl[88]). The question of whether Augustine read Vic-
torinus on Paul, of signal importance for our understanding of the
development of Christian theology, will be treated at length in the
following chapter. But as pertains to the present question of situat-
ing the commentaries, Harnack conceded an important qualification
in this regard. Because Victorinus' formulation of Pauline thought
was contained in a commentary, 'we do not even know whether he
spoke as he wrote here [in the commentaries]; we also do not know
how he connected the praxis of his church with the thoughts devel-
oped therein'.[89] Thus Harnack recognized that the genre of com-
mentary in Victorinus' rendition did not lend itself to an easy
reconstruction of the relationship between the author and the
church-historical situation.

   The enthusiasm of Harnack's claim that Victorinus, precisely in
his Neoplatonizing Paulinism, was an 'Augustinus ante Augusti-
num' was somewhat dampened by Reinhold Schmid's 1895 Kiel
dissertation. Schmid approached Victorinus in terms of his 'rela-
tions to Augustine', as his study's title expressed it; and he rejected
the theory of a dependence of Augustine's Paulinism upon Victor-
inus for a variety of reasons, including that he was unable to discover
any trace of Victorinus' exegesis in Augustine's commentary on
Galatians.[90] Yet this aspect of Victorinus' exegetical works con-
tinued to attract attention. Werner Karig's 1924 Marburg disserta-
tion, the first monograph devoted to the commentaries, dealt at
length with Victorinus' treatment of two major issues in Pauline
theology: justification and Christology.[91] Despite his judgement

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[87] Harnack, 'Geschichte der Lehre', 159. Victorinus uses the phrase *sola fides* in
his comments on Gal. 2: 15, 3: 2, 3: 7, 3: 21, 3: 22, 6: 10, also a similar expression at
5: 10 (*fidem tantum habeatis*).

[88] Karl Holl, 'Die iustitia dei in der vorlutherischen Bibelauslegung des Abend-
landes', in *Festgabe für A. v. Harnack* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1921), 75–92; repr. in
idem, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte*, iii (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche
Buchgesellschaft, 1965), 171–88.

[89] Harnack, 'Geschichte der Lehre', 160.

[90] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 79. This last conclusion must, in my view,
be rejected in light of newer research (see Ch. 6 below).

[91] On the topic of justification Karig grants that Victorinus grasped Paul in a
more significant measure than Schmid had recognized ('Des Caius Marius Victor-
inus Kommentare', 87, 94–5).

that 'the commentary is a scholar's work which owes its genesis to the scholarly (*wissenschaftlichen*) interest of its author',[92] Karig connected Victorinus' activity as an exegete with his enthusiasm for certain Pauline themes: 'the event of Christ's death on the cross found a deep echo . . . an essential moment in the development of Victorinus'.[93] Karig seems here to have coloured in an earlier conclusion reached by Schmid: namely, that Victorinus was attracted to Paulinism 'for some sort of reasons of personal inclination'.[94] Karig seems rightly to me to assume a depth of religious experience, nay, enthusiasm on Victorinus' side for a Pauline theology of grace; but unfortunately we lack the kind of evidence that would permit us to sketch his inner life in any significant measure. Victorinus' faith in Paul's salvific message, at any rate, along with the high Christology he apparently considered part of the package,[95] are the motivating factors that Erdt identified behind both his engagement in the doctrinal controversies and his decision to comment on Paul. His 'anti-Arianism', accordingly, cannot be said to be the cause of the commentary; rather, his Paulinism will have conditioned his response to the Trinitarian disputes.[96] Erdt concluded that it was Paul's soteriologically oriented Christocentrism that found such a deep echo both in Victorinus personally and in terms of what he thought his contemporaries needed during this time of theological controversy.[97]

The following sketch of Victorinus' understanding of justification by faith demands the cautionary note that because his commentary on Romans is lost, and his work on Galatians has two lengthy lacunae,[98] we cannot arrive at a comprehensive reconstruction of his teaching on the subject. What is apparent from the material in the surviving commentaries, however, is a strong connection between

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[92] Ibid. 16.

[93] Ibid. 95.

[94] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 80: 'aus irgend welchen Gründen persönlicher Neigung dem Paulinismus zugewandt'.

[95] That is, a Christology which made sense in light of a philosophical position he already held: viz. the Porphyrian modification of Plotinus' three hypostases in light of the Chaldean oracles. For this philosophical background, see Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, or—more succinctly—*Christlicher Platonismus* (Zürich: Artemis, 1976), 5–20. In English, see Mary T. Clark's introduction to her Fathers of the Church translation of the Trinitarian treatises or her excellent brief article, 'The Neoplatonism of Marius Victorinus', *SP* 11 (1972), 13–19. An advance on all the above is now Baltes, *Marius Victorinus*, ch. 3: 'Die Lehre des Marius Victorinus'.

[96] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 210. Here I differ from Erdt, and would emphasize that Victorinus read Paul—and the Bible generally—in light of a philosophical monotheism understood in a manner compatible with the Nicene Creed.

[97] Ibid. 249–52.

[98] His remarks on 3: 10–20 and 5: 17–26 are missing (the lack of comments on 3: 11–23 and 5: 17 is particularly unfortunate for the question).

the position Victorinus assumes on justification and the negative stance he takes in regards to the Jewish Law. In the following I will present the definitions and clarifications of Paul's justification language which Victorinus provides, organizing his relevant remarks along the lines of the vocabulary which became an essential feature of Latin theological discussion of the doctrine of justification by faith. My exposition will thus concentrate on Victorinus' use of *iustitia* and *meritum*, including cognate vocabulary. The sense of other relevant terms, such as *fides* and *gratia*, will emerge from their use in context. Victorinus very frequently employs both *salus* (also *salvatio*, *salvo*, and *salutaris*) and *liberatio* to signify generally the aim and end of what he calls the 'Mystery'—the totality of the Christ-event—or, more specifically, eternal life. We shall consider this language of 'salvation' only when it has particular bearing upon the issue—that is, the question of the pertinence of works to salvation.

Of the three extant commentaries, the commentary on Galatians contains the fullest development of *iustitia*, *iustificatio*, and *iustificare*, since these terms occur frequently in the VL text of that letter (2: 15–21; 3: 6, 8, 11, 21; 5: 5). Victorinus brings forward this terminology first in the summary of the epistle he offers prior to embarking on his line-by-line comment on Paul's *narratio* in 1: 13–21. The key Pauline term finds its place first in his recapitulation of Paul's argument: 'The gospel is one and true: to have faith in Christ and to be justified by him (*ab eo*), not on the basis of works of the Law. After these points, Paul gives other arguments that justification comes about based on Christ (*ex Christo*), not on the Law or on works.'[99] Christ is both agent (*ab eo*) and source (*ex Christo*) of justification. This point is emphasized almost always in contrast to an opposing view, that of Jews and Judaizing Christians, who supposedly seek justification based on the Law or works. Victorinus' most elaborate presentation of this contrast comes in his comments to Gal. 2: 15–21. Elucidating the text by adopting the point of view of Paul addressing Peter, he recounts their reasons for having taken up faith in Christ.

We, says Paul, we have believed in Christ, and we do believe in order that we might be *justified based on faith, not works of the Law*, seeing that *no flesh*—that is, the human being who is in flesh—*is justified based on works* of the Law. So knowing this, if we have believed that justification comes about through faith, we are surely going astray if we now return to Judaism,

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[99] This is part of his summary remarks on 1: 13–14: *evangelium . . . quod unum est et verum: in Christum fidem habere et ab eo iustificari, non ex operibus legis. Post haec dat alia argumenta, quia ex Christo iustificatio fit, non ex lege neque ex operibus* (Gori, 107, 73–6).

from which we passed over to be justified based not on works but faith, and faith in Christ. For faith itself alone grants justification and sanctification. Thus any flesh whatsoever—Jews or those from the Gentiles—is justified on the basis of faith, not works or observance of the Jewish Law.[100]

The penultimate line has a Reformation ring: 'faith itself alone grants justification and sanctification' (*Ipsa enim fides sola iustificationem dat et sanctificationem*); and it is perhaps the earliest Latin formulation of Paul's theology in those terms.[101] In that regard, Harnack considers that 'the mention of sanctification here is of greater importance than even the "sola"'.[102] The qualification of faith as *fides sola* clarifies the ground for the rejection of the usual competitors of faith: 'not works or observance of the Jewish Law'. The mention of a 'sanctification' bestowed by justification was not casual: in his comments to Eph. 2: 14, Victorinus conjoined *sola fides* with 'salvation'. Because that verse attributes to Christ the action of 'breaking down' the wall of partition and the hostilities in the flesh,

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[100] *'nos', inquit, 'in Christo Iesu' credidimus et 'credimus ut iustificemur ex fide, non ex operibus legis,' quia 'ex operibus legis non iustificatur omnis caro,' id est homo qui in carne est. Ergo, si hoc scientes credidimus per fidem iustificationem fieri, utique erramus si nunc ad Iudaismum redimus, ex quo transivimus, ut non ex operibus iustificemur, sed ex fide et fide in Christum* (Gori, 122, 13–20). His remarks on 3: 22 contain a similar formulation: *Ut fides sola Iesu Christi sufficiat ad iustificationem liberationemque nostram* (Gori, 134, 7).

[101] In the following note I quote a passage from Hilary's *Commentary on Matthew*, dated to before 356 (Quasten, *Patrology*, iv. 48) where Hilary uses the phrase *sola fides*, albeit not as an elaboration of Paul's theology.

[102] Harnack, 'Geschichte der Lehre', 159. Harnack observes how '[t]he catholic editor [of the Migne edition] is thrown into an understandable disquiet by Victorinus' expression and cites in a note James 2,24 f. *in extenso* in order to calm himself. The import of "*sanctificatio*", as the addition of this word proves, is that Victorinus did not merely paraphrase and repeat the Pauline ideas but actually understood them.' Harnack may be right that Victorinus is the first to champion the *sola fide* as a positive doctrine; but Origen in his commentary on Romans—as Caroline Bammel has pointed out ('Justification in Augustine and Origen', *JEH* 47 (1996), 223–35, 230)—had raised the question of whether anyone could be saved by faith alone, looking for examples in the Gospels. We have the Greek for this passage where he brings up the example of the faithful bandit on the cross (Luke: 23: 39–43): 'it is sometimes possible for someone just believing already to obtain justification' (τυχεῖν τῆς δικαιώσεως πιστεύσαντα μόνον; Scherer, *Le Commentaire d'Origène*, 164, 7). However, the use of the phrase in the passage from Origen is not to articulate *sola fide* as a central aspect of Paul's theology; rather, at issue is what Harnack has described as the early church's general discomfort with any suggestion that faith alone saves. The phrase also occurs in a similar exegetical context in Hilary's commentary on Matthew (at 9: 6), apropos of Jesus' healing of a paralytic: 'A sin forgiven by a human being upset the scribes, for in Christ they saw only a human being. What the Law had been unable to mitigate was forgiven by him, for faith alone justifies [*fides enim sola iustificat*]' (PL 9, 961A). Hilary's mention of the Law's incapacity (*quod lex laxare non poterat*) resembles Paul's views (Gal. 3: 21–2, Rom. 3: 20, etc.).

'it is not of our labour . . . that we break them down, but faith alone in Christ is salvation for us' (*sed sola fides in Christum nobis salus est*).[103]

Paul's recourse to the example of Abraham in Gal. 3: 6–16 elicits a number of remarks from Victorinus suggesting that he held to an understanding of justification as an imputed, passive justification, to use the familiar Reformation terminology. Unfortunately the manuscripts break off after 3: 10, so we lose his comment on the crucial quotation in the next verse from Hab. 2: 4: 'the just shall live by faith'. What remains of this section illustrates nicely how the technique of paraphrase is conducive to the recovery of the tenets of the text under examination. Victorinus' initial comment on 3: 6 (*sicut Abraham credidit deo et reputatum est ei ad iustitiam*) recalls the reader to the context, and then rearranges the vocabulary of the verse to clarify the sequence of events. One event, Abraham's faith, is the ground of the other: God's accounting it to him as justice (*Reputatum est, inquit, Abrahae ad iustitiam quia credidit deo*). Referring back to 3: 1–4, Victorinus illustrates how in the case of the Galatians, God provided grace in response to faith. The Galatians were able to withstand adversities since God worked powers in them (*virtutes in vobis operatus est deus*) on account of their faith. The comment on 3: 7 gives an illuminating paraphrase of *reputatum est ei ad iustitiam* (KJV, 'accounted to him as righteousness'): 'Abraham himself was found acceptable, as regards justice, on the basis of his faith' (*ex fide acceptus est ad iustitiam*). Thus Abraham's faith is paradigmatic for Christians: 'therefore, if we have faith in Christ and his whole Mystery, we too will be children of Abraham, meaning that our whole life will be credited to us as justice' (*id est reputabitur nobis omnis vita ad iustitiam*). Thus justification is an action on God's part, even if occasioned by human faith. This is particularly clear in Victorinus' view of salvation history: 'What was scripture *foreseeing* [Gal. 2: 8]? That God has a plan to justify the Gentiles based on faith. . . . But what did it predict? That the Gentiles would be justified based on faith.' The meaning of the blessing found in Paul's quotation from Genesis in 3: 8 is elucidated as the justification granted to them: 'This is what *they will be blessed* means: it will be credited to them as justice, and they will be blessed by God.' The blessing would appear to be a result of the justification (*benedicentur autem a deo iustificati*), which is then itself defined negatively in terms of freeing them from the Law, which clearly cannot justify (*iustitificari autem liberari a lege servitutis*). Thus both justification and blessing, while proceeding from God's action (alternatively formulated as being from Christ or the Spirit[104]),

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[103] Gori, 37, 17–19.

[104] As in his comments on Eph. 3: 9: 'in its due time it might be revealed that Christ the Son of God comes, puts on flesh, rushes to our aid and frees humanity,

can be mediately attributed to faith. *Totum igitur fides est*: 'So the whole thing is faith.'

In the passages quoted above, the 'justice' which God credits to Abraham, and so to later believers, substitutes for what Paul considers the unattainable ethical justice based on the Law. Thus the justice of faith is the *iustitia dei*, i.e. the justification God provides for believers. The evidence that Victorinus understood this clearly is the fact that he frequently employs *iustitia* as a synonym for the non-classical *iustificatio*.[105] So fully has he absorbed this equation that he offers the latter to paraphrase the biblical text's use of the former when he wants to indicate the Pauline sense of justification.[106] He must have been quite conscious of using 'Christian Latin', since he is perfectly capable of reverting to the classical meaning of *iustitia* when it occurs in the biblical text. Thus he states of the 'breastplate of righteousness' (Eph. 6: 14) that this justice 'consists only in deeds'.[107] A remark on Gal. 3: 21 reveals that he regarded the justice of the Jewish Law in the same manner: 'the Law given through Moses comprises only the justice pertaining to deeds.'[108] So too in his treatment of the phrase from Phil. 3: 6 (*secundum iustitiam quae in lege est*), in which the apostle claims to have been *sine reprehensione* in

forgives sins, raises humanity to the eternal and heavenly realms, justifies, glorifies, and does the rest of what Paul adds' (Gori, 48, 30–3). Similarly on Eph 4: 24: 'because the Spirit sanctifies and justifies, the Spirit . . . itself is Truth' (Gori, 69, 18–20).

[105] *Iustificatio* is first witnessed in Tertullian as a VL reading, according to Souter, *GLL* 223.

[106] Hence his comments on Gal. 3: 21: 'So justice is not based on the Law—that is, neither justification nor salvation come from there but are based on faith, as was promised' (*Non ergo ex lege iustitia est, id est non est inde iustificatio neque salus, sed ex fide, sicuti promissum est*; Gori, 134, 32–4).

[107] Gori, 88, 54. Victorinus' opening comments on this verse clearly indicate that this justice—carefully subordinated to faith—refers to our actions: '*And put on the breastplate of justice*. The apostle adds another precept beyond faith, to the effect that we should maintain justice, although that precept stated earlier—that is, faith—is itself the head of them all. The fact is that justice is not as powerful as faith; the fact is, *the just man lives from faith*' (88, 38–42). In his commentary on Cicero, Victorinus defines *iustitia* in the classical sense as one of the four parts of virtue, and then subdivides it among three different kinds of justice (Halm, 301, 32–9). Schmid, failing to see that Victorinus in his commentaries switches back and forth between the classical sense of *iustitia* and the Christian meaning, regarded his comments on Eph. 6: 14 as proof 'that Victorinus nonetheless understood one of the most important Pauline conceptions, that of righteousness, in a thoroughly non-Pauline manner, despite all his talk of justification' (*Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 65). Victorinus here uses the classical sense of *iustitia* not because he cannot comprehend Paul but because the passage from Ephesians says 'put on the breastplate of righteousness' as an imperative, perhaps implying that we are the agents of our own *iustitia*—a sentiment he rejects throughout.

[108] *lex enim per Moysen data factorum iustitiam tenet* (Gori, 133, 3).

this 'legal' justice. This kind of humanly performed, humanly meas-
ured justice (of which he gave a surprisingly modern evaluation in
his commentary on Cicero[109]) is clearly distinct from the justifica-
tion that proceeds from faith: 'Likewise what he says—*as to justice*—
signifies that it is through conduct and life that a person is justified,
at least in terms of Jewish Law' (*per mores et vitam, unde homo
iustificatur, in lege tamen Iudaeorum*). This last phrase makes it
clear that although one can be considered just according to this
standard, the standard itself is in his view purely human, being
based on the Jewish *interpretation* of the God-given Law. His com-
ment on the phrase 'without reproach' from this passage of Philip-
pians clearly shows how he distinguished justification by faith from
this 'Jewish justice' (i.e. the justice according to which Victorinus
thinks Jews regard themselves as just), in having its source not in
human approval but being from God or Christ.[110] This justice, or
justification, is defined expressly as belonging to God (*iustitia dei*)
and is thus distinct, as his remarks to Phil. 3: 9 reveal, from any
justice we could properly call our own.[111] His comments on Gal. 5: 5
provide further clarification: 'We Christians, says Paul, those who
follow Christ, we have hope in spirit, in faith, and in the justification
of God; our hope is not based on works.'[112] Although this occur-
rence of *iustificatio dei* may not be as clearly marked out as an
objective genitive (or rather, *genitivus auctoris*) as Reformation the-
ology would have it,[113] Victorinus' conception clearly excludes
God's formal righteousness (the subjective genitive), at which the

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[109] 'For it is not the case that one and the same thing is regarded as acceptable
(*probabile*) by all, for one thing is just for Romans and another seems so to barbar-
ians' (Halm, 234, 38–9).

[110] 'I committed no infraction and did all the things which the Law commands.
For this what Jews mean by justice based on the Law (*ipsa enim iustitia apud
Iudaeos ex lege*). Indeed . . . there is now justice for us Christians from Christ, and we
are justified on account of him' (Gori, 205, 11–16).

[111] 'For in that case it would be, as it were, my justice or our justice, if we
maintain that by our moral lives we obtain a justice that has been achieved through
our morals. But this, he says, is not the justice he has. But what justice does he have?
He has included it: *rather that one which is based on the faith in Christ, which
originates from God, a justice based on faith*' (*Tunc enim quasi mea iustitia est vel
nostra, cum moribus nostris iustitiam dei mereri nos putamus perfectam per mores. At
non, inquit, hanc habens iustitiam. Sed quam illam? Subiungit: 'Sed eam quae est ex
fide Christi, quae procedit ex deo, iustitia ex fide*'; Gori, 206, 4–7). The *iustitia dei*
here has the sense of 'God's approval of us as just', called by Luther an 'alien
righteousness' ('Two Kinds of Righteousness', in *Martin Luther: Selections from his
Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Doubleday, 1962), 86.

[112] *Christiani, inquit, et qui Christum sequuntur, et in spiritu et in fide spem habemus
et in dei iustificatione, non ex operibus* (Gori, 159, 2–3).

[113] See Ernst Käsemann, '"The Righteousness of God" in Paul', in *idem*, *New
Testament Question of Today*, trans. W. J. Montague (Philadephia: Fortress Press,
1969), 168–82, 169.

monk Luther raged. The sense of *iustificatio dei* here can best be captured by translating the phrase as 'God's justifying action', what Luther called 'the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith'.[114] This is the *iustificatio* which Victorinus formulates as the object of Christian hope;[115] and it stands in contrast to 'works', which—as he constantly repeats—provide justification to no one. This is why his talk of faith and justification always implies grace, even when not specifically mentioned.

A final notable feature of Victorinus' utterances on justification is that the term is often coupled with stronger soteriological language: e.g. the combination of *iustificatio* and *sanctificatio* quoted above. The preface to his second book on Galatians links these terms again to highlight how justification by faith *is* salvation by faith:

Hoping for justification and salvation on the basis of the Law is in every way mistaken. For all things come about on the basis of faith: the promise was given to Abraham based on faith, and thus to his seed as well. It is clearly a promise of liberation, of justification, and of inheritance in heaven and above heaven. This being the case, he teaches in every way that no justification, no liberation, no inheritance comes about on the basis of the Law and its works, even if they are fulfilled according to the precepts.[116]

This passage is of particular interest on account of the way in which the positive teaching about faith is sandwiched between two negative statements about the impotence of the Law to perform what faith provides. Other examples could be cited where not merely justification, but also salvation and inheritance (i.e. eternal life), are attributed to faith.[117]

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[114] See Luther's 'Preface to Latin Writings', in *Martin Luther*, ed. Dillenberger, 11.

[115] Victorinus would seem to have grasped Paul's thought well here, if we regard Käsemann as a reliable exponent of the apostle: 'It is all the more striking that Gal. 5.5 regards it [*sc*. God's righteousness] as possessed only by hope and its ultimate realization as lying still in the future.... we thus encounter the phenomenon usually designated, not altogether happily, as Paul's double eschatology. Even the righteousness of God is seen in this double aspect; salvation and the things which salvation brings appear sometimes as already present by faith and baptism, sometimes as only to be realized at the End through the Parousia' (' "The Righteousness of God" in Paul', 170).

[116] *omnino frusta illud esse quod ex lege iustificatio et salus speratur. Omnia enim ex fide provenient, promissio quippe liberationis et iustificationis et hereditatis in caelo et supra caelum Abrahae data ex fide est, ita et eius semini. Quod si ita est, docet omnino ex lege atque ex operibus eius secundum praecepta completis, nullam iustificationem, nullam liberationem, hereditatem nullam provenire* (Gori, 132, 5–12).

[117] e.g. his comments on Gal. 3: 20, which close the first book of this commentary: 'we cannot be liberated without a mediator. If this is the case, it is a vain hope to believe that justification and salvation come from the law of deeds, which, as we have said, is not a mediator. For Christ alone, who joins together what he mediates,

Since justification and the rest come about *ex fide* in Victorinus' conception, it is obviously important to ascertain what he understood by faith. This question has been examined exhaustively by Erdt, who presents Victorinus' views: 'Faith is a faith in the gospel, that is, a trusting and hoping in the promises given by Christ, a faith in the salvific character of Christ's passion and resurrection, in what M.V. has summarized as the concept of the Mystery (*sc*. of Christ).'[118] Faith is a response, then, to God's promises, whether those contained in the Old Testament[119] or those given in Christ's words and deeds. Faith is thus not a rational decision to accept a proposition, but a movement of the heart which brings people into relationship with God. His comments on 1: 15 and 4: 6 make it clear that God is the initiator of this process, whereas at 3: 6 he speaks vaguely of faith springing up interiorly (*cum fides provenerit in hominum animis*) without addressing the question of its origin. The notion of faith in Christ as a response to God's promises in Christ is patent in Victorinus' elucidation of the phrase *fide in Christo Iesu* in his remarks on Gal. 3: 26. He defines the act of faith here in regards to its content: 'This is when we have faith in Christ: in our believing in him, that he is Son of God, that he himself saves us, and that he carried out that Mystery for our sake and did all those things in the gospel we have discussed.'[120]

In so far as justifying, or saving, faith for Victorinus is always faith in Christ (and in the events of salvation history concerning him), *ex fide* is synonymous with *ex Christo*. Both phrases express the relationship of the believer to God, whether in terms of the mode of apprehension (faith) or the object apprehended (Christ). Victorinus' use of these phrases is functionally synonymous with *ex gratia* as well, since both faith and Christ are continually contrasted with works and the Law. Schmid, however, has argued that for Victorinus Christ is only a teacher of saving knowledge, and an example of the spiritual life to be followed upon the acceptance of his teaching.[121] Along these lines, Victorinus' conception of faith would be

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is the mediator. So justification and liberation come about through Christ, and not through the law of deeds' (*sine mediatore nos non posse liberari. Quod si ita est, vana spes est de factorum lege credere iustificationem et salvationem, quae, ut diximus, non mediator est. Ergo per Christum iustificatio et liberatio, non per legem factorum*; Gori, 132, 33–8).

[118] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 145.

[119] See his comments to Gal. 3: 21: 'because the promises guarantee inheritance and justification' (*Promissa enim cum hereditatem polliceantur et iustificationem*; Gori, 133, 6–7).

[120] *Tunc fidem in Iesu Christo habemus, id est dum in illum credimus quod filius dei sit et quod ipse nos salvet et quod illud mysterium pro nobis egerit et illa omnia quae in evangelio diximus* (Gori, 135, 3–6).

[121] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 61.

'a purely rational faith (*der reine Vernunftglaube*), which is the only thing that tears one loose from the world'.[122] While Schmid has correctly observed the presence of strong moral and ascetic dimensions to Victorinus' Christianity, he has interpreted these elements as undermining whatever progress our exegete made in evaluating the place of justification in the Pauline letters. Although he recognized that some of Victorinus' elucidations of Paul (such as his mention of *sola fides*, or his categorical denial that works of any sort justify) contain 'a whiff of the real Pauline spirit', the force of these utterances is blunted by other exegetical assertions which correspond to the general views of the pre-Augustinian church or even that of Pelagius.[123] This line of argument, is less than illuminating, however, largely because it is structured by normative theological concerns—did anyone prior to Augustine grasp the 'true Paul' as Luther did?—and because its conclusions are significant only if one were somehow trying to take the crown from Augustine and bestow it on Victorinus (which was not Harnack's goal, or in any measure mine).

Schmid's work unfortunately contains a number of misinterpretations of crucial passages in Victorinus' commentaries on Paul which skew his conclusions. In one of these instances, he argues that Victorinus interpreted what Christ bestowed on humanity not in terms of Paul's concepts of salvation, reconciliation/propitiation, or justification, 'but as liberation from the body, the senses, and their drives, and as enlightenment of the understanding'. Schmid then quotes Victorinus' comments on Eph. 3: 12,[124] in what can only be described as a garbled form, and then goes on to conclude that 'there is actually no need of forgiveness for deeds of the past, because human beings in no way stand under sin or a guilt-induced state of servitude which separates them from God'.[125] One might have concluded otherwise, had Schmid not weeded out a couple of sentences from the passage he quoted from Victorinus *carptim*: 'In fact, oppressed by our captivity, we did not have the wherewithal to resist through the Law. As the apostle himself says, our weakness in respect of the body was not strong enough to resist.'[126] This vague reference to a saying of the apostle would appear, as Gori has suggested, to be a reference to Paul's line of discussion in Rom. 7–8. While we might fault Victorinus for interpreting the 'weakness' Paul alludes to throughout Romans (5: 6; 6: 19; 8: 3, 26) in terms of

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[122] Ibid. 67.
[123] Ibid. 64.
[124] ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 80.
[125] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 62.
[126] Gori, 50, 5–7.

the body, that is an entirely different issue from Schmid's claim here, which amounts to denying that Victorinus had absorbed any of the apostle's teaching about the 'law of sin which is in my members' (Rom. 7: 23). Victorinus' understanding of 'captivity to sin' is surely not identical to that of Augustine; but it is a pity that Schmid elided the passage of Victorinus which approaches the complex of problems Augustine worked on for over a decade before coming up with the solution expressed in *Ad Simplicianum* and the *Confessions*. Further evidence of Schmid's misconstrual of Victorinus' presentation of justification can be found in his treatment of our exegete's comments on Eph. 6: 14 about the 'breastplate of righteousness', discussed above (n. 107). Not realizing that the old rhetor recognized two usages of the term *iustitia* (one classical and one Christian), and that both occur in the New Testament, Schmid concluded that for Victorinus 'righteousness is the condition of actually being righteous or good, which condition must first be earned on a foundation of faith, righteousness being something that comes along later and brings the faith itself to completion'.[127] This would indeed not be a God-given righteousness; but that is not what the verse is talking about anyway, as Victorinus recognized.[128] The problem here is that Schmid is operating with a kind of lexical rigidity: because the key word δικαιοσύνη shows up in the text, he assumes it to be the specifically Pauline sense of righteousness! That the word can mean the justice appertaining to deeds should be sufficiently obvious to anyone able to consult a Greek lexicon.

A Pauline conundrum which has exercised both ancient and modern exegetes is the relationship between the human and the divine will in good works. Victorinus' views are developed most fully in comments on Phil. 2: 12:

Therefore he says *work out your salvation*; but this very working is nonetheless from God. For God works in us and works such that you would will thus; and the will, as it were, is our own (*et velle quasi nostrum est*), whence we work out salvation for ourselves. Nonetheless, because this very will from God works in us, it happens that we have both working and will on the basis of God's activity (*fit ut ex deo et operationem et voluntatem habeamus*).

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[127] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 65. His reading of the rest of Victorinus' utterances on the subject is revealed in his next remark: 'If one looks from this standpoint back at the utterances on justification, they really appear in something of a different light.'

[128] One could argue, to the contrary, that Victorinus' further comments on this verse, even if they stress the priority of faith, undermine it by insisting that faith requires an ethical follow-up for it to be of advantage to us (*tunc enim fides nobis proderit et tunc vera erit fides si iusti simus et iustitia proderit si accedat fides*). One finds the same demand in Luther and Calvin, yet neither entertains the notion that the works which follow faith justify.

Thus both have been mixed, so that we would have the will and the will itself would be God's; and because we have the will, the ability to carry it out would be there to fulfill a good will (*adsit efficacia pro bona voluntate*).

He then concludes by clarifying the sense of the last phrase:

God, however, works in us both to will and to act to fulfill a good will (*et velle et agere pro bona voluntate*). Thus, someone who does not work on the basis of God's activity (*ex deo*) does not in the first place have the will (*velle*); then, even if he should have the will, he does not have the ability to carry it out (*efficaciam*), since he does not have a good will (*quia non habet bonam voluntatem*).[129]

The tacit assumption here is that only God can furnish the good will through election. His Romans commentary in all likelihood discussed the transformation of the human will into a good will by the grace of God. Schmid may well have been right that Victorinus set out the issue without experiencing it deeply as a personal problem or offering a definitive solution.[130] Augustine, at any rate, would come to reflect deeply upon this in *Ad Simplicianum* and the *Confessions*.[131] But even if Victorinus did not match the profundity of the bishop of Hippo on this question, Schmid's notion that Victorinus conceived faith as 'Vernunftglaube' is difficult to support, particularly in the face of those passages where the commentator carefully qualifies that the knowledge attained in faith is made possible by the Holy Spirit.[132] Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the 'Spirit of the Son' which is sent into them, believers can call God 'Abba, Father'. This implies a knowledge of God which is given—as Victorinus carefully states—by Christ and the Spirit.[133]

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[129] Gori, 195, 26–33, 37–41.

[130] Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 54.

[131] Augustine, *Ad Simpl.* q. 2 (ET: *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, trans. John Burleigh, 385–406; Conf. 8. 9. 21 (ET: Chadwick, 148).

[132] This is particularly clear from his comments on Eph. 1: 17: 'in order that we might have wisdom (*ut sapiamus*), might understand, and understand what is true, the spirit—the spirit of wisdom—is given to us by God. Next he adds something to prove that it does not belong to us that we understand or strive to understand' (Gori, 21, 15–19). The fact that these utterances are found in a passage redolent of a Neoplatonic theory of mind should not prevent us from seeing that Victorinus treats the capacities of our own spirits for attaining wisdom as something that follows from the activity of the divine Spirit within us, all of which happens through the mediation of Christ. This is made clear by his comments on Eph. 1: 7: 'For we are not turned back to spirit by our power (*non enim virtute nostra ad spiritum reversi sumus*), and it is through the blood of Christ that we have received the spirit. Therefore our sins are remitted and forgiven us through God's grace; it is not by our power that we abandon them. This only belongs to our power (*solumque hoc virtutis nostrae*): to believe Christ and to live spiritually on account of Christ' (Gori, 14, 20–4).

[133] See Victorinus' elaborate comments on Gal. 4: 6 in the translation here.

Throughout the commentaries Victorinus frequently uses the noun *meritum* and the related verb *mereri*, which must be discussed to avoid the hasty conclusion that his doctrine of grace is a doctrine of 'merit' due to the presence of this vocabulary. According to his study of the Latin of our period, J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink has concluded that '*mereri* has lost its proper sense of merit, which is therefore negligible in translation'.[134] Like other Latin Christians of his time, Victorinus employed these terms in a *sensus laxior* as well as a *sensus strictior*, to reproduce the categories of the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. The latter sense, in which *mereri* has the meaning of 'meriting' or 'obtaining deservedly', seems always to occur in formulations of a teaching to be rejected, as in his remarks on Gal. 1: 7: 'There is no other gospel: salvation is not earned (*mereri*) on the basis of works; nor is the gospel—that is, our salvation—based on sabbath observance or circumcision.'[135] A comment on Gal. 1: 10 also belongs to the *sensus strictior* of the verb: 'Pleasing human beings, as is disclosed in many circumstances, does not win (*mereri*) the grace of God.'[136] Whether Victorinus would ever admit that one can merit grace in the strict sense remains to be seen; but that we do not 'merit' heavenly salvation is a point which his comments on Eph. 2: 6 present as essential to the faith: 'And let us have faith in Christ that we do not now deserve (*non nos nunc mereri*) raising up or deserve the heavenly realms, but that when Christ was raised, then we have been raised.'[137]*Mereri* here obviously cannot mean just 'to obtain', which it does in the frequent cases where the *sensus laxior* of the verb occurs in the commentaries. A couple of passages on Philippians present the same pattern, where *mereri* has the sense of 'to

[134] J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink, '*Mereo(r)* and *meritum* in some Latin Fathers', *SP* 3 (1961), 333–40, 337. One of the many pieces of evidence he offers is the translation of 1 Tim. 1: 13 that Cyprian quotes in his *Ep.* 73, 13: ἀλλὰ ἠλεήθην is rendered as *sed misericordiam merui*, which other VL versions and the Vlg. give as *sed misericordiam consecutus sum* (ibid. 335).

[135] Gori, 100, 2–4.

[136] *Etenim placere hominibus, sicuti multis rebus ostenditur, non est gratiam dei mereri* (Gori, 102, 14–15). The sentence that follows, however, might suggest that we are dealing with the *sensus laxior* here: 'If someone maintains that life is to be based on works, he is pleasing human beings, but he does not obtain grace' (*at hic gratiam non meretur*). Here we must ask whether indeed it is not an oxymoron to speak of 'meriting' grace. This was the conclusion of van den Brink as regards the phrase *veniam mereri*: 'Since *venia*, indulgence or grace, in a strict sense, can never be merited, it should be stated that as a rule, *mereri* loses its strict notion of merit in proportion to the notion of grace which is inherent in its object' ('*Mereo(r)* and *meritum*', 335). Van den Brink cites a passage from Optatus' anti-Donatist work: *quia non talis erat culpa quae veniam mereretur* (1. 21; CSEL 26, 24, 13).

[137] Gori, 32, 2.

merit', albeit in formulations where the notion of our meriting anything is rejected.[138]

The commentary on Galatians contains two additional uses of the verb *mereri*, passages where the context seems to indicate the *sensus laxior*. This being a matter of the reader's judgement, we will examine these instances. Commenting on 6: 15, Victorinus explains that with this verse Paul clarifies 'what the Mystery has achieved: that in Christ Jesus there is no social status or any discrimination; all who follow Christ obtain eternal life equally' (*omnes aequaliter . . . aeternam vitam merentur*).[139] Here *aequaliter . . . merentur* can only signify that no person is more or less deserving of saving grace than another; i.e. it is not a matter of merit. The second case comes in his comments on 6: 17. There the apostle claims to bear the *stigmata domini nostri* on his body to demonstrate 'how much he has obtained from Christ' (*quantum mereatur a Christo*).[140] Here there appears to be little sense of a deserving merit. What Paul has obtained from Christ are Christ-like sufferings (he mentions the nails and the spear-wound in the side); not necessarily 'deserved sufferings', these are construed as a privileged participation in the Mystery. There is no suggestion of a reward here; the force of his exegetical remarks is to point out that for all Christians, to follow Christ must involve a willingness to suffer as Christ himself did.

Two further instances of *mereri* in the *sensus laxior* may be adduced, one from each of the other commentaries. In a discussion apropos of Eph. 1: 8 (*qua* [sc. *gratia*] *abundavit in nos in omni sapientia et prudentia*), Victorinus is asserting the proposition that while all other spiritual beings—angels, demons, etc.—remain in their own *substantia* and *qualitas*, just as they were created, souls

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[138] See the passage on Phil. 3: 9, quoted at n. 111 above. Similarly on Phil. 3: 14: 'Nonetheless, he doesn't hold on to that in his memory, as if that were a source of his deserving the things he will obtain (*tamquam inde mereatur quae consequi habet*). Instead he consigns it to oblivion' (Gori, 209, 28).

[139] Gori, 171, 5. The sentence that follows will perhaps be alleged as an objection to my interpretation: 'For it is not because of circumcision that one becomes something in Christ, nor because the foreskin is there does one become something in Christ. Rather, in whichever of these conditions one is, whatsoever one be, all people will count as something in Christ, provided one is reborn and becomes a new person by the Mystery' (*Non enim quia circumcisio, idcirco aliquid est in Christo, neque quia praeputium est, ideo aliquid est in Christo, sed in quolibet horum, quicumque sit, si modo renascatur et mysterio novus fiat homo, valebant omnes in Christo*). One could maintain that one 'merits' eternal life by being reborn and becoming a new person by the Mystery, and that this would constitute a prerequisite 'work' necessary for salvation, without which one does not merit eternal life. The question must be raised within the larger framework of of the relation between faith, works, and salvation in Victorinus' thought.

[140] Gori, 172, 14–16.

have a unique capacity: namely, to be promoted beyond their station:

> But amongst all of these creatures the soul has obtained more from God (*plus a deo meruit*), the greatest gift and great riches, when the soul by knowing God (albeit by means of the will of God infused in it by Jesus Christ) is granted (*meretur*) acceptance among the sons of God, so as to be near to God and to the Son, that is, to Jesus Christ. Still, it is through Christ himself that the soul, made into a co-heir of eternity and majesty, is granted (*meretur*) the name and position of son.[141]

Important for the discussion of his soteriology is the clear statement that the soul's 'knowing God' comes about as a result of the will of God, the calling of God that is at the beginning of the process of salvation.[142] In the passage just quoted, the first occurrence of the verb *meruit* is an excellent example of context determining meaning. If the *plus* that the soul is said to 'merit' from God consists of *maximum munus*, it is obvious that this 'gift' cannot be said to have been merited in the strict sense. In Galatians Victorinus also connects the idea of an inheritance strongly with grace, the unmerited quality of which is emphasized.[143] The passage on Eph. 1: 8 is instructive, since Victorinus appears to be talking about a capacity that the soul has from creation but is subsequently actualized; thus there can be no sense in which the soul merited anything prior to its creation. The second occurrence of the verb (*meretur ut inter filios accepta*) substantiates this picture, in that the participles that describe the soul undergoing this transformation are passive (*infusa . . . effecta*), which clarifies that the source of this change is God and Christ. Victorinus' comment on Phil. 1: 29 presents a similar situation in which the object of *mereri* is a gift, thus eliminating the strict sense of having earned something: 'Therefore he has given us a gift so that we would believe in him (*igitur donum nobis dedit ut credamus in eum*). The gift is great, however, if by faith alone in him we obtain so much grace (*si sola in eum fide tantam gratiam*

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[141] Gori, 15, 57 ff. (for discussion of this passage, see Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 139).

[142] See my translation of his comments on Gal. 4: 6 and 5: 8. The former particularly illustrate how the soul's knowledge of God and 'calling' back to God—'the voice of our spirit'—is something God has given to us (*quem spiritum nobis dedit deus*).

[143] Significantly, *gratia* does not appear in the verse commented on, 4: 7: 'If one is given the name *son*, according to the previous discussion, one is also an heir, not though by things done or by one's works, rather by the mercy and grace of God' (*Si autem filius, et heres per deum. Ergo si filius appellatur, secundum superiora, erit et heres, heres autem not factis, non operibus suis, sed dei miseratione et dei gratia*; Gori, 144, 6–8). The bearing of this passage is reinforced by his citation of a few words from Rom. 9: 16 (*non currentis, sed miserantis*) and a reference to his earlier discussion of the point.

meremur).'[144] What prevents one from construing the gift mentioned in the second sentence as something earned by faith is the clear sense of the first sentence, where believing in Christ is itself said to be a 'gift'.[145] This passage states that the greatness of the gift is apparent only when, by believing, 'so much grace' is received. In a similar fashion he elsewhere uses the term *gratia* to include what are strictly speaking the results of the end process initiated by grace.[146] So although to believe really is up to us (as Victorinus is not shy about stating elsewhere[147]), it is also clear that our ability to believe is a gift not merely in the sense—as we find in Pelagius' comments on this same verse[148]—of God furnishing the soul's created capacity and the external events which elicit faith. Faith, although it is genuinely a human response, tends to be depicted by Victorinus as a response to God's spiritual persuasion.[149]

Turning to Victorinus' use of the noun *meritum* as 'merit', we see that it is almost invariably employed in negative formulations (the exceptions will be dealt with later). The negative formulations are so frequent throughout the commentaries that I shall present only a small sample from each of the three commentaries. First, discussing Gal. 3: 21, Victorinus follows Paul in rejecting the notion that the Law is opposed to the promise; yet he still affirms that God gave the Law, which cannot be presumed to contradict the divine promise: 'This would imply that the Law . . . voids the promise, and makes it a matter of merit and not faith, so that we would obtain justification by merit, by having done all the works, and not by faith

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[144] Gori, 181–2, 11–13.

[145] Thus we must also interpret a comment on Phil. 1: 25 (Gori, 179, 8–12), which regarded by itself would seem to be of ambiguous import: 'He says *I shall abide* and has further added *and I shall continue*—that is, I shall abide all the way to the completion, the completion of your progress, in order that you would acquire (*consequamini*) grace—of faith, obviously—that is, when you furnish faith, you would obtain grace from God (*cum fidem praestatis, a deo gratiam mereamini*).' The grace that follows upon faith is doubtless forgiveness and eternal life; and we have already seen that faith, if our response, is none the less our response to God's initiative in calling us.

[146] See the opening comment on 1: 6 in the translation below (*omnem spem salutis et gratiae dei circa nos in fide esse circa Christum, ut eum credamus dei filium esse, pro nobis passum esse*, etc.; Gori, 99, 5 ff.). The 'hope of the grace of God' is presented in tandem with the 'hope of salvation': this indicates that one may hope to obtain the envisioned salvation as a result of God's favour.

[147] Hence his comment on Eph. 2: 16: 'Now there is hardly anything left for us, except only to believe in him who has overcome all things' (Gori, 38, 25).

[148] Pelagius wrote: 'The opportunity for faith is presented by God (*occasio fidei a deo donata est*), since unless Christ had come and taught, we would certainly not be believing' (Souter, 395, 6–7).

[149] See his comments on 5: 9 (*suasio vestra ex deo est qui vos vocavit*) in my translation below, where he invokes the phrase from Rom. 8: 30: 'those whom God called, them God also predestined', etc.

alone.'[150] The Law would cancel the promise if and only if the fulfilment of the promise were conditional on the performance of the works of the Law—which would be tantamount to our obtaining justification by reason of merit and not faith (note how these two are considered to be opposed in principle: faith as a free response, and merit as the payment of a debt incurred). Victorinus' comment on Gal. 5: 4 helps clarify his view of the relationship between grace and merit: 'The whole power of someone who believes in Christ rests in the grace of God. Grace, however, is not based on one's merits but on God's mercy' (*gratia autem non ex meritis, sed ex dei pietate est*).[151] He has established two things here: first, that the power to believe is attributed to grace; and then that this grace itself arises from God's mercy, and is not a response to any merit of our own. Two passages from the commentary on Ephesians clearly present this same picture. In elucidating the phrase *redemptio adoptionis* of Eph. 1: 14, Victorinus states: 'this matter belongs more to the glory and grace of God than to our merit. For the gift which is received is great beyond merit: the glory belongs to the one who gave it, not to the one who has received.'[152] His remarks on the *exceeding riches of his grace* of Eph. 2: 7 are of a similar tenor: 'God did not give us what we deserve (*non enim nobis reddidit meritum*), as we certainly do not receive these things because of our merits but because of the grace and goodness of God.' His point is that whatever riches God grants believers, they cannot be reckoned as recompense in any sense, since receiving them is attributable solely to God's nature and action, as the ensuing remarks reveal: 'So God *raised us together in Christ* by reason of his goodness and by the grace which is in Christ, so that God might show his riches to the future and *supervening ages*. Which *riches*? The grace of his goodness upon us.'[153] The receiving of riches means quite plainly the receiving of grace, which as grace can be nothing other for Victorinus than a free gift, having its cause in God.

One final passage concerning Victorinus' understanding of *meritum* remains to be considered, despite its length: his comments on Eph. 2: 8–9. The Old Latin version of these verses translates thus: *For you have been saved by grace through faith. And this is not from you, it is a gift of God; it is not from works, lest perchance someone boast*. His comments seem intended to elucidate for his reader that the latter verse functions to clarify the former through a negative formulation excluding two distinct possibilities that could rival

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[150] *evacuat promissionem facitque meritum esse, non fidem, id est ut operibus omnibus factis iustificationem merito consequamur, non fide sola* (Gori, 133, 19–22).

[151] Gori, 159, 2–5.

[152] Gori, 19, 8–10.

[153] Gori, 33, 3–7.

grace as the source of salvation. The passage, containing a brief lacuna, is clear enough on the point concerning merit:

Because we have been saved, Paul claims, it is God's grace. So you too Ephesians, because you have been saved, it *is not from you, it is a gift of God*. Nor is it from your works, but it is the grace of God, it is the gift of God— not by your merit (*meritum*). Works are one thing, and our merit another, whence he has differentiated the *not from you* by saying *not from works*. Certainly, above and beyond works which are called for every day in our duties toward the poor and other good deeds (but also because one can obtain merit on the basis of duty and religious observance, on the basis of chastity and abstinence), it can be neither by your works [154] So he includes both, saying *not from you, nor from works*—and then he adds *lest someone boast*. For he who imagines that the reward (*meritum*) was merited by his works, wants the reward to be of his own doing (don't ask me how) and not of the one who bestowed it—and this is boasting.[155]

Besides the obligatory *benefacta* done with a view to the good of one's neighbour (which are examples of what Paul means by *ex operibus* in the passage), Victorinus names other kinds of action—religious and ascetic practices which could qualify as being *ex vobis*—which he wants to exclude as possible sources of merit. His conclusion is that in both cases God is the one who furnishes believers with the wherewithal to perform such practices. None the less, Victorinus also speaks quite generally of God rewarding and punishing at the Judgement.[156] In this connection we encounter the term *praemium*, thrice in the Galatians commentary, although it is somewhat unclear whether the recompense is in this life or the next.[157] Victorinus can speak of a *praemium ex fide*—'the recompense obtained on the basis of faith'—but this does not mean that he conceives faith as in any way analogous to a work. Indeed, he often emphasizes the difference between the two and the sufficiency and ease of faith.[158] In his first-person portrait of Christians, believers indeed hope for that reward; and their hope, in turn, is based on their faith, which is itself a

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[154] There is a small gap in the text here, which probably contained something like 'nor by your merits that are you saved'.

[155] Gori, 33, 5–18.

[156] His comments on Paul's intimations of a judgement (Gal. 5: 10; 6: 7–10) elaborate the theme literarily without any conceptual development. More explicit are his remarks on Eph. 4: 27: 'Thus we are masters of our own will, and we get good rewards for good deeds (*merita de bonis bona*) and punishments for our evil actions, since by our weaknesses the devil gets an opening (*quia nostro vitio fit diabolo occasio*) (Gori, 72, 9–12). Victorinus assumes that God punishes evil-doers and rewards the good in a just manner (see the comments on reaping and sowing apropos of Gal. 6: 7–10), much as he assumes the return of Christ while commenting on Phil. 3: 12 (Gori, 208, 25–7).

[157] See his remarks on Gal. 1: 8 and 3: 4.

[158] Thus on Eph. 2: 16; 3: 16; 6: 13 (ET: *Metaphysics and Morals*, 71, 82, 108).

believing the promises of Christ, which can be summed up as 'the gospel'. But the hope of receiving is always rooted in God's action—note how he paraphrases 'grace' above as 'a gift of God'—and not in our own doings: there can be no question of meriting grace. Even if the term 'grace' occurs in his vocabulary with less frequency than the other key Pauline terms, such as justification or faith, we should not regard the concept of grace as having only a 'subordinate role' in Victorinus' thought.[159] The gift character of the relationship of human beings to God through Christ permeates his rendition of Pauline soteriology. For Victorinus, grace is the basis for a life of faith, including both right belief and a Christ-like life; but there is no suggestion that the unmerited quality of that grace is brought into question by the life it inspires. Simply because in order to receive the grace offered in Christ, we must accept it by faith—a formulation Victorinus often repeats—says nothing to the effect that the grace is a pay-back for faith *qua* work. Nowhere in his commentaries does Victorinus suggest that some qualities in those to whom the offer is made, and for whom Christ came, elicited God's mercy. Rather, God's salvific activity follows from the divine awareness of the creature's weakness and need. Victorinus never says that the predestining of souls involves divine consultation of their future righteousness; rather, whatever holiness souls come to possess is clearly stated to be the result of God's predestination.[160] Some of his comments on Ephesians make it likely that the pre-existence of souls would have figured in the explanation. This surely made his exegetical solution to the Pauline problem intolerable once the first round of the Origenist Controversy broke out in the last decade of the fourth century.[161] We know, at any rate, that the one person most likely to have

[159] Volker Henning Drecoll has concluded in his impressive study, *Die Entstehung der Gnadenlehre Augustins* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), that 'the concept of *gratia* in Victorinus' Galatians-commentary plays only a subordinate role, except in the verses where it stands in the Pauline text' (171 n. 82). Drecoll appears here to be considering the matter from a simple tally of the word's occurrences. But the few places where Victorinus mentions grace not directly in connection to the text are significant, e.g. his comments on Gal. 4: 7 cited above, n. 143.

[160] Granted that with the loss of his Romans commentary, we can only tentatively reconstruct Victorinus' teaching on predestination (see the study by Hubert de Leusse, 'Le Problème de la préexistence des âmes chez Marius Victorinus', *Recherches de science religieuse*, 29 (1939), 197–239). The philosophical excursus on Eph. 1: 4, however, provides us with a fairly clear picture that the initiative belongs to God: 'So God predestined these souls before the foundation of the world; God chose them so that they might become holy—that is, that having received the Spirit they would be strengthened, and having put off all the weaknesses that could befall them they would become spirits' (Gori, 11, 156–9). For this excursus on the metaphysics of the soul, see Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 46–54, 122–40.

[161] Origen's teaching on the pre-existence of souls is the first article condemned in Justinian's *Ep. ad Menam* and in the anathemas of the Fifth Council of Constan-

known Victorinus' Pauline commentaries—Simplician—was the very one who urged Augustine to work over this ground anew, clearly ill content with any previous efforts.

The truncated survival of Victorinus' work on Paul does not allow, as we have averred, any full comparison of Victorinus' understanding of justification with that of Augustine. From the commentary on Galatians, however, we can see that Victorinus probably remained within the bounds of the synergistic understanding of the relationship between divine grace and the human will typical of both Greeks and Latins, as Alfred Schindler pointed out in an insightful if underread article from 1965. Yet, as other scholars from Gore to Harnack have noted, 'a definite approach to Augustine's doctrine can be ascertained in the West in the second half of the fourth century.'[162] I quote Schindler's further remarks at length here, because they present the best summary of the parallels between Augustine and Victorinus on the issues under discussion:

What is now of relevance to Augustine's position is that it was thus not something completely new in the history of Latin theology. Marius Victorinus . . . had around the middle of the fourth century already spoken of justification from faith and against all works-righteousness; he had already taught an unalloyed predestination and activity of God *prior to* and *in* our will. That speaks against seeing Augustine's doctrine of grace as a simple rediscovery of Paul. Rather, like Victorinus' teaching on the subject, it is to be primarily considered as a special connection of Latin Christianity with Neoplatonic determinism. Plotinus had already brought a general conception of providence and the free will of the rational creature into a unified deterministic system which nonetheless clearly differentiated itself from the Stoic doctrine of *heimarmenē*. An analogy to this in the case of Augustine, is the fact that his doctrine of predestination finds place in his teaching on general providence and creation.[163]

It is instructive that Schindler can sketch such significant parallels between Augustine and Victorinus, while maintaining the accepted view that 'no direct influence of his writing on Augustine can be assumed'.[164] The case for literary influence of Victorinus on Augustine is now considerably stronger than previously, as we shall see in Chapter 6.

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tinople of 553. See the brief overview of the controversy in Di Berardino and Studer (eds.), *History of Theology*, 177–82. A full treatment of the first round of the controversy has been provided by Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy* (Princeton: Princeteon University Press, 1992).

[162] Alfred Schindler, 'Gnade und Freiheit: Zum Vergleich zwischen den griechischen und lateinischen Kirchenvätern', *ZTK* 62 (1965), 178–95, 184.

[163] Ibid. 186.

[164] Ibid. 187.

Apart from this issue of Victorinus' possible role in the history of doctrine, we must pose the question of whether Victorinus' enthusiastic appropriation of Paul's justification language and theology of grace presents anything more than literary embellishments of Pauline themes, imagery, and language. A personal inclination for Paul's theology on the part of Victorinus can be granted as a plausible psychological background to his conversion, as well as to his decision to comment on Paul. But such a predilection for the Pauline epistles can well exist alongside other motivating factors bearing more immediately on the climate of his church. Thus any speculative elaboration of a psychological profile cannot be regarded as exhausting the question of why Victorinus chose to write commentaries on Paul. None the less, certain aspects of who he was can be employed to reconstruct a plausible scenario that makes sense of Victorinus' public conversion, literary engagement in the doctrinal controversy of his time, production of hymns for liturgical use, and finally the composition of commentaries on Paul. Elsewhere[165] I have argued that Victorinus' background as a professor of rhetoric who routinely handled—at least on the level of theory—a variety of ethical and legal questions should incline us to regard him as a public intellectual. His participation in the Trinitarian debates fits this picture; and the studies of the commentaries by both Raspanti and Erdt assume the same as regards these latter works. Erdt's own conclusion is a judicious mixture of the 'personal inclination' theory and the notion that Victorinus was responding to a definite historical situation. In Erdt's view, Paul's soteriologically oriented Christocentrism found a 'deep echo' in Victorinus both personally and in terms of what he thought his contemporaries needed during the time of the pro-Nicene recovery in the West.

When we turn to a consideration of the commentaries' most notable polemical feature, the anti-Judaizing polemic, should we expect to provide a similar sort of account for it, a combination of personal inclination and historical situation? Most of the scholarship on this question has leaned heavily on the former type of explanation, and has been very hesitant about the latter. While it is not impossible to conceive of Victorinus as possessed of a general hostility to Judaism prior to—and then strengthened by—his conversion to Christianity, there is no positive evidence for this. On the other hand, his anti-Judaizing vociferations could be explained simply as the shadow side of his great love for Paul and justification by faith. Along these lines, one could posit that the literary elaboration of Paul's epistles and theology demanded an elaboration of the apostle's own polemical positions. While I do not deny that both these types

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[165] See the introduction to *Metaphysics and Morals*, 24–7.

of explanation may have some plausibility, I am unwilling to settle for such thin gruel, if the literary analysis of Victorinus' anti-Judaizing polemics should offer any promise of bearing some relationship to any historical situation of his day.

Can the attempt to fathom the 'audience in the text' of the commentary produce anything more concrete in the way of a historical context for these pronounced polemics? So far we have confirmed elements of the analysis reached by previous scholars in the matter of the Trinitarian controversies: the commentaries in their pro-Nicene bearing reveal an 'encoded implicit reader' whom Victorinus seeks to assure that their body of communal convictions[166] could be confirmed on the basis of the norm of Scripture as rightly interpreted in the Nicene Creed. But alongside this, does Victorinus' constant reiteration of the danger of Jewish practices reveal a second trait of the reader in the text? His concern that Christians might involve themselves in Jewish practices is present not just in the commentaries on Galatians and Philippians, where it would be comprehensible as a simple amplification of these letters' themes. It is also a significant motif in the first book of his commentary on Ephesians,[167] which is striking, since the epistle itself is conspicuous for its lack of anti-Jewish polemics.[168] In the commentary on that letter, as in the one on Galatians, Victorinus' fear focuses on the spectre of adding things Jewish to Christianity, a formulation he repeats variously and emphatically. His most alarmist and—considering the long history of Christian anti-Judaism—alarming formulation comes to light in a revealing aside amongst his comments on the second verse of Ephesians: 'Judaism does not exist in such a way as not to harm Christ'.[169] It is remarks like this that have elicited

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[166] I deliberately circumvent the word 'belief' here, as I want to indicate that more than merely individual items of accepted 'truth' are involved. Expectations regarding patterns of behaviour are involved as well. See the recent discussion of conversion by Alan Kreider, 'Changing Patterns of Conversion in the West', ch. 5 of *idem* (ed.), *The Origins of Christendom in the West* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2001). Kreider regards conversion as 'the process by which one became the sort of person who belonged to that kind of community', 'a journey of multi-dimensional change' (p. 15).

[167] See the preface to the first book and then his comments on the following verses: 1: 2; 1: 4; 1: 17; 1: 22; and 2: 17. His remarks on 2: 5 carry an explicit reference to Christians beyond the original recipients of the letter: 'Paul concludes by stating what was most necessary for the Ephesians and for everybody: that we accept nothing beyond Christ, if indeed we have been saved by his grace' (Gori, 32, 9–11).

[168] See the introductions to the recent commentaries on Ephesians by Andrew Lincoln (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1990), Ernest Best (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), and Larry Kreitzer (London: Epworth Press, 1997).

[169] *ut . . . in Christo omnia conlocent nihilque aliud admittant, si quidem Iudaismus non eodem modo est ut non Christum laceret* (Gori, 4, 4–7).

scholars' disapprobation and condemnation in the encyclopedia entries and the various introductions which treat Victorinus. But beyond such unpleasant one-liners, and beyond the constant tirades where Victorinus amplifies the anti-Jewish polemics of Paul, we find some references that appear to point to the commentator's own world. Despite his general rule of not mentioning the name of heterodox teachers or sects, he twice refers to an obscure Jewish-Christian group, the Symmachians, in connection with Paul's mention of 'James the Lord's brother' (Gal. 1: 19).[170] This deviation from his practice of naming no names in the commentaries has received no real explanation. For there has been a tendency toward great restraint in taking these polemics as indicators of Victorinus' perspective on a specific historical setting. This is probably because the data pertaining to Judaizing Christians are very fragmentary and mostly coloured by heresiological interests which tend to render the actual historical situations unclear.

Hadot has acknowledged that Victorinus may have been aware of Symmachians or other Jewish-Christian groups at Rome, and that research in this area would be fruitful.[171] Maria Grazia Mara,[172] however, is the only scholar who has taken Victorinus' explicit polemics seriously enough to think that 'those Jewish-Christian circles that were particularly flourishing in the fourth through fifth century' may have been a major focal point of his concern in writing commentaries.[173] Mara cites Ambrosiaster's preface to his Galatians commentary[174] as additional grounds to suppose that those who passed from the synagogue to the church did not necessarily abandon their customs or their religious patrimony. Noting that the 'anti-Judaic and anti-Jewish-Christian polemic in the commentaries of Marius Victorinus is singularly accentuated', she concludes that 'he was aiming at a specific and known background'. This approach to

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[170] See his remarks on Gal. 1: 19 and 2: 12 in the translation below.

[171] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 292–4.

[172] Mara, *Paolo di Tarso*. A briefer presentation is Mara's article, 'Il significato storico-esegetico dei commentari al corpus paolino dal IV al V secolo', *Annali di storia dell'esegesi*, 1 (1984), 59–74.

[173] Mara, 'Il significato', 67. Recently, however, the author of the fullest work to date on ancient Jewish Christianity, Simon Claude Mimouni, has also adopted this line of thought concerning Victorinus as a witness to, and opponent of, Jewish-Christians at Rome 'whom he calls Symmachians' (*Le Judéochristianisme ancien* (Paris: Cerf, 1998), 100). Mimouni goes so far as to connect this group, which existed—based on the testimony of Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine—in Italy and Africa until at least the end of the fourth century, with the transmission of the Pseudo-Clementine literature (ibid. 32–3 n. 1).

[174] Although Mara does not make this claim, it is clear to me that this is one of the evident points of dependency of Ambrosiaster on Victorinus. See Ch. 6 below, where I treat parallels in the prefaces to the patristic commentaries on Galatians.

the problem strongly contrasts with that of Wischmeyer. In his search for a *Sitz im Leben* for the Paul commentaries, he maintained that the anti-Judaic and anti-Jewish-Christian polemics of Victorinus were a cipher for an anti-theurgical thrust to his alleged mission to philosophical pagans.[175] Mara also points out how Augustine encountered Christians in Africa involved in Jewish practices,[176] a phenomenon apparently not geographically limited, as evidenced by the anti-Judaizing canons of the Council of Elvira from the early fourth century.[177] 'Such a situation', she writes,

could justify the strong anti-Judaism of the Pauline commentaries of C. M. Victorinus and his insistence on the necessity of faith alone for salvation and on the radical opposition between faith and the works of the Law which he presents as a fundamental doctrine of the entire Pauline corpus.[178]

This aspect of Victorinus' Paulinism could have been accentuated in order 'to demonstrate to the educated pagans of Rome—precisely by way of Paul—that one can be Christian and Platonist at the same time without any Jewish mediation'.[179] Mara's suggestion has plausibility in light of some anti-Jewish strands of Roman culture, which as a whole was not uniformly hostile to Jews and Judaism.[180] Yet because the negative views find a prominent place in important Latin authors (Cicero, Horace, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Martial), Victorinus and other educated pagans may well have absorbed aspects of this anti-Judaism prior to any contact with the specifically Christian variety of it.[181]

[175] Wischmeyer, 'Bemerkungen', 112. His argument presupposes an unproven: 'die Apotrope iudaismus hat in der Kirche keine Entsprechung. . . . Ausserkirchlich findet sich eine Entsprechung zum iudaismus der Sache nach in der Theurgie'. For this scholar the Symmachians are gnostics (he has been misled by Filaster (*de Haer*. 63), who presents them as dualist libertines; see A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 54, 232); thus he sees Victorinus' mention of them as parallel to Plotinus's attack on Christian gnostics as heretical Platonists. Wischmeyer is driven to such ingenuity by his assumption that Victorinus could not really be concerned about Judaizing Christians!

[176] She refers to Augustine, *Ep.* 55 and *Ep.* 196.

[177] Text from Mansi in E. J. Jonkers (ed.), *Acta et symbola conciliorum quae saeculo quarto habita sunt* (Leiden: Brill, 1954), 5–23. Four of the canons of this council (16, 49, 50, 78) indicate concern for Christians being in contact with Jews. For a summary of the bearing of the fourth-century councils on these issues, see the classic by James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue* (New York: Atheneum, 1934), 174–7.

[178] Mara, *Paolo di Tarso*, 59–60.

[179] Mara, 'Il significato', 69.

[180] See the recent contributions with citations of earlier literature: Bruno Rochette, 'Juifs et Romains', *Revue des études juives*, 160 (2001) 1–31; David Rokéah, 'Tacitus and Ancient Antisemitism', *Revue des études juives*, 154 (1995), 281–94.

[181] See Louis Feldman, 'The Relationship between Pagan and Early Christian Anti-Semitism', in *idem, Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 1996),

The assumption Mara makes of a historical background behind Victorinus' anti-Judaizing polemics seems to me far preferable to other recent attempts to account for them. Raspanti follows Mara and Hadot in admitting that Jewish-Christians at Rome were among Victorinus' concerns. Thus he does not reduce Victorinus' anti-Judaism and attacks on Jewish-Christians merely to his reading of Paul's own polemical utterances under the influence of the (possibly) Marcionite Prologues to the VL version of the Pauline epistles, which was Erdt's explanation.[182] None the less, Raspanti is not inclined to interpret the polemics in the commentary on Galatians along the lines suggested by Mara:

Marius Victorinus takes Paul's attacks against the Galatians' practice of mixing Christianity with Jewish observances as an opportunity to polemicize against those Christians of his own time who, badly interpreting the scriptures, alter the genuine content of the faith.[183]

Why should the target of Victorinus' polemics that have to do with Christian *practice* (e.g. 'those who add on the precepts and observation of Judaism go far astray'[184]) be interpreted as a cover to attack those who have *doctrinal* commitments different from Victorinus' own? One may grant that both relate to Victorinus' more general concern for getting Scripture right; but there is little reason to reduce the one to the other.[185] Raspanti's assertion quoted above

289–316. For material from pagan authors, see the full compilation of texts, translations, and commentary by Menachem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israeli Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1974–84). Some of this hostility is specifically directed to religious customs: e.g. the barbs against circumcision found in Martial (*Ep.* 7. 30, 35, 82; *Ep.* 11. 94) and Juvenal (*Sat.* 14. 96–100). For the position of Jews in the Roman Empire during the period of our concern, see Fergus Millar, 'The Jews of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora between Paganism and Christianity, AD 312–438', in J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak (eds.), *The Jews Among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1992), 97–123. Rich discussion of the theme by Lellia Cracco-Ruggini, 'Pagani, Ebrei e Cristiani', in *Gli Ebre nell'alto medioevo*, i (Spoleto: La Sede del Centro, 1980), 15–117.

[182] Erdt: 'Anti-Jewish explanations in Victorinus' commenting on Paul result...from the taking up of Marcionite tradition and are elicited at least in part through the corresponding words of the apostle, who stands in opposition to Jewish false teaching' (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 212).

[183] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 97. Erdt had already suggested this: 'the anti-Judaism encountered in Victorinus is perhaps here and there to be understood as an expresion of an anti-Arianism which results from the Christocentric thinking of the former philosopher' (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 214).

[184] This remark is found in the preface to the commentary on Galatians: *longe errare eos qui Iudaismi praecepta iungunt et observationem* (Gori, 96, 27).

[185] Important is Victorinus' comment on Gal. 1: 12, where he states that 'the Galatians too already received Christ as both God and Son of God' (*et Galatae iam acceperunt et deum et dei filium* (Gori, 104, 22)). Thus, even when correct doctrine is

seems odd in light of his more balanced claim that Victorinus chose to comment on the Pauline epistles 'because he maintained that their content was adapted to offer a response to the problems with which the Christian community of his time was torn'.[186] I agree completely with Raspanti's statement that 'not only against the Arians was Victorinus able, at the same time, to educate the rest of the community'.[187] But it is not clear why one should privilege the anti-Arian context (*l'orizzonte antiariano*[188]) instead of continuing along the lines of what Raspanti had early identified more broadly as the 'anti-heretical panorama' (*l'orizzonte antieretico*).[189]

Decisive for my judgement that the anti-Judaism of Victorinus' commentaries constitutes more than literary elaborations[190] of Paul's own polemics are the number of passages which go beyond the simple explication of the text in order to present Judaism and Christianity as two incompatible religious systems. This is evidently something he thought his readers needed to hear, a point that comes to especially stark expression in his preface to Ephesians:

Jewish teaching is quite different [from Christianity] and has been meant, instilled, and understood in another way. As we have often said and are now

present, there can be deviations in practice which reveal a less than full trust in Christ as the source of salvation (his comments on 5: 2 develop this analysis of the Galatians' situation).

[186] Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 86.

[187] Ibid. 87.

[188] Ibid. 85.

[189] Ibid. 71–2.

[190] Simonetti has attempted to explain 'the downgrading of good works' (part of what he rightly identifies as Victorinus' 'anti-Jewish *animus*') by arguing that it 'should be seen in the context of a Platonising interpretation of the Pauline opposition between faith and works as an opposition between intellectual, or contemplative, and practical acitivity' (*Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, 93). This seems unconvincing in light of the fact that this supposed bias against 'practical activity' is altogether absent from the commentaries. Victorinus takes a slighting attitude toward 'works' only when they are seen as a means to justification; otherwise he assumes without controversy that Christianity requires a Christian ethic and the sacramental life of the church. Referring to Victorinus as a predecessor of Ambrosiaster in this regard, Wilhem Geerlings has observed: 'For the Western theology of the fourth century discovered the anti-Jewish Paul and has never given up this position' ('Das Verständnis von Gesetz im Galaterbriefkommentar des Ambrosiaster', in B. Aland (ed.), *Die Weltlichkeit des Glaubens in der Alten Kirche* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 100–13, 110. (See the similar statement by von Campenhausen, cited in Ch. 1, n. 13 above, on the West's discovery of justification by faith.) My claim is that the 'anti-Jewish' Paul would have been attractive to ancient exegetes as a theological weapon in a real historical conflict within Christianity that was itself related to the conflict with Judaism. Full discussion of this issue, with recent bibliography, can be found in William Horbury's rev. edn. of Samuel Krauss, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy from the Earliest Times to 1789* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995).

explaining, the Jewish teaching—whether regarding the knowledge of the divine or the way of living by works and actions—is not to be conjoined [with the Christian way].[191]

The quantity of these anti-Jewish vociferations would seem to strengthen the contention that we must read them as signs of a genuine concern about Christians who Judaize or are tempted to do so. His comments on Phil. 3: 3, while a paraphrase of Paul's speech to the Philippians, none the less bear the marks of an appeal to his readership:

Therefore turn all your knowledge away from the Jewish teaching, away from the works of the Jews, away from Jewish circumcision, and get the circumcision of the heart so that we might serve God through the spirit and rejoice in Christ. But they rejoice in the flesh, whence they have the confidence that, since they are circumcised in the flesh, they can be saved and obtain eternal life.[192]

Readers of the commentary on Galatians will find innumerable further examples of his protestations that Christians have no business doing anything Jewish. The text of Galatians gave him ample opportunity to make this argument to his audience. He reiterates the point of the epistle to make the 'application' of his Christocentrism—his *solo Christo* doctrine—perfectly clear: 'If liberation is through Christ, nothing further ought to be sought, and those things the Galatians are adding—Judaism, works of the Law, sabbath observance, and circumcision—are useless.'[193] It is interesting to note that although the letter itself says nothing directly about sabbath observance, Victorinus deduces this from 4: 10 ('you are observing days') and arrays it alongside circumcision in a number of passages. Thus we need not suppose, if we accept the hypothesis of the commentator's concern for contemporary Judaizing, that circumcision was the only Jewish practice which worried him. Circumcision, along these lines, would, as the furthest and so most dangerous extreme of Judaizing,[194] simply stand for any adoption of Jewish practices.

   Victorinus' repeated appeals to the readers of his commentaries to reject any form of Jewish practice as a slight against Christ, as testimony to an incomplete faith in Christ,[195] make sense only if he perceived this as a real threat to the Roman church. Unfortunately we do not have the kind of detailed historical information that would

   [191] Gori, 1, 20–3.
   [192] Gori, 204, 21–6.
   [193] Gori, 99, 20–2.
   [194] See Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 349.
   [195] See his comments on Gal. 5: 2 (Gori, 158, 10–28).

allow us to substantiate fully the hypothesis that Christian Judaizing was one of the major issues that Victorinus hoped to address and correct with his commentaries on Paul. But the case for the *probability* of this hypothesis does not rest on the basis of 'encoded implied readers' in Victorinus' commentaries for whom Jewish religious practices were an attractive option. There is sufficient evidence from a great variety of fourth-century authors to suggest that Victorinus was not the only élite Christian worried about the practices of other, perhaps non-élite, Christians. Quite apart from the well-known sermons of Chrysostom against Judaizing Christians in Antioch,[196] Latin Christian writers of the period, many in Italy, had similar worries. Ambrosiaster's concern for the conversion of Jews and for peace in the church between Jewish and Gentile Christians is well known.[197] Maximus of Turin, in a sermon *De kalendris ianuariis* about a pagan holiday, admonishes his flock not to join in the festivities; he concludes by warning them against another related infraction: 'Not only must we avoid the company of pagans but also that of Jews, even conversation with them being a major violation.'[198] Bishop Zeno of Verona, a somewhat younger contemporary of Ambrose, devoted an entire sermon to the question of circumcision, which he concluded by warning his flock: 'Take care, lest the new person (*nouus homo*) appear to have anything of the Jew or the pagan.'[199] A number of Ambrose's letters suggest that he had to deal with Christians who still had serious questions about the abrogation of Jewish practices commanded by Scripture.[200] In a letter to

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[196] The formulation with which Chrysostom addresses his flock is similar to Victorinus: τί μιγνύεις τὰ ἄμικτα; 'Why are you mixing the unmixable?' (*Hom*. 4. 3; PG 48, 875). This aspect of Chrysostom has been examined fully by Robert Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[197] Alessandra Pollastri, 'Sul rapporto tra cristiani e giudei secondo il commento dell' Ambrosiaster ad alcuni passi paolini', *Studi storico religiosi*, 4 (1980), 313–27. Lydia Speller has rejected the notion that Ambrosiaster's concern for Jews was motivated by his own Jewish background, as sometimes alleged ('Ambrosiaster and the Jews', *SP* 17 (1982), 72–8). The anonymous author's Q. 44 *Adversus Iudaeos* of his *Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti* goes to great pains to insist that the Law has ceased to be valid in regards to specifically Jewish religious practices (ed. A. Souter, CSEL 50, 71–81).

[198] Maximus of Turin, *Sermo LXIII*, 3: *Non solum autem gentilium sed et Iudaeorum consortia vitare debemus, quorum etiam confabulatio est magna pollutio* (ed. A. Mutzenbecher, CCSL 23, 267, 39–41).

[199] Bishop Zeno, *Tract*. I. 3. 24 (ed. B. Löfstedt, CCSL 22, 29, 209–11).

[200] Ambrose, *Ep*. 52 to a certain Constantius opens thus: 'It is not an insignificant question that disturbs most people concerning why circumcision is commanded as useful by the author of the Old Testament and is rejected as useless by the instruction of the New Testament' (PL 16, 1297C). Ambrose concludes by saying: 'Circumcision, therefore, remaining today among Jews, has been adequately

Horontianus in which circumcision is the issue, Ambrose opens by invoking Gal. 3: 24 as the basis for his exhortation: 'The Law is a pedagogue, faith a free woman—let us then cast aside works of servitude, let us hold on to the grace of freedom, let us break from the shadow and follow the sun, let us break with Jewish rituals.'[201] Outside Italy, the evidence for Judaizing Christians is also ample. Augustine's *Ep.* 196 tells us about a certain Aptus, who 'because he is teaching Christians to Judaize . . . calls himself a Jew and an Israelite'.[202] While such spontaneous Judaizing among Gentile Christians zealous for Scripture was neither unknown to nor approved of by Augustine, his opinion was different in the case of Jewish-Christians if they were otherwise orthodox. In an exchange of letters with Jerome about the incident at Antioch between Peter and Paul (Gal. 2: 11 ff.), Augustine suggested that those who received Jewish customs from their parents had the option to continue as Christians to observe them.[203] The tone of Jerome's response is instructive: 'I would speak to the contrary, my bold voice protesting to the world. I would pronounce that the ceremonies of the Jews are pernicious and death-dealing for Christians.'[204] While there might be some virtue in a theory regarding such asseverations as the stammerings of an ingrained Christian paranoia derived from a deep defensiveness and insecurity about religious identity,[205] I am not inclined to make this case. The constant concerns and

explained and declined by us' (1305A). Similar questions pervade his *Ep.* 74 and 77 (PL 16, 1308–11, 1318–23).

[201] Ambrose, *Ep.* 73 (PL 16, 1328B).

[202] Augustine, *Ep.* 196, 16 (ed. A. Goldbacher, CSEL 57, 229, 21).

[203] For Augustine's views on Jews and Judaism, see the recent article by Paula Fredriksen, 'Augustine and Israel', *SP* 38 (2001), 119–35. See also her previous contributions on the same subject, cited in ibid. n. 1.

[204] Jerome, *Ep.* 112, 4. 14, in J. Schmid (ed.), *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae mutuae* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930), 64. Jerome then goes on to point out to Augustine the obvious danger posed by the presence of various Jewish-Christian sects: the Ebionites, 'who make a pretense of being Christians' (*qui Christianos esse se simulant*), and those whom the Pharisees call *minim*, commonly known as Nazoreans, who despite their belief that Jesus was the Son of God born from the virgin Mary, are 'neither Jews nor Christians, whilst wanting to be both Jews and Christians'. 'They will not become Christians', he admonishes with a warning note, 'rather they will make us Jews.' The discussion between Jerome and Augustine on this point has been treated extensively by Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, 265–91.

[205] Sceptical about the use of patristic evidence, particularly from exegetical writing, to demonstrate Christian Judaizing is Hillel Newman, 'Jerome's Judaizers', *JECS* 9 (2001), 421–52. My own views are more in accord with the perspective of Wolfram Kinzig ('"Non-Separation"', *VC* 45 (1991), 27–53) and James Carleton Paget ('Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 195–225). Paget's article provides a good overview of the debate.

cautions about Judaizing voiced by leading figures of fourth-century Christianity—bishops, priests, and lay theologians—are explicable without recourse to speculative psychological explanations, if we but accept that not all of the flock were in accord with their pastors on this point.[206]

This picture, moreover, is confirmed by a variety of forms of evidence beyond that of theological literature, as Robert Wilken argued more than three decades ago.[207] The archaeologist Leonard Rutgers sums up what I take to be a fair statement of the new consensus:[208]

References scattered throughout the literature of the period, together with several laws integrated into the *Codex Theodosianus*, support inferences made on the basis of the archaeological finds: that well into the fifth century Judaism held a powerful attraction for at least segments of the Christian population.[209]

In his recent *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World*, Louis Feldman, despite his disagreements on some points with Rutgers, comes to a similar conclusion, not unlike that of Marcel Simon in his *Verus Israel* some four decades earlier:

That Judaism vigorously continued in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries to attract both converts and 'sympathizers' and that it continued to influence 'Judaizers' and Jewish Christians is evident from the frequent

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[206] See the sizeable list of 'Early Christian Controversialists' and their writings in Krauss, rev. Horbury, *Jewish–Christian Controversy*, 26–43.

[207] See Robert L. Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971). I concur with Wilken's five-point summary conclusion stated on pp. 37–8.

[208] The issue here is *not* whether ancient Judaism attempted to missionize pagans and Christians, a theory championed by Marcel Simon but recently rejected by Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Granted that Simon was probably wrong on this issue, Albert Baumgarten is none the less correct to say that 'despite its flaws, Simon's conflict theory continues to be an important tool for understanding the relations between early Christians and Jews' ('Marcel Simon's *Verus Israel* as a Contribution to Jewish History', *HTR* 92 (1999), 465–78, 476). Simon's thesis continues to be maintained by some scholars, e.g. Pieter W. van der Horst, 'Jews and Christians in Aphrodisias in the Light of their Relations in Other Cities of Asia Minor', in *idem*, *Essays on the Jewish World of Early Christianity* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1990), 166–218. For more discussion of the question of Jewish proselytism by other prominent scholars, see the contributions of Shaye J. D. Cohen and Louis Feldman in Menachem Mor (ed.), *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation, and Accomodation* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1992).

[209] Leonard Rutgers, 'Archeological Evidence for the Interaction of Jews and Non-Jews in Late Antiquity', *American Journal of Archeology*, 96 (1992), 101–18, 104. Rutgers's full presentation of the results of his research is found in his *The Jews of Late Antique Rome* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

repetition of imperial laws, canons of the Church councils, comments of church fathers, remarks of rabbis, inscriptions, and papyri.[210]

Many more studies could be adduced, but I will mention only one that strikes me as particularly significant, in so far as it deals with a form of social contact between Jews and Christians which could entail the importation of Jewish practices into Christian families. Documentation from three sides—rabbinic, patristic, and Roman legal texts—has suggested to Hagith Sivan that men and women of different religious backgrounds sometimes came together in a way that suggests that religious affiliation may not have been the fore-most thing on their minds.[211] That this was not altogether a rarity may be surmised from the interdiction of marriages between Chris-tians and Jews laid down by Theodosius in 388. Such marriages were to be punished as adultery; it seems that Ambrose may have had a hand in influencing the emperors to this action, as he himself had initiated an anti-mixed marriage campaign in 385.[212] The ex-istence as well of Jewish-Christian groups, such as the Symmachians or Nazoreans mentioned by other fourth-century Christian authors, must have multiplied the possibilities of contact and—in the eyes of orthodox authorities—contamination.

Whatever may have been the reasons why some early Christians took up Jewish practices, they seem to have done so frequently enough to alarm the intellectual spokesmen of the church. Their hetero-praxis, if doomed to eventual extinction, left its lasting im-print in patristic writings and in imperial legislation. Victorinus represents Judaism—Jewish practices and beliefs—as a grave danger for Christians. The commentary on Galatians paints in lively colours the manifold mistakes and falsehoods inherent in mixing things

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[210] Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 413.

[211] Hagith Sivan, 'Rabbinics and Roman Law', *Revue des études juives*, 46 (1997), 59–100. Interesting also in this regard is the conclusion reached by Daniel Boyarin in a recent article comparing Jewish and Christian martyrdom: 'far from the complete separations implied by the usual metaphor of the ''parting of the ways,'' the interaction of rabbinic Judaism and Christianity throughout Late Antiquity, and perhaps indeed, forever, was as marked by convergence as by divergence, and we would do well to think, indeed, of encounters and meetings at least as much as of separations and partings' ('Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism', *JECS* 6 (1998), 577–627, 627). On the other hand, despite the evidence for continual contact between Jews and Christians into the period of the Christian Roman Empire, a significant 'parting of the ways' took place in the second century after the Bar Kokhba Revolt (see Lawrence Schiffman, *Who Was A Jew?* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1985), 75–8).

[212] See the superb collection of primary sources, with texts, translations, and commentary by Amnon Linder, *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987; Hebrew orig., 1983), 178–81. Linder cites Ambrose's *Ep.* 91 (PL 16, 982–94) for his efforts against mixed marriages.

Jewish and Christian. One can understand why earlier generations of scholars were tempted to read Victorinus' vociferations as mere outpourings of evangelical fervour for his new faith, combined with his supposed philosophical distaste for ritual and ceremony. Such an imaginative portrayal of the new convert's faith is not an implausible depiction; but, even if accurate, it does not exclude the possibility of the commentator having had a real concern about Judaizing Christians in his own environs. Given the advances in post-war scholarship in our understanding of the relations between Judaism and Christianity in antiquity,[213] we have sufficient reason to suppose that a reconstruction which would have Victorinus tilting only at the fantastic inventions of his own literary and theological imagination is the less probable of these two explanations. This conclusion follows both from the study of his commentaries on Paul and from the other evidence for Judaizing Christians. While we cannot establish with certainty what factors were responsible for Victorinus' anti-Jewish animus, it is possible that a convert from paganism and its aristocratic circles could have been unpleasantly surprised by the persistence of Jewish customs within the Christian fold.[214] Victorinus may well have been unable to appreciate that segments of the Christian population who had been Christians for generations still felt a greater identification (albeit not without ambivalence) with the sizeable Jewish population of Rome than with the pagans who were now pouring into the church in ever larger numbers.

[213] Good discussion with bibliography in Anni Maria Laato, *Jews and Christians in De duobus montibus Sina et Sion* (Åbo, Finland: Åbo Akademi University Press, 1998), 2–19.

[214] The sociologist Rodney Stark has recently argued that in the early church there continued to be Christians of ethnic Jewish background (*The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)). Even if the controversial thesis expressed in the title of his third chapter ('The Mission to the Jews and Why It Probably Succeeded') has not been demonstrably proven, one would probably find some continuation of Jewish practices in the ethnically Jewish families who had become part of the Christian movement in its first century; and the presence of such families in mixed churches could result in Judaizing on the part of some Gentile Christians in social contact with Jews (ibid. 65–6). Indeed, such a picture is consistent with Augustine's broad-minded moment (discussed above) in supposing that such Jewish-Christians could continue to have their sons circumcised. The iconographic representations of the *ecclesia ex Iudaeis* and *ecclesia ex gentibus* discussed above (p. 85) make sense if there was an ongoing awareness that there really were members of both in the church. Those sceptical of this last claim should recall the one clear instance of a conversion in fourth-century Rome: that of the Jew Isaac (for references, see the entry on this figure in *EEC*, i. 416).

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Influence of Victorinus' Commentaries on Later Latin Exegetes

The thrill of discovering in Victorinus an exegete of the evangelical Paul animates the pages of Gore and Harnack, as we have seen in the preceding chapter. But the result of the *fin-de-siècle* debate between Harnack and Schmid on the question of the influence of Victorinus upon Augustine on the crucial subject of justification by faith was largely negative. Schmid seemed to have won the day in regards to Harnack's statement that Victorinus was an *Augustinus ante Augustinum*. With Harnack, Souter had agreed that 'nothing is more antecedently probable than that Augustine knew and esteemed the works of his fellow-countryman', but he did not attempt to make a sustainable case based on parallels, since unambiguous ones were not apparent.[1] Souter's judgement of the matter has been particularly weighty, as his *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* has long been one of the few introductions for the study of Victorinus' commentaries on Paul. But Souter had also noted that the independence of Augustine's mind complicated the general question of ascertaining any literary influences whatever.[2] It is, after all, not impossible that one author may read and absorb much of another without ever mentioning, quoting, or plagiarizing that author. Conceptual parallels and a common diction would then be the only clues—but such would never reach the high bar of proof attained only with significant textual parallels. Absent these, scholars have continued to advance the thesis with less compelling evidence, to little avail. 'One could affirm with relative certainty', maintained Alberto Pincherle in 1947, 'that Augustine was

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[1] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 199. Monceaux is another example of an early twentieth century scholar who followed Gore and Harnack in admitting Victorinus' influence on Augustine (citing particularly passages from *De trin.*) without reference to direct textual parallels (*Histoire littéraire*, iii. 422).

[2] See the important study by Berthold Altaner, 'Augustins Methode der Quellenbenützung', *Sacris Erudiri*, 4 (1952), 5–17.

acquainted with . . . the commentary of Marius Victorinus.'³ But his claims cannot be said to have become generally known, let alone generally accepted. The parallels Pincherle adduced were conceptual, not lexical, and so could be dismissed as coincidental. A Dutch article of 1950 by L. J. van der Lof on 'The Influence of Marius Victorinus Rhetor on Augustine' focused on theological similarities, not textual parallels. These lacking, his qualified confirmation of Harnack's view in favour of the influence of Victorinus on Augustine was unable to help resolve the question.⁴ But the common elements, belonging to the conceptual world of the Christian Neoplatonism shared by the two, continued to bring the issue to the fore. In 1962 Hadot pointed out another coincidental conceptual parallel: prior to Augustine, Victorinus taught that the soul had a Trinitarian structure; he also maintained that Victorinus' influence upon Augustine was more likely to have been through the Paul commentaries than the Trinitarian treatises, and to pertain to the subject of grace rather than the Trinity.⁵ Still, the lack of substantial textual parallels in their exegetical works on Paul remained an insurmountable obstacle for any one who sought to argue that in the years surrounding his conversion, Augustine read more Victorinus than his translation of the *libri Platonicorum*.

The final decade of the twentieth century, however, saw several independent studies of the question, the majority of which affirm that Augustine had indeed read Victorinus on Paul. Most came to this conclusion through their engagement with other Latin commentators on Paul. I myself have long had the impression—more pointed in Jerome being the exception—that the Latin patristic commentaries share a strong generic similarity. Victorinus thus seems likely to have been the originator of this approach, given the geographical and chronological proximity of the other Latin commentators on Paul.⁶ Theodore de Bruyn expressed this point well in his translation and study of Pelagius' commentary on Romans:

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³ Pincherle, *La formazione teologica di S. Agostino*, 118. On pp. 132–3 (n. 17), Pincherle cites parallels between the work of these two African exegetes on Galatians.

⁴ L. J. van der Lof, 'De Invloed van Marius Victorinus Rhetor op Augustinus', *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 5 (1950–1), 287–307, 307.

⁵ Hadot, 'L'Image de la Trinité', 432–3.

⁶ Prior to my reading of Cipriani and Plumer, I had observed conceptual parallels in the works of Victorinus and Augustine on Galatians, but was not fully satisfied that they were beyond coincidence. I had noted a similar conceptual structure in Augustine's Neoplatonic conception of the soul and some of Victorinus' utterances in his Pauline exegesis, especially on Ephesians (see Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 129, 134, 167). I was also convinced that Augustine's early writings from Cassiciacum indicated a preoccupation with the Pauline corpus dating from the time of his conversion (see my 'Scripture at Cassiciacum').

A thread of continuity amid the variations from one commentator to the next in this Roman tradition is the style of commentary. It is a literal one, beginning and often remaining with the historical and grammatical meaning of the biblical text. This approach probably had its beginnings in Latin rhetorical training. Marius Victorinus had been professor of rhetoric in Rome, and when late in life he began work on the Pauline epistles he approached Paul in much the same way as he had taught Cicero. . . . The approach of Ambrosiaster and Pelagius is similar, but their comments are briefer than Marius Victorinus'.[7]

Indeed, with the exception of the philosophical excurses,[8] the characteristic elements of Victorinus' manner of proceeding with the text almost all recur in the commentaries of Ambrosiaster. It is very telling that Geerlings's recent, excellent analysis of Ambrosiaster's method of commenting on Paul largely describes what we find in Victorinus' commentaries.[9] The similarity between the first two Latin commentaries on Paul is actually stronger than de Bruyn has suggested. In length, Ambrosiaster's commentaries resemble those of Victorinus rather than those of Pelagius, whose comments are generally restricted to a single gloss per verse.[10] De Bruyn makes his point somewhat tentatively, implying, rather than claiming, the direct influence of Victorinus on the others. His caution on this score surely reflects the strength of the dominant view.

De Bruyn, however, was not the only one to reject that consensus. Ralph Hennings's full-length study of the dispute between Augustine and Jerome about Gal. 2: 11–14 assumes that Augustine's commentary on Galatians, in its interpretation of this incident, had been 'influenced by the Latin exegetical tradition', including Victorinus.[11] Also in 1994, Nello Cipriani argued in a lengthy article that Augustine's Cassiciacum dialogues showed the influence of Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises and hymns, while maintaining a somewhat conspicuous silence on the question of Augustine having also read Victorinus' Paul commentaries.[12] This latter possibility

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[7] *Pelagius' Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, trans. with introduction and notes by Theodore de Bruyn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 2.

[8] See Ch. 4, sect. C, above.

[9] Wilhelm Geerlings, 'Zur exegetischen Methode des Ambrosiaster', in G. Schöllgen and C. Scholten (eds.), *Stimuli*, (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1996), 444–9.

[10] Souter has provided a conspectus of the Latin commentaries on Paul according to the number of columns in Migne (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 21).

[11] Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, 257: 'Er folgt in seiner Interpretation Cyprian, Marius Victorinus und Ambrosiaster.'

[12] Cipriani, 'Le Fonti cristiani'. Drecoll (*Gnadenlehre Augustins*, 71) has also identified similarities between Augustine's conception of God as *summa vita* in *De immortalitate animae* and the philosophical conception of God in Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises.

was once again ruled out by A. Bastiaensen in a study published in 1996, which concluded instead that Augustine was influenced in his commentary on Galatians by Ambrosiaster and Jerome.[13] Cipriani, however, returned to the issue with a focus on the exegetical works, producing parallels with Augustine on Galatians, in an effort to move beyond the state of affairs where scholars are still 'perplessi e divisi'.[14] Shortly thereafter Eric Plumer published a paper which presented further parallels between the two authors' commentaries on Galatians. He fortified his argument from literary parallels by the use of John Henry Newman's notion of 'antecedent probability', previously invoked by Souter to suggest that Augustine had probably read Victorinus on Paul.[15] An important feature of Plumer's argument is his interpretation of a passage in *De doctrina christiana* (2. 40. 146), where Augustine mentions Victorinus—along with Optatus, Lactantius, and Hilary—as one of the church writers who plundered the gold of Egypt (see Exod. 12: 35–6) in his appropriation of elements of pagan Greek learning.[16] Beyond this, Plumer also renewed the insight of Charles Gore that Harnack had championed: that certain Pauline theological themes elaborated by

[13] A. Bastiaensen, 'Augustin commentateur de saint Paul et l'Ambrosiaster', *Sacris Erudiri*, 36 (1996), 37–65, 54. He concludes that 'Augustin n'a pas utilisé les oeuvres de Marius Victorinus, mais a consulté celles de l'Ambrosiaster et de Jerome' (p. 57). An English translation of this article has now appeared with the title 'Augustine's Pauline Exegesis and Ambrosiaster', in F. Van Fleteren and J. C. Schnaubelt (eds.), *Augustine* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 33–54.

[14] Ciprani, 'Agostino lettore dei commentari paolini di Mario Vittorino'. Cipriani had noted that the parallels cited by Pincherle (see n. 3 above) 'show interesting doctrinal congruencies, but do not offer textual correspondences sufficient to demonstrate a true literary dependence' (p. 414). See also Cipriani's demonstration that Augustine had absorbed but then corrected an important aspect of Victorinus' Trinitarian theology: 'La *Retractatio* agostiniana sulla processione'.

[15] Delivered at the 1995 Oxford Patristics Conference, his conclusions were first published as Eric Plumer, 'The Influence of Marius Victorinus on Augustine's Commentary on Galatians', *SP* 33 (1997), 221–8. Plumer's recent *Augustine's Commentary on Galatians* carries forward the thesis in depth. The 'antecedent probability' that Augustine consulted Victorinus' commentary on Galatians, Plumer argues, is corroborated by 'seemingly minor coincidences' (ibid. 27), both of language and thought, between their exegeses of particular Pauline verses. The three strongest parallels he finds are on Gal. 2: 19; 3: 1; and 5: 2 (see Plumer's discussion, pp. 28–33, and my notes *ad loc*. in the translation here). Plumer and I became aware of each other's researches only after we had both completed first drafts. This chapter of the introduction is the only completely new part of my book, written after I received the proofs of Plumer's work.

[16] Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. and trans. R. P. H. Green (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 127. See Plumer's discussion, *Augustine's Commentary*, 16–17. Schmid had previously made the same connection (*Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 70). Plumer also observed, as have many others, that this passage in *De doc. chr.* about 'spoiling the Egyptians' of their gold resembles a similar allusion in *Conf.* 7. 9. 15 (ET: Chadwick, 123).

Victorinus—justification by faith and the 'hope of salvation'—received a corresponding emphasis in Augustine's commentary on Galatians.[17] Plumer, like Hennings, concludes that Jerome's censorious remarks about Victorinus indicate he had indeed read the latter's commentaries on Paul.[18] Despite the evident respect Jerome shows Victorinus in *De viris illustribus*, he refers to the latter slightingly in his prologue on Galatians, as an academic steeped in the erudition of the world and insufficiently read in Christian letters. Intent on remedying an exegesis of the incident at Antioch which he found repugnant and in sharp opposition to the exegetical traditions he had received,[19] Jerome sought to offer Latin readers a Christian commentary on Paul of a different sort: a *variorum* commentary which presented a variety of exegetical alternatives, mostly drawn from Origen, who himself followed this method.[20] Although it is not impossible that Jerome retained something of Victorinus' exegesis of Paul, it is more likely that Victorinus' influence upon Jerome is as a negative example, both in terms of the general form and in the interpretation of the conflict between Peter and Paul.[21]

Jerome and Augustine do not exhaust the list of Latin commentators whom evidence suggests may have read Victorinus on Paul. Gori noted in his bilingual edition a number of parallels between Victorinus and the next generation of Latin exegetes, which included Ambrosiaster as well as Augustine. The parallels between Victorinus and Ambrosiaster are not, in my view, limited to those proposed by Gori but include others of my own discovery. While the importance of the Great Anonymous's complete—save Hebrews—commentary on the Pauline corpus has long been acknowledged,[22] the more subtle point that he set to work atop a platform of at least six more lengthy commentaries on the main epistles by Victorinus

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[17] See the comparison between the two exegetes on Gal. 5: 2 further in this section, *ad loc*.

[18] Plumer, 'Influence', 225 n. 26 (see Jerome, PL 26, 308A [332B]). The same conclusion was reached by Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, 255–6. Plumer provides a lengthy treatment of the relationship of Jerome's commentary on Galatians to that of Victorinus (*Augustine's Commentary*, 33–47).

[19] Thus Plumer: 'the unnamed opponent whose interpretation of Gal. 2: 11–14 Jerome attempts to demolish in his commentary is none other than Victorinus' (*Augustine's Commentary*, 33).

[20] Bammel, 'Die Pauluskommentare des Hieronymus', 206.

[21] Because Jerome wrote his commentaries in 387/8 in Bethlehem (after being driven out of Rome following the death of Pope Damasus on account his unpopular pro-asceticism campaign (see J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 111–15, 145), it is difficult to imagine that he consulted there the commentaries he had read and scorned earlier in Rome.

[22] Harnack wrote: 'what Western expositor of the early period or the Middle Ages is his equal?' (quoted by Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentators*, 44).

has been less well appreciated. Of the parallels, lexical and conceptual, that I have detected between the first two Latin commentators, some are not beyond all reasonable doubt, in light of the various considerations pertinent to the *Quellenforschung* of exegetical texts. None of them constitute explicit quotations of, or allusions to, a literary work or exegete. Yet the cumulative weight of the parallels permits, I hope to show, a prudent affirmation of the claim that Ambrosiaster had read and was influenced by Victorinus' commentaries on Paul.[23] In brief, he adopted the general style of a complete running commentary,[24] retained a number of themes and verbal formulations, wrestled with some of the same problems his predecessor had uncovered,[25] and in the end worked out his own 'independent' reading of the text. Much the same can be said of Augustine as a reader of Victorinus' commentaries.

Because in the case of these three commentaries on Galatians we are not dealing with extended verbal parallels but with more elusive verbal and conceptual traces, the method of providing synoptic columns of quotations is inadequate to demonstrate the matter. The nature of the exegetical parallels requires a critical exposition. Thus I shall treat the relevant passages here *in extenso*, both those uncovered by various other scholars as well as those proposed by myself. The treatment will follow the order of Galatians itself, and will be limited for the most part to the commentaries of Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine on this letter. Given that Augustine admits having read Jerome's commentary on Galatians prior to composing his own,[26] the latter's work must be consulted in any comparison toward this end. No such external evidence indicates

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[23] Drecoll assumes this as a given (*Gnadenlehre Augustins*, 146 n. 14).

[24] Problematic is Geerlings's assertion that it is the basic form of 'progressive exposition' (*fortlaufende Auslegung*) that distinguishes Ambrosiaster from Victorinus ('Zur exegetischen Methode', 444). The presence of philosophical excurses does not negate the fact that Victorinus' commentaries are also a progressive exposition of the text which is quoted in full, in the same manner we find by Ambrosiaster (cf. Simonetti's description of Victorinus' exegetical method in *Lettera e/o allegoria*, 239). That the 'philosophical' passages are recognizable as excurses or digressions—and that Victorinus is vaguely apologetic about them— reinforces the impression that we are indeed dealing with a progressive exposition.

[25] This is particularly evident in their exegesis of Gal. 2: 3–5, where both defend the VL text *ad horam cessimus subiectioni*, despite their knowledge that many codices read *nec ad horam,* etc. Both admit that the negative reading can have a meaning consistent with the context, but they both end up rejecting it on a variety of textual and logical grounds. In support of their favoured reading, both mention the circumcision of Timothy as proof that Paul did in fact on occasion 'give way'. Jerome (PL 26, 333D [358D]) is aware of the VL text without the negative particle and denounces it; he mentions Timothy only later in his comments on 2: 11–13 (339A [364A]).

[26] Augustine, *Ep.* 28, 3 (CSEL 34/1, 107, 6).

Augustine had read Ambrosiaster by the mid-390s, although it is clear that he knew these anonymous commentaries later in his career.[27] I will occasionally resort to comparisons with the commentaries on Paul of Greek exegetes, mostly of the Antiochene school (John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret of Cyrus), to help determine whether exegetical parallels should be regarded as products of literary dependence or simply parallel readings that any ancient exegete trained in grammar and rhetoric could have produced. As for the remaining early Latin commentators, Pelagius[28] and the Budapest Anonymous, I have been unable to find clear evidence of Victorinus' influence, despite the existence of a few exegetical similarities which—unaccompanied by any lexical parallels—cannot support a hypothesis of literary dependence. Whether Victorinus' commentaries on Paul were read by medieval Latin exegetes is a question I leave to medievalists.

That Ambrosiaster names a 'Victorinus' when discussing textual variants in his commentary on Romans has encouraged some scholars to suppose that the great unknown commentator had read Marius on Paul. Defending a Vetus Latina reading of Rom. 5: 14, Ambrosiaster invokes his predecessors in the Latin Christian tradition:[29] 'The words encountered nowadays in Latin codices are found to have been similarly laid down by men of old: Tertullian, Victorinus, and Cyprian' (*nam hodie quae in Latinis reprehenduntur codicibus, sic inveniuntur a veteribus posita, Tertulliano et Victorino et Cypriano*).[30] It seems likely, however, that the 'Victorinus' mentioned here is to be identified with the earlier Christian author by

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[27] Both Bastiaensen ('Augustin commentateur', 57) and Plumer are in accord on this (*Augustine's Commentary*, 26, 54). There is a question as to when Augustine first read the anonymous author, whom he quoted as an authority on Rom. 5: 12 in 420 as 'Hilary' (in *Contra ep. Pel.*, 4. 4. 7). It has also been maintained that in one of Augustine's exchanges with Jerome over the conflict at Antioch (*Ep.* 82, 3. 24, dated to 405), he refers to the opinion of Ambrosiaster under the name 'Ambrose' (see J. H. Baxter, 'Ambrosiaster cited as "Ambrose" in 405', *JTS* 24 (1922–3), 187). This had previously been rejected by Antonio Casamassa, who regards 420 as the earliest we can securely date Augustine's reading of Ambrosiaster ('Il Pensiero di sant'Agostino e l'Ambrosiastro', in *idem, Scritti patristici*, i (Rome: Facultas Theologica Pontificii Athenaei Lateranensis, 1955 (orig. 1919), 43–66.

[28] These parallels are observed in my notes to Victorinus' comments on Gal. 2: 4–5 and 2: 20. In his commentary on Ephesians (on 1: 4), Pelagius glowers at exegetes who assert a pre-existence of souls prior to embodiment (Souter, 345, 16), such as we find in Victorinus' remarks on that same verse; but it is difficult to make a case for Pelagius having read Victorinus solely on this basis, as he may have been aiming at discredited Origenist ideas.

[29] See Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 63–5. Further discussion by Heinrich Vogels, 'Ambrosiaster und Hieronymous', *RBén* 66 (1956), 14–19, 17–19.

[30] CSEL 81/1, 177, 24–6. The remark does not appear in the earliest recension of the commentary on Romans but in the two subsequent ones, clearly to defend the

that name, the late-third-century bishop of Pettau.[31] I am unable to agree with the other scholars who maintain that Marius is meant here, for a number of reasons.[32] The case for understanding Marius to be the Victorinus named by Ambrosiaster cannot be made simply on the basis of the fact that the martyr-bishop of Pettau never wrote commentaries on the apostle (most of his exegetical works were devoted to the Old Testament[33]). Neither did Tertullian or Cyprian, yet both are mentioned in this passage. But Ambrosiaster is not even claiming that the three authors mentioned quote the verse from Romans in question. Rather he is making a more general remark intended to justify his reliance on the Vetus Latina in his commentaries on Paul: because the old Latin translation was made from Greek texts dating prior to Tertullian, it is more likely to contain a better textual tradition than Greek manuscripts of the Pauline letters circulating in the latter half of the fourth century. The chief argument against seeing Marius as the Victorinus finding honourable place between Tertullian and Cyprian is the qualification of these authors as being among the *veteribus*. Despite my best attempts to convince myself to the contrary, I am unable to conclude that Ambrosiaster would have considered Marius Victorinus, whose commentaries had been composed less than twenty years before his own, to be among the 'old' authors who evidence early versions of the Vetus Latina. Although Ambrosiaster probably composed his commentaries in Rome,[34] where Victorinus' works on Paul would presumably have been available and an obvious source of reference,

VL reading against critics of his work. According to Souter, Ambrosiaster 'had little or no Greek' (*A Study of Ambrosiaster*, 200); but the reference to Tertullian reveals a concern to hold to an early—and presumably reliable—text. Just prior to the remark on Rom. 5: 14 quoted above, Ambrosiaster condemns those who insist on following Greek codices 'as if they did not differ among themselves'. Vogels holds one of the targets of this criticism to be Jerome (see his article cited in previous note).

[31] Coelestinus Martini, *Ambrosiaster, De auctore, operibus, theologia* (Rome: Pontificium Athenaeum Antonianum, 1944), 33. Martini unfortunately does not argue his point but insinuates it as self-evident: 'Of the ecclesiastical writers there is express mention . . . of Tertullian, Cyprian, and Victorinus (of Pettau, clearly (*Petabionensis utique*)), whose witness the author invokes to confirm the reading of Rom. 5: 12 quoted by him.' The force of Martini's 'utique' probably lies in the argument that a recent writer on Paul like Marius could not be among the *veteribus* such as Tertullian and Cyprian.

[32] Thus Gori, CorPat, 18, and a number of the older contributions: Koffmane, *De Mario Victorino*, 33; Séjourné, 'Victorinus Afer', 2893. Séjourné's article is one of several older encyclopaedic entries on Victorinus that are well worth reading. Koffmane's opinion on this matter is reprised by Otto Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, iii (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), 465.

[33] Simonetti, *Lettera e/o allegoria*, 234.

[34] Vogels, CSEL 81/1, p. xv.

the fact that Ambrosiaster makes 'evident use'[35] of the works of Victorinus of Pettau in his *Quaestiones* must be regarded as the second piece of decisive evidence in this matter. However, our judgement on this issue must not prejudice our conclusion about the possibility of Ambrosiaster's use of Victorinus on Paul. Particularly because there were no other Latin commentaries on Paul available, Victorinus' work would have been valuable to Ambrosiaster *as a witness to a solid Latin textual tradition*, quite apart from the question of his exegesis of the text.

The case for literary dependence must rest upon the persuasiveness of the parallels, lexical and conceptual. The prefaces to the patristic commentaries on Paul are good material for an initial comparison. As discussed previously,[36] the prefaces generally contain the author's theological digest of the letter, often with a brief indication of the situation and the nature of the apostle's response. The situation of Galatians being easily derivable from the letter itself, the commentators' prefatory remarks tend to be fairly uniform. Still, idiosyncratic elements of each commentator are visible, not least the themes and syntheses of 'Pauline theology' favoured by the exegetes. A strong parallel of this sort obtains in the prefaces of Victorinus and Ambrosiaster on Galatians, made stronger still by the presence of similar material in the latter's commentary on Romans. While the preface to Augustine's commentary contains a diagnosis of the situation of the letter similar to those of both Victorinus and Ambrosiaster, there is nothing specific enough in it—with the exception of his mention of the conflict at Antioch, discussed below—to stand as evidence for the present issue. Ambrosiaster's preface to Galatians, however, has a general parallel to Victorinus' exegesis of the letter and a very specific element:

All who believe in Christ and observe the law of deeds poorly understand Christ, just like the Symmachians, who originate from the Pharisees. Maintaining the Law in its entirety (*servata omni lege*), they call themselves Christians. In the manner of Photinus, they define Christ as a human being only, not God and human. If they understood Christ to be God, they would not be hoping for anything from the law of deeds—that is, from what the Law says concerning new moons, sabbath, circumcision, and dietary distinctions.[37]

According to Klijn and Reinink's definitive study *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects*, the Symmachians are mentioned by four Latin authors only: Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Augustine, and Filaster. Victorinus names this obscure Jewish-Christian group twice in

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[35] Thus Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 65.
[36] See Ch. 4, sect. A, above.
[37] CSEL 81/3, 3, 3–9 (Argumentum 1).

his commentary (on Gal. 1: 19 and 2: 12) in connection with James, the brother of the Lord.[38] 'The mention of the Symmachiani in the prologue [of Ambrosiaster] to Galatians suggests that Victorinus was used there', according to Souter.[39] It is difficult to find this an injudicious judgement, as it is not just the bare mention of the group by both that inclines toward a hypothesis of literary influence. Ambrosiaster's pronounced reference to the Symmachians (in the opening sentence of his commentary) as those who hold the error of Photinus seems to be an attempt to inform his readers that the primary error of the Galatians—Judaizing—is relevant to the issues of the Trinitarian disputes. Both sets of issues abound throughout Victorinus' commentary, as we have seen, along with his attention to the connection of practice and doctrine.[40] Both he and Ambrosiaster make the point about this epistle that the problems of praxis arise from problems in understanding the gospel. To demonstrate the errors of the Galatians, Victorinus adduces the examples of James, the prototype of Christian Judaizers, and the Symmachians, who follow him in combining Christianity with Jewish observances, 'although they also confess Jesus Christ differently'.[41] But why would Ambrosiaster have asserted that the Symmachians are an offshoot of the Pharisees (*ex Farisaeis trahunt originem*)? A possible ground for this assertion, *ex hypothesi*, is that Ambrosiaster wanted to use Victorinus' example of the Symmachians as Judaizing Christians, but was uncomfortable with the latter's casual assertion that James the brother of the Lord was their *auctor*. Who then to blame for Christians wanting to maintain Jewish observances? The apostles' council of Acts 15 provides a handy answer—Pharisees who accepted Christ, v. 5[42]—which exonerates James from the charge of pressuring Gentiles to be circumcised (vv. 13–21). While Victorinus may have had a better historical perspective in his evaluation of James's devotion to the Jewish law, Ambrosiaster with his comprehensive knowledge of Scripture would have had reasons to prefer

[38] See below, *ad loc*.

[39] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 63–4. Dating Victorinus' commentaries no more precisely than '2nd half 4th cent.', Klijn and Reinink oddly reverse the chronological relation of Victorinus and Ambrosiaster ('the first writer to speak of this group is Ambrosiaster', *Patristic Evidence*, 53–4, 232). Thus they overlook the possibility of the latter's dependence for information about the group upon his predecessor Victorinus.

[40] Albeit without attempting to attribute problems of low Christology to the Galatians. In fact, he states just the opposite in his comments on 1: 12: 'even the Galatians already accepted Christ as both God and Son of God (*et Galatae iam acceperunt et deum et dei filium*)' (Gori, 104, 22).

[41] See translation below of his full comments on 1: 19.

[42] KJV: 'But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them.'

Luke's sanitized James to the James favoured by more Torah-observant groups of Christians, such as the authors of the Pseudo-Clementine literature or the Ebionites.[43] However, the matter of the Symmachians is not the only parallel between Victorinus and Ambrosiaster in the latter's prologue. Ambrosiaster's reduction there[44] of the religious dispute in Galatia to the issue of the source of one's hope is a constant feature of Victorinus' commentary on Galatians.[45] Both commentators frame the matter in terms of antithetical hopes—from the Law or from Christ alone—in such a similar manner that one may well regard this overlap as an effect of Ambrosiaster's reading of Victorinus.[46]

As regards the Symmachians, we must also note the peculiarity of the fact that this sect is also mentioned by Augustine, twice in *Contra Faustum* and again in *Contra Cresconium*.[47] It is not impossible that Augustine knew of them from his debate with Faustus,[48] or through Filaster—the only other witness to this group—whose mention of

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[43] See Florence Gilman, 'James, Brother of Jesus', in *ABD*, iii. 621. It is interesting in this regard that Eusebius states in his *Ecclesiastical History* (6. 17) that the Bible translator Symmachus was an Ebionite (ET: Loeb, ii. 53). Klijn and Reinink reject Eusebius as a source of information about Symmachus (*Patristic Evidence*, 28), despite the fact that the information in this passage probably comes from Origen.

[44] Besides the passage from his preface noted above, see his remarks on 1: 6 (CSEL 81/3, 9, 4); 3: 16 (36, 21–2); 4: 3 (43, 11); 6: 14 (67, 13–15); and Eph. 3: 9 (89, 16–18).

[45] Victorinus employs the term *spes salutis* in his preface (Gori, 95, 9), in comments on 1: 3–5 (99, 1); 1: 6 (99, 5–6); 2: 10 (117, 11); 3: 24 (135, 7); 4: 17 (150, 10–11); and 6: 16 ((172, 4–6). Augustine was apparently impressed by his formulation of the matter; Plumer argues for his dependence on Victorinus for this formulation, particularly in their comments on 5: 2. See below for a full discussion.

[46] See especially Ambrosiaster's remarks on 3: 16, mentioned in the penultimate note: 'With this discussion of his, the apostle indicates that they are kind of like those accused of having broken a compact (*quasi reos falsati testamenti*), being believers in Christ who keep some of their hope in the Law, such that salvation would not only be promised in Christ but would lie in the Law as well (*qui credentes in Christum et de lege aliquid sperant, ut non solum salus promissa in Christo, sed et in lege sit*). This is similar to many of Victorinus' utterances, especially on Gal. 5: 2.

[47] Augustine states that some call 'Symmachians' those he knows as Nazoreans (*Contra Faustum* 19. 4 and 17 and *Contra Cres*. 1. 31. 36; texts and translations in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, 236–9). On Symmachus as a translator, see Mimouni, *Le Judéochristianisme ancien*, 272–6. Mimouni, like Klijn and Reinink, rejects the notion of the Symmachians as a discrete group and regards the appellation as a designation for those who use the translation of Symmachus.

[48] Augustine writes of Jewish-Christian believers who wanted to compel the Gentiles to Judaize: 'There are those whom Faustus keeps mentioning by the name of Symmachians or Nazoreans, who into our own times still exist, few in number, indeed, but still maintaining themselves, albeit in that scanty state' (*Contra Faustum* 19. 17).

them pre-dated Augustine's by fifteen or twenty years.[49] But Filaster reports that they are libertines, which bears no resemblance to the descriptions of Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine. Augustine's assertion that they 'call themselves Nazoreans but are called Symmachians by some' may well be correct.[50] Augustine's description of the more familiar Nazoreans in *De haeresibus*, at any rate, aligns them with the Symmachians of Victorinus' report:

Although the Nazoreans confess that Christ is the Son of God, they nonetheless observe all the things of the old law, which Christians have learned through the apostolic tradition not to observe carnally but to understand spiritually (*non observare carnaliter, sed spiritaliter intelligere didicerunt*).[51]

Victorinus, although decrying the Judaizing of the Symmachians, admitted that they did regard Jesus as the Christ, albeit differently and heretically (*quamquam etiam Iesum Christum aliter fatentur*).[52] It is interesting, moreover, that when Augustine contrasts the position of the Nazoreans with Catholics, he describes the hermeneutical approach of the latter with the very same terms employed by Victorinus throughout his commentaries on Paul. Admittedly such terminology was widespread in the fourth century, as discussed previously,[53] especially through translations of Origen and through Ambrose's own works; but its employment against Jewish-Christians here is another coincidence to add to the striking circumstance that three out of four authors who mention the Symmachians are Latin commentators who wrote on the Pauline epistles in the final four decades of the fourth century.

A signal feature of Ambrosiaster's and Augustine's commentaries on Paul which aligns them more with traditional Christian exegesis than those of Victorinus is their frequent citation of relevant passages from other biblical books (compare the scriptural indices found in the Vienna edition of the three commentaries on Galatians).

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[49] Filaster, *De div. her. liber* 63 (CSEL 38, 33), dated by Klijn and Reineck to 383/391.

[50] *Contra Cres.* 1. 31. 36 (CSEL 52, 355). Augustine elsewhere states that 'Nazorean' was a self-designation: 'Thus those who call themselves Christian Nazarenes (*sicut illi, qui se christianos Nazarenos vocant*) circumcise the fleshly foreskins. They are heretics, begotten from that error into which Peter deviated and was recalled by Paul, in which they still persist up until now' (*De baptismo* 7. 1. 1 (CSEL 51, 342)). It is perhaps another sign of his reading of Victorinus on Galatians that Augustine associates the Nazoreans/Symmachians with the conflict at Antioch, something we also find in *Contra Faustum* 17, where he mentions Paul's 'fraternal criticism' of Peter's *simulatio* (CSEL 25, 515, 22–4).

[51] *De haer.* 9; cited in Klijn and Reineck, *Patristic Evidence*, 239.

[52] See his comments on 1: 19 in the translation below.

[53] See Ch. 4, Sect. C, above., esp. nn. 163–9.

This difference shows up immediately in Ambrosiaster's commentary, but there is also present a thread that lead unequivocally back to his predecessor. Quoting or alluding to eight such scriptures in his prologue, Ambrosiaster then summarizes the letter in a way that seems to echo both Victorinus' general reading of Galatians and his exact language of *sola fides*:

So if they were understanding these [*sc.* scriptural] sayings, they would be backing away from the Law, knowing that the Law has now come to an end (*iam cessare*) from the time of John the Baptist's preaching (cf. Matt. 11: 12–13), with the result that faith alone suffices for salvation, based on the condensation of the Law (*ut sola fides sufficiat ad salutem adbreviata ex lege*).[54]

We discussed briefly in the last chapter the appearance of the phrase *sola fides* in Victorinus' commentaries on Paul.[55] Less frequently employed by Ambrosiaster (and in a decidedly weakened and guarded sense), its appearance in his commentary on Galatians (in the preface and at 3: 22 and 5: 5[56]), is nevertheless significant in its positive use of the term.[57] While it is true that all the ancient commentators recognize that the problem of this letter concerns the application of biblical laws to the Gentiles, the formulation of 'faith alone' was by no means a universal or obvious answer to the question. The phrase is largely absent from the Greek commentaries on Paul, but is present in Victorinus and Ambrosiaster; and while this language is lacking in Augustine *expressis verbis*, in its place was

[54] CSEL 81/3, 4, 2–5 (Argumentum 3).

[55] See Ch. 5, sect. C, above. The phrase *sola fides* occurs in Victorinus' comments on Gal. 2: 15; 3: 2; 3: 7; 3: 21; 3: 22; 6: 10 (similarly on 5: 10, *fidem tantum habeatis*).

[56] 'And through this, neither uncircumcision nor circumcision counts as anything; rather, faith alone, at work in love, is requisite for justification (*sed sola fides opus est in caritate ad iustificationem*)' (CSEL 81/3, 55, 26). *Sola fides* also appears in a number of his remarks in the appendix of his *Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti CXXVII* on Gal. 1: 6–7 (CSEL 50, 451, 12–13) and Gal. 3: 10 (460, 12). This last passage shows how Ja. 2: 14–26 controls his use of the language of *sola fides*: 'For Paul says the Law alone does not justify human being before God, just as faith alone does not commend one to God if good works are absent (*sicut nec sola fides exceptis bonis operibus commendat deo*). Rather faith makes people perfect when justice—earthly and divine—is preserved.' Other relevant utterances *sine expressis verbis* are found in *Quaest.* XLIIII, 'Adversus Iudaeos', 5–6 (CSEL 50, 74, 3–4; 75, 6–9).

[57] Karl Holl has argued ('Die iustitia dei', 172–4) that Ambrosiaster's use of the expression does not bear the same meaning Augustine attributes to it, noting a number of occurrences of *sola fide* in Ambrosiaster's commentary on Romans. The references he gives to the Migne edition (PL 17: 53C, 79D, 83A, 154C) are very inexact, but I have supplied the references to the Vienna Corpus edition in n. 60 below. It is very peculiar that Holl, having written this paper for a *Harnack Ehrung*, should completely ignore Victorinus' contribution, previously highlighted by Harnark!

a theology of grace destined to play a signal role in Luther's Pauline theology of justification which included, as its emphatic expression, the *sola fide*.[58] Given the significance of Luther's *sola fide*, and the role of Augustine in the development of his understanding of Paul's justification by faith,[59] Victorinus should receive some credit for pioneering a formulation of Pauline theology which an earlier generation of scholars had enthusiastically characterized as proto-Lutheran due to conceptual and lexical similarities. The loss of his commentary on Romans does not allow us a complete picture of Victorinus' view on this complex of issues; but it is highly significant that Ambrosiaster's work on Romans—indeed, its preface—contains some of these formulations, particularly the *sola fide* and the emphasis upon the 'hope of salvation'.[60] In the following passages from Galatians, our examination thus includes a number of instances where it is the very elements of the 'evangelical Paul' that Victorinus appears to have bequeathed to later Latin exegetes.

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[58] See Wolfgang Bienert, ' "Im Zweifel näher bei Augustin"?' in D. Papandreou (ed.), *Oecumenica et Patristica* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1989), 281–94. While Luther's breakthrough understanding of Paul was strongly influenced by Augustine's *De spiritu et littera*, the phrase itself does not appear there, but the idea is none the less expressed (Harnack, 'Geschichte der Lehre', 164; see *De sp. et lit.* 13. 22 (ed. Urba and Zycha, CSEL 60, 176, 14–17; ET: *Later Works*, trans. Burnaby, 22)). Shortly after writing this treatise, Augustine produced another, *De fide et operibus* (ed. Zycha, CSEL 41, 33–97; ET: Augustine, *Faith and Works*, trans. Gregory S. Lombardo (New York: Newman Press, 1988)), in response to a situation where some of the laity apparently hoped to gain eternal life without works (*Retrat.* II, 38). Harnack's analysis of this ('Geschichte der Lehre', 165 ff.) leads him to a conclusion worth quoting at length (pp. 176–7): 'The heighted engagement with the Pauline letters worked out to the benefit of the old phrase which had again and again troubled the church. Augustine experienced the revival of this sentiment in the ancient church and silenced it for a millennium. He was able to do this, because to a greater degree than any of the earlier church fathers he sensed and recognized its relative truth. The thesis that faith alone makes blessed was surmounted by the Catholic theologian who stood closest to this thesis. Not the formula "faith and works" but the other one—"faith which is active in love"— became the official formula in the Catholic Church. This formula permitted, on the one side, the transition to the Pauline doctrine of justification; on the other side it could be worked up in favour of works-righteousness. Therein lies its historical significance.' Luther's controversial translation of Rom. 3: 28 with the insertion of 'alone'—'allein durch den Glauben'—was ably defended by him as necessary for the sense in the target language (see Luther, *On Translating*, in E. Bachmann (ed.), *Luther's Works*, 35/1 (Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, 1960), 181–202).

[59] Most recently see the article of Giancarlo Pani, with bibliographical references, 'Agostino nella Römerbriefvorlesung (1515–1516) di Martin Luther', *SP* 23 (1989), 266–78. That Augustine's understanding of justification had not utterly disappeared during the medieval period has been amply demonstrated by Alphons Müller, *Luthers Theologische Quellen* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1912), ch. 22.

[60] In the preface: CSEL 81/1, 5, 18–19; 7, 5–7; 7, 18–20; 9, 6–8. See also his remarks on Rom. 3: 23 (119, 16); 3: 24 (119, 2); 9: 28 (333, 21).

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The Case For Exegetical Parallels

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Gal. 1: 1–3

The final remark of Ambrosiaster's preface which introduces the epistolary opening (Gal. 1: 1–3) resembles Victorinus' exegesis on a couple of points. Victorinus states that Paul declares himself an apostle *non ab hominibus neque per hominem* to demonstrate that his knowledge of the gospel was derived from none of the apostles who had accompanied Christ (*a nullo apostolo qui cum Christo fuit aliquid didicit*); Paul then added the phrase that follows (*sed per Iesum Christum et deum patrem*) to clarify the sense of *neque per hominem*, lest anyone fail to grasp that Christ is God (*Cum negavit utique 'per hominem' et subiunxit 'per Christum', intellegi licet per deum, per deum Christum*). Both elements occur in Ambrosiaster's transitional sentence from the preface to the first verse: 'So in order that Paul might indicate Christ to be God (*ut ergo et Christum deum significaret*) and might claim not to have learned these things which he taught from a human being (*et non se ab homine ea didicisse quae docebat adsereret*), he begins in this fashion...'. The lexical overlap of Victorinus' *didicit* and Ambrosiaster's *didicisse* does not derive from the biblical text but from the exegesis itself. In light of the fact that this interpretation is very common in the patristic commentaries on this text, it is not impossible that both exegetes could have independently reached the notion that Paul must deny he 'learned' the gospel from the Jerusalem apostles in order to strengthen his claim for his gospel as divinely revealed. However, because this same language recurs in both of these exegetes' comments on 1: 18, the case for literary dependence on this basis is not altogether vitiated.[61]

   Ambrosiaster returns to the point in his comments on the first verse. The apostle testifies that he—unlike certain others who were dispatched by the apostles to strengthen the churches—'was sent by the Son of God, whom Paul for this reason appears to deny was human, because he has given precepts like a god, not like a human being'. The exegete seems concerned to counter the impression that

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[61] Victorinus: 'For if the foundation of the church, as is written in the gospel, has been laid in Peter, to whom all things were revealed, Paul knew he ought to see Peter. Indeed, he says *to see Peter*, to see, so to speak, the person to whom so much authority was entrusted—not that I would learn something from him (*quasi eum cui tanta auctoritas a Christo delata esset, non ut ab eo aliquid discerem*)' (Gori, 109, 8–10). Compare Ambrosiaster: 'It was appropriate that he should desire *to see Peter*, because he held first place among the apostles, being the one to whom the Saviour entrusted the care of the churches—certain not in order to learn something from him, as Paul had already learnt it from the Author (*non utique, ut aliquid ab eo disceret, quia iam ab auctore didicerat*), from whom Peter himself had been instructed' (CSEL 81/3, 15, 10–13).

the apostle is denying the humanity of Christ (*sed a filio dei missum, quem in hac causa idcirco hominem negare videtur*), apparent from his declaration that by this verse the apostle lays waste both Mani and Photinus: the former denying Christ was human, the other that he was divine. The problem that Paul could be read as denying humanity to Christ was also alluded to by Victorinus: 'Paul has added *not through a man* lest, because he was taught through Christ, Christ be accounted a human being' (*item ne, cum per Christum didicerit, ut quibusdam haereticis et blasphemis videtur, homo Christus fuerit, adiecit non per hominem*). Victorinus means 'lest Christ be accounted merely a human being', the necessary qualification having been made immediately above (*sed per Christum qui in homine; Christus enim et deus et homo*); but he does advert to a heretical reading of the passage, echoed in Ambrosiaster's naming of two heresies. The use of the greeting in Galatians to demonstrate the divinity of Christ recurs throughout the Latin commentators: Jerome,[62] Augustine,[63] the Budapest Anonymous,[64] and Pelagius.[65] Greek exegetes too purveyed this exegesis, as we see from a fragment of Origen on Galatians[66] and the remarks of the Antiochene commentators.[67]

Paul's inclusion in his greeting of 'all the brothers who are with me' also draws forth an analysis from Ambrosiaster that includes another lexical similarity to Victorinus, who wrote:

Although he customarily makes profession only of himself (*Paul, an apostle to the Romans; Paul, an apostle to the Corinthians*), to make an impact on the Galatians and let them know they are involved in a serious error (*ut oneraret Galatas et in errore gravi notaret*), he has also associated with himself all the brothers who were with him, to the effect that they themselves would be writing to the Galatians, whom he is shaming with the fact that everybody disagrees with them (*faciens eis pudorem quod contra omnes sentiunt*).[68]

And thus Ambrosiaster:

After he has commended his own authority, he continues to strengthen it to this end: to show that all the others who had acted in concert with him were aroused in opposition to the Galatians. Although his authority was sufficient to prevent him from being refuted, nevertheless, in order to increase the sense of gravity about their deed (*tamen ut gravet factum illorum*) by

[62] PL 26, 312D–313A [336D–337A].

[63] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 2 (CSEL 84, 57, 10; ET: Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 127).

[64] Budapest Anonymous, ed. H. J. Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext*, 218–19.

[65] Souter, 307, 5–7.

[66] In Pamphilus' *Apologia pro Origene* 5 (PL 17, 584B).

[67] See the comments of Chrysostom (PG 61, 614–15), the more understated remarks of Theodore (Swete, i. 4, 1–11), and Theodoret (PG 82, 461B).

[68] Gori, 96, 6 ff.

which they deserted from their initial faith, he signals that there are many with him who are burning with anger at their error, which is to be exposed (*multos secum accensos ad errorem illorum arguendum designat*).[69]

While both commentators' mention of the Galatians' *error* cannot be regarded as a parallel beyond coincidence, Ambrosiaster's remark *ut gravet factum illorum* closely resembles Victorinus' *ut oneraret Galatas et in errore gravi notaret*. Although Ambrosiaster does not invoke Victorinus' precise notation of the apostle's employment of shame as a persuasive technique (*faciens eis pudorem*), he similarly envisions Paul's 'brothers' as incensed at the Galatians (*conmotos adversus eos ... accensos ad errorem illorum*). This line of interpretation is not found in any of the other patristic commentators, Latin or Greek.

Gal. 2: 1–2

These verses concern the rationale for Paul's trip to Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus. Cipriani has drawn attention to how Victorinus and Augustine both refer to Barnabas and Titus as 'witnesses'.[70] I observed as much in the case of Victorinus and Ambrosiaster, where we find an additional lexical similarity in their reconstructed picture of the scene in Jerusalem. Both refer to the removal of some emotion, which would inhibit group solidarity, from the circle of the apostles recently joined by Paul and his companions. Thus Victorinus:

For once previously he had gone up to Jerusalem after a period of three years; now *after fourteen years*, he says, *I went up to Jerusalem again*. So it was through a revelation that I received the gospel announced by me to the Gentiles: I learned it *neither from human beings nor through a human being. With Barnabas, also taking Titus along*. Paul evidently regards these men as witnesses, through whom he can demonstrate that his gospel was given to him through a revelation.... This then was the reason why I went up to Jerusalem. It was revealed to me that I should go up on this account: that the gospel might be more easily recognized as one: mine to preach among the Gentiles and theirs to preach among the Jews. Now he presented his gospel to them *separately* in order to remove from their midst any feelings of reserve (*ut pudor de medio tolleretur*), in order that those who had come to know the mysteries might share them amongst themselves. Since there had been among all these people one way of thinking and one gospel, what is Paul seeking to persuade them? That they should add nothing new or include anything else in the gospel.[71]

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[69] CSEL 81/3, 6, 9–15.

[70] Cipriani considers this one of the passages 'where the literary dependence between the two is more evident' ('Agostino lettore', 414).

[71] Gori, 112–13, 6–8, 17–24.

And thus Ambrosiaster:

Thereupon it happened that Paul, having been admonished by a revelation of the Lord went up to Jerusalem with witnesses of his preaching (that is, with Barnabas and Titus . . .), so that if anyone had taken offence at Paul, it might be removed by their testimony (*si qui de eo haberent scandalum, horum testimonio tolleretur*). . . . With the apostles, indeed, he conferred in secret so that they would know he did not dissent from the evangelical rule . . . as more than a few of the Jewish believers were thinking. For it was not that Paul stood to learn anything from them, because he had been instructed by God. But it was done at God's behest for the sake of unanimity and peace, in order that any scruple or suspicion on the part of the brothers or his fellow apostles be removed (*ut tolleretur scrupulus aut suspicio*), and in order that it be of benefit to the Gentiles who would know that Paul's gospel was in agreement with that of the apostles.[72]

The emphasis on Paul having learned nothing from the apostles in Jerusalem, a point made by these two exegetes at Gal. 1: 1–3, is repeated by both in regards to his second trip there. The designation of Barnabas and Titus by both as 'witnesses' of Paul's gospel cannot bear much weight, being a fairly obvious explanation of why Paul brought them along. Augustine has it too, in his first remark after the lemma: '*I went up to Jerusalem, taking along Barnabas and also Titus*: when he names these men as well, it is as if he is making his case by means of multiple testimonies (*tamquam testimoniis pluribus agit*).'[73] Victorinus' notion of Barnabas and Titus as *testes*, and Ambrosiaster's additional recourse to the noun, 'witness' or 'testimony' (*horum testimonio*), along with Augustine's similar phrase *testimoniis pluribus*,[74] are perhaps too easily deducible from the biblical text to bear much weight. None the less, both Ambrosiaster and Victorinus go on to explain why Paul and his companions had a private audience with the apostles: *ut pudor de medio tolleretur* (Victorinus); *ut tolleretur scrupulus aut suspicio* (Ambrosiaster). Victorinus' mention of *pudor*—emotional awkwardness ranging from shyness to shame—is again eliminated and replaced by other motives. What immediately follows is also relevant. Both exegetes present the result of the private meeting as a confirmation of the concord between Paul's gospel and that of the apostles in Jerusalem. Both see this as an argument for the question concerning the Gentiles, generally and with reference to the problem in Galatians. The upshot of the conference in Victorinus' mind was to establish agreement on the nature of the gospel (*una sententia atque unum evangelium*). For

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[72] CSEL 81/3, 18, 4–7, 11–15.

[73] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 10. 1 (CSEL 84, 64, 17).

[74] Cipriani's case for this passage is weaker, because Augustine's language is closer to that of Ambrosiaster than of Victorinus here.

which reason no additions to Paul's gospel are required. Ambrosiaster simply states that it would profit the Gentiles to know that Paul's gospel agreed with that of the apostles (*concordabat*). The same line of thought and a lexical similarity occur *within a sustained exegesis*, at least in Victorinus and Ambrosiaster here.

Gal. 2: 3–5

The situation is similar to that above in the three commentators' exegeses of these verses. Victorinus and Ambrosiaster both defend the VL variant *ad horam cessimus subiectioni* in the face of the many codices they know which contain the reading accepted by modern critics: *nec ad horam,* etc.[75] Both admit that the negative reading can easily bear a meaning consistent with the context, but they end up rejecting the negative particle on a variety of grounds. In support of their favoured, positive reading, both mention the circumcision of Timothy in Acts 16: 3 as proof that Paul in fact did on occasion 'give way'.[76] Due to these similarities, Gori regards this as a passage where the influence of Victorinus on Ambrosiaster is evident.[77] This conclusion is not altogether compelling, because Tertullian had used the same arguments against Marcion's preference for the negative reading.[78] The two commentators differ, however, on the matter of whether that 'giving way' entailed the circumcision of Titus as well. René Kieffer has pointed out that Victorinus, in affirming this, follows the path laid down by Irenaeus[79] and Tertullian[80] and later picked up by Pelagius.[81] Ambrosiaster does not think that Titus was circumcised; but his defence of the positive reading of 2: 5, based on both 'text and history' (*nam non solum historia, sed et litterae hoc indicant quia cessit*) resembles Victorinus' efforts.

Augustine's comments on Gal. 2: 3–5 are interesting in this context, since he has read Jerome's commentary, which vehemently rejects the positive reading of the VL text.[82] He follows Jerome's

[75] The exception to this rule is F. C. Burkitt's defence of the positive reading, more brilliant in its rhetorical formulation than in the cogency of its reasoning: 'for who can doubt that it was the knife which really did circumcise Titus that has cut the syntax of Gal. ii 3–5 to pieces?' (*Christian Beginnings* (London: University of London Press, 1924), 118).

[76] Victorinus: Gori, 114, 7–20. Ambrosiaster: CSEL 81/3, 20–1.

[77] Gori, CorPat, 416–17.

[78] Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 5. 3 (CCSL 1, 668; ET: ANF 3, 433).

[79] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3. 13 (ET: ANF 1, 437).

[80] René Kieffer, *Foi et justification à Antioch* (Paris: Cerf, 1982), 84–6.

[81] Pelagius affirms the positive reading of 2: 5 as well as Paul's circumcision of Titus (Souter, 312, 10–14).

[82] PL 26, 333A [358D]. In defence of the negative reading of 2: 5, Jerome suppresses the case of Timothy (whom he mentions only later in his comments on 2: 11–13 (364A)), which he surely knows was invoked by Tertullian, Victorinus, and Ambrosiaster to support the positive reading.

text-critical analysis without so much as mentioning the positive reading—clearly recognizing the authority of the Greek tradition which the latter reports. Yet his remarks about Titus suggest that he was familiar with the arguments of his other Latin predecessors:

Although Titus was a Greek, and although no custom or relationship to his parents compelled him to be circumcised, the apostle would none the less have easily allowed this man as well to be circumcised. For the apostle was not going around teaching that salvation is annulled by a circumcision of this sort. To the contrary, he'd made it clear that only if one's hope of salvation were invested in it, would it be opposed to salvation (*sed in ea constitueretur spes salutis, hoc esse contra salutem ostendebat*). So Paul was ready to tolerate the practice in good humour as a superfluous thing, according to the view he elsewhere expressed: *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God is what counts* (1 Cor. 7: 19).[83]

Several elements found in Victorinus' exegesis are visible here. First, there is Augustine's desire to assert that Paul could have circumcised even the Gentile Titus without danger,[84] had it not been for the necessity to win the point against the 'false brothers', who—according to Augustine—were eager for Titus' circumcision 'in order that they might now preach circumcision, with the precedent of Paul himself, as necessary to salvation'.[85] Victorinus' reconstruction of the situation is approximately the same, however much the two exegetes necessarily disagreed—based on the lack of a negative particle in Victorinus' VL text—about the outcome: Paul gave way 'on account of the stealthily introduced brothers, who were combining Judaism with Christianity; hence it was said *on account of the Jews* (Acts 16: 3).' Augustine, like Victorinus, defends Paul's willingness to concede on the matter of circumcision—be it just of Timothy or of Titus as well—on the basis of 1 Cor. 7. Victorinus alludes to the whole passage (1 Cor. 7: 18–8: 13), while Augustine quotes the most relevant verse (7: 19).[86] Another trace of Victorinus' Paulinism, discussed earlier,[87] lies in the phrase Augustine employs here, *spes salutis*. Plumer regards its occurrence in

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[83] Augustine, *Ep. ad Gal.* 11. 1–3 (CSEL 84, 65, 17–24).

[84] Wiles is surely mistaken when he writes: 'Jerome, Pelagius, and Augustine follow Irenaeus and Tertullian . . . in believing that he [*sc.* Titus] was' (*Divine Apostle*, 70 n. 1).

[85] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 11. 4 (CSEL 84, 66, 2–5).

[86] It is worth noting that Ambrosiaster's comments on 2: 4–5 quote the similar verse found in Gal. 5: 6. He uses it to support the opposite conclusion from Augustine: viz. to support the notion that Jewish-Christians who still circumcise their sons do not have the 'truth of the gospel' (CSEL 81/3, 21, 22–6).

[87] See n. 45 above for a list of passages where Victorinus employs this formulation.

Augustine's commentary on Galatians (particularly on 5: 2, also in his comments on 2: 11–16), as a significant indicator of his dependence on Victorinus.[88] Both commentators are operating with a philosophy of religion, as it were, in which the 'hope of salvation' is characteristic even of heretical or false religions. While the phrase *spes salutis* does not appear as such in Ambrosiaster, the emphasis upon 'hope' as the core of the religion is also present in his commentaries, though to a lesser degree.[89]

Gal. 2: 6

Paul's abrupt interjection in Gal. 2: 6—KJV: 'God accepteth no man's person'—provoked very similar remarks from Victorinus and Ambrosiaster. On Gal. 2: 6 Victorinus writes:

What sort someone is at present is sufficient for me; I do not care what sort they were earlier. Paul has added the reason as well: *God does not regard the public face of a person*; rather God regards the person's mind-set, the person's faith. Whether one is a Greek or a Jew, whether one has been something of importance, God does not regard this. Rather God regards what one is, and whether one has taken up faith and the gospel (*sed quid sit an fidem susceperit et evangelium*). For in an inquiry after the truth, God does not admit consideration of social position (*Non enim in praeiudicio veritatis acceptat deus personam*).[90]

Ambrosiaster makes the same point without the close repetition of the elements of the biblical text:

For who would accuse anyone whom God has excused? One is not asked what one was but what one is (*quia non quaeritur quis quid fuerit, sed quid sit*). For the things of the past neither condemn nor vindicate us.[91]

They both have the phrase *sed quid sit*, which does not derive from the lemma; but it is too obvious a way to formulate the thought in Latin to draw any conclusion. But another piece of Victorinus' remark on the verse just quoted is echoed by what Ambrosiaster says of Gal. 3: 28: 'Paul says there is no distinction among believers, that there will be no prejudice against any believers based on what they were before' (*ut nulli praeiudicetur quid fuerit antequam cre-*

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[88] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 28–9. The problem of a misplaced 'hope' is present in Augustine's comments on 4: 21 (*Exp. ad Gal*. 40. 4): 'The son from the slave-girl called Hagar signifies the Old Testament (meaning the people of the Old Testament) on account of the servile yoke of fleshly observances and the earthly promises. Ensnared by these things, which were the only things they were hoping to receive from God (*quae tantummodo sperantes de deo*), they are not granted a share of the spiritual inheritance of the heavenly patrimony' (CSEL 84, 109, 4–9).

[89] See n. 44 above.

[90] Gori, 115, 8–13.

[91] CSEL 81/3, 23, 5.

deret).[92] Ambrosiaster's phrase *nulli praeiudicetur quid fuerit . . . apud deum nulla discretio personarum* picks up both the vocabulary and the thought of Victorinus' *non enim in praeiudicio veritatis acceptat deus personam*. The term recurs in Pelagius' comments on 2: 6 as well.[93]

Gal. 2: 11–14

Paul's narrative of the apostles' conflict at Antioch has attracted the efforts of biblical exegetes both ancient and modern.[94] Jerome and Augustine famously disputed over this passage in a series of letters,[95] after Augustine read Jerome's commentary on Galatians, where he presented an exegesis whose general lines have been attributed—not without question—to Origen.[96] On this reading, Peter and Paul had

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[92] CSEL 81/3, 42, 8–10.

[93] After the quotation of the verse, Pelagius remarks: 'It doesn't matter to me when they began to walk with the Lord, since the timing doesn't count against one's faith nor the social standing against one's efforts (*quia nec tempus praeiudicat fidei nec persona labori*)' (Souter, 313, 3–5).

[94] Franz Overbeck's seminal 1877 contribution, *Über die Auffassung des Streits des Paulus mit Petrus in Antochien (Gal. 2, 11 ff.) bei den Kirchenvätern* (repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968), discusses Victorinus' reading in detail (pp. 4–44). See also the study of Kieffer (*Foi et justification à Antioch*, 81–99), on which I draw freely in the following paragraph.

[95] This correspondence has been edited and discussed by Joseph Schmid, *SS. Eusebii Hieronymi et Aurelii Augustini Epistulae mutuae* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1930). The fullest recent treatment of this is Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, ch. 6 of which provides the *Auslegungsgeschichte* of Gal. 2: 11–14 in early Christianity.

[96] Origen treated this passage in his commentary on Galatians and the tenth book of his *Stromateis*, according to Jerome (PL 26, 308B–309A [333A]), neither of which we still have. The attribution to Origen of the exegesis Jerome records has recently been brought into question by Francesca Cocchini in an important contribution to this discussion, 'Da Origene a Teodoreto', in W. A. Bienert and U. Kühneweg (eds.), *Origeniana Septima* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 292–309. Cocchini points out how the extant texts of Origen where he treats this passage make no mention of the exegesis purveyed by Jerome, Chrysostom, and others: 'From the *Commentary on John* [32. 63] and above all from *Contra Celsum* [2. 1] there emerges, therefore, an interpretation of Ga 2, 11–14, according to which the conflict between Paul and Peter at Antioch would be real and not a pretence' (p. 300). A confirmation Cocchini offers for this is the number of Greek authors who interpret the passage along these lines: Gregory Nazianzen *Carm.* 2. 25 (PG 37, 829, 222–30); Basil, *Ep.* 250; Pseudo-Didymus, *De trinitate* 2. 6. 13 and 3. 19 (PG 39, 540 and 889), Pseudo-Athanasius, *Dial. Trin.* 1. 24 (PG 28, 1153). Theodore of Mopsuestia offers both interpretations in his commentary: one from Chrysostom and the other—*ex hypothesi*—from Origen (see Swete, i. 22 n. 26). Cocchini (p. 307) hypothesizes not implausibly that Jerome could have obtained the reading that Augustine so objected to from Chrysostom's homily *In illud: In faciem ei restiti* (PG 51, 383). A similar objection had previously been advanced with less textual support, by Wiles (*Divine Apostle*, 22 n. 1), on the grounds that the passage from book II of *Contra Celsum* (a mature work of Origen's) shows no trace of this theory; Wiles also noted how Jerome's comments to Gal. 2: 6 seem to presuppose a real

put on an act, though without prior consultation, for the benefit of both parties of Christians at Antioch. The essential component of this reading is that there had been no real conflict between Peter and Paul in the sense of discord on doctrine or life. Both apostles employed *simulatio* or *hypocrisis*—as Jerome willingly admits—in their evangelism when the situations demanded. Thus Paul could not really have criticized Peter for what he himself had done.[97] Jerome championed this exegesis as a bulwark against Porphyry, who had painted this scene in colours decidedly uncomplimentary to Christianity.[98] Little wonder that Jerome's commentary on Galatians would be so critical of Victorinus, who apparently failed to appreciate this point. But the tradition of interpretation among Latin exegetes had led to another reading, which had always in some way acknowledged the genuineness of the confrontation even while responding to apologetic exigencies. Because Marcion had so delighted in Paul's reproach of Peter, who at Antioch 'walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel' (Gal. 2: 14, KJV), Tertullian developed a strategic response that admitted the reality of the reproach but denied that the passage offered support for Marcion's claim that Paul's gospel differed radically from that of the other apostles. Peter had revealed, thought Tertullian, 'a weakness in his comportment, not his preaching' (*conversationis fuit vitium, non praedicationis*);[99] but Paul, with the zeal of a convert, had erred in his fervent rebuke of Peter. This last element of Tertullian, tending toward the exculpation of Peter,[100] was eliminated by Cyprian in his reading of the pericope, though otherwise he followed his master in granting Paul the right. The importance for Cyprian to the Latin tradition of interpretation of this passage, however, lies in his assertion that Peter recognized the correctness of Paul's pos-

face-off between Peter and Paul and he himself later in life abandoned the 'simulated conflict' theory (*Adv. Pel.* 1. 22), perhaps having taken Augustine's critique to heart. We cannot assume that Victorinus was unfamiliar with Origen's (later) interpretation of the conflict at Galatians as a genuine one, especially since a reading by Victorinus of Origen on John has been maintained by Jean Daniélou on the grounds of other parallels (*Recherches de science religieuse*, 41 (1964), 127–8).

[97] The best brief treatment of the dispute between Augustine and Jerome is Paul Auvray, 'Saint Jérome et Saint Augustine', *Recherches de science religieuse*, 29 (1939), 594–610.

[98] See his references to Porphyry in his commentary on Galatians (PL 26, 310C [334C] and 341B [366A]). Any attempt to reconstruct Origen's exegesis of this passage must work not only from the comments of Jerome and Chrysostom but also from the Syriac commentary of Ephrem (extant only in Armenian), whose comments reveal aspects of Origen's exegesis (see Fürst, 'Origenes und Ephräm über Paulus' Konflikt mit Petrus').

[99] Tertullian, *De praesc. haer.* 23.

[100] As Franz Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1974), has noted in his excursus, 'Gal 2, 11 in der Auslegungsgeschichte' (p. 149).

ition.[101] Cyprian also pointed to Peter's wonderful example of humility in the conflict with Paul—a note we encounter also in Augustine.[102]

This was the state of the Latin exegesis, of which we may not presume Victorinus to have been totally ignorant,[103] since there are definite lines of continuity between his exegesis and the readings of earlier Christian authors. Kieffer has paid him the high compliment of being 'the first to make a genuine effort to read attentively the text of Paul without any apologetic aim'.[104] This may be overstating the case somewhat, since we will see how Victorinus' reading also offers a defence against Porphyry, despite Jerome's failure to appreciate him on this point. What distinguishes these Latin commentators from the Greek exegetical tradition is their presupposition that the conflict between the two apostles was genuine.[105] Thus their exegetical remarks try to elucidate what could have compelled Paul to take public action against Peter, who in some way must therefore have been blameworthy. The parallels between Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine are found in the general trend of their exegeses, which has been regarded as characteristic of the Latin exegetical tradition concerning this passage. Their broadly similar readings are almost entirely unaccompanied by clear lexical parallels, which is perhaps why scholars prior to Plumer have been shy about claims of literary dependency.[106] If, however, a line of interpretation of this passage from Victorinus to Augustine can be established, then Victorinus' exegesis of Paul can be said to have contributed indirectly to Luther's early and critical understanding

[101] 'For Peter . . . did not look down on Paul because he had earlier been a persecutor of the church . . . and he easily gave way to the legitimate argument on which Paul was basing his claim (*et rationi legitimae, quam Paulus vindicabat facile consensit*)' (*Ep.* 71, 3 (PL 4, 410); quoted in Keiffer, *Foi et justification*, 90 n. 38). The point is well made by Gert Haendler, 'Cyprians Auslegung zu Galater 2, 11 ff.', *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 97 (1972), 561–8.

[102] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 15. 9–15 (CSEL 84, 70–1).

[103] Hennings regards Victorinus as having been independent of earlier Latin exegesis, specifically that of Tertullian and Cyprian (*Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, 243). However, Victorinus' defence of the VL reading of Gal. 2: 5 resembles that of Tertullian at many points, particularly in his use of Acts to confirm the positive reading found in the VL of that verse; see my notes in the translation below, *ad loc.*

[104] Kieffer, *Foi et justification*, 90.

[105] Or perhaps I should say 'the Greek exegetical tradition that Jerome presents'. If the arguments of Cocchini (see n. 96 above) are accepted, and Origen is not the source of the 'staged conflict' theory, the entire body of scholarship on the history of the exegesis of Gal. 2: 11–14 stands to be corrected.

[106] Kieffer is equivocal: 'Ambrosiaster, then, maintains certain aspects which we have found in Victorinus, but he softens the conflict. Likewise he eschews any accusation against James' (*Foi et justification*, 95).

of the incident at Antioch as a precedent for the rebuke of the church hierarchy (= Peter) in the name of 'the truth of the gospel'.[107]

   From the outset, we may say that Ambrosiaster's exegesis resembles Victorinus' reading more than it does that of Tertullian, in explicitly stating the equality of Paul and Peter—a note also absent in Cyprian[108]—and in not attempting to excuse Paul's zealousness. Victorinus, who had already both mentioned the special authority of Peter and asserted the equality of Paul,[109] addresses the question—raised by Porphyry—where Paul got the nerve. He begins in his first-person paraphrase:

> . . . I did not keep quiet about Peter's sin, he says. In this, Paul shows his freedom and boldness concerning his gospel (*fiduciam de evangelio suo*)—if indeed he reprimanded something being done in a contrary fashion by Peter. . . . When Peter came to Antioch, says Paul, I did not address him at church and among the congregation, rather *I opposed him to his face*—that is, I spoke out against him publicly (*aperte contradixi*). Where did Paul get this confidence (*fiducia*)? Paul alone did not reprimand him; rather, after Peter had been reprimanded by everyone, Paul criticized and accused him, *because he had been reprimanded*.[110]

Victorinus' answer to this last question is one of those places where his exegesis resembles the Greek tradition in regarding the phrase *quoniam reprehensus erat* [*sc. Petrus*] as a perfect passive (moderns take κατεγνωσμένος ἦν as middle voice—NRSV: 'he stood self-condemned') in which the unnamed agents of the rebuke were believers at Antioch.[111] This creative exegesis was perhaps motivated by an

[107] See the article by Karl Holl, which demonstrates how the medieval exegetes sided largely with Augustine against Jerome. Luther's immediate predecessors, Lefèvre d'Étaples and Erasmus, took the part of Jerome, and thus became targets for the Augustinian Luther, who renewed the insights of Augustine and the medieval exegetes ('Der Streit zwischen Petrus und Paulus zu Antiochien in seiner Bedeutung für Luthers innere Entwicklung', *ZKG* 38 (1920), 23–40).

[108] Granted Cyprian gave no full exegesis but simply used the passage to illustrate how the authority of tradition must give way to the authority of reason. The primacy of Peter is thus required for his analogical argument that heretical baptism should not be recognized as valid, even if there were exceptions to this in the tradition of the church (Haendler, 'Cyprians Auslegung', 563). The art-historical evidence discussed above (Ch. 3) suggests that the motif of the equality of Peter and Paul developed in the fourth century.

[109] In his remarks on 1: 18 Victorinus refers to Peter as the one in whom 'the foundation of the church has been laid' (Gori, 109, 6). On 2: 7 he states the equality of their apostleship: 'that I also have been made an apostle, in equal fashion, by the grace of God (*et ego pari modo per gentes apostolus factus sum dei gratia*)' (Gori, 116, 15–17).

[110] Gori, 118, 7–9, 12–15.

[111] See n. 107 for Holl's discussion of how Luther rejected the apologetic glosses of Jerome and Erasmus on the verbal form. Fürst has noted that this gloss on κατεγνωσμένος/*reprehensus* is a place where Victorinus 'offers not the entire Orige-

apologetic desire: namely, to exonerate Paul from Porphyry's charge of brashly and hypocritically blaming his superior by presenting Paul's criticism of Peter as a follow-up to a rebuke from the congregation.[112] This solution is not adopted by any of the later Latin commentators except Jerome. Ambrosiaster, however, addresses both that phrase and the same complex of problems:

I opposed him to his face, he says. What does this mean except that I spoke against him in his presence (*nisi in praesenti ei contradixi*)? He has added the reason why, saying *because he was reprimanded.* He was clearly reprimanded by the truth of the gospel, to which his deed stood in contrast. For who of them would have dared to oppose Peter, the first of the apostles, to whom the Lord has given the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, except for another such apostle, who, knowing himself not to be unequal through confidence of his own election (*fiducia electionis suae*), would firmly refute what Peter had done without consulting him?[113]

Both exegetes underscore the public aspect of Paul's reprimand. While this might seem an obvious inference from the biblical text (*in faciem illi restiti*), their comments seem to indicate a clear literary influence. Victorinus clarifies the phrase with his typical first-person paraphrase (*id est aperte contradixi*), which is echoed by Ambrosiaster, who does not use this form so frequently: *quid est hoc nisi in praesentia ei contradixi*? He supplies an agent for the passive *reprehensus erat* ('by the truth of the gospel'), although a different and more plausible one than the midrashic suggestion of Victorinus ('by everyone'). There is also the admission of Paul's equality to Peter, whom as the *primus apostolorum* it took nerve to 'firmly refute' (*constanter improbaret*, a softening of the verse's *reprehendere*). Finally there is the recurrence of the term *fiducia* in both authors, not found in the lemma.

Another commonality is the explanation which Victorinus and Ambrosiaster give to a phrase from 2: 13, unremarked by the other patristic commentators. Both are concerned to identify 'the other Jews', who Paul says 'dissembled likewise with him [*sc.* Peter]'. In reference to Peter's actions that elicited such a rebuke from Paul, Victorinus asks,

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nist exegesis of Gal. 2: 11–14 but individual elements of it' (see his 'Origenes und Ephräm über Paulus' Konflikt mit Petrus', 127). Fürst cites Ephrem, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Theodore as reading the text to imply that Peter had accusers, whether among the Jewish-or Gentile Christians. The aspects Victorinus has in common with Origen may be drawn from his commentary on John (see n. 96 above) rather than his various treatments of Galatians.

[112] The point is made in Victorinus' comments to both 2: 11 and 2: 12. See my translation below *ad loc.*

[113] CSEL 81/3, 25, 17–24.

Where did the major sin (*magnum peccatum*) come in? Others were also going along with him: *And the other Jews also went along with him.* Let us take *Jews* here in such wise to indicate the Jews who had none the less already accepted Christ, that those people went along in accepting both Christ and Jewish teaching and observance.[114]

Ambrosiaster is also concerned to clarify that they, unlike the interlopers from James, were people of good faith:

All of the Jews who went along with Peter's and Barnabas's pretence were of good faith. But they did it on account of the scandal which it would cause those who came from James: for they were zealous for the Law, being the sort who honoured the Law and Christ on an equal footing—which is contrary to the practice of the faith. With them present, the Jews of good faith did not mingle with the gentile believers, for they feared an audacious onslaught on the part of those who were zealous for the Law.[115]

Both commentators identify what Victorinus calls Peter's *peccatum* ('sin') as consisting not in the withdrawal itself—Paul himself having been willing to engage in *simulatio* to avoid scandal—but in its effects on the community. Thus Victorinus:

In saying this, Paul shows he also understood Peter to have gone along with the Jews only by way of a pretence (*sed simulatione*), but that he was none the less sinning. First, because he feared the men who came on the scene; in the next place, because others were deceived and the Gentiles compelled to Judaize, not understanding that Peter was making a pretence (*illum simulare*).[116]

And thus Ambrosiaster:

Paul has now clarified the reason for the reprimand. For there had not been any wrong-doing (*aliquid fuisset erroris*), if, fearing a scandal on the part of the Gentiles, Peter had dissembled (*dissimulasset*) when the Jews were present. But here is the entire reason for the reprimand: that when the Jews from James arrived, Peter not only withdrew himself from those with whom he had lived Gentile-style, but also because he forced them to Judaize on account of his fear of the men from James. The result was that the Gentiles didn't know which part of Peter's conduct was true.[117]

Both readings can be accused of a 'harmonizing' tendency in their attempt to minimize, while admitting, the problem with Peter's action; whence Victorinus' *unde magnum peccatum* and Ambrosiaster's *non enim aliquid fuisset erroris . . . sed hic tota causa reprehensionis est*. It is interesting to see that Ambrosiaster avoids any discussion of the term *simulatio* found in 2: 13. He mentions it once in his opening remarks to 2: 12–13 and returns to it in the

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[114] Gori, 120, 35–9.   [115] CSEL 81/3, 26, 4–11.
[116] Gori, 121, 16–18.   [117] CSEL 81/3, 26, 22 ff.

passage quoted just above (with the cognate *dissimulare*, much as Victorinus mentioned a *dissimulatio* in his summary remarks to 1: 13).[118] An additional lexical parallel between Victorinus and Ambrosiaster is a phrase they use to characterize the life-style of Gentiles not under the Law: *vivere simpliciter*.[119] Both use it to gloss an expression in 2: 14 (*gentiliter vivis*). The occurrence of the same phrase in both authors at almost identical points in their commentaries is another indicator of literary dependence.

A comparison of these two exegetes' comments on this passage with those of Augustine reveals none of the lexical traces of Victorinus that we see in Ambrosiaster. Augustine does share in the general point that the problem with Peter's action lay not in a temporary return to Jewish practices (which Paul himself admits to engaging in at times) but in Peter's hasty and fearful conciliation of the men from James. This is what created a confusing and potentially damaging situation for the Gentile believers at Antioch. Paul's public rebuke, says Augustine, was necessary to offset the damage done by Peter's public behaviour.[120] Augustine, like Ambrosiaster, does not pay exegetical attention to the term *simulatio*, unlike Victorinus, who employed *simulatio* and *simulare* fifteen times—not including quotations of the lemma—in his remarks on Gal. 2: 11–15. Augustine uses the noun only thrice (along with the adverbial form *simulate*), but the occurrences are prominently positioned.[121] (In his correspondence with Jerome, the term *simulatio* comes to the fore as the main bone of contention.[122]) It is a little peculiar that Augustine's commentary somewhat uncharacteristically omits supplying the text of 2:

[118] *Ubi et quantum per dissimulationem fecerit docet, ut evangelium obtineret . . . quod loco suo quid sit docebimus* (Gori, 106, 45–9).

[119] Victorinus, in a summary statement of the whole pericope: 'that the gospel about Christ be preached equally to Jews and Gentiles; and that the food laws of the Jews not be observed but one live simply, according to the manner of the Gentiles [*ut aequaliter de Christo adnuntietur et Iudaeis et gentibus et non observetur cibus Iudaeorum, sed vivatur simpliciter more gentium*]' (119, 22–5). Ambrosiaster's remarks on 2: 14 are also focused on Peter's action: 'For if it was true that they should Judaize, they would be considering Peter himself a transgressor, because he had lived Gentile-style (*quia gentiliter vixerat*). But if the thing was better and true, that they should live simply (*ut simpliciter viverent*), there had been an upsetting of the Gentiles through his cowardice' (CSEL 81/3, 27, 6–8).

[120] Augustine, *Exp. in Gal.* 15. 9: 'For there was no use correcting an error secretly which had done damage publicly (*Non enim utile erat errorem, qui palam noceret, in secreto emendare*)' (CSEL 84, 70, 11–12).

[121] As Plumer has pointed out (*Augustine's Commentary*, 31–3), Augustine regards the exegesis of this passage as important enough to mention in his preface (*Exp. ad Gal.* 1. 4; CSEL 84, 56, 3–8).

[122] See Augustine, *Ep. 28*, 3. 3, where he refers to reading Jerome's commentary (CSEL 34/1, 107, 9); *Ep.* 40, 6 (CSEL 34/2, 76, 11); *Ep.* 82, 18 (CSEL 34/2, 369, 10–13).

11–14a. He paraphrases most of it but passes over in total silence the harsh terms of Paul's perception of Peter's withdrawal in v. 14a. His opening remark on these verses launches into the point about what disturbed him in reading Jerome's commentary:

So Paul did not fall into any pretence (*simulatione*) because he consistently kept up the practice which seemed appropriate, whether to the churches of the Gentiles or the Jews: that he would never do away with any custom which, if kept, would not get into the way of obtaining the kingdom of God. He admonished only that no-one should put any hope for salvation in superfluous things (*ne quis in superfluis poneret spem salutis*), even if he were wanting to maintain the custom while with them on account of offending the weak.[123]

The *simulatio* which Augustine denies that Paul fell into refers not in the first place to the pretence of a rebuke, as claimed by Jerome,[124] but rather to the hypocrisy of criticizing Peter for what he himself had done on many occasions. This is evident in how the rest of the sentence is essentially a defence of the 'Jew to the Jews, Greek to the Greeks' policy. The danger of this policy lay in the possibility of creating the misunderstanding that such practices contain the 'hope of salvation'. In Augustine's view, Peter was rebuked not for his own occasional practice of the Jewish *consuetudo*; rather, 'he was rebuked because he was wanting to impose it on the Gentiles' when the representatives of the Jerusalem church came to Antioch. The phrase *volebat imponere* seems hyperbolic, since his remarks which follow merely indicate that this was not part of Peter's intention:

So *fearing them* who were still thinking that salvation was established in those observances, *he withdrew himself* from the Gentiles and faked going along with them in laying those burdens of servitude on the Gentiles— which is clear enough in the words of Paul's rebuke [i.e. 2: 14b].[125]

That Peter 'faked going along with them' (*simulate illis consentiebat*), in Augustine's words, corresponds to the idiosyncratic element in Victorinus' commentary which Overbeck none the less insisted was fully of a piece with the dominant 'harmonistic' exegesis of the

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[123] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 15. 1–2 (CSEL 84, 69, 6–12).

[124] Jerome gives *hypocrisis* the sense of 'public impression', as opposed to the kind of moral fault for which Jesus blamed the Pharisees: 'But as I have already said previously, Paul opposed Peter to his face publicly, and opposed the others, in order that the hypocrisy of observing the Law, which was damaging those who had believed from the Gentiles, would be fixed up by the hypocrisy of a reproof (*ut hypocrisis observandae legis, quae nocebat eis qui ex gentibus crediderant, correptionis hypocrisi emendaretur*), and both peoples would be saved' (PL 26, 339B [364B]). It is precisely this attribution of *hypocrisis* to Paul that both Victorinus and Augustine reject.

[125] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 15. 7 (CSEL 84, 70, 2–6).

passage.[126] Without denying the presence of apologetic elements, we can see that Victorinus is struggling as an exegete to accept the force of the hard statement of v. 13, where Paul attributes *simulatio* to Peter and the other Jewish-Christians at Antioch:

So what do we understand *with their pretence* to mean? Could it be that Barnabas, the other Jews, and even Peter had really gone over to living life according to Jewish teaching? Or was it rather that for a while they pretended to do so on account of those present? Was this the reason that *even Barnabas*—Paul says—went along with their pretence? This is how it must be taken. For neither Peter nor any of the others had gone over to the Jewish teaching, but they did go along with it for a while, as indeed from time to time pretended agreement was deemed acceptable (*acccipitur simulata consensio*). Even so, where in this were Peter and the others sinning? Because they put on this show of going along with them, though not in order to draw in those Jews, which Paul himself had done. He even boasts of having done so in order to get along with the Jews, although he did this to win them over.[127] But because Peter also put on a pretence, he none the less sinned in so doing, because *Peter withdrew, fearing those who were of the circumcision.*[128]

Augustine's denial that Paul fell into any *simulatio* may be a rejection not only of Jerome's explanation but also of Victorinus' idea that *simulata consensio* was an acceptable mission practice for Paul, albeit unaccompanied by any fault such as Peter's.[129] Victorinus goes on to clarify that the real problem was the result of Peter's fearful pretence, an insight he attributes to Paul: 'In saying this, Paul shows he also understood Peter to have gone along with the Jews only by way of a pretence (*sed simulatione*), but that he was none the less sinning. First, because he feared the men who came on the scene; in the next place, because others were deceived and the Gentiles compelled to Judaize, not understanding that Peter was making a pretence (*non intellegentes illum simulare*).'[130] He then goes on to paraphrase Paul's speech to Peter of 2: 14b, just as Augustine does. However much Augustine may have objected to Victorinus' admission of *simulata consensio* on Paul's part, these two exegetes are in emphatic agreement against Jerome that Paul was telling the truth in Galatians

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[126] Overbeck, *Über die Auffassung des Streits*, 43.

[127] *ut illos lucrifaceret.* Cf. 1 Cor. 9: 20 in VL: *ut Iudaeos lucrifacerem.* Jerome refers to this verse to explain why Paul could not really have 'opposed the apostle Peter and heedlessly defamed his predecessor' when he himself used various strategies of pretence in dealing with Jews (PL 26, 339A [364A]).

[128] Gori, 120, 52–65.

[129] Hennings has rightly observed that 'here both Victorinus as well as Ambrosiaster approach the Greek exegesis and speak of an only apparent (*simulative*) observation of the Law' (*Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus*, 249, also 247).

[130] Gori, 121, 16–19.

when he depicted his rebuke of Peter as part of a genuine conflict. The truth of Paul's account was the crux, for Augustine, of his debate with Jerome; and this was also a presupposition of Victorinus' exegesis of the incident. A reading in which Paul was fully justified in his rebuke of Peter certainly saves the text from one end of Porphyry's critique, thus exonerating a major canonical author from a charge against his integrity.

Gal. 2: 19–21

Paul uses the term 'law' twice in Gal. 2: 19a (NRSV: 'For through the law I died to the law'), a passage which Cipriani and Plumer[131] have advocated as a strong proof for literary dependence of Augustine upon Victorinus. The case indeed is strong. As Cipriani puts it, 'both exegetes propose two alternative explanations, which correspond to each other completely in content: the apostle either opposes the new law of Christ to that of Moses, or opposes the Law understood spiritually to the Law understood carnally.'[132] He also points out that the comments of both contain formulaic elements for introducing the exegetical alternatives (Victorinus writes, *potest videri . . . potest autem videri*; and Augustine says, *sive quia . . . sive*). While for the second of these two alternatives the comments of the two exegetes resemble each other closely, I do not see that the same cannot be said for the first interpretive option. Victorinus does indeed name two such laws (*duas leges dixisse Paulus, unam Christi, alteram Moysi*); but Augustine refers not at all to a law of Christ and only by implication to the 'law of Moses', albeit in other words (*sive quia Iudaeus erat et tamquam paedagogum legem acceperat*). So the case for borrowing here rests upon the strength of the lexical parallels in the interpretation for which there is some overlap.

   Victorinus explains the second interpretive option twice. Augustine's comment is closest to Victorinus' first version, which runs thus:

But seeing that Paul frequently expresses himself this way, as the Saviour himself also does, it could seem that he has mentioned two laws here for the reason that the very same law is two-fold, so to speak: there is one law when it is understood in a fleshly manner; and there is another law when it is understood spiritually (*una cum carnaliter, altera cum spiritaliter intelligitur*). Previously it was understood in a fleshly manner, and one kept the Law based on its works, on circumcision, and with its other observances

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[131] Plumer states his own indebtedness to Cipriani for this parallel (*Augustine's Commentary*, 29). He argues that Victorinus and Augustine each present two similar interpretations with 'agreement in conception and in order of presentation' and a 'striking verbal agreement in the expression of the second intepretation' (ibid. 30).

[132] Cipriani, 'Agostino lettore', 414–15.

understood in a fleshly manner (*observationibus carnaliter intellectis legi seviebatur*).[133]

Two parts of Augustine's comments resemble Victorinus', although the context is different. First is Augustine's quick summary: 'through a spiritual understanding of the Law he died to the Law, so that he would not live under it in a fleshly manner' (*sive per legem spiritualiter intellectam legi mortuus est, ne sub ea carnaliter viveret*). Then, referring the matter to Paul's inquiry after the extent of the Galatians' knowledge of the Law, he repeats the formulation: 'that through the same Law spiritually understood they would die to the fleshly observances of the Law' (*ut per eandem legem spiritualiter intellectam morerentur carnalibus observationibus legis*).[134] Cipriani maintains that the coincidence is more significant if you compare Augustine's comments here with the very different ones of Ambrosiaster and Jerome, the latter whom we know he read.[135] But one line from Jerome's exegesis is not all that different: 'So he who dies to the law of the letter through the spiritual law lives to God, although he is not without the law of God but is in the law of Christ.'[136] The idea is essentially the same exegesis found in Victorinus and Augustine. The vocabulary of these two agrees against Jerome, in their employment of the adverbial forms of the antithesis, *carnaliter—spirit[u]aliter*.[137] This is all the more significant in that Augustine uses Victorinus' language of understanding *carnaliter* or *spiritaliter* here, instead of reprising the more Pauline language of 'the law of the letter' found here in Jerome. Elsewhere in his commentary on Galatians Augustine utilizes both kinds of terminology.[138] Ambrosiaster's comments to this verse correspond almost exactly to the first exegesis offered by Victorinus. The only difference lies in that

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[133] Gori, 123, 6–11.

[134] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 17. 2–3 (CSEL 84, 73, 13–14, 17–18).

[135] Ciprani, 'Agostino lettore', 415.

[136] *Qui per legem igitur spiritualem, legi litterae moritur, Deo vivit cum non sit sine lege Dei, sed in lege sit Christi* (PL 26, 345A [370A]).

[137] The adverbial formulation, so dear to Victorinus, is found frequently in Augustine as well; the spelling *spirytualiter*, according to Souter, is not found in manuscripts prior to the eleventh century (Souter, *GLL*, 385).

[138] See Augustine's comments on 3: 13 (*Exp. ad Gal.* 22. 1–3), which use the vocabulary favoured by Victorinus, whose remarks on this verse are missing due to a lacuna: 'Wherefore the Lord Jesus Christ, about to grant liberty to believers, did not maintain certain of these observances to the letter (*ad litteram*). . . . Thus by not observing them in a fleshly manner (*carnaliter*) he ignited the hatred of fleshly people. . . . This verse [*sc*. v. 13b, a quotation of Deut. 21: 23] is a sacrament of liberty to those who understand it spiritually (*spiritaliter*). But for those who understand it in a fleshly manner (*carnaliter*), if they are Jews it is a yoke of servitude, if they are pagans or heretics it is a blinding veil' (CSEL 84, 81, 15–24, 82, 1–5).

what Victorinus called the 'law of Christ', Ambrosiaster refers to as the 'law of faith' (*hic dicit quia per legem fidei mortuus est legi Moysi*).[139] Victorinus also referred to the *lex Christi* (quoted above); but the greater correspondence is with one of Victorinus' remarks not quoted above: 'through the law of Christ I died to the Law of the Jews that was given previously' (*per legem Christi mortuus sum legi Iudaeorum ante datae*). Thus Victorinus' first interpretive option seems to have been followed by Ambrosiaster, his second by Augustine.

Cipriani has also identified an explanatory gloss of Victorinus' on 2: 21b that occurs verbatim in Augustine's commentary.[140] The Pauline phrase in question—*ergo Christus gratis mortuus est*—receives the identical clarification from both: 'that is, has died for no reason' (*id est sine causa mortuus est*).[141] However, seeing that the introductory formula *id est* is extremely common in Latin writers, and the phrase *mortuus est* is from the lemma, one cannot rule out the possibility of coincidence producing this parallel.

Gal. 3: 1

The comments of Victorinus and Augustine on this verse contain a number of common elements. Attention was first drawn by Souter to the 'curious view as to the meaning of *proscriptus est*' which both Victorinus and Augustine share.[142] Cipriani and Plumer both present fuller arguments for literary dependence of Augustine on Victorinus here. The Vetus Latina of 3: 1 runs as follows: *O stulti Galatae, quis vos fascinavit, ante quorum oculos Christus Iesus proscriptus est et in vobis crucifixus?* As Cipriani points out, both Victorinus and Augustine observe that the first part of the verse implies that the Galatians had made progress before being impeded. To the objection that this is a simple inference from the biblical text can be countered the fact that the obvious idea of a movement implied from good to bad is found in a general form in both Ambrosiaster and Jerome.[143] The latter, however, also shares the specific idea[144] found in Victorinus and Augustine, of the Galatians as having been deterred by a *fascinum* from the progress they were making.[145] Plumer maintains that the parallel interpretation of the term *proscriptus*

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[139] CSEL 81/3, 28, 21–22.
[140] Cipriani, 'Agostino lettore', 415.
[141] Victorinus: Gori, 125, 14–15; Augustine: *Exp. ad Gal.* 17. 13 (CSEL 84, 75, 4).
[142] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 24, 193.
[143] Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 30, 1–3); Jerome (PL 26, 346D–347A [372A]).
[144] PL 26, 347D [373A].
[145] Victorinus: 'People do not suffer from *a spell* unless they are going strong in something good (*Non patiuntur fascinum nisi qui in bono aliquo pollent*)' (Gori,

(which both exegetes render in accordance with the legal meaning referring to public notification of 'the enforced sale of confiscated property'[146]) is more substantial that Souter realized, if one notes 'the precise way in which Victorinus and Augustine understood Christ to have suffered the confiscation of property'.[147] Thus Victorinus:

But what did they let happen (*admiserunt*), what are they stupid about? That they were persuaded to observe Judaism. So Christ has been *expropriated*: his goods have been divided up and sold (*bona eius distracta et vendita sunt*). These goods, which certainly were among us, have been expropriated, sold, and lost (*proscripta sunt, vendita et perdita*) by the persuasion of Judaism.[148]

And thus Augustine's opening remarks on 3: 1b, in Plumer's translation:

In other words, they saw Christ Jesus lose his inheritance and his possession (*hereditatem suam possessionemque suam amisit*), specifically to those who were taking it away and banishing the Lord. They, in order to take away Christ's possession (meaning the people in whom he dwelt by right of grace and faith), were calling those who had believed Christ back—back from the grace of faith whereby Christ has possession of the Gentiles to works of the law.[149]

As Plumer notes, '[t]he interpretation given by Victorinus and Augustine is not really paralleled by any other Latin author in the early Church.'[150] (The comments of the Greek exegetes contain no such interpretation, as the meaning of προεγράφη is not the same as the Vetus Latina's *proscriptus est*, found in the lemmata of all the early Latin commentators; the Vulgate better translates the Greek as *praescriptus est*, to write up publicly or write up in advance.[151]) The loss of Christ's 'goods' (*bona*) which Victorinus writes of is similar to Augustine's comment about the loss of his *possessio*.

125, 2). Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 18. 1: 'This is not properly said of the kind of people who never set out but of the kind who have defected after initial progress' (*Quod non recte diceretur de his, qui numquam profecissent, sed de his, qui ex profectu defecissent*)' (CSEL 84, 75, 11).

   [146] *OLD*, 1499, proscribo, 2b.
   [147] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 28.
   [148] Gori, 126, 9–13.
   [149] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 18. 2 (CSEL 84, 75, 14–20).
   [150] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 28.
   [151] The contrast between the Greek and the VL translation is almost comically apparent in Theodore's commentary, which is preserved in a Latin translation, where the translator seems to have substituted VL readings instead of translating the biblical text of the commentary. Thus *proscriptus* is found in the biblical verse given, yet Theodore's comments naturally reflect the Greek with its different meaning (Swete, i. 36, 13–14).

One can raise an objection against the case for literary dependence here: to wit, that the two exegetes are simply taking *proscriptus* in its technical legal sense and applying it to the situation of the Galatian churches. This, then, could be the reason why they come to a similar view of 'the precise way' in which Christ has lost his goods among the Galatians—that is, because of the demands made upon the Galatian Christians by the men from James. The fact that Ambrosiaster also takes *proscriptus* in its legal sense—though without, as Plumer points out, the elaboration of it present in the other two exegetes—is similarly equivocal: either he is influenced by Victorinus, or he too is simply elaborating the legal meaning in this passage. Ambrosiaster's predilection for Roman law has long been noted.[152] Thus I do not see that an airtight case for literary dependence can be made between Victorinus and Augustine (or the former and Ambrosiaster) based on the interpretation of *proscriptus*; for we may suppose all these educated men to have been familiar with the legal sense of the term. But the way in which Victorinus and Augustine handle the question from the first part of this verse—*quis vos fascinavit?*—presents a stronger similarity, as I see it (their comments quoted in n. 145 above). Both exegetes are remarking on the verb *fascinare*—Victorinus directly, Augustine obliquely[153]—and both make the point that this can be said only of those who 'are going strong' (Victorinus) or 'have made progress' (Augustine). Of the Latin exegetes only Victorinus and Jerome[154] remark directly on the magical meaning of the verb *fascinare* (so too the Greek βασκαίνω; 'to bewitch' is the main sense); because Augustine certainly knows the work of Jerome on Galatians, it would be surprising for him to make no remark on that word. But because he had read Jerome, we can make no case that his reading of the verse depends on Victorinus, as Jerome's remarks run along the same lines.

Gal. 3: 20

Previously unnoted, Victorinus' comment on Gal. 3: 20 seems to be a passage which—*ex hypothesi*—elicited a silent correction from Augustine. Both exegetes' remarks unpack the notion implicit in that concept of a mediator: Christ is the mediator who mediates

[152] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 67–70. Ambrosiaster glosses *proscriptus* thus: 'meaning those who have been [judicially] stripped of property or sentenced (*expoliatus vel condemnatus*)' (CSEL 81/3, 30, 6).

[153] Plumer thinks instead that he is commenting on the way in which Paul calls the Galatians 'foolish', in apparent violation of Matt. 5: 22 (*Augustine's Commentary*, 93, 150 n. 61). I cannot agree to this, because his comment contains no apologetic element, which we would expect to find were there a reference to Jesus' prohibition against calling one's brother a fool. Pelagius' comments on Gal. 3: 1 contain an explicit reference to Matt. 5: 22 (Souter, 317, 8–10).

[154] PL 26, 347C [372C–D].

between God and other beings. But they also have a more unusual element in common: namely, the idea of the mediator's recalling—or gathering—these other beings to 'the heavenly church' or 'the heavenly Jerusalem'.[155] Significantly, no mention of a heavenly church or Jerusalem is found in either Ambrosiaster's or Jerome's comments. The difference between Augustine's and Victorinus' exegeses of this verse is also illuminating, for it displays the latter's penchant for the theme of cosmic reconciliation (reminiscent of Origen) being suppressed by Augustine, whose eye is more attentive to theological difficulties that would thereby be occasioned. While Victorinus insists that Christ is the mediator between God and all that is outside God, including other spiritual beings who have fallen (a theme developed more fully in the Ephesians commentary[156]), Augustine restricts Christ's mediation to God and human beings (citing 1 Tim. 2: 5). He explicitly excludes from this mediation any fallen angels, who are unable to be reconciled to God, since their fall was entirely spontaneous and without demonic seduction.[157]

Gal. 3: 23

Augustine's comments on this verse contain, according to Cipriani, 'a small trace' of Victorinus' exegesis. The parallel consists of the word *adventus* ('advent') and the accompanying analysis of the phrase from the verse, *sub lege custodiebamur, conclusi in eam fidem quae futura erat ut revelaretur* (the VL used by Augustine rendered this last clause *quae postea revelata est*). Victorinus commented thus:

The intent was that because Christ was coming, we would be expecting his advent, *contained*, as it were, for that *faith which was to come*, in order that believing in this faith, and having been prepared through the Law (as we were avoiding sins and were carrying out the works of the Law), we would at his advent easily be able to have what was promised—clearly, faith in Christ. Therefore, we ought not have faith in the Law, but in his advent.[158]

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[155] Victorinus: 'clearly, by Christ's joining the things which were separated, by his liberating the part of the church which is held here through the errors of the world, and by bringing it back to the heavenly church (*iungente Christo ea quae sunt separata et liberante partem ecclesiae quae hic per errores mundi tenetur et revocante ad ecclesiam caelestem*)' (Gori, 131, 19–21). Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal*. 24. 13: 'For from the whole world he has gathered the church, the heavenly Jerusalem (*nam de toto orbe ecclesiam Hierusalem caelestem congregat*)' (CSEL 84, 87, 24).

[156] See his comments on Eph. 2: 15 (Gori, 37, 30–42; ET: *Metaphysics and Morals*, 70). The notion that non-human spirit-beings are rescued by Christ's descent and ascent is clearest in his comments on Eph. 4: 10b (Gori, 62, 20–32; ET: *Metaphysics and Morals*, 89; for discussion, ibid. 191).

[157] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal*. 24. 5–6 (CSEL 84, 86, 17 ff.).

[158] Gori, 134, 8–13.

Augustine, discoursing on the value of the Law for the Jews prior to the coming of Christ, also states that the Law had prepared them. One proof of this lies in the community of goods which arose amongst believing Jews, according to Acts 4: 34. Their willingness to go so far indicates that the Law really had laid the groundwork for the arrival of Christ:

What the Lord taught those who would be perfect, had been done by that Law under which they had been *contained for the faith*—that is, for the advent of faith in him—*which was revealed afterwards*.[159]

This parallel, however, consists merely in the common term *adventus*, and is without confirmation from other similarities in the larger context. Thus it cannot be considered probative, particularly as a similar language is found in Jerome.[160]

Gal. 4: 9–10

One of the central passages in Bastiaensen's case for the dependence of Augustine on Ambrosiaster and Jerome—and not Victorinus—is Gal. 4: 9–10. The case revolves around the interpretation of the phrase *infirma et egena elementa* (Victorinus' VL has the additional phrase *huius mundi* ('of this world'), imported from a similar mention of *elementa* at 4: 3[161]). The sense of Paul's invoking 'the weak and beggarly elements' (KJV) has long posed problems for exegetes, modern and ancient.[162] Augustine offers two explanations of the term 'elements', relating them alternately to Jewish and pagan practices. Victorinus offers both possibilities as well, as Bastiaensen himself suggested, perhaps to avoid having to choose between them.[163] He argues that Augustine is dependent on both Ambrosiaster and Jerome in the analysis of this passage, because these two exegetes supply him with both Jewish and Gentile interpretive

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[159] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 26. 8 (CSEL 84, 91, 17–20).

[160] Jerome: 'For they kept guard [*sc.* over the Law] for the advent of the faith which was to come, which would deliver the object of the promise' (*custodierunt in adventum futurae in Christo fidei, quae finem repromissionis afferret*)' (PL 26, 367C [393C]).

[161] For a similar variant of Col. 2: 8 found in some early works of Augustine, see Therese Fuhrer, 'Philosophie und christliche Lehre im Wiederstreit', *ZAC* 1 (1997), 291–300. Fuhrer traces this variant to the group of Neoplatonizing Christians of Milan, who introduced Augustine to Plotinus (pp. 296–8).

[162] See F. F. Bruce, *Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1982), 202–5.

[163] Bastiaensen, 'Augustin commentateur', 53: 'Marius Victorinus, cherchant à définir la nature de ses *elementa*, se soustrait au choix entre une interprétation judaïque et une interprétation païenne' (this is rendered infelicitously in the English translation of Bastiaensen's article: 'Marius Victorinus is *at a loss* [my emphasis] with regard to the understanding, in a Jewish or pagan sense, of *infirma et egena elementa*', in van Fleteren and Schnaubelt (eds.), *Augustine*, 42).

options for the *infirma et egena elementa*. Bastiaensen, unfortunately, recounts Victorinus' reading of the passage at insufficient depth and neglects a significant exegetical parallel: namely, *the reason Victorinus and Augustine give* for supplementing their reading of the 'elements' as a reference to paganism with an interpretation of them as Jewish. In essence, they share a specific literary-critical perspective on the passage. A full comparative analysis of their exegeses requires that we also consult their reading of the earlier passage (4: 3), where the apostle first invokes the 'elements of this world'.

Victorinus regards this first mention of 'the elements' as part of as an extended 'simile' (*similitudo*) in which the Jews were 'kept under the Law' (3: 23) as a pedagogue until the time they should come into their inheritance. In 4: 1–2 the apostle clarifies the conditions of quasi-servitude under which the future heirs, or 'children', were kept: 'under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the father'. Verse 3 raises a difficulty for interpreters: Paul, using a first-person plural—'when we were little ones', as the simile would have it—appears to confess to having been in servitude 'under the elements of this world'. The term 'elements' ($\sigma\tau o\iota\chi\hat{\epsilon}\iota\alpha$) rings so strongly of paganism that many commentators are puzzled by Paul's (Jewish-Christian) first-person confession of being 'under the elements of this world'. Partly this has to do with the fact that the other mention of the *elementa mundi* in the Pauline corpus, found in Col. 2: 8, has a patently pagan flavour. Jerome, probably following Origen, presented the clever solution that because the 'elements' in Colossians are clearly marked as pagan, and the same cannot be said of the passage in Galatians, the latter mention of elements must be related to Jewish observance.[164] This eases the tension in Paul's text, to which many of the patristic commentators felt obliged to respond.

Among the Latin interpreters, Victorinus and Augustine present the most complex readings, based on literary-critical observations. Victorinus begins by noting how Paul's return to the simile about the Law (3: 26–9 being a digression) brought in something new:

In concluding Paul has brought the discussion back, not to the Law, but to the elements. He says: *we too, because we were children*. What was supposed to follow? '. . . we were living under the Law . . .'. But this was not added; rather he followed with *we were serving under the elements of this world*. This is either different from what came before or is related to it (*hoc aut alterum est a superioribus aut ad superiora pendet*). We must examine how it would not be extraneous (*alienum*).[165]

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[164] Jerome: *Sed ex eo quod addidit, 'secundum rationem hominem, et inanem decep-tionem'* [Col. 2: 8]*, ostendit non eadem elementa ad Colossenses et ad Galatas nominari* (PL 26, 371C [397C]).

[165] Gori, 138, 14–19.

He follows his instinct as a reader trained in grammar and rhetoric to assume coherence in the text. Even though he encounters the shift from Jewish to Gentile signification, he wants the simile followed through in a coherent manner. Victorinus recalls how the simile, beginning with 3: 23–4, is picked up again with the mention of the 'heirs' following the baptismal confession of 3: 27–8, with its climax: 'We who have put on Christ are neither Jews nor Greeks.' He then proceeds to deduce, as it were, the consequences of this, so as to interpret the verse in a way that resolves the apparent disjuncture in Paul's utterance:

But we who have put on Christ are neither Jews nor Greeks. Now, if we who have put on Christ are neither Jews nor Greeks, we are no longer of the world. Certainly, before the advent of Christ, the world held people either Jew or Greek (*Etenim mundus hominem ante adventum Christi aut Iudaeum habebat aut Graecum*).[166]

What it means for the world to 'hold' every person has a twofold explanation. In brief, human beings are subject to determinations, both cultural and physical or cosmic. Both Greeks and Jews have their own laws and enforce them, and sometimes they punish the same crimes: sacrilege, theft, perjury. But all are subject to another source of determination: the 'elements of the world', which bring their own 'movements', creating 'certain necessities from these movements'. Human beings are 'led into necessity' to do 'as the stars command and the course of the world orders'. Victorinus has been accused of fatalism here—wrongly, because he is just making the uncontroversial claim that human lives are structured according to a calendar which itself is determined by the forces of the universe around us. Less clear is how exactly the Christian escapes from these elements (see the translation and notes); but it is evident that Victorinus puts forth this 'rational' account of the forces of necessity in order to salvage a sense of the text in which Jews can be considered *sub elementis huius mundi*. His interpretation of the elements need not be considered an importation of a pagan idea into a Christian text, because its being 'pagan' or 'Christian' depends not on some inherent sense of the term—which was simply a word for describing certain realities of the cosmos—but rather on the religious location of the interpreter.

In line with Victorinus, Augustine reads 4: 3 as an extension of a simile and also identifies the same problem: 'Now, one can ask, in accordance with this simile, how Jews will have been *under the elements of this world*.'[167] Jews worship the creator, commended

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[166] Gori, 138, 21–7.
[167] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 29. 2: *Quaeri autem potest, quomodo secundum hanc similitudinem sub elementis huius mundi fuerint Iudaei* (CSEL 84, 94, 22–4).

to them by the Law, not the elements—so how can they be said to be under the elements? He then points out that we can read it differently (*sed potest esse alius exitus capituli huius*), if we go back to the simile of the Law as a pedagogue. For Augustine, the 'heir' in question, the *parvulus*, stands for the 'seed of Abraham' from the preceding verse (3: 29). This seed is itself a 'people' composed of 'churches' of both Jews and Gentiles, the *ecclesia ex gentibus, ecclesia ex circumcisione*, whose iconographic prominence in the late fourth and early fifth century we noted earlier.[168] Part of this seed was under the Law as a pedagogue; the other part was serving under the elements of the world. He then clarifies the confusing shift in the simile where Paul, a Jew, would have confessed to be under the 'elements of this world' when he was little (*cum essemus parvuli*). Paul, Augustine claims, was just identifying himself with the audience (*miscet apostolus personam suam*) in the interest of persuasion.[169] Victorinus had also sought to clarify the shift, albeit with his more elaborate philosophical explanation, because that was a way to account for Paul's exact language. Augustine's identification of the shift in the intended subject of the apostle's first person allows him to exclude the Jews out from under the elements of the world (*non pertineat ad significationem Iudaeorum, ex quibus Paulus originem ducit, sed magis ad gentium*).[170] By contrast, Ambrosiaster and Jerome are both rather militant that the meaning relates to Judaism. Jerome first gives the interpretation of 'some' (*nonnulli*) who maintain that the elements refer to 'the angels who preside over the four elements', but he readily admits that the language is redolent of paganism: 'Many maintain that the sky and the earth and the things within them are called *elements of the world*', and they are worshipped by the wise men of Greece, barbarian peoples, and the Romans. None the less, he keeps the interpretation within the Jewish orbit by taking the 'elements' *qua* letters of the alphabet to signify the Law and the prophets.[171] Ambrosiaster admits the astronomical sense of Paul's term *elementa*, albeit taking it to 'signify new moons and the sabbath'[172]—a solution found also in Theodore, Chrysostom, and Theodoret.[173] In its identification of the tension between Paul's language in this verse and the larger context of the letter, Augustine's exegesis resembles that of Victorinus more than that of either Jerome or Ambrosiaster.

[168] See Ch. 3, sect. D, above.
[169] Augustine's remarks on 4: 7 refer back in confirmation of this reading (*Exp. ad Gal.* 32. 5; CSEL 84, 99, 13–17).
[170] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 29. 4 (CSEL 84, 95, 14–15).
[171] PL 26, 371A–D [397A–D].
[172] CSEL 81/3, 43, 4.
[173] PG 61, 657; Swete, i. 60, 12; PG 82, 485B.

The pagan flavour of *elementa* is more pronounced in 4: 9, where the apostle appears to be charging the Galatians with a lapse into paganism (KJV): 'But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements?' (Victorinus' VL: *Nunc autem ut cognoveristis deum, immo cogniti estis, quomodo convertimini iterum ad infirma et egena huius mundi elementa, quibus rursum servire vultis?*).[174] Victorinus begins by raising the question whether Paul has brought a new charge against the Galatians—that they have gone over to a pagan practice (*quod etiam in gentilem transierint disciplinam*)—or whether he is sticking with the original charge of adding the Jewish Law to Christianity. Whether these 'elements' refers to things Jewish or pagan, they are certainly *infirma*; but Victorinus is then compelled to admit that the phrase 'beggarly elements of this world' has heavy pagan connotations. Pagans make the elements into gods and fashion gods out of the elements (*magis quasi paganos tangit qui etiam de elementis huius mundi operantur sibi deos*); and he condenses a large area of discussion into a few formulae about the elements and their *daemones*. He also notes how the context of the discussion (namely, 4: 8) would seem to imply that Paul is charging them with a relapse into paganism; but his desire to maintain the thread of the whole letter's argument conquers:

None the less, since the whole speech and this whole discussion was taken up that Paul might rebuke the Galatians because they turned back to Judaism, and since all these sorts of things must be understood to pertain to Jews, how do we understand *you are turning back again to infirm things*? Therefore, because he specified the *beggarly elements of this world*, let us understand that the Galatians, understanding the Law in a fleshly manner, appear to have turned back to elements which are *beggarly*.[175]

He then dilates philosophically on the neediness of flesh in comparison with the self-sufficiency of *anima* and *spiritus*—an aspect of his exegesis not reprised by the other Latin commentators—but ends up confirming his 'Jewish' reading of the elements by interpreting the observation of 'days, months, times, and years' (4: 10) as referring to the many events of the Jewish calendar (*quae apud Iudaeos multa sunt*).

Augustine begins by adverting to the same complex of problems encountered by Victorinus in attempting to interpret the references to paganism in 4: 8–10 in the context of a letter about Judaizing:

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[174] This is Victorinus' verson of the VL. The versions used by Ambroasiaster and Augustine differ slightly.
[175] Gori, 145, 25–32.

Nevertheless, the words which follow entail a question [*sc*. first raised at 4: 3], now made almost explicit. For although he shows throughout the whole letter that the Galatians' faith hadn't been a matter of concern for anyone but those from the circumcision who were wanting to lead them into the fleshly observances of the Law as if salvation were in them, only in this passage does he seem to speak to them as people tempted to return to the superstitions of the Gentiles.

He then quotes the lemma of 4: 9—noting the implications of *revertimini*—and points out how 4: 8 (KJV: 'ye did service unto them which were no gods') brings up the Galatians' former paganism, which compels the reader to understand the passage in relation to Gentiles. The 'days, months, years, and times' of 4: 10 are interpreted as 'that most common error of the pagans' (*vulgatissimus . . . error iste gentilium*), who observe the days determined by 'astrologers and Chaldeans' when important matters of life are at stake. But then Augustine too feels the tug to bring the issue back to the central point of the letter. I quote Plumer's translation of Augustine's further remarks:

But perhaps there is no need for us to understand this passage in relation to the error of the Gentiles. We don't want to appear to be suddenly and rashly trying to twist Paul's cause for writing into something else—a cause which he takes up from the exordium and carries through to the end. Instead, let us understand it in relation to the things he is clearly urging them to guard against throughout the entire letter. For the Jews also slavishly observe days, months, years, and times in their carnal observance of the sabbath and new moon, the moon of new corn, and the seventh year (which they call the 'sabbath of sabbaths').[176]

Having presented both possibilities, Augustine leaves the matter open: 'so let the reader choose which interpretation he wants, provided he understand that the superstitious observation of times pertains to such a great danger to the soul.' We should note that in Augustine's exploration of the option that it wasn't really a matter of the Galatians going back to pagan practices (against Ambrosiaster and with Victorinus); he also resorts to the notion of understanding *carnaliter*. Augustine characterizes teachers who led the Galatians into following Jewish practices as 'those who, among other works of the Law which they understand in a fleshly manner (*inter cetera opera legis, quae carnaliter sapiunt*), are serving times too, being still unaware of their time of liberation'. The Galatian converts are not now observing pagan 'days', but in their observance of Jewish 'days and times' they are doing a similar sort of thing. This is the solution adopted by Victorinus: 'Let us take it that they,

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[176] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 34. 2–4 (CSEL 84, 102, 7–14); Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 187.

understanding the Law in a fleshly manner (*carnaliter intellegentes legem*), seem to have turned to elements that are needy.'[177] In terms of lexical verbal overlap on this passage, Victorinus and Augustine both have *carnaliter* here and the identification of the larger context of the passage as an extended *similitudo*. Neither is beyond being produced by chance; but their presence within the more broadly parallel exegesis of this passage cannot be discounted altogether. At any rate, the general readings of these verses they share have more in common with each other than with Ambrosiaster or Jerome.

Ambrosiaster's exegesis provides an interesting contrast. His interpretation of 4: 9–10 regards Paul himself as clarifying in v. 10 what the 'elements' of the preceding verse were: 'days, months, times, and years', all of which refer to pagan holidays and astrological practices. However, he adopts the aspect of Victorinus' admission which sees the implications of Paul's words as redolent of paganism but none the less relating to the Galatians' observance of Jewish practices. He differs from both Victorinus and Augustine, however, in thinking that the Galatians were really reverting to paganism. 'Having been led into—or back to—the Law, they easily succumbed to the observation of days and months, for the observation of the sabbath and new moons drew them to these things.'[178] On this verse at least, it is difficult to grant Bastiaensen's tentative conclusion that Augustine is probably dependent on Ambrosiaster and Jerome but not Victorinus.[179] Bastiaensen may be correct in suggesting that Jerome's insistence on the 'elements' as things Jewish was a 'reply to Ambrosiaster', who suggested that the Galatians were slipping back in to pagan practices.[180] Nothing in Augustine's commentary, however, demands or indicates that he obtained this idea of 'Jewish elements' from Jerome rather than from Victorinus. The same is true in the case of Augustine's alleged borrowing from Ambrosiaster of a pagan interpretation of the *elementa*, for Victorinus had fully explored the pagan resonance of the term. A thin commonality between Ambrosiaster and Augustine is the former's description of astrological practices at 4: 10 and Augustine's mention of 'astrologers and Chaldeans' (as discussed earlier). But nothing compels us to posit a literary dependence here. On the one hand, Victorinus also alluded to pagan bondage to astrology in his comments on 4: 3; on the other, we know enough about Augustine's pre-conversion dabbling in astrology to suppose that he hardly needed to

[177] Gori, 145, 30.
[178] CSEL 81/3, 47, 25–7.
[179] Bastiaensen, 'Augustin commentateur', 54. He qualifies his conclusion appropriately: 'A clear-cut final conclusion is not possible' (ET: 'Augustine's Pauline Exegesis', 43).
[180] Ibid.

be prodded into mentioning astrology, which he was also worried about in his congregation.[181]

Gal. 4: 17

Galatians 4: 17 is one of the passages Cipriani regards as containing 'a sure trace of the literary dependence' of Augustine on Victorinus.[182] Their remarks on the first clause of the verse (*They are badly emulous of you and want to exclude you, in order that you would be emulous of them*) bear a strong resemblance to each other. Victorinus comments: '*They are emulous of you*, he says, meaning they are jealous of you' (*'aemulantur', inquit, 'vos', id est, invident vobis*); and then he clarifies that it is the presence of the *non bene*—'badly'—in the phrase that indicates that we are dealing with *aemulatio* in the sense of jealousy (*invidia*). Similarly Augustine: '*They are badly emulous of you*, meaning they are jealous of you' (*'aemulantur vos non bene', id est, invident vobis*). Thus we have an identical gloss, introduced by *id est*, from both commentators. But if not for a lexical similarity with respect to the second clause (*ut illos aemulemini*) that we shall presently observe, one might argue that two good readers, both trained in grammar and rhetoric, could easily produce an identical exegetical remark prefaced by the common formula *id est*. Both exegetes operate with an understanding that *aemulari* has two distinct meanings, a matter Victorinus mentions twice in his comment:

Now, because he has added *in order that you would be emulous of them* (in the sense that you would follow them), he has thus employed this dual significance of emulating in different parts of the verse, as emulation means imitation (*cum aemulatio sit imitatio*), especially when one imitates a good thing. This is what Paul is saying here: *in order that you would be emulous of them*—that is, that you would follow some supposed good of theirs.[183]

Augustine makes the same point about *aemulatio* as *imitatio* in slightly different words, i.e. with the verbal form:

But *they want to exclude you, in order that you would be emulous of them*. This means you would imitate them (*hoc est imitemini*). How? That you would be restrained by a yoke of servitude, just as they themselves are restrained.[184]

While neither Augustine nor Victorinus would consider the 'yoke of servitude' something desirable, the latter makes it explicit that it was a good in the eyes of those who wanted the Galatians to imitate them.

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[181] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 82.
[182] Cipriani, 'Agostino lettore', 416.
[183] Gori, 150, 12–16.
[184] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 37. 8 (CSEL 84, 106, 5–8).

The fact that we encounter an identical phrase (*id est, invident vobis*) in Victorinus' and Augustine's treatment of the first part of the verse is particularly important, since Ambrosiaster also recorded the same exegesis based on the twofold significance of the key word:

He gives an indication that they were overturned by jealousy on the part of the Jews (*invidia Iudaeorum*). . . . For they wouldn't put up with hearing that the grace promised to themselves was given to the Gentiles. That is why they wanted the Galatians to become imitators of them (*imitatores suos*), so as to get circumcised according to their custom.[185]

Although the notion of 'imitation' is present in Ambrosiaster as well, Augustine is closer to Victorinus, in that they share the verbatim comment discussed above. We must ask, to rule out a chance production of the parallels here, whether the other patristic commentators reproduce this exegesis in a comparable fashion. Jerome has the dual sense of *aemulatio* as imitation and jealousy,[186] as does Pelagius (without identical language[187]) and Chrysostom;[188] but none of them contains the two meanings in the same order we find in the other three Latin exegetes. Although *aemulatio* was commonly understood to have both a negative and a positive sense, the order of these observations in Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine— and the lexical parallels in the first and the last of these exegetes— would seem to suggest a literary relationship.

Gal. 4: 20

Unnoticed by previous scholarship, this verse is interpreted identically by Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine. The question is further complicated by the fact that Jerome presents two interpretive options, the last of which contains a variant resembling the one voiced first by Victorinus. The verse runs in Victorinus' Vetus Latina as follows: *Vellem autem nunc adesse apud vos et mutare vocem meam, quoniam*[189] *confundor in vobis* (KJV: 'I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you'). I will sketch Jerome's views first, because he presents a conspectus of options and allows us to see the peculiarity of the fact that the other three Latins all agree with his final, brief interpret-

[185] CSEL 81/3, 49, 7–15.
[186] PL 26, 383B [409C–D] and 384C [411A–B]. A glance at the Antiochene commentators shows the basis of Jerome's comments in the Greek exegetical tradition, where ζῆλος ἀγαθὸς is defined as an imitation of something good, the 'bad' zeal being the aim to upset the progress of another (Chrysostom, PG 61, 660; cf. Theodore, Swete, i. 68–9).
[187] 'An emulous person, and an imitator can also be understood to be an enemy' (*Aemulus et imitator potest et inimicus intellegi*; Souter, 327, 7).
[188] PG 61, 660.
[189] Ambrosiaster and Augustine read *quia* in their versions of the VL.

ation of the verse. While one could argue that Augustine derived it from Jerome, the same obviously cannot be said for Ambrosiaster.

Jerome's comments begin with the commonplace observation that the 'living voice' of an author has great power. The apostle, being aware of this, would like to change his epistolary voice (*vox episto-lica*) into face-to-face speech.[190] He then points out that the Latin translation (*confundor*) inadequately represents the Greek ἀπορούμαι, which means *indigentia* or *inopia*—being at a loss—rather than *confusio*. Next he passes over to a different interpretation, which we find also in Theodore of Mopsuestia.[191] Just as Paul was willing to be a 'Jew to the Jews', here, Jerome argues, he can be seen as adopting forms of speaking to which the Gentiles are accustomed (*pro qualitate eorum quos salvare cupiebat, mutabat vocem suam, et in histrionum similitudinem . . . habitum in diversas figuras vertebat et voces*). Like a doctor whose first prescription has failed to bring about a cure, so Paul wishes try a different approach in his suasions.[192] Speaking in their presence, the apostle would correct them in a more severe manner than usual, but a letter will not allow for this. Jerome then presents an abbreviated version of this interpretation (*potest autem et simplicius intelligi*): Paul, who has spoken so lovingly to the Galatians in his letter—Jerome quotes 4: 12 and 4: 19—would like to take a tougher tone (*et blandam vocem in objurgantis verba mutare*).[193]

This last option, strangely rejected by almost all modern exegetes,[194] is the solution endorsed by Victorinus, Ambroasiaster, and Augustine. These three also mention 'shame' (*pudor, rubor, rubeo*) in their comments on this verse, which, as Jerome pointed out, fits the Latin translation but not the Greek text. Victorinus wrote:

Now, this remark was made with great annoyance, such that he would be saying: If only I were with you now, I would take action! For this is what *change my tone* means. Not a change by which I would proclaim the gospel differently, but that I would express myself in anger. For the moment he admonishes them through the letter he is sending. But he has included the

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[190] *Sciens itaque Apostolus majorem vim habere sermonem qui ad praesentes fiat, cupit vocem epistolicam, vocem litteris comprehensam, in praesentiam commutare* (PL 26, 386C [413A]).

[191] Swete, i. 71, 3–6.

[192] PL 26, 387B–C [413C–D]. The metaphor of the 'doctor' is also found in Chrysostom's comment on 4: 19, much to the same effect (PG 61, 660; ET: NPNF 1/13, 32).

[193] PL 26, 387C [414A].

[194] Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater*, 11th edn. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1952), 152; Bruce, *Epistle to the Galatians*, 213; Martyn, *Galatians*, 426 (Antonio Pitta leaves the question open, *Lettera ai Galati* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 1996), 274).

reason for his just anger, as he said *I am upset with you*: that is, I feel ashamed, because you were quickly turned back (*pudorem patior quod cito conversi estis*).[195]

Similarly Ambrosiaster mentions Paul's embarrassment about the Galatians:

He wants to be present to accuse them, in order to change his voice from praise to blaming them, so that they would be upset on two counts: both about their own error and about the apostle's feeling of shame, which he was suffering in their regard (*et de errore suo et rubore apostoli, quem patiebatur apud eos*).[196]

Augustine too keeps the comment brief and to the same point, but adds a further piece of rhetorical analysis. I quote Plumer's translation:

How is this to be understood, unless perhaps when he called them *sons* he was sparing them in a letter out of concern that if they were upset by a more severe rebuke (*ne severiore obiurgatione commoti*), they might be induced to hate him by those deceivers whom he cannot withstand because he is absent. *But I wish*, he says, *I were present with you now and could change my tone*—that is, could deny that you are *sons*—*for I am ashamed of you* (*quia confundor in vobis*). For even now parents are accustomed to disown evil sons in order to avoid being put to shame by them (*ne de his erubescant*).[197]

With his mention of a *severiore obiurgatione*, Augustine seems to have picked up on some of Jerome's vocabulary quoted above. But we cannot reduce Augustine's comment solely to influence from Jerome's work, since the note about 'shame' is absent in Jerome but present in the other two commentators. Nor can the mention of 'shame' be reduced to the influence of the verb found in the Vetus Latina, *confundor*; for although it is a possible meaning, it is certainly not the primary or root sense of the word.[198] Augustine's last comment (about parents who prefer to disown their children rather than suffer shame on their account) maintains the idea but avoids the direct statements by Victorinus and Ambrosiaster that Paul himself was ashamed of the Galatians. Augustine's *erubescant* resembles Ambrosiaster's *rubore*, so this is one of the passages in which it is not clear which of the two Augustine was echoing.

[195] Gori, 152, 3–9.
[196] CSEL 81/3, 50.
[197] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 193 (*Exp. ad Gal.* 39. 1–2; CSEL 84, 108, 1–10).
[198] In the article 'confundō' in the *OLD* (p. 403), 'embarrass' is given as the tenth and last entry. Thus *confundor* can have this sense if the context indicates; but to translate *confundor* in the verse as 'I am ashamed' obscures that this meaning is an interpretive conclusion. This conclusion is by no means obvious: Pelagius sticks to the primary sense of *confundor* and paraphrases it as *confusio* (Souter, 328, 3).

Gal. 4: 22–31

Paul's digression in Gal. 4: 22–31 on the Abraham story was a rich site for ancient exegetes, all of whom had to address the apostle's characterization of his treatment of the birth stories of Isaac and Ishmael as *per allegoriam*.[199] The way in which both Augustine and particularly Ambrosiaster elucidate an aspect of this allegory bears certain resemblances to Victorinus' interpretation. Paul himself uses the material from Genesis in an intricate and sometimes obscure allegory to reach the conclusion enunciated in 4: 31–5: 1: 'We' are of the free woman—Sarah, according to the allegory—and have therefore been freed by Christ from the Law. The main terms of the allegory are these two sons, one born of the free woman and destined for freedom, the other born according to the flesh and destined for servitude (4: 24–5). 'These things are said through an allegory'—and Paul himself gives the interpretation of the allegory: 'for they are two testaments' (4: 25). With this, Victorinus takes the opportunity to interpret the story of Abraham's sons in a slightly different key than did the apostle:

We, however, are going to compare these two sons, and likewise their mothers, to different peoples, to the churches of the Jews and the Christians. Paul, having indeed interpreted the passage differently,[200] adds as follows: *These things are said through an allegory* (4: 24–5). We have certainly made the interpretation *through an allegory*, so to speak. (An allegory is when one thing is said and another is meant.) Paul has none the less interpreted this same allegory differently, as he adds: *For these are the two covenants: one is from Mount Sinai and gives birth into servitude, which is Hagar. Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which is associated with the one of Jerusalem now, and she is in servitude along with her children.* The son from the slave girl signifies, he says, a people or a covenant. Now, the slave girl was Hagar, who was from Mount Sinai.[201]

Victorinus' confessed innovation is to interpret the two sons, allegorized by Paul to mean 'two covenants', as the two 'peoples' or 'churches' of Jews and Gentiles. Although he takes this to be a deviation from the apostle's own interpretation, the same equation is made by all the ancient commentators with the exception of Theodore of Mopsuestia, whose remarks on this passage bristle

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[199] See Marcello Marin, 'Agostino e l'interpretazione antica di *Gal*. 4,24', in C. Mayer (ed.), *Homo spiritalis* (Würzburg: Augustinus Verlag, 1987), 378–90.

[200] Paul's allegorizing the text of Genesis gives Victorinus licence to offer an alternative—and vehemently anti-Jewish—allegorical interpretation which highlights the fact of two different peoples. Paul's allegory emphasized the idea of covenant.

[201] Gori, 153, 9–9.

with anti-allegorizing polemics.[202] This interpretation being thus widespread, the case for literary borrowing here rests upon the lexical similarities within the larger common interpretation we see in Ambrosiaster's comments on 4: 23:

Ishmael, who was born from the slave-girl, *was born according to the flesh*, as he was born in the normal fashion; but Isaac was not born in the normal fashion but according to providence by the power of God. This is obviously the case because Sarah was both old and barren. For Isaac was born to be a type of Christ (*in typum enim Christi natus est Isaac*). For this reason Paul asserts that these things are *said through an allegory*, so that the persons of Ishmael and Isaac signify one thing from another. For Ishmael signifies the birth of the Jews, or those who are servants of sin; but Isaac signifies the birth of Christians, since they are born into freedom.[203]

Ambrosiaster's remark here that 'Isaac was born to be a type of Christ' is not an unusual formulation[204] (repeated in his comments on 4: 28), albeit not found in any of the other ancient commentaries on this passage. Victorinus made the point twice, first in his remarks on 4: 23 (*in figura enim Christi Isaac*) and then in his comments on v. 27, where we find a phrase very close to the one just quoted in Ambrosiaster:

Therefore, it was this barren woman who produced a son, Isaac, who was born to be an image and type of Christ (*qui ad imaginem et typum Christi natus est*). . . . It is the church, I am claiming, which has many children, sons of God and sons of the Spirit, whom she has with greater joy and not with pain (*cum laetitia magis habet, non cum dolore*). . . . Then, as he said *the sons of the desolate woman are many more than those of the woman who has a husband*, he shows what he was indicating above: she had a son without a man, having had one spiritually instead (*sed spiritaliter filium habuit*) . . . . And clearly, says Paul, *the sons of the desolate woman are many*. Certainly, since Sarah had one son, the phrase is not to be referred to Sarah but

[202] Theodore's lengthy comment on the pericope interprets Paul's allegorization of the two mothers as two covenants to signify ways of life based on either grace or law (Swete, i. 72–86; ET: Froelich, *Biblical Interpretation*, 95–103). The equation of 'two covenants' with 'two peoples' is readily made by the other Antiochene commentators, Chrysostom (PG 61, 663) and Theodoret of Cyrus (PG 82, 42A).

[203] CSEL 81/3, 51, 2–6.

[204] Jean-Paul Brisson, the editor of Hilary's *De mysteriis* in the Sources Chrétiennes edition (vol. 19 (Paris: Cerf, 1947, 22) has supplied a number of passages from Origen where the Isaac–Christ typology occurs, also, unlike Victorinus, in relation to the binding of Isaac (the MS is unfortunately mutilated where Hilary treats of Isaac). An earlier Latin attestation of the idea of Isaac as a 'type of Christ' is found in the pseudo-Cyprianic treatise *De montibus Sina et Sion*: 'Indeed, Rebecca conveys a figure of the church, just as Isaac, her husband, conveyed a type of Christ in himself' (CSEL 3/3, 106, 21). This latter work can be dated no more exactly than to after Tertullian and before Constantine (Laato, *Jews and Christians in De duobus montibus Sina et Sion*, 19–21).

to the church which has many sons. Thus the woman who has a husband stands for the Law and the church of the Jews, which assents in a corporeal manner (*quae corporaliter consensit*).[205]

Ambrosiaster's description of the conception of Isaac in his remarks on v. 27 picks up some of Victorinus' characteristic vocabulary— only loosely occasioned by the phrase from v. 23, *qui de ancilla secundum carnem natus est*—and also repeats the sociologically oriented interpretation of the allegory:

He says that this earthly Jerusalem has a husband, because she gives birth *according to the flesh*; but the heavenly Jerusalem, whom he calls *our mother*, he calls *barren*, because she does not give birth according to the flesh, nor does she suffer pangs (*nec dolores patitur*)—that is, she does not labour. But she gives birth spiritually (*spiritaliter*) without suffering, crying out in joy that she, once desolate, now has more sons than the woman who has a man—meaning, than the one who gives birth in a fleshly manner (*quae carnaliter generat*). For there are a lot more Christians than Jews.[206]

Ambrosiaster's use of *carnaliter* here can be explained on the basis of the vocabulary of 4: 29 (*Sed quomodo tunc qui carnaliter*[207] *natus fuerat, persequebatur eum qui secundum spiritum, ita et nunc*); but the way he says that Sarah *generat autem sine passione spiritaliter* (refer-ring both to the conception of Isaac and the 'birth' of children to the heavenly Jerusalem) is very close to Victorinus' description of how the 'abandoned woman' none the less came to conceive: 'she had a son without a man, having had one spiritually instead' (*sine viro, sed spiritaliter filium habuit*). Victorinus, indeed, seems to deny that Sarah and Abraham had sex to produce Isaac, who in this way can be described as *in figura Christi*. Ambrosiaster is less clear about this last matter, but his claim that Isaac is a 'type of Christ' relates to the manner of his birth, being born *secundum providentiam dei virtute*— as we saw above—and not 'of the flesh'.[208] Of the woman 'who has a man', Ambrosiaster simply states that 'she gives birth in a fleshly manner' (*carnaliter generat*). Similarly, Victorinus wrote of this woman, who stands for the 'Law and church of the Jews', that she 'assents in a corporeal manner' (*corporaliter consensit*—a *double en-tendre* in referring both to the Jews who assent in interpreting the Law *corporaliter* and to Hagar who consented to intercourse with Abraham. They also both assert that Sarah did not suffer any pain (*dolor, dolores*) in childbirth.

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205 Gori, 155, 16–36.
206 CSEL 81/3, 52, 12–20.
207 Corrected in Ambrosiaster's revision to *secundum carnem*.
208 This is clearest from his remark on 4: 28: '*But you, brothers, are sons of the promise according to Isaac:* this means that you are not sons of the flesh but of God, since Isaac was born to be a type of the Son of God' (CSEL 81/3, 52, 23–5).

Turning to Augustine's interpretation of the passage, we find the same quick identification of *testamenta* and *populi* along with the notion that the two peoples are divided by their hopes. I quote Plumer's translation:

The reason the Apostle mentions only these two is that when these things were signified he had only these two. He goes on to explain that the son of the slave woman Hagar signifies the Old Testament, that is, the people of the Old Testament, on account of the slavish yoke of carnal observances and the earthly promises. Ensnared by these and hoping for nothing more from God, they are not admitted to the spiritual inheritance of the heavenly patrimony. Now in order for Isaac to signify the people of the New Testament as the heir it is not enough that he was born of a free woman—what is more relevant here is the fact that he was born according to the promise.[209]

The motif of Isaac's birth 'according to a promise', here emphasized as an important element beyond his signification of a 'people', indicates for Augustine precisely a miraculous conception due to the age of his parents (*Isaac mirabiliter natus est 'per repromissionem', cum ambo parentes senuissent*). Digressing somewhat to provide a compatible allegorical meaning for Abraham's other sons through Keturah[210] (Gen. 25: 1–4)—they mean heretics who are born from a free woman but not spiritually through the promise (*secundum carnem nati sunt non spiritualiter 'per remissionem'*)—he returns to the Pauline text so as to reveal how he thought Isaac's birth miraculous. Thus Augustine, in Plumer's translation:

And therefore Sarah—who was long *deserted* with respect to intercourse with her husband because he knew she was barren—signifies the heavenly Jerusalem. For men such as Abraham do not use women in order to satisfy their lust but in order to have descendants. Now in his old age Abraham had also approached sterility, so that the divine promise might bestow great merit upon those believing in the face of utter despair.[211]

Save for the anti-Manichaean assurance that the old patriarch and Sarah did not engage in recreational sex when procreation was out of question, we see the same notion of the birth being 'through a promise' and without carnal relations in a further comment from Victorinus:

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[209] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 195 (*Exp. ad Gal.* 40. 4–5; CSEL 84, 109, 1–12).

[210] See Maria Grazia Mara, 'Note sulla *Expositio epistolae ad Galatas* di Agostino', in *Memoriam Sanctorum Venerantes* (Vatican City: Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1992), 539–45.

[211] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 195 (*Exp. ad Gal.* 40, 11–13; CSEL 84, 110, 7–13).

But the free woman, who was indeed his wife, was sterile and would not have given birth if God had not provided her a son on account of his promise. From this one can understand that Abraham had a son, not from their taking up bodily activity, but based on the promise of God—if indeed the son of the free woman was born of a barren woman and conceived by a certain spirit, rather than by copulation.[212]

Victorinus' reason, seemingly, for wanting Isaac to have been conceived in a purely spiritual fashion arises from his idea of Isaac as a type of Christ. That idea we found in Ambrosiaster, but not Augustine, who uses the notion of Isaac's miraculous conception against the Manichees' portrayal of the patriarchs as lusty polygamists.[213] There are further similarities along these lines in their comments on the phrase from 4: 27. Thus Victorinus:

As he said *the sons of the desolate woman are many more than those of the woman who has a husband*, he shows what he was indicating above: she had a son without a man, having had one spiritually instead. Sarah would never have given her husband to this woman unless she had a sense that a son would come not by intercourse with her husband, but that she would receive him on account of a spiritual promise.[214]

So too Augustine:

Since the sons of the desolate woman are many more than those of the woman who has a husband: because even earlier Sarah had been dead to her husband; and there hadn't been any divorce between them. So whence is it that one woman was *deserted* and the other *has a husband* except from the fact that Abraham had transferred his effort to have offspring from the barrenness of his wife Sarah to the fertility of the slave-girl Hagar?[215]

Since this idea was not stated clearly in Ambrosiaster, and is totally absent from Jerome's commentary, the case for Augustine's having borrowed it from Victorinus is patent.

The other element in common to their expositions of this passage is their treatment of Paul's statement in 4: 29 that just as Ishmael, born according to the flesh, persecuted the one born by a promise, Isaac, so too now. Victorinus explains Paul's contemporary application: 'those people, who have an understanding according to the flesh, persecute those who live according to the Spirit (*eos qui secundum spiritum vivunt*), that is, Christians.'[216] Augustine also paraphrases the verb *esse* in the lemma (*'qui secundum spiritum erat'*) with *vivere* in making the same point:

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212 Gori, 155, 10–16.
213 See Augustine, *Conf.* 3. 7. 12 (ET: Chadwick, *Confessions*, 43).
214 Gori, 155, 29–33.
215 Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 40. 15–16 (CSEL 84, 18–23).
216 Gori, 156, 6–8.

So the apostle says that we are *sons of the promise according to Isaac*; and that Isaac suffered persecution from Ishmael, just as those who have begun to live spiritually (*qui spiritualiter vivere coeperunt*) suffer persecution from the fleshly Jews, though in vain. . . . [217]

In vain do the 'fleshly Jews' engage in this persecution, because—as both Augustine and Victorinus point out—the scripture Paul quotes in the next verse (4: 30) indicates that Hagar and her son are to be ejected and have no share in the inheritance. Both could have derived the same reading easily enough from the text; but the passage just quoted from Augustine not only contains one of Victorinus' favourite locutions in describing the Christian life—*spiritaliter vivere*—but strongly echoes in content as well a statement the latter made in his comments on 3: 4:

He is admonishing them when he says *you have suffered so many things*, to the effect that because they have stalwartly borne many things, because they received faith, they would also be living spiritually. For by necessity, one who begins to live spiritually (*qui spiritaliter incipit vivere*), while casting off worldly things, while with the new self one has to endure the malevolent gaze of Greeks and uncultured peoples—it is necessary that one would suffer many things, which Paul says the Galatians certainly suffered.[218]

The two exegetes differ in their analysis of the identity of those 'persecuting' the Galatians (Greeks and barbarians for the one; Jews for the other), but the parallelism between Victorinus' phrase *qui spiritaliter incipit vivere* and Augustine's *qui spiritualiter vivere coeperunt* cannot be overlooked. A coincidence? That cannot be ruled out, of course, but we are beginning to pile up a very coincidental number of such coincidences.

Gal. 5: 2

One of the major passages in which Plumer finds evidence of Augustine's dependence on Victorinus is Gal. 5: 2. The phrase *spes salutis* of 1 Thess. 5: 8 (NRSV: 'put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation'; VL: *induti thoracem fidei et caritatis et galeam spei salutis*) seems to have made a major impact on both exegetes. It occurs very frequently in Victorinus.[219]

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[217] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 40. 24 (CSEL 84, 111, 19–23).
[218] Gori, 127, 4–10.
[219] I have listed the passages in n. 45 above. Victorinus' other uses of the term 'hope'—the vain hope in the Law, the hope in Christ, the hope for justification—are too frequent to enumerate. That 1 Thess. 5: 8 is an earlier version of Paul's hope, faith, and love triad (1 Cor. 13: 13) is not insignificant here. It is a major motif for Augustine (he wrote an *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love*), as also for Victorinus. Porphyry's interest in the triad, stimulated by a passage from the Chaldean

His comments on Gal. 5: 2 contain a very similar phrase, *spes salvationis*, or 'hope of salvation'; and the general theme is reprised thrice:

He shows plainly that Christ does not benefit any who put their hope in circumcision (*si aliqui in circumcisione spem ponat*), in fleshly circumcision. . . . *I Paul*, he says, I deny that Christ benefits you, I deny that he brings help in anything if you put your whole hope in circumcision (*si omnem spem in circumcisione ponatis*). In the way Paul has reasserted this point (that Christ will have been of no avail if the Galatians get circumcised), some kind of hidden element can seem present. This is evident from the fact that the Galatians do follow Christ and, following Christ, put their hope of salvation in him (*spem salvationis in eo ponant*).[220]

Augustine makes the same point as we find throughout Victorinus' commentary: namely, that the problem is not the Jewish observances *per se* but rather the hope vested in them:

But he says that Christ will be of no benefit to them if they get circumcised—meaning, if they get circumcised in the way those other people were wanting them to do it, that is, such that they would put their hope for salvation in the circumcision of the flesh (*ut in carnis circumcisione ponerent spem salutis*).[221]

Particularly striking here is the noun–verb combination *ponere spem* which occurs three times in Victorinus and once in Augustine. Significantly this phrase is not found in either Ambrosiaster's or Jerome's remarks on this verse. A similar formulation is also found in Augustine's comments on 5: 25, where he characterizes the Galatians' erring in language reminiscent of Victorinus. As Plumer has translated it, the Galatians are 'not obtaining God's grace in a spiritual way but placing their hope for salvation in circumcision of the flesh and other things of this kind' (*non spiritualiter obtinentes gratiam dei sed in circumcisione carnali et ceteris huiusmodi spem constituentes salutis*).[222]

Victorinus' formulation that the problem with Christians engaging in Jewish practices lies in misplaced hopes may have arisen

Oracles (see Karin Alt, 'Glaube, Wahrheit, Liebe, Hoffnung bei Porphyrius', in Dietmar Wyrwa (ed.), *Die Weltlichkeit des Glaubens in der Alten Kirche* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 25–43), may have been Victorinus' first contact with it.

[220] Gori, 157, 2 ff.

[221] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 41. 5 (CSEL 84, 112).

[222] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 221 (*Exp. ad Gal.*, 54. 5; CSEL 84, 130, 8–10). See also Augustine's comments on 5: 6 (*Exp. ad Gal.*, 42. 6), which he regards as demonstrating his theory of the *indifferentia* of circumcision. Paul has added this verse 'in order to demonstrate that there is nothing dangerous about this circumcision, unless one hopes for salvation based upon it' (*nihilque perniciosum esse in hac circumcisione ostenderet nisi ex illa salutem sperare*; CSEL 84, 114, 9–11).

as a solution to the question posed by the willingness of Paul to be a 'Jew to the Jews' (1 Cor. 9: 20). Why is it that Paul can do things which he doesn't want his Gentile converts to imitate? Believers in Christ can do these things for the sake of missionary motives, he states, because Christ resides in the soul of believers and is sufficiently nourished by their faith. He makes this point at length in his explanation of why Paul—according to his own admission in Gal. 2: 4–5—'gave way for an hour'. Augustine represented this perspective in a more developed form in his dispute with Jerome over the apostles' conflict at Antioch; and their correspondence contains expansions of the points of view developed in their own commentaries. Thus in Augustine's second letter to Jerome (*Ep. 40*, composed *c.*397), which reached him tardily and only through indirect channels, we find him insisting that when Paul became 'a Jew to the Jews', it was because of his 'merciful compassion and not a deceitful pretence' (*compassione misericordi, non simulatione fallaci*). He then went on to make a statement that would disturb Jerome as too tolerant of Jewish practices:

Certainly, he was a Jew, and, on becoming a Christian, he had not given up those practices of the Jews, which they had lawfully adopted as being in accord with their times. Thus he undertook to keep up these observances even after he became an apostle of Christ, but he taught that they were not dangerous to the conscience of those who wished to keep them, as they had received them from their parents under the Law, even after they had come to believe in Christ. However, they were not to put their hope of salvation in them (*non tamen in eis iam constituerunt spem salutis*), because the salvation which was typified by those mysteries had come through the Lord Jesus.[223]

Peter, according to Augustine, had to be corrected by Paul at Antioch because he had reverted to a Jewish diet in such wise as to suggest that Jewish practices were necessary for salvation. Jerome quoted this very passage in his response to Augustine, being particularly upset by the suggestion that Christians born of Jewish parents might without danger maintain their ethnic customs: 'I would pronounce that the ceremonies of the Jews are pernicious and death-dealing for Christians.'[224]

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[223] Augustine, *Ep. 50*, 1. 4 (CSEL 34/2, 73–4). ET by W. Parsons, *Saint Augustine, Letters*, i (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1951), 174.

[224] Jerome, *Ep. 112* (= Aug. *Ep. 75*), 4, 14 (*Epistolae mutuae*, ed. Schmid, 64, 25–8). Jerome's calling the Jewish *caeremonias . . . perniciosas* seems deliberately to echo the adjective in a crucial passage of Augustine's commentary on Galatians quoted in the penultimate note.

Gal. 5: 11–12

In these two verses Paul frames a rhetorical question (KJV: 'And I brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer perse-cution?') with a counter factual conclusion[225] ('then is the offence of the cross ceased'), and then pronounces a malediction on those who would persuade the Galatians to get circumcised. Bastiaensen has claimed that the discussion of the *scandalum crucis* in 5: 11b is a passage where Augustine's exegesis resembles that of Ambrosiaster and bears no trace of the comments of Victorinus or Jerome.[226] While I agree that this is correct as regards Jerome, a look at the comments of Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine on v. 11 reveals a place where the latter's exegesis contains elements of both of the others. Victorinus unpacks the sense of 5: 11b thus:

Then the scandal of the cross has been nullified. In vain do those who crucified Christ incur punishment; what was evilly done *has been nullified*. For this is *the scandal of the cross*, whence the Jews too were unsettled. Here he does not attribute (*revocavit*) this just to his own preaching, but also to the power of the thing itself. This is why I do not preach circumcision: because *the scandal of the cross* remains and has not *been nullified*. Therefore, the Jews have to pay the penalty. If the Jews who created the scandal of the cross have to pay for it, it follows that I would not preach circumcision and that you ought not pursue it.[227]

The difficulty, if not obtuseness, of the comment is twofold. First, there is the fact that Victorinus, like Paul in 5: 11b, uses an indica-tive to express a counter factual situation (i.e. the Jews are not—in his view—punished in vain). Next, while the ideas of scandal, cross, and crucifixion are closely related, the theme of the Jews as respon-sible for the death of Christ seems gratuitous here, even for an early Christian writer. The problem of interpreting his remarks about the 'scandal of the cross' arises, it seems, because Victorinus has not developed the idea sufficiently in the commentary, apart from a brief mention at 2: 21. The lacuna between 3: 10 and 3: 20, however, deprives us of his remarks on 3: 13 (KJV: 'Christ hath redeemed us

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[225] Cf. Burton, *Galatians*, 286–8, and François Vouga, *An die Galater* (Tübin-gen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 125–6.

[226] Bastiaensen, 'Augustin commentateur': 'There is a great resemblance with that of Ambrosiaster' (p. 55).

[227] Gori, 162, 10–16. Jerome's final comment (PL 26, 405A [432C]) on this verse bears some resemblance to that of Victorinus: 'But although—he says—the scandal of Christ's cross remains in force and I am suffering persecution (which I would not suffer if the scandal were not remaining in force), it is in vain that they are throwing up the charge that I preach circumcision: by fighting against it I have to put up with persecution' (*Cum autem, inquit, crucis Christi scandalum maneat, et ego persecutionem patiar, quam non paterer, si scandalum non maneret: frustra quidam iactitant me circumcisionem praedicare, quam impugnando sustineo persecutionem*).

from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree'). To judge from Ambrosiaster's comments,[228] that verse would furnish any anti-Jewish exegete occasion to wax eloquent on the Jews' supposed responsibility for the killing of Christ; thus Victorinus' lost comments may easily have supplied the link between the scandal of Christ's teaching and his crucifixion. His obscure observation on 5: 11–12 that Paul relates the scandal here not to his own preaching of the gospel but to 'the power of the thing itself' is unclear. Is Victorinus thinking that the possibility of offence was already present in Christ's ministry? But why then is it called the 'scandal of the cross'? This difficulty is resolved once we realize that for Victorinus, Christ and cross are largely identified.[229] The scandal of the cross proper—so to speak— is something for Victorinus that the Jews created (*qui scandalum crucis effecerunt*); what offence his ministry caused that led to this is left unsaid here.

   Ambrosiaster supplies the connection for this line of thought in his comment on 5: 11b through a citation from the Fourth Gospel. His remark, a model of clarity and simplicity, presents a similar reading of the phrase without Victorinus' reference to the Jews as the agents of the crucifixion:

Then the scandal of the cross has been nullified. The preaching of the cross was a scandal for the Jews, because it nullified sabbath and circumcision. Now, if that preaching were to allow circumcision, there would be no scandal, and the Jews would be peaceful to us. For they were saying about the Saviour, *This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath* [John 9: 16].[230]

Bastiaensen points out that Ambrosiaster has 1 Cor. 1: 23 (NRSV: 'Christ crucified, a stumbling-block (*skandalon*) to Jews and foolishness to Greeks') in the back of his mind here; likewise Augustine, whom he claims has borrowed here from Ambrosiaster both the notion of *scandalum* as 'offence' and the idea that the Jews were upset by what appeared to them as the destruction of the foundations of their religion. These latter notions are indeed present more explicitly in Augustine's comment than in Victorinus'; but the matter of the verse from 1 Corinthians is less clear. Augustine approaches the

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[228] 'And if you should examine it more closely, you will see that Christ is a curse applying to those by whom he was killed (*Christum maledictum eorum, a quibus occisus est*); for the cross of the Saviour is a sin and a curse applying to the Jews' (CSEL 84/3, 35, 2–4).

[229] Evident especially in a clause from his comments on 6: 12 ('all our hope is from Christ—more properly, from his cross') and his remarks on 6: 14.

[230] CSEL 81/3, 57, 18–23.

verse from Galatians 5 by recalling a similar one from earlier in the letter (2: 21):

But as he says, *Then the scandal of the cross has been nullified,* he is repeating that idea, *If justice is based on the Law, then Christ has died in vain.* However, because he has named it *scandal* here, he has brought to mind (*in memoriam revocat*) the fact that the Jews were especially scandalized at Christ because they noted that he often overlooked or condemned those fleshly observances which they thought were to be kept for the sake of salvation. Therefore, Paul has spoken in this manner as if to say, It is without any reason, therefore, that the Jews, having been scandalized, crucified Christ because he condemned these practices, if such things are still being pushed on those for whom he was crucified.[231]

Clearly, his main point that the scandal arises in relation to Jewish concern for Torah observance is what Ambrosiaster had expressed in his counter factual sentence just previously: were Paul to grant the validity of circumcision, the Jews would be living at peace with us. But there is also a similarity with Victorinus' comments, and not just that both he and Augustine use the word *revocare*. More significant is the part of the latter's paraphrase of Paul's point which associates the scandal suffered by the Jews with the crucifixion of Christ, which is declared to be in vain, if circumcision be preached (*Sine causa ergo Christum . . . scandalizati Iudaei crucifixerunt*). This, along with his explanation of why Paul resorted to the term 'scandal'—to recall the reaction of 'the Jews' to Christ's neglect of the Torah—is why Bastiaensen think 1 Cor. 1: 23 exerts a controlling influence on Augustine here: that verse is about the proclamation of Christ crucified. But a mention of the crucifixion, lacking in Ambrosiaster, is found in Victorinus. Since none of the Greek commentators join Victorinus and Augustine in associating the activity of crucifixion with the scandalizing of the Jews, the coincidence is more striking. Beyond that material sharing, however, is a further similarity in that the two former professors of rhetoric explain the (unreal) apodosis of 11b by offering a parallel example of the same syntax. Augustine quotes 2: 21 (*si ex lege iustitia, ergo Christus gratis mortuus est*) and Victorinus paraphrases 11b with other unreal conditions that would obtain if Paul were still preaching circumcision (*Frustra est quod poenam merentur qui in crucem Christum sustulerunt et evacuatum est illud quod male factum est*). His point, of course, is that Christ has not been crucified in vain, the significance of that evil deed has not been annulled, and it is not for nothing that the Jews suffer punishment (*sic*). Both he and Augustine also apply the point to the argument of the letter. Victorinus concludes his comment by drawing the

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[231] *Exp. ad Gal.* 42. 17–18 (CSEL 84, 116, 2–9).

conclusion that the Galatians ought not 'follow circumcision'; Augustine clarifies that Christ will have died in vain if Jewish observances are preached to those for whom he was crucified. The element that Augustine appears to have taken from Victorinus is the reference to the crucifixion of Christ by the Jews, which—to judge from the absence of any such comment on the part of Jerome and the Greek commentators—was not part of the run-of-the-mill exegetical fare on this verse.

Modern commentators are generally frank about recognizing the sharp imprecation of 5: 12 as a sarcastic joke: 'I wish those who unsettle you would castrate themselves!' (NRSV). As Bruce has noted, 'Greek commentators regularly understand Paul's language thus; the Latins operated with a more ambiguous form of words, like Vlg. *utinam et abscidantur qui vos conturbant*.'[232] (the VL is identical but without the *et*). Jerome's remarks[233] betray an uneasy conscience concerning a possible violation here of the injunction against cursing found in Paul's own letters as well as in Jesus' teaching. He must be following Origen on this verse, as no such comments are found in the surviving Greek commentaries. Jerome openly admits that the text reads as a curse (*nunc et maledixit eis, qui Ecclesias Galatiae conturbant*), but goes on to adduce numerous ways pious exegetes have mitigated this conclusion. No such scruple appears in Victorinus' comment: 'Paul has struck with a curse (*maledicto persecutus est*) those who are applying new persuasions and unsettling the Galatians.'[234] Ambrosiaster is similarly untroubled: 'Not only spiritually but also in a fleshly manner Paul curses them, to the effect that those who were compelling the Galatians to get circumcised would themselves be *cut off* so that their bodily pain would be greatly increased' (*et non solum spiritaliter, sed et carnaliter hos maledicit, ut quia circumcidi Galatas cogebant, ipsi absciderentur, ut multiplicaretur his dolor corporis*).[235] This resembles Victorinus' initial remarks on the verse, which avoid the nasty joke about castration. Augustine takes a clever if somewhat evasive approach to the matter of the curse: 'With an extremely artful ambiguity Paul has also added a blessing, which appears in the guise, as it were of a curse, saying *Would that those unsettling you also be cut off!*'[236] This is similar to one of the suggestions reprised by Jerome: 'Paul doesn't so much curse them as pray for them, that they would lose the parts of the

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[232] Bruce, *Epistle to the Galatians*, 238.
[233] PL 26, 405B–C [432D–433C].
[234] Gori, 162, 1–3.
[235] CSEL 81/3, 58, 3–6.
[236] Augustine, *Exp. ad Gal.* 42, 19: *et adiecit elegantissima ambiguitate quasi sub specie maledictionis benedictionem dicens: 'Utinam et abscidantur, qui vos conturbant'* (CSEL 84, 116, 10–12).

body through which they were being compelled to make a mistake.'[237] Augustine's next remark—'Let them not only be circumcised, he says, but let them also get it *cut off*' (*Non tantum, inquit, circumcidantur, sed et 'abscidantur'*)—strongly resembles Victorinus' closing line: 'Not only let them be snipped around, but let them get it cut off as well' (*Non solum circumsecentur, sed 'abscidantur' etiam*). This is the only clear parallel between Victorinus and Augustine on this verse, since the identification of it as a curse is found in Jerome.

Results

Of the fifteen passages from Galatians discussed above, only one (on 3: 20, suggested by Cipriani) was rejected as showing no clear signs of the influence of Victorinus on either Ambrosiaster or Augustine. Twelve of the passages contain traces of Victorinus in Ambrosiaster (four of which are questionable), and eleven suggest that Augustine read Victorinus. Particularly striking is the way the three exegetes have incorporated a phrase from Paul—'the hope of salvation'—as a core element in their reading of Galatians. A common emphasis upon justification by faith, however differently nuanced, is another possible marker of literary dependence, along with the express formulation *sola fide* found in Ambrosiaster and Victorinus.

These last two major commonalities, along with the other parallels we have examined, demand a verdict. Could they more reasonably be accounted for by the possibility that working on the same text with similar educations would produce such a number of parallels? Or is a hypothesis of literary dependence the more probable solution? That fact that the three commentators in question can all, at some point in their careers prior to composing their works on Galatians, be placed in learned Christian circles of the central Italian peninsula within a temporal horizon of less than three decades inclines me toward the latter hypothesis. The only reason for thinking that a serious exegete and church man like Ambrosiaster would not have read Victorinus is the entirely unjustified assumption that his commentaries sat idle, dusty, and unread on some shelf in Rome immediately after their author's demise. Such a scenario would contradict what we know was a very lively interest in, and demand for, Latin commentaries on biblical books. It would also be very peculiar, as numerous scholars have noted, if Augustine had not been informed about Victorinus' exegetical work by Simplician in one of their conversations in Milan. Moreover, Jerome's explicit

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[237] PL 26, 405D [433B]: *quod Paulus non tam maledixit eis, quam oraverit pro illis, ut eas partes corporis perderent, per quas delinquere cogebantur.*

mention of Victorinus' commentaries on Paul in his own, presupposes they were known and available.[238]

In Ambrosiaster and Augustine we have to do with commentators who neither plagiarize nor merely relate the opinions of other exegetes.[239] Both are well read but independent-minded authors: we should expect them to have studied the Pauline text with the help of earlier, available commentaries. Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine all occasionally refer to other exegetes' opinions (generally under the aegis of *quidam* or *nonnulli*), but none of them retail the readings and writings of others in the constant, systematic manner of Jerome. Apart from Jerome, in fact, none of the Latin commentators name other exegetes. Heretical groups and heresiarchs are readily mentioned, but only as authors of unorthodox opinions, not of commentaries. It does not seem to have been a necessary aspect of the genre of commentary to refer explicitly to previous exegetes. What kind of traces of literary dependence, then, could we expect to find in the case of Ambrosiaster and Augustine? Precisely the ones we do find, I submit: clips of phrases, similar vocabulary, and readings of verses that repeat, vary, take issue with, and position themselves in relation to earlier exegeses.

Apart from the evidence of the various parallels between Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, and Augustine is the continuity in basic exegetical methodology, recognized early on by Karig[240] and highlighted by de Bruyn in his study of Pelagius' commentary on Romans. While the derivation of this common method from the influence of the grammarian's craft and the rhetorical schools permits a prudent *non liquet* to the question of Victorinus' influence within the Latin tradition of Pauline exegesis, the lexical and conceptual parallels suggest that the first Latin commentator on Paul should be regarded as the originator of a specific style of commentary. As Simonetti has stated in his survey, 'Marius Victorinus had already begun an exegetical approach to the Pauline letters which was strictly literal and would achieve great success.'[241] Confirmation of this point can be found if one considers that the main characteristics of Ambrosiaster's exegesis are found already in Victorinus' commentaries. The fact that the excellent description which Wilhelm Geerlings has

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[238] Thus Karig, *Des Caius Marius Victorinus Kommentare*, 12.

[239] As Bammel put it, 'Augustine is an independent thinker, who digests his reading and does not plagiarise. It is not always easy to identify his use of earlier writers' ('Justification in Augustine and Origen', 223).

[240] Karig, *Des Caius Marius Victorinus Kommentare*, 12. Karig marvels that Ambrosiaster appears—in his judgement—not to know Victorinus' work: 'That is all the more striking, since in his whole mode [of exegesis] he stands close to the commentary of Victorinus.'

[241] Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, 90.

provided of Ambrosiaster's exegetical method in a brief article also fits the procedure we find in Victorinus, almost point for point, is a powerful indicator of their methodological similarity.[242] The differences, however, are also instructive. What Geerlings has identified as 'an essential element characterizing the formal side' of Ambrosiaster's exegesis is one major facet which distinguishes his works from those of Victorinus: 'Ambrosiaster's comprehensive knowledge of the Bible'.[243] The other area of major contrast lies in Victorinus' philosophical excurses, entirely lacking in Ambrosiaster's commentaries.[244] But while the contrast is indeed there (Ambrosiaster's complete lack of interest in philosophical elaboration has long been noted), one should not overlook the significance of what they have in common. Geerlings clearly summarizes his conclusions and assumptions in a paragraph relating the thesis of his article:

Ambrosiaster set forth the first complete interpretation of the Pauline letters in the Latin church, which thus constitutes a milestone in the history of the reception of Paul. Even a brief glance at the commentaries of Ambrosiaster shows that we are dealing with commentaries in the strict sense. The exposition strides forward verse by verse, thereby delimiting itself clearly from related genres like scholia or exegetical homilies. What we have here is a progressive exposition, not a series of more or less connected individual observations of exegetical or philosophical character. Therein our commentator distinguishes himself especially from Marius Victorinus, whose exegesis is shot through and through with philosophical discussions. There is also a lack of devotional elements or other secondary theological objectives. The author concentrates solely on his text.[245]

Most problematic is Geerlings's assertion that the basic form of 'progressive exposition' (*fortlaufende Auslegung*) distinguishes Ambrosiaster from Victorinus. The presence of philosophical excurses does not negate the basic fact that Victorinus' commentaries are precisely progressive expositions of the biblical text, which is

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[242] Geerlings, 'Zur exegetischen Methode des Ambrosiaster'. Geerlings notes the following points about Ambrosiaster's commentary: (1) 'The exposition of each letter is prepared by a prologue'; (2) 'The exposition of the text follows the prologue, in which the text is for the most part cited completely. Methodologically, Ambrosiaster proceeds by reducing the text into sections of differing lengths, which are then explained word for word. . . . Very often the cited text is simply repeated in the explanation, not always in a totally literal way'; (3) 'Only in a few places does he deal with other textual variants'; (4) 'As a rule, however, the explanation is connected directly to the text without any transitional remark. Alternatively a simple transitional phrase binds the text and the exegesis' (*hoc est, id est*, etc.); (5) 'Mostly frequently, however, the exegesis is introduced simply by a third-person finite verb' (*dicit, dixit, vult, voluit, ostendit*, etc.).

[243] Ibid. 448.
[244] Ibid. 444.
[245] Ibid.

quoted in full, just as in Ambrosiaster's commentaries. That the 'philosophical' passages are recognizable as excurses or digressions—and that Victorinus is vaguely apologetic about them—reinforces the impression that they are intended to be no more than a supplement to a progressive exposition of the text commented on. Indeed, his exegetical remarks are, if anything, more connected than Ambrosiaster's, due to Victorinus' method of interpreting individual utterances in the context of the whole and offering summaries of key passages. The appearance, noted by Geerlings, of a greater concentration on the text in Ambrosiaster is the by-product of a tendency toward increasing brevity among the Latin commentaries on Paul.[246] However desirable it may have been to produce a series on Paul of manageable size, something is lost: the details of the text, which we see in the extreme brevity of Pelagius' work or the modest comments of the Budapest Anonymous.

Victorinus' commentaries on Paul established a model for later Latin exegetes, particularly for those with insufficient Greek. They offered students of the Pauline epistles a line-by-line exposition of the text, where the commentary keeps largely to that task and avoids overwhelming the scriptural text itself. Taking into account the kinds of scriptural commentary which Augustine's first attempts were, the advantage of Victorinus' model (which he does not fully follow) is clear. Augustine's *Exposition of Certain Propositions on Romans* is a version of the *Questiones* genre; his *Unfinished Commentary on Romans* has the fault of being too inclusive—whence he abandoned the ambitious attempt.[247] The trend of the Latin patristic Paul commentaries toward brevity—with variations such as those in the Budapest Anonymous—probably reflects a need for biblical study-guides in a convenient and easily reproducible format. Rufinus' translation and abridgement of Origen's commentary on Romans is a big book in which the forest often gets lost for the sake of the trees: it would have been daunting for all but the most expert. Victorinus followed the exegetical rule of not letting the commentary swallow up the text; and the remaining Latin patristic commentators—except Jerome—followed him in this. In this sense Victorinus' exegetical work was ground-breaking in the 'literal' Latin tradition of Pauline commentary. Here we should bear in mind that although Hilary was the first of the mid-fourth-century exegetes to produce full-scale works on Scripture, his tendency was

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[246] This has been noted by a variety of scholars, and should be understood as a result of a fundamental aspect of the attempt to present a complete commentary on Paul as a single work to aid in the study of the epistles.

[247] See Divjak's introduction to his CSEL edition (vol. 84) of these commentaries, pp. viii–ix.

to move beyond a 'literal' treatment, even in his *Commentary on Matthew*, which preceded his exile in the East and the influence of Origen on his exegesis.[248]

What I am claiming about Victorinus' influence on Ambrosiaster is substantially the same point made by Plumer with respect to Augustine.

The basic question that Augustine faced was this: How can one trained in grammar and rhetoric adapt his skills for the interpretation of Paul in humble service to the Church?...the most trustworthy precedent here was Victorinus.[249]

If the influence of Victorinus' commentaries on Ambrosiaster and Augustine be granted, then the credit for instituting a specific form of Latin commentary on Paul belongs to the professor of rhetoric turned theological polemicist and scriptural exegete. By contrast with Jerome, Victorinus established a format for dealing with the Pauline letters as bearers of their own integral meaning, letters which lay down clear instructions in all matters of doctrine and life. He was also instrumental in setting a high bar for later Latin commentators as the standard and starting-point for further exegesis, and thus for further explorations of fundamental theological questions. If the immediate influence of Victorinus' commentaries be granted in the case of Ambrosiaster, his mediate influence will still be significant. For this anonymous commentator was—in the words of Wiles—'perhaps the most important of them all',[250] at least as far as Latin Christianity is concerned. Ambrosiaster's 'terseness, astringency, and undivided concern for the literal sense'[251] can be understood as extensions of qualities found already in Victorinus' commentaries. Anyone who has spent time with Victorinus' Latin will appreciate the paradox that while his language can be terse to the point that one can barely grasp his meaning, his comments are at the same time expansive, prolix, and repetitive. One could consider Ambrosiaster the great 'corrector' of Victorinus: abbreviate, soften the anti-Judaism, subtract the metaphysics of the soul which the Origenist Controversy made so theologically incorrect, name the heretics, and—perhaps above all—add cross-references to the Old Testament. The result was an exegetical work on the Pauline epistles fit to be copied copiously in several recensions until the arrival of the printing press. But Victorinus was the Latin who made the first step

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[248] See Simonetti's discussion in Quasten, *Patrology*, iv. 48–52, and his more extensive remarks in *Lettera e/o allegoria*, 254–64, in which Hilary is treated under the heading, 'Esegesi di tendenza allegorica'.

[249] Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 21–2.

[250] Wiles, *Divine Apostle*, 11.

[251] Thus Kelley, *Jerome*, 149.

in adapting a variety of elements of late antique *paideia* for the purposes of a comprehensive commentary on the Pauline epistles. That this portion of the New Testament was the most significant source of Latin theological discussion would become apparent in the Pelagian Controversy. Both Pelagius' and Augustine's Paulinism must be understood in relation to the tradition of Latin Pauline commentary. Perhaps they can also be understood as having resolved, each in his own direction, a fundamental ambiguity in Paul's letters left unresolved by previous commentators.

Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians: Translation

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BOOK I

The letter to the Galatians is said to have been sent by the apostle
from the city of Ephesus. For this reason, some put that letter first
and order this one after it.[1] Now, the main point of the letter is this:
the Galatians are going astray, because they are linking the gospel of
faith, which is a faith in Christ, to Judaism.[2] On account of their
corporeal understanding,[3] they observe the sabbath and circumci-
sion, likewise other works they picked up from the Law. Upset by
these things, Paul wrote the letter wanting to correct them, and to
summon them back from Judaism in order to keep faith in Christ
alone, and to have the hope of salvation from Christ, the hope of his
promises. For no-one is saved based on the works of the Law.
Therefore, to put a stop to those additions they are making, Paul
sets out to establish the truth of his gospel. To grant authority to his
gospel, he invokes its origins,[4] saying he is an apostle neither from
nor through human beings. He proves that he truly is an apostle

[1] The translation of the sentence is disputed. See Appendix 1: 'The Order of the
Commentaries'.

[2] I have followed Gori's text here; despite the criticism of A. Gallico in a review
of the Corona Patrum edition of the text (*Orpheus*, NS 7 (1986), 231–2), Gori
retained in the CSEL edition the reading of the two manuscripts *O* and *S* and
rejected the harmonizing correction—printed in the Migne and Teubner editions—
of the generally untrustworthy scribal hand *O*[3] (Gori, p. xi). The correction would
have us read, literally translated: 'the Galatians are going astray, who to the gospel
of faith . . . add Judaism' (*qui ad evangelium fidei . . . adiungant iudaismum*, instead of
quod evangelium fidei . . . adiungant ad iudaismum). The correction, indeed, better fits
Victorinus' iterations that the Galatians are adding Jewish observance to Christian-
ity; but because the odd formulation ('adding Y to X' instead of the usual 'adding X
to Y') could easily have led to a 'correction' in the first place, I retain with Gori the
more difficult reading.

[3] See Ch. 4, Sect. C, above for discussion of Victorinus' hermeneutic, in which
the opposite of a 'spiritual understanding'—of Scripture or of Christ—is often
expressed as a 'fleshly understanding' or, twice here in the preface, a 'corporeal
understanding'. Cognate adverbial formulations—understanding 'corporeally' (*cor-
poraliter*) or 'in a fleshly manner' (*carnaliter*)—are frequently found, e.g. on 1:
11–12; 2: 19; and 4: 27. This vocabulary derives from the Pauline letters (see 1
Cor. 2: 14 and Col. 2: 9), but doubtless owes something to a philosophical view of
sense perception as inadequate for true knowledge (cf. a remark in *Ad Cand*. 9
(CSEL 83/1, 25, 5 ff.; ET: Clark, 67) and his comments on Eph. 1: 4 (ET: Cooper,
Metaphysics and Morals, 125–8)).

[4] *adhibet principia*. On 4: 13 the same term (*repetit principia evangelii sui*) refers to
the beginnings of his preaching in Galatia.

neither from nor through human beings on a series of counts: he received the gospel by revelation as a Jew, a strident Jew; after a period of three years, he came to Peter in Jerusalem; he was with him for fifteen days; and fourteen years later he returned to Jerusalem. By all of this, Paul shows he learned nothing from the apostles in Jerusalem, owing either to his brief presence or his long absence. So with the authority established[5] (that he received from God the gospel by our Lord Jesus Christ), Paul adds on its very precepts—that is, there is to be no addition of the corporeal understanding characteristic of Judaism. He also relates how he proved the point earlier and acted upon that basis, taking action against even Peter. He follows this up, asserting that there is one gospel, which he taught; those who add the precepts and observation of Judaism go far astray. We will analyse how he treats these matters, each in its own place. In the meantime, let us go back to the beginning of the letter.

Paul, an apostle neither from nor through human beings, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead, and all the brothers who are with me, to the church at Galatia (1: 1–2). The structure of the opening line goes like this: *Paul, an apostle, and all the brothers who are with me, to the church at Galatia*: by whom, with whom, and to whom. Although he customarily makes profession only of himself (*Paul, an apostle to the Romans*; *Paul, an apostle to the Corinthians*), to make an impact on the Galatians and let them know they are involved in a serious error, he has also associated with himself all the brothers who were with him,[6] to the effect that they themselves would be writing to the Galatians, whom he is shaming with the fact that everybody disagrees with them.

Neither from human beings nor through a human being. By this Paul intensifies the force of his own precepts and the force of the gospel he is promulgating. Obviously intending to correct the Galatians, he states that he is an apostle *neither from human beings nor through a human being*. Rather, he is an apostle *through Jesus Christ and God the Father*. So I am to be trusted and faith embraced: the gospel I am

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[5] Classen ('Paulus und die antike Rhetorik', 30) regards Victorinus' ablative absolute (*confirmata igitur auctoritate*) as referring to the apostle's own authority (as Ambrosiaster does: *postquam auctoritatem suam conmendavit* (CSEL 81/3, 6. 10)). But Victorinus' earlier statement here (*ut autem det auctoritatem evangelio suo adhibet principia*) suggests that the authority in question is not that of Paul but that of his gospel, which is the basis of the apostle's authority. An appeal to the 'authority of the gods' was a recognized means of strengthening arguments (Quintilian, *Inst.* 5. 11. 42; Loeb, ii. 294).

[6] This stands in tension with his comment on 6: 10, which states that Paul is writing the letter in his own hand to spare the Galatians the shame of knowing that others are aware of their doings. Victorinus, eager to find in each verse a means whereby Paul is working toward the general persuasive goal, shows himself to be less than consistent.

setting out is true—clearly, because I am an apostle through Jesus Christ and God the Father! He adds *neither from human beings nor through a human being*, since it was not through the apostles, whom he says he was with for a few days and that they gave him the right hand of fellowship. So he learned nothing from them. Neither was it *through a human being*, through a prophet, say, such that it would be ambiguous.[7] Nor was it through Christ as a human being; rather it was through the Christ who was in the human being. For Christ is both God and a human being.[8]

Neither from human beings nor through a human being seems to refer here to the Matthew who learned the gospel from human beings.[9] This man was the replacement for the betrayer, so he learned it from human beings. That Paul said *nor through a human being* indicates that he was neither sent from nor instructed by a human being, *but through Jesus Christ*—obviously, through God. Therefore, in that he said *not from human beings*, precisely so has the apostle Paul proved that he did not learn the gospel from any apostle who was with Christ. Likewise, because he learned it through Christ, he has added *nor through a human being*, lest Christ be accounted a human being—as he is by some heretics and blasphemers.[10] Paul includes what that phrase does mean by saying *but through Jesus Christ and God the Father*. As Paul has clearly denied being an apostle *through a human being*, and has added the phrase *through Christ*, one may gather it means through God, through the God Christ. But because he included *through God the Father*, certain people claim this as grounds for denying that Christ has been clearly called God by Paul.[11]

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[7] The end of his comments on Eph. 2: 19 record a number of modes of revelation that occurred in the case of prophets and apostles (Gori, 40, 20–4; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 72).

[8] Similar remarks on Christ's two natures appear in his comments on 1: 11.

[9] The Latin here (and several times below) merely has the verb (*didicit*) without an object, which I have supplied from the context. Victorinus is thinking here of Acts 1: 25; but his next statement is erroneous, as Acts 1: 21–2 implies that this Matthew accompanied the Twelve throughout Jesus' ministry.

[10] Victorinus is perhaps thinking of Paul of Samosata and Photinus, whom he takes to regard Christ as merely human. He mentioned them in his Trinitarian treatises, the former in *Adv. Ar.* I 22 (CSEL 83/1, 91, 20–1) and both in *Adv. Ar.* I 28 (104, 32–9). The same phrase of Paul's greeting is invoked by Jerome as a means by which 'the heresy of Ebion and Photinus must be quelled, because our Lord Jesus Christ is God' (PL 26, 312D [336D]).

[11] As the emperor Julian, though without reference to this text, alleged in his treatise *Against the Galileans* of 363 (327A; Loeb, iii. 412). Porphyry had claimed in his *Philosophy from Oracles* that Jesus was a good man who had received elevation to a semi-divine status at death, according to Augustine (*City of God*, 19. 23). 'Arian' opponents of the Creed of Nicaea certainly did not deny that Christ was God (or that Paul held this view), but just denied that he was God in the same way as God the Father.

However, we have shown that in many places Christ has been called God by Paul too. Here too one may understand it. Certainly, if it was said in regard to Christ's calling him that Paul was not an apostle through human beings, and the phrase *but through Christ* was included, whence God is understood (the Father is also present in the Son[12]), one must understand that Christ is also God.[13] But since what God does, God does through Christ, as we have shown in many places, the text accordingly states *through Jesus Christ and God the Father*.

Who raised him from the dead clearly prevents anyone from saying 'how did you learn through Christ?' For Paul did not follow Christ, and Christ died. Since he said God raised up Christ from the dead, it was therefore the Christ raised up from the dead who taught me—and Christ was raised up by the power of God the Father. We have often explained what this Mystery[14] of the Son raised up from the dead means; often will we speak of it when occasion arises.

And all the brothers who are with me. I have already clarified the structure of this phrase above: *Paul, an apostle, and all the brothers who are with me*. What is added? *To the church[15] at Galatia.*

The custom has been maintained—there are things which we add in written form, a greeting, or some such thing:[16] *Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself*

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[12] 'The pre-Nicene origin of this formula to express the unity of the Father and the Son is documented in Athenagoras *leg*.102, 2 and Clement, *paed*. 1, 5; cf. also *Acta Thomae* 48' (Gori, CorPat, 413). See a similar confession in *Adv. Ar*. II 2 (CSEL 83/1, 171, 25–6; ET: Clark, 199) and Hadot's comments (SC 69, 900).

[13] The patristic commentators, mindful of the fourth-century Trinitarian disputes, generally treat the opening assertion of Paul's apostolate as a rhetorical syllogism, or enthymeme, an incomplete syllogism in which the premises are furnished but not the conclusion (see Aristotle, *Ars Rhet*. 1. 2. 8 (1356b); Loeb, 18). See my discussion of the polemical context (Ch. 5, Sect. B) and parallel exegeses to this verse on the part of other ancient commentators (Ch. 6).

[14] The *mysterium* of Christ is a technical term (hence my capitalization) in Victorinus' understanding of the events of salvation history which culminate in the Gentiles coming to participate in God's promises to Israel. He develops the thought most fully in his comments on Eph. 3: 4–12 (Gori, 43–50; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 75–80). The soteriological force of the concept is apparent in his use of the same term at the end of his comments here on 1: 3–5.

[15] Victorinus' VL text, like that of Ambrosiaster, has the singular 'church', instead of the plural presented by all the other commentators and by biblical manuscripts.

[16] *Servata consuetudine quae addimus aut salutem scripta aut aliquid tale*. Textual difficulties beset the sentence. Gori had previously printed it differently (CorPat, 186, 48–9), following a suggestion of Hadot ('A propos d' une récente édition', 135): *Servata consuetudine qua addimus aut salutem scripto aut aliquid tale*. The easier *qua*—adopted by Locher and by Gori in his earlier edition—derives from the third correcting hand of *O*; but as both *O* and *S* have the *quae*, I retain it. The reading *scripto* is from Sirmond's own correction, followed by Hadot and initially Gori. Reading this with the easier *qua*, Gori could offer a smooth translation: 'Following the practice of adding to the text of a letter a greeting or something

for our sins to liberate us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever (1: 3–5).

Let us recall what the apostle is doing in this letter. He is reprimanding the Galatians and trying to correct them, in order that they might have faith in Christ and look to him alone for hope, the hope of eternity, for the remission of sins, and for all things. He does this to prevent them from believing that the works of the Law, sabbath, or circumcision are advantageous for them. That is why he prays for *peace* and *grace from God* for them at the beginning of the letter, and then he has added *from Christ*, as all things are in Christ. He proves that all things are in Christ and through Christ, when he says *who gave himself for our sins to liberate us from the present evil age*. So by Christ's act of kindness, by his grace—from God the Father indeed, but by Christ's suffering—he liberates us *from the present evil age*. And we are being liberated through Christ, but it is by the power of God, of God—obviously—to whom belongs the glory for all eternity. Therefore, if God is eternal, God's glory also lasts for eternity. It is also by the will of God that Christ, enacting the Mystery, gave himself for our sins, according to God's will to liberate us all. Liberation is through Christ, in accordance with God's will. If it is through Christ, nothing further ought be sought; and those things which the Galatians are adding—Judaism, works of the Law, sabbath observance, circumcision—are worthless.

I marvel that you so quickly shifted away from the one who called you to grace, into another gospel (1: 6). The gospel Paul announces is sure: that Christ is the Son of God, *the power of God for salvation to all that believe, to the Greeks and to the Jews*[17]—and nothing besides! In fact, all hope for salvation and for the grace of God pertaining to us lies in faith pertaining to Christ, to the effect that we would believe he is the Son of God, that he suffered for our sake and rose again, from which we too might arise with the forgiveness of sins. This is the true gospel that Paul announces. Therefore, if anyone adds on something else—like Judaism, circumcision, sabbath observance, and other

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similar, Paul says . . . (CorPat, 187). Gori's CSEL edition keeps the more difficult readings (*quae* and *scripta*) which I ventured to translate above, understanding an ellipsis: *servata consuetudine: [sunt ea] quae addimus aut salutem scripta aut aliquid tale*.

[17] This previously unnoticed quotation of Rom. 1: 16 differs from an exact citation only in that the 'all who believe'—Greeks and Jews—are in the plural instead of the singular. The Latin versions rendered δύναμις with *virtus*, here as elsewhere (e.g. Gal. 3: 5, Eph. 1: 19, 1: 21, 3: 7, 3: 16, 3: 20; Phil. 3: 10). Most of Victorinus' usages of *virtus* in his Paul commentaries display this adaptation to 'Christian Latin' and simply mean 'power', in contrast to his use of *virtus* in his commentary on Cicero, where the classical sense predominates, e.g. 'Virtue has four parts: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance' (Halm, 156, 6).

things of this sort—he is sinning and is a stranger to the truth. Therefore, since the Galatians have maintained that Judaism is to be added on to the apostle's gospel, Paul accordingly says, *I marvel that you so quickly shifted*. In the first place, it is a sin to be *quickly shifted*. For when something is quickly shifted, one has no reason; nor when something is shifted does one have any good reason, if one shifts quickly and then shifts from one thing to another. Let us see from what: *away from the one who called you to grace*. Christ,[18] who suffered for the sake of us all, is certainly the one who called us to grace—if we believe in him.[19] There is no great difficulty in obtaining his grace, if we just follow him, believing that he accomplished these things by his Mystery and that he did it gratis, without labour or great works. Because this was accomplished for us by him, it is a great marvel to be shifted quickly from him and shifted *into another gospel*: that is, so we would believe this shift to be something good and advantageous for us (for this is what 'gospel' means[20]) and end up joining in with Judaism's teaching.[21] But the gospel is one and one only: to believe that Christ is the Son of God, that Christ by his passion, incarnation,[22] and resurrection paid for all sins, conquered death and banished corruption. This is the only gospel, which is why Paul adds *which is no other*.[23] The only gospel is that one we have just been discussing, for there is no other: salvation is not earned on the basis of works. The gospel—that is, our salvation—is not based on sabbath observance or circumcision.

Except that there are some people who are unsettling you and seeking to turn away the gospel of Christ (1: 7). He is saying, then, that this situation developed due to the activity[24] of certain people, though

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[18] Gori (CorPat, 413) notes that Victorinus takes Christ as the one calling, not God, as most moderns and Chrysostom hold. Paul as the caller is preferred by Hans Dieter Betz (*Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 48) but rejected by Martyn (*Galatians*, 108–9).

[19] The 'if-clause' here and in the following sentence is a consistent way Victorinus has of describing the interplay of divine grace and human response. See my discussion above (Ch. 5, Sect. C).

[20] *Evangelium* is a loan-word from the Greek *euaggelion*, so deeply a part of the Christian Latin vocabulary that Victorinus feels the need to alert his readers to its original meaning, 'good news'. He often alludes to the kerygmatic or proclamatory sense of the term, also of the cognate verb, *evangelizare*, at 1: 11.

[21] *uti sociemus Iudaismi disciplinam*. Victorinus recognizes that 'Judaism's teaching' is first and foremost a practical teaching; elsewhere he uses more specific terms, like *observatio* (just below and very frequently elsewhere) or *observantia* (on 1: 19).

[22] *adventu in carne*.

[23] This clause is numbered in the critical editions as part of the following verse, according to modern convention.

[24] *Dicit ergo quorundam opera fieri hoc non veritate*: I take *opera* as ablative singular, which solves the problem of the *hoc* expunged by Mai and Locher but retained by Gori (CorPat, 413).

without any basis in truth. Because they aim to unsettle you and become your teachers (as if you were insufficiently taught), they turn[25] the gospel of Christ into another—although there is no gospel except that of Christ! Really, that one they base on works or circumcision is not of Christ. Understood in a fleshly manner, those things are certainly not of Christ. If understood spiritually, however, so that the circumcision be of the heart and of all things that are in the flesh, and all things are understood spiritually[26]— those things, I'm saying, do belong to the gospel of Christ. But even further: those who go down to the level of works and to the things which are fleshly do not possess the gospel of Christ. So those who want you to observe, say, the sabbath, new moons,[27] circumcision, and others things which are done by works, and command you to do so—those people do not possess the gospel of Christ. This is the source of their aiming to turn you off from the gospel of Christ.[28] Further still: since you have believed in Christ and have believed that all things which are from Christ are to be hoped for in Christ, when they advocate some other thing, they are trying to unsettle you.

But even if we or an angel from heaven preach anything beyond what we preached to you, let that one be accursed (1: 8). He has drawn the necessary conclusion in a rather sharp and forceful manner: all are in error if they announce anything beyond the gospel of Christ. It is an error, even if it is we ourselves who add anything to what you have already believed. Still more: it would be an error if an angel, even an angel from heaven, would have preached differently to you—differently, clearly, beyond the gospel which we indeed preached to you. For he has said this: *anything beyond what we preached to you.* So if I preach differently, let me too, let an angel, even an angel from heaven, be *accursed*, if he announces—Paul says—anything differently from how we announced it the first time. This is what we explained above:[29] let him be rejected, be without recompense, and instead get punished for his evil-doings.

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[25] *convertunt evangelium Christi.* Thus Victorinus paraphrases the lemma (*et volunt avertere evangelium Christi*).

[26] This is Victorinus' hermeneutical key to affirming the truth of the Old Testament as divine revelation: rightly understood, the contents of the Jewish Law do not contradict the gospel of Christ, as he understands it. See discussion in Ch. 4, Sect. C, above.

[27] The Jewish observance of the new moon (see 1 Sam. 20: 24; Isa. 1: 14; Ezek. 46: 3) is mentioned not in Galatians but in Colossians (2: 16).

[28] Alternatively, 'convert you from the gospel of Christ' (*volunt vos convertere a Christi evangelio*).

[29] Probably in his missing commentary on 1 Cor., at 16: 22.

Just as we previously said (1: 9). It could seem that he had in earlier remarks[30] previously said some such thing: Accursed be those who proclaim the gospel differently! But the reason why he said *just as we previously said* was to add *and now again I say*, so that the phrase *just as we previously said and I now again* admonish be understood to concern the very thing he was just talking about. And what is that? What he just said above: *If anyone preach to you beyond what you received, let him be accursed.* That is, whether I myself proclaim and announce the gospel differently, or an angel, or anyone whosoever: let that one be accursed.

But Paul has produced a stronger reason why what he does is not done to please human beings, but to fulfil the Mystery which has been committed to him. Thus he adds: *Am I now pleasing human beings or God?* (1: 10) What I do, I do not do to please people, he states, but I act in the presence of God.[31] I should like to please God, so as to carry out what God has commanded.[32] The Greek has a different meaning: *Do I now ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἤ τὸν θεόν?*[33] This means, 'It is not human beings I am preaching, but God'. I do not want to make human beings the object of my persuasion, but rather God, Christ. So in this way too I am constrained and concerned to speak the truth, not now saying one thing and then another. Accordingly, he adds as follows*: I am not seeking to please human beings, am I?* What I do is not for the sake of human convenience, so as to please human beings; rather I do it that I might please God by rendering obedience and fulfilling God's orders. He puts it more strongly still in what he adds, saying *were I still pleasing human beings, I would not be a slave of Christ.* Pleasing human beings, as is disclosed in many circumstances, does not win the grace of God. If someone maintains that life is to be based on works, he is pleasing human beings, but he does not obtain[34] grace. So if I wanted to please human beings, he is

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[30] *superioribus*. Victorinus ends up rejecting the suggestion that Paul was referring to an earlier discussion with the Galatians in favour of the idea that the apostle is just reinforcing what was said in the previous verse. Gori has pointed out how both Ambrosiaster and Augustine adopt this exegesis (Gori, CorPat, 413).

[31] Victorinus paraphrases the rhetorical question with a declarative statement, much as he does just below when he offers his own translation of the Greek.

[32] The discomfort which modern commentaries register (e.g. Betz, *Galatians*, 54–5) with the notion of 'persuading God' seems also present in Victorinus' paraphrase of this verse. To avoid this implication, he varies the grammatical construction to achieve a shift in sense (*Non enim, inquit, hoc quod ago, ago propterea ut hominibus suadeam, sed suadeo ante deum*).

[33] Victorinus argues for a syntactically possible, though contextually improbable reading of the Greek, for no other reason, apparently, than to have one more verse testifying that Christ is God. See Appendix 2: 'Misreading of the Greek of Gal. 1: 10'.

[34] The word translated here as 'obtain' is the same as the verb translated as 'win' in the previous sentence (*mereri*). For discussion, see Ch. 5, Sect. C, above.

saying, I would not be a slave of Christ, I would not be redeemed by Christ. For this is what it means to be a slave of Christ: to have been redeemed through his suffering from the lords of the world and of the flesh,[35] so as to have Christ now as Lord and be his slave. Consequently, people who want to please human beings have not been redeemed by Christ; they serve the lords of the world, pleasing human beings all the while. But becoming a slave of Christ means having been redeemed from servitude into freedom. This is the meaning of *a slave of Christ*: being free from worldly slavery. The slave of Christ is redeemed, as we have said, and unacquainted with that servitude. This is perfect freedom.

For I make known to you the gospel which is preached by me: that it is not a gospel according to human custom (1: 11). Just as Paul stated above that he was an apostle *neither from nor through human beings*, now he has said also this: *that it is not according to human custom*.[36] The apostle is obviously bringing the news of the gospel—that is, he is preaching it. This means he is proclaiming that Christ is the Son of God, the Saviour of all, 'through whom all things were made'.[37] And I am not talking about a gospel *according to human custom*—that is, my gospel was not something received from a human being. This is the case because the Saviour is himself not a human being, as some people think. He is not a human being just because he was sent into one; rather he is God, taking on flesh in a Mystery for the conquering of the flesh, as has been said and discussed in many places.[38] Therefore, he says, I did not preach to you *according to human*

[35] Although the contrast between Christ the Lord (*dominus Christus*) and the 'lords of the world and the flesh' (*dominis mundi et carnis*) is clear, we cannot be certain whether Victorinus means these latter to be understood as spiritual (demonic) powers or earthly rulers. The latter meaning would have a poignant sense in relation to the residual loyalty of some of Rome's aristocracy to the old gods. Cutting off ties to the religion of the Roman elite may have meant for Victorinus the cutting of social ties to sources of patronage, thereby dispensing with the necessity of 'pleasing human beings'.

[36] Literally, 'according to a human being' (here, *secundum hominem*, translating κατὰ ἄνθρωπον). Victorinus takes the phrase to indicate both the gospel's content and its manner of transmission.

[37] *per quem omnia facta sunt*, a clause of the Nicene Creed: δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο (text in J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd edn. (New York: Longman, 1972), 215).

[38] Apropos of the same point at 1: 11, Victorinus speaks similarly of 'the Christ who was in the human being'—'Christ' meaning the Logos of God both before and after the Incarnation. Thus he is not denying Christ's humanity, but is intent upon establishing that his divinity is not compromised by his incarnation. Gori (CorPat, 413) points in this regard to *Adv. Ar.* I 14 as a passage where the humanity is unambiguously acknowledged: 'Christ is not only man but God in man' (CSEL 83/1, 74, 21–2; ET: Clark, 107). The various Christological statements found in the commentaries have been discussed by Karig, *Des Caius Marius Victorinus Kommentare*, 89–90.

custom.[39] Therefore *I make it known* to you, brothers—you who are going astray, you who are deferring to a human being, you who are being carried off by thinking in a fleshly way, by observing the sabbath, circumcision, and the rest: my gospel is not *according to human custom*—meaning that it would also have to do with a human being, that is, with flesh.[40] Rather, the gospel is in accord with a power of the soul, and thus with the other elements within the human being.[41] The entire Mystery has been carried out for this purpose: that we not form impressions, as some people do, *according to human custom*, by receiving all things in a fleshly way. At any rate, Paul has added what he would like to be understood by the phrase *that it is not according to human custom*:

For neither did I receive it from a human being, nor was I taught it; rather I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ (1: 12). So I have not preached *according to human custom*, because I did not *receive it from a human being*.[42] If it is one thing, then, to receive from a human being, to receive according to human custom will be something different. Likewise, if *I did not receive it from a human being means one thing, receiving the gospel not according to human custom* will mean something else. From this one may gather that *according to human custom* means that you would think corporeally, as this mode of thinking would obviously entail the line of argument that I did[43] receive the gospel from a human being. For if a human

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[39] If Christ were just a human being, a merely human presentation of the gospel—viz. one based on sense knowledge—would suffice.

[40] *evangelium meum non secundum hominem est, id est et de homine agatur, id est de carne*. 'Flesh', like the expression 'flesh and blood' of 1: 16 (see his remarks on that verse below), signifies the human being *qua* mortal.

[41] *sed secundum virtutem animae et sic cetera quae in homine sunt*. The gospel pertains to the spiritual—i.e. potentially immortal—nature of human beings, the realities of the inner person. How not, when the apostle elsewhere states that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God' (1 Cor. 15: 50)? The gospel, 'the power of salvation' (see his opening remark on 1: 6), is about the ontological transformation of the human person, the central aspect of Eastern Oxthodoxy's Paulinism (Ernst Benz, 'Das Paulus-Verständnis in der morgenländischen und abendländischen Kirche', *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, 3 (1951), 289–309, 301). Victorinus conceptualized this transformation along the lines of a Neoplatonic 'metaphysics of the soul', but it is none the less an integral element of his Christian faith.

[42] The direct object 'it' (the gospel) does not appear in the Latin, but is clearly to be supplied here. The entire paragraph is characterized by brevity and allusiveness; and I have had similarly to supply objects for Victorinus' verbs and to parts of the lemma under discussion to make sense of the passage. The 'extreme concision' that Courcelle ('Du nouveau', 127) found characteristic of Victorinus' style in the Trinitarian treatises is also present in the commentaries.

[43] Gori has rejected the manuscript reading *non* in this difficult passage on well-reasoned grounds (CorPat, 414).

being had transmitted these things to me, I would have received them according to human custom, so as to understand all things according to the flesh.[44] But in truth, what I preach is not to be received according to human custom, that is, not in a fleshly manner but spiritually, inasmuch as this is the point of the argument that *I did not receive [it from a human being]*. For if I received it from the Spirit, and if I have been taught by the Spirit, I ought to understand it spiritually; and this will be the meaning of *not according to human custom*. What next has the apostle added? *Rather* it was revealed to me by *Jesus Christ*, he says. Now, that he said the gospel was revealed entails a greater degree of credibility than if he said he had been taught it. Certainly human beings teach and assert things on rational grounds, as it were. A revelation, however, is a vision of the things themselves, which is clearly something greater. But who revealed it? Jesus Christ. Those who are already following Christ ought not, ought not take it in such a way so as to understand that Paul received a revelation from a human being because it was stated in the letter that Jesus Christ revealed it.[45] Even the Galatians had received Christ as both God and Son of God. The rest of what they add they received from a human source, whether from those who have persuaded them or from Moses himself who gave the Law. Indeed, Moses received it from God;[46] they, understanding little of its truth, conceive it all in a fleshly manner. Whence so much ill. Moses certainly did receive and transmit this Law; whereas the apostle said his gospel was indeed revealed to him, and he explains this.[47]

You have heard of my former involvement in Judaism: that I was immoderately persecuting the church of God and was intent on wiping it out; and I was progressing in Judaism abundantly,[48] above many contemporaries in my nation, being an emulator of the patriarchal

[44] An understanding of this sort (expressed either adverbially with *corporaliter* or by Paul's prepositional phrase *secundum carnem*) is what leads people into Christological error. Victorinus' remarks on Phil. 3: 19–20 mention those who 'know earthly things (*sapiunt terrena*), reckoning Christ to be a human being, to have been a human being and not to have been in the flesh but to have come with flesh, saying—just like Jews and certain heretics—that he is still to come' (Gori, 214, 3–5). Note the association here, typical of heresiology, of Jews with chiliast Christians based on a common hope for an earthly messiah and kingdom.

[45] So too Jerome: 'It is certainly not the human being Jesus Christ who revealed the gospel to Paul' (PL 26, 322A [346C]).

[46] A clear rejection of any Marcionite views on the Old Testament.

[47] The narrative thus serves to support the claim of authority for Paul's gospel, as he explained in his preface.

[48] As Souter noted, Victorinus punctuates the text differently from modern editors, taking 'abundantly' with this clause rather than the following one (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 19).

traditions (1: 13–14). The main point of his autobiographical narrative[49] is this: to teach that he learned the gospel neither from human beings nor through a human being, but from God and Jesus Christ. This fact helps make the case that the Galatians should not conceive it otherwise, should not think any additions were to be made to the gospel. The gospel Paul brought them is this: one must take up faith in Christ and believe[50] that Christ himself, and no one else, grants salvation; and that salvation is not granted based on works, circumcision, or sabbath observance. This is the gospel. Nothing else ought be received beyond what the Galatians had already received. To prove this easily, as I have said, he adds an autobiographical narrative:[51] what sort of man he was; how he was converted; what kinds of things he did after he began to believe in Christ, having converted from Judaism; and that he did not learn the entire gospel from human beings—if indeed he saw neither Peter nor any other of the apostles until he was already primed and instructed.

For in the first place, says Paul, I was a Jew—therefore, very opposed—and I did not learn anything from them.[52] This is obviously because he was opposed to what is said in the gospel about Christ, for this is what the gospel is.[53] So I was a Jew, doing a lot of things in opposition to the church; therefore, I learned nothing from Jews.[54] After I was converted, after God began to reveal his Son to me through his grace, he says, then I began to preach among the Gentiles. Next he shows that he did not delay his mission,[55] nor did he come to Jerusalem—eliminating any possibility he learned the gospel from the apostles there. *Rather I withdrew into Arabia*, he says, *from there I returned to Damascus and then after three years*

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[49] *Summa huius de se narrandi haec est.*

[50] Human agency is clearly implied here; i.e. believing is in our power. His comments on Eph. 6: 13 express this clearly: 'to have faith in Christ and to have full faith is no labour, no difficulty, the will of the soul is so compliant, so believing' (Gori, 87, 10–13). However, this belief is a response of the soul to a process initiated by God (see the discussion of justification by faith above, Ch. 5, Sect. C).

[51] *de se narrationem.* Similarly Jerome, probably from his Greek sources: 'This sort of narrative is most of all for the benefit of the Galatians' (PL 26, 323D [348C]).

[52] *neque ab ipsis didici*: Gori translates 'from the Jews', in line with the remark in the next sentence (*nihil ergo a Iudaeis didici*). I translate 'from them' to leave open the possibility that he is referring to Peter and the other apostles mentioned in the preceding sentence.

[53] Victorinus grasps well the kerygmatic nature of the gospel, i.e. that it is essentially proclamation.

[54] *a Iudaeis didici.* The 'Jews' in question do not seem to be Jewish believers in Christ, like the apostles mentioned above. Rather, his remarks on 1: 13b below indicate that he is thinking about Jewish sources (texts and textually based teaching) that in his view could lead one to understand that Jesus was the promised messiah.

[55] Literally, 'spare himself'.

I came to Jerusalem. See, he is already preaching and teaching Christ! So he did not learn these things from human beings. After a space of three years he did come to Jerusalem. It was then, therefore, that he saw Peter and stayed with him fifteen days. So when did he learn it, or when could he have learned it from Peter? Then I saw none of the apostles, he says, except for James, the Lord's brother. With this remark he shows clearly that he learned from no one, since he had been with Peter for only a few days and had seen only the Lord's brother, whereby he all the more affirmed that he was unable to learn anything from James. This follows from the fact that Paul has things in his gospel which James does not, as we will later teach. Next he says he went to parts of Syria and Cilicia. He adds that he was none the less already known to all the churches and to the Jews, because, although he had been a Jew, he too was now following and preaching the gospel. After these things, he tells how he came to Jerusalem fourteen years later.

From where, then, did he learn the things he preaches? *Neither from human beings nor through a human being . . . rather through a revelation. I explained to them* all—he says—*the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles.* Next he says, I also told the apostles even more about my gospel; they did not teach me. Here Paul explains to what extent he engaged in dissimulation that the gospel might prevail—if indeed he seems to have accepted, from necessity, a bit of Judaism in order that the truth of the gospel would continue. (In its own place we will teach what this involved.) Then Paul says that both he and Peter hold one gospel, but Peter was to preach to the Jews and he to the Gentiles. He says this gospel was given to him through a revelation, and that these responsibilities for the gospel were apportioned by God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who was working in both men. And Peter and John[56] confirmed that their knowledge of the gospel was identical to that of Paul and Barnabas; they agreed that the latter would preach to the Gentiles and they to the Jews.

Paul has included, however, the most significant example of his fidelity, of his knowledge, of his revelation, and of his own gospel. Paul recalls that Peter acted with integrity, he says, before certain men from James came. Then after they came, Peter changed; and it was this very thing Paul reprimanded, and he won Peter back. But Peter had changed, to the effect of not eating with Gentiles and availing himself of Jewish food. This change was reprimanded by him, Paul says, for the obvious reason that before the men from James had come, Peter had been living with Gentiles. It was afterwards, as if

[56] Victorinus slightly neglects to mention James, whom Paul named along with Peter and John as having given him and Barnabus the right hand of fellowship (2: 9).

Peter feared James's messengers, that he went and lived with Jews. James was evidently preaching Christ mixed with Judaism, which Paul here denies is to be done. So if this was already reprimanded, and, in the case of Peter—because he was carrying on in this way— condemned, overcome, and agreed upon, it is clear that since the Galatians have begun to do this, they too are to be corrected and changed. The reason is obvious: so that believing by faith in Christ,[57] they might be justified based on faith and not the works of the Law.

Up to this point the account concerns Paul himself.[58] Next there is an admonition, also a narrative, quite effective and relevant to what Paul is seeking to accomplish: to correct the Galatians lest they, following Judaism, not follow the gospel. The gospel is one and true: to have faith in Christ and to be justified by him, not on the basis of works of the Law. After these points, Paul gives other arguments that justification comes about based on Christ, not on the Law or on works. And the entire segment of the text, which I described above, goes up until the passage which begins thus: *But if seeking to be justified in Christ we too are found to be sinners ourselves, Christ is then made a minister of sin* and so on.[59] But now that we have said why it was taken up, let us return to the narrative about Paul's own person and role.[60]

For you have heard of my former involvement in Judaism. Lest he appear to be relating something new about himself, he says *you have heard* of my life (he called it *involvement*, meaning path of life,[61] a path I adhered to formerly when I was in Judaism), and you heard how I was carrying on: *that I was immoderately persecuting the church of God.* Not only was I a Jew, not only was I following the Law, he says, but further still: I was persecuting the church, intent on fighting against it. Therefore, I was the type of person who would have been persecuting the church; today, having converted from Judaism, I cannot persecute the church as I was doing. I cannot present myself, I am saying, as one who would follow both Judaism and the church.[62] At the same time, we find Paul saying what I men-

[57] Faith for Victorinus entails believing that Christ alone is the source of human salvation. On his marked Christocentrism, see Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 215–16.

[58] See my discussion of Victorinus' outine of Galatians in Ch. 4, Sect. A, above.

[59] Gal. 2: 17. Augustine makes the break in the same place when he cites these verses in *Ep.* 196, 2 (CSEL 57, 216–17).

[60] The modern editors, following O^3, have excised what appears to be a gloss of four words.

[61] Victorinus, like a grammarian explaining unusual locutions in Virgil or another standard of the Latin curriculum, clarifies the sense of 'involvement' (*conversatio*).

[62] That is, Paul's 'Jew to the Jews' approach (discussed in his comments on 2: 5) should not be taken to justify continuing Jewish practices on the part of Christians of whatever ethnic background.

tioned above: I neither received nor comprehended anything in Judaism relevant to the church.[63] So I was not taught anything by human beings. Therefore *I was intent on wiping out* the church. The phrase *I was intent on wiping out* does not say much. What has he added? *And I was progressing in Judaism very abundantly, above many contemporaries in my nation.* That is, although I had comrades of the same age, I outdid them all in Judaism on account of my zeal and dedication; and I was pressing on *very abundantly*—that is, forcefully and powerfully in Judaism as it was to be maintained. *Being an emulator of the patriarchal traditions*: likewise, I was explaining and passing on the patriarchal traditions, that is, the texts of Judaism and the Law. I was emulous (that is, an imitator), possessed of a certain competitiveness, I being the type who would have liked to have been the same kind of person as the patriarchs were, or as the traditions themselves have it.[64] Therefore, since this was the manner of my life, where did so great a conversion come from? He has included the answer:

But when it pleased the one who separated me (1: 15–16). The sentence structure goes: *But when it pleased* God *to reveal his Son to me*.[65] But what does *when it pleased* God mean? And what is the meaning of *who separated me from my mother's womb*? But what pleased God? *To reveal his Son to me*, that is, so I might get to know Christ. It happens first that Paul would get to know Christ and next that he would preach him. Thus he says that it pleased God, the God who made me be born. This is what *who separated me from my mother's womb* means; likewise, *God also called me through his grace*—that is, God summoned me to come to his grace and get to know God. For no one comes to know God without having been called.[66] So God called me; and it pleased God *to reveal his Son to*

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[63] The assumption here is that the Jewish Scriptures did contain material relevant to the church, but Saul was not able to grasp this then.

[64] *idem qui et vellem esse quales fuerunt vel patres vel ipsae traditiones*. Modern scholars, anticipated by Eusebius of Emesa (Staab, *Pauluskommentare*, 48, 16–18), largely concur that Paul's mention in 1: 14 of 'the patriarchal traditions' (τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων; the VL lacks the possessive pronoun) is a reference to the oral teachings of Jewish schools, Pharisaic in Paul's case (Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, 80). Victorinus' remark in the previous sentence about 'the texts of Judaism and the Law' (*lectiones Iudaismi et legis*) would suggest that he was aware of the existence (if only from Matt. 15) of extra-biblical Jewish oral or written traditions. So perhaps the 'traditions' which Saul the Pharisee, according to Victorinus, sought to emulate were oral traditions either about the patriarchs and their way of life or about the advice of Jewish sages concerning the way to live, contained e.g. in the Mishnah tractate *Pirke Aboth*.

[65] Again doing the work of the grammarian, Victorinus clarifies the sentence structure by removing the relative clause.

[66] Thus he maintains divine initiative in the order of salvation, despite his acceptance of the reality of human agency in our believing, as implied in his opening

me, that I might come to know Christ, he says, and thus from there, *that I might preach him among the Gentiles*. This came about after it pleased God; what followed? *Immediately I gave no rest*[67] *to flesh and blood*. Therefore what I preach was revealed to me, he says.[68] I performed every kind of fleshly labour. ('Fleshly' is what we mean when we say labour.) When Paul is busy bringing the news of divine things, things containing God's grace, it's no labour for his mind. The labour falls rather on flesh and blood: hustling to and fro, bearing the labour of the road, travelling through provinces and countries. *I gave no rest*, he says, *to flesh and blood*. *Flesh and blood*[69] mean the whole external person.

   Nor did I come to Jerusalem to my predecessors the apostles (1:17). Had he travelled to Jerusalem and lived with the elders a while, his predecessors in the gospel, it could have seemed from this that he learned about Christ from or through human beings. I did not go, he says, to the apostles, my predecessors; I did not learn from them. *But off I went to Arabia and then back to Damascus*. This is what he received in the revelation from God: that he would preach among the Gentiles.[70] *Off I went to Arabia*, he says. What a long trip! And when he returned to Damascus, how different he was!

   Then after three years I came to Jerusalem to see Peter (1:18). So he had already been preaching for three years among the Gentiles.

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remarks on 1:13 (see also his remarks on Phil. 3:14 (Gori, 210, 49–55)). He probably discussed the matter of the divine calling at great length in his commentary on Romans, at 8:29–30.

[67] Victorinus' comments reflect the mistranslation found here in the VL (*non adquievi*) which differs significantly from the sense of the Greek οὐ προσανεθέμην: 'I did not confer' (NRSV), as observed by later Latin exegetes. While Jerome points out the discrepancy between the Latin version and the Greek text (PL 26, 326C [351B]), Ambrosiaster, without alerting the reader, correctly paraphrases the Greek (CSEL 83/1, 14, 12–16).

[68] The understanding being that because Paul received the gospel as a commission from God, he wouldn't dare take a break.

[69] Victorinus understands this hendiadys (a rhetorical figure where one concept is expressed by two terms) correctly to indicate by metonymy human beings, a Hebrew idiom (Martyn, *Galatians*, 159). In this context the expression would refer to the other apostles, an exegesis known and rejected by Jerome (PL 26, 326C ff. [351B]), who prefers to take 'flesh and blood' to mean sinners, whom the apostle 'turned from flesh and blood to spirit' (*de carne et sanguine vertit in spiritum*)—an exegesis that smacks of Origen. Porphyry had apparently objected that it was improper to suppose that Paul would have consulted the apostles after having been taught by Christ in a revelation, 'lest he be instructed by flesh and blood' (ibid.). Victorinus' comments on 1:18–19 and 2:1–2 seem designed to ward off any such suggestion that Paul's consultations with the Jerusalem apostles would imply a lack of confidence in his own gospel.

[70] Victorinus understands Paul's conversion as a call to the Gentile mission. The mission to them is part of the 'Mystery' revealed to Paul (cf. his comments on Eph. 3:6–9; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 76–8).

What else could this mean, but that he had received a mission from God to preach to the Gentiles the Christ revealed to him? After three years, he says, I came to Jerusalem. Then he adds the reason: *to see Peter*. For if the foundation of the church, as is written in the gospel,[71] has been laid in Peter, to whom all things were revealed, Paul knew he ought to see Peter. Indeed, he says *to see Peter*, to see, so to speak, the person to whom so much authority was entrusted— not that I would learn something from him. What does Paul include next? *And I stayed with him for fifteen days*. So I just stayed with him, I just saw him. Would I have been able to learn so much knowledge about God from Peter in so little time?[72]

But I saw no one else of the apostles, except James the Lord's brother (1: 19). Paul, with a great teaching and great ingenuity, has also added this. First off, in that he spoke in this manner: Of the apostles, I saw no one else. For the Symmachians[73] make out James as a twelfth apostle; and those who add the observation of Judaism to our Lord Jesus Christ follow him, although the Symmachians also confess Jesus Christ differently. They say that he is Adam himself,[74]

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[71] See Matt. 16: 18.

[72] Jerome makes the same point (PL 26, 330A [354C]). Both exegetes share the odd sensibility that the extent of Paul's knowledge can be accounted for only by a divine revelation of such immensity that such a short (!) period of fifteen days would not suffice for it to have been transmitted humanly.

[73] The Symmachians, mentioned again in comments on 2: 12, were a Jewish-Christian sect (see above, Ch. 5, Sect. C, n. 173 and Ch. 6, nn. 47–8). Ambrosiaster refers to them in the preface to his Galatians commentary, stating that they 'take their origin from the Pharisees' and maintain the whole Law (CSEL 83/1, 3, 4–5). Augustine mentions that they are also called Nazoreans in *Contra Faustum* 19. 4 and *Contra Cresconium* 1. 31. 36 (all texts mentioning Symmachians are gathered in Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, 197, 232–9). Klijn and Reinink consider the Symmachians 'a product of the imagination of early Christian authors' (p. 68, see also pp. 50–4) and plausibly suggest that the name was a label applied to Jewish-Christian sectarians on account of their use of Symmachus' late-second-century CE translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. It is not improbable that Victorinus had read some Jewish-Christian works; after all, he refers to the legend of Simon Magus flying (found in the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, 2. 32; ET: ANF, 8, 235) in his commentary on Cicero (Halm, 249, 12): 'It is true that Simon flew, but it is none the less unbelievable' (*Verum est, quod Simon volavit, sed tamen incredible est*; discussed by Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 51–2).

[74] Victorinus' statement that these Jewish Christians believe Christ to be Adam fits with what Epiphanius claims about Ebionite and Elkesaite doctrine (Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, 33). Klijn and Reinink are inclined to follow the patristic sources which present Symmachus as an Ebionite, at any event a Jewish Christian (ibid. 52–4). However, Epiphanius states that he was a Samaritan convert to Judaism, was re-circumcised, and proceeded to translate the Scriptures (*De mensuris et ponderibus*, 16). For the possible identification of Symmachus with a certain Sûmkhôs ben Josef of rabbinic reports (a fervent disciple of the Tannaitic rabbi Méir), see Dominique Barthélemy, 'Qui est Symmaque?', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 36 (1974), 451–65.

and is the universal soul,[75] and other blasphemies of this sort. Therefore, Paul denies here that James is an apostle by saying: *But I saw no one else of the apostles*. Because when he said he saw no one else of the apostles *except James*, the reason was also included why he saw James: *the Lord's brother*, the one regarded as his brother according to the flesh.[76] Now, when he called him *his brother*, he denied that James is an apostle. This man too deserved an honorary visit. Yet Paul could not have learned anything from James (obviously, because he has a different conception of the gospel), nor on the other hand from Peter. He was unable to learn from either man, whether because he remained with Peter for just a few days, or because James is not an apostle and may also be in heresy.[77] But Paul did include that he also saw James. Therefore, I saw the new thing that James was bandying about and preaching; but because that blasphemy was known to me and rejected by me, so too it ought to be rejected by you, you Galatians! You people are unable to say, 'Paul, you would[78] deny that James is an apostle, and accordingly you reject the things which we practice, because you did not see James.' So this is why Paul included that he saw James too. That's no mistake. Which James? *The Lord's brother*, he says, the author of your way of thinking. Thus he had no sway over me. I did not follow him, but I knew his way of thinking. So since there is no big unknown to me, and James had no power to persuade me, consequently, it is in vain that you follow him.

But what I write to you, look—before God I am not lying! (1: 20). His credibility was to be established even by swearing an oath.[79] It

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[75] *dicunt enim eum ipsum Adam esse et esse animam generalem*. Gori offers an alternative translation (on the basis of the otherwise needless repetition of *esse*, I assume): 'indeed, they say that he is Adam himself and that there is a universal soul'.

[76] Like modern scholars, Victorinus maintains that James was Jesus' blood brother (his comment on 2: 12 states this without ambiguity). The later Latin commentators—Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 16, 3–16), Jerome (PL 26, 330A–331A [354–55C]), Augustine (*Exp. ad Gal*. 8. 5; CSEL 84, 63, 5–7), Pelagius (Souter, 311, 5–8)—all deny that James could have been Mary's son. This fits with the fact that, as David Hunter has noted, 'the doctrines of Mary's virginity *post partum* and *in partu* have only a fragile basis in the tradition of the first three centuries' ('Helvidius, Jovinian, and the Virginity of Mary in Late-Fourth Century Rome', *JECS* 1 (1993), 47–71, 69).

[77] Victorinus switches to the subjunctive to soften this last assertion (*vel quod Iacobus non apostolus est et in haeresi sit*), perhaps because he is unwilling to condemn James in the same manner as he does the Jewish Christians who honoured and followed him. Whether his unwillingness stems from uncertainty about making a historical judgement or from ecclesiastical piety is unclear.

[78] I follow the reading of both manuscripts which have the subjunctive *neges*, not the indicative *negas*, printed by Mai and followed by Locher and Gori.

[79] *Adserenda fides erat etiam iureiurando*: alternatively, 'The faith was to be established . . .'. Augustine agrees this was an oath and takes issue with those who

was for the benefit of those who had already strayed from faith. These things which I write you, he says, I am not lying about them; *look—before God*, I am relating all things just as they happened.

Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia (1: 21). This means he went to preach among the Gentiles.[80]

But I was an unknown face to the churches of Judea which are in Christ (1: 22). That is, the gospel which I had been spreading the news about was already known to practically all the churches of Judaea—the Judaea, however, which is in Christ, not the one in the Judaism of the Jews. In Judaea there are many churches in Christ,[81] and to all of them the gospel which Paul has about Christ was known.[82] I myself was none the less an unknown face. What is he demonstrating by all of this? That he had already made a persuasive case for his gospel to everybody, even though he wasn't there.

All they were hearing was that he who formerly persecuted us is now preaching faith (1: 23). He says this was a source of astonishment to everybody, which it certainly ought to be, and ought to be considered as an astonishing thing. Everybody, he says, was *hearing*—obviously—that I who had been such a Jew, *who formerly persecuted* Christians and their churches, that I was *now preaching faith*. This means that he was preaching so that everyone might have faith in Christ, the faith Paul was previously engaged in refuting, *which he was formerly intent on wiping out*. The result is that he would today preach faith, he who had formerly been intent on wiping it out— which was what Paul had been doing.

And they magnified God in me (1: 24). Paul is saying that everyone began to comprehend the power of God. They were saying God was magnificent because I had been converted and because I, who had been a deadly foe, was now an evangelist of the faith. In this way it came about that *they magnified God*—meaning, they said God was

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deny it: 'What could be holier than this swearing?' (*Exp. ad Gal.* 9, 1–3; CSEL 84, 63, 10).

[80] Victorinus evidently had no interest in supplying his readers with geographical data, which was one of the grammarian's tasks in commenting on classical literature.

[81] Similarly Augustine: 'One must note that not only in Jerusalem were there Jews who believed in Christ, nor were they so few that they were mingled in the churches of the Gentiles; rather there were so many that churches arose from them' (*Exp. ad Gal.* 10. 7; CSEL 84, 64, 4–6).

[82] Gori translates this last phrase (*evangelium, quod de Christo habet*) as if the meaning were 'the gospel which he had received from Christ' (CorPat, 209). But among the prepositions Victorinus uses to discuss how Paul received the gospel (*ab, per, secundum*), we never find *de*.

magnificent—*in me*, who with a sudden conversion of the mind would come to evangelize Christ as God,[83] Christ, whom previously I had been intent on wiping out! What could be so magnificent as when one's mind is overwhelmed and one comes to accept the opposing mind-set, to accept what you had earlier been intent on wiping out? If this is the case, then you too ought follow nothing else but what he who is a miracle for the Gentiles preaches to you, because he is preaching faith in Christ.[84]

Then after fourteen years I went up to Jerusalem again (2: 1). For once previously he had gone up to Jerusalem after a period of three years; now *after fourteen years*, he says, *I went up to Jerusalem again.* So it was through a revelation that I received the gospel announced by me to the Gentiles: I learned it *neither from human beings nor through a human being*.[85]

With Barnabas, also taking Titus along. Paul evidently regards these men as witnesses, through whom he can demonstrate that his gospel was given to him through a revelation, if indeed[86] Barnabas too went up with me. Paul took along Titus as well. The faith and the gospel of these men had been demonstrated to all.

Now, I went up in accordance with a revelation, and I explained to them the gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles (2: 2). With weighty arguments he seeks to demonstrate that the gospel given him in a revelation to proclaim among the Gentiles is from God. For *I went up* to Jerusalem, he says, *in accordance with a revelation* in order that I might also teach everyone, even the Jews themselves.[87] *I explained* to everyone, he says, *the gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles*. One understands from this account, based on the fact that no one contradicted or opposed him, that his is the one true gospel—if indeed *I explained* in Jerusalem, he says, this *gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles*. But the laity[88] could have been uninformed. What has he added?

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[83] *praedicerem deum Christum*. Compare his remarks on 1: 10.

[84] The *miraculum* of Paul's conversion creates additional authority for his gospel. In ancient rhetorical theory the speaker's person and way of life (ἦθος) are an important persuasive factor (Aristotle, *Ars rhet*. 1. 2 (1356a4 ff.) (Loeb, 16); Cicero, *De inv*. 1. 16. 22 (Loeb, 44)).

[85] He repeats the phrase from 1: 1 to indicate its application to Paul's narrative.

[86] Victorinus often makes use of an 'if indeed' (*si quidem*) clause to urge the reader to accept the text's implications as he has just stated them.

[87] He recognizes that this is a departure from Paul's normal *modus operandi* as the apostle to the Gentiles.

[88] *populus*. Although it is anachronistic to suppose a division in Paul's early mission between clergy and laity, by *populus* Victorinus wants to indicate those members of the churches who were not in leadership positions, as is clear from the context here.

But separately to those who were considered to be the mainstays:[89] that is, those through whom the gospel and the commandments of God were handed down. *To those separately*, he says, and to the other apostles as well, *I explained the gospel which I proclaim among the Gentiles*, so that if there were anything which the other apostles were handing down differently, they might correct it. Or perhaps if there were anything which I myself was handing down differently, they would set it right.[90] This then was the reason why I went up to Jerusalem. It was revealed to me that I should go up on this account: that the gospel might be more easily recognized as one: mine to preach among the Gentiles and theirs to preach among the Jews. Now he presented his gospel to them *separately* in order to remove[91] from their midst any feelings of reserve, in order that those who had come to know the mysteries might share them amongst themselves. Since there had been among all these people one way of thinking and one gospel, what is Paul seeking to persuade them? That they should add nothing new or include anything else in the gospel. From this one may gather that the Galatians are now sinning by following Judaism and its teaching, whether about circumcision, the sabbath, or all the rest.

Lest perchance I were running—or had run—in vain. That is, lest I were not preaching the gospel fully. For if I have preached anything less, I have run in vain, or am even now running in vain. If circumcision, the observance of the sabbath, and the rest are advantageous, salvation will not be based on the grace of Christ—and one is running in vain to preach the gospel.

But not even Titus, a Greek who was with me, was forced to be circumcised (2: 3). He explains the situation. Nothing at all was accomplished by the people who are pseudo-apostles. This means that nothing was accomplished by those who maintain that to Paul's gospel (that is, to the news about Christ the Son of God, in whom faith and sure salvation have been taken up), that to this gospel, I'm saying, must be added other things: being circumcised, observing the sabbath, and the rest. These practices, I'm saying, had no weight; no persuasive case was made to Titus who, Paul says, was clearly Greek, that is, pagan.[92] Despite this, no case was made to

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[89] *qui firmamenta videbantur esse.* Victorinus' VL contained here the unique variant addition *firmamenta* ('mainstays'), on which he offers no comment, perhaps aware that it is a deviation from the Greek.

[90] Attempting to do justice to the text, Victorinus undermines somewhat his own argument about the absolute and revealed authority of Paul's gospel. On the other hand, he wants to depict Paul as an equal, and no more, of the other apostles.

[91] Similarly Ambrosiaster (see the discussion of the exegetical parallels in Ch.6, *ad loc.*).

[92] *paganus.* Victorinus 'appears to be one of the first writers to use this word in the sense "pagan" ' (Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 35).

him, nor even was he *forced to be circumcised*—that is, not even they had the audacity to force him. Thus an agreement with Paul on the gospel was reached by everyone belonging to the church at Jerusalem. Whence the Galatians are sinning by maintaining that some new thing is to be added to the gospel.

But on account of stealthily introduced false brothers, who sneaked in to spy on our freedom, which we have in Christ, in order to drive us back into servitude, for an hour we submitted in subjection (2: 4–5). Some read the last phrase as follows: *not even for an hour did we submit in subjection.*[93] The sense fits with the previous verse: that *not even Titus*, a Greek, was *forced to be circumcised*; nor indeed did we submit in subjection, even for an hour—that is, as we were accustomed to submit in some matters. Still, seeing that in quite a few codices, both Latin and Greek, the verse runs *for an hour we submitted in subjection* (meaning that we did things their way although we had no intention of always following that path), one can in many ways prove that it ought to be read thus: *for an hour we submitted in subjection*. First, because Paul really did submit: for in fact he also[94] circumcised Timothy *on account of the Jews,* as it says in the Acts of the Apostles.[95] So the apostle was under no pressure to lie.[96] Second, if there had been any need to deny the deed absolutely, who would say 'not even for an hour'?[97] And surely, if he

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[93] The textual witnesses are most thoroughly discussed in Zahn's commentary (Excursus I, pp. 287–96), though his agreement with Victorinus' acceptance of the positive form of 2: 5 is not as strongly supported by the manuscript evidence as the former claims (the only Greek witness to that effect is D*), as pointed out by Mussner (*Der Galaterbrief*, 110) who is representative of modern scholarship (and the other ancient commentators) in preferring the negative reading. For discussion in English of the textual variants, see Bruce, *Galatians,* 113–15.

[94] *nam et Timotheum circumcidit*. The phrase may suggest that Victorinus believes Titus to have been among those whom Paul circumcised. Apart from the ambiguous *et*, his comments simply insist that Titus was not compelled, perhaps leaving to the readers' imagination whether circumcision took place. Souter maintains that Victorinus 'takes neither side on the question', and attributes the same position to Augustine (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 24, 192).

[95] Cf. Acts 16: 3. It would merit a special study to see how the patristic reception of Paul was affected by the portrait of the apostle in Acts and in the Deutero-Pauline letters.

[96] Victorinus' emphasis on the truthfulness of the apostle anticipates Augustine's position in his discussion with Jerome about Gal. 2: 14 ff. (see my discussion above, Ch. 6, *ad loc*.).

[97] His logic is that since the Scriptures openly record that Paul circumcised Timothy, it cannot have been an absolutely prohibited action. Thus if, based on Acts, 'submitting for an hour' was an acceptable thing, Victorinus refuses to accept a reading of Gal. 2: 5 that would imply such a temporary act of submission to be inadmissible. He presupposes, of course, that Acts and the epistles cannot contradict; in this way of reasoning Victorinus has unconsciously followed the harmonizing line of thought which probably led to the suppression of the 'not' in Gal. 2: 4 in the early Western textual tradition (for discussion, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 197).

opposed Peter, what would the meaning here be of 'not even for an hour did we submit'? Likewise, if it was said above that *not even Titus, a Greek who was with me, was forced to be circumcised*, Paul did not submit in all matters, nor always or even very much. In the end,[98] he did so on account of the stealthily introduced brothers, who were combining Judaism with Christianity. Hence it said *on account of the Jews*.[99] Anyway, I've always made his policy clear: on some occasions Paul submitted, even when it came to matters of the truth. For this is the meaning of his saying *as a Jew that I might win over the Jews*,[100] and so on. At this time, therefore, we submitted[101] *on account of stealthily introduced false brothers* (since there are many pseudo-apostles whom he calls *false brothers*[102]): certain men began to come around and to sneak in by their persuasions, and so *to spy on the freedom* of the apostles' speech—that is, they were wanting to get in among us. Can they be true apostles who belong only to Christ? Or were they making

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[98] *postremo*. It is unclear whether Victorinus is referring here to Paul's submission in the case of Timothy, as mentioned above, or whether he thinks that Titus too came under the knife. The fact that Victorinus does not insist that the latter remained uncircumcised suggests that our exegete concluded (with Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 5. 3; ET: ANF, 3, 433) that Paul circumcised Titus, though without compulsion. Bruce (*Galatians*, 111–12) acknowledges that even with the negative MS reading of 2: 5 ('not even for an hour') the phrasing of v. 3 is 'formally ambiguous', and the sense has to be determined in relation to vv. 4–5. Neither Bruce (p. 114) nor Zahn (pp. 293–4) read Tertullian as maintaining that Paul circumcised Titus; Zahn (ibid.) also does not believe that Victorinus held this opinion, against Overbeck (*Über die Auffassung des Streits*, 41). Kieffer (*Foi et justification*, 85, 90–3) argues that both Tertullian and Victorinus thought that Titus was circumcised. Of the other ancient Latin commentators, Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 19, 15–20) holds Titus not to have been circumcised; likewise Jerome (PL 26, 333C–334D [358D–359D]), who polemicizes against those who held Victorinus' view, later represented by Pelagius (Souter, 312, 12). Augustine thinks that Titus remained intact, although he insists that 'the apostle would none the less have easily allowed even this man to be circumcised' (*Exp. ad Gal.* 11. 1; CSEL 84, 65, 19), perhaps aware of Victorinus' arguments on this score.

[99] In the passage from Acts just quoted (16: 3).

[100] Cf. 1 Cor. 9: 20, a verse he alludes to again in his comments on 2: 13.

[101] The words 'we submitted' do not appear in the Latin. I have assumed an ellipsis here of the element of the verse in question, just as I have a few sentences above: 'In the end, [he did so] on account of stealthily introduced brothers.' The very difficult passage that follows is Victorinus' attempt to reconstruct the scenario in response to which Paul and the other apostles submitted to the demands of the *stealthily introduced false brothers*.

[102] 2 Cor 11: 13 mentions 'pseudo-apostles'; 11: 26 mentions 'false brothers'. Although the Greek prefix of both nouns was the same (ψευδο-), the VL translations of the epistles always rendered the former expression as *pseudoapostoli* and the latter as *ficti fratres*. Victorinus' parenthetical remark here clarifies that they were not really 'brothers' but 'false apostles', and that this is a regular feature of Paul's speech.

an attack on *the freedom which we have in Christ*?[103] Therefore, because we saw their plan to lead us over *into servitude*, for an hour we did indeed *submit in subjection*, meaning that for a brief period we performed some actions. This is not permitted to everyone; rather, we must understand that it is permitted to one who is advanced and mature in faith, the kind of person who for the sake of Christ would do some things which are outside the rule. It is permitted provided that what such a believer does serves the purpose of the Law—that is, results in souls being liberated.[104] This has in fact been demonstrated in many places; and we will show that this was done by Paul, to the effect that he submitted to a rule that was not true in order to be able, from that standpoint, to straighten out and lead many people over to the true rule. This is the source of Paul's concessions regarding second marriages, marriage itself, and food as well, every food, even meat sacrificed to idols.[105] Although he would like to prohibit these, in his trusting attitude he none the less concedes their use to people with solid faith. For as Christ lives in the mind and is nourished through the faith present among us,[106] there is no peril in submitting for a time to a rule that is not true, as long as we do it for this reason: that we be able, by that initial fellowship, to lead them to the true rule. Consequently, Paul included *we submitted in subjection*, but only *for an hour that the truth of the gospel might remain with you*, with you who were instructed by us, you Galatians. We did not submit so that you too would do what we did, but so that Paul could satisfy their requirements and lead them over to the true rule, in order that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.

But by the agency of those who seem to be something—what sort they ever may have been makes no difference to me, God does not regard the public face of a person (2: 6).[107] The words *by the agency of those* were

set down in the following manner:[108] as if the Galatians would be something through the doings of those who seemed to be something, or by the agency of those who came forth from the pseudo-apostles themselves. The implication here is that the Galatians would be changed and would now follow the gospel. Any people, therefore, who now seem to be something and have arisen by their agency[109] in such a way that they were formerly such-and-such but are now intact (for this is what *to be something* means), *what sort* they *may have been* earlier—this is what *ever* means here—*makes no difference to me*, he says. What sort someone is at present is sufficient for me; I do not care what sort they were earlier. Paul has added the reason as well: *God does not regard the public face of a person*; rather, God regards the person's mind-set, the person's faith. Whether one is a Greek or a Jew, whether one has been something of importance, God does not regard this. Rather, God regards what one is, and whether one has taken up faith and the gospel. For in an inquiry after the truth, God does not admit consideration of social position;[110] nor did I have regard for those who were said to be pillars. This, therefore, is what he says, as it comes up mid-sentence:[111] *for those who are considered to be something brought nothing to me*. This means

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[108] Because the prepositional phrase which opens this sentence is uncompleted (see preceding note), Victorinus attempts to fill in what he thinks Paul's point may have been. The sentence is very difficult due to the subject of the main verb being unstated (*quasi ex his qui videntur esse aliquid . . . tamen aliquid essent*), which I take to be the Galatians. Victorinus' reconstruction of the situtation at Galatia is that false apostles, or those who represent their point of view, came to the Galatians and presented the demands of their 'gospel' as the will of the church at Jerusalem. Awed by these credentials, the Galatians jumped at the chance to really 'be something' by following what they thought to be a more authoritative version of the gospel (the imperfect subjunctives are counterfactual and convey the sense that their wishes were in vain). Victorinus sees Paul's point here being that the connections of these interlopers are irrelevant so far as he and God are concerned.

[109] i.e., from the pseudo-apostles whom Victorinus probably associated with the Christian proponents of circumcision variously mentioned in Acts 15: 1–5.

[110] *Non enim in praeiudicio veritatis acceptat deus personam.* The translation is somewhat tentative, due to the ambiguity of the term *praeiudicium*, which I have taken in its sense of a preliminary inquiry of a legal case. Gori may well be correct in translating the phrase *in praeiudicio veritatis* as 'with prejudice to the truth' (CorPat, 215), such that the sentence should read: 'For God does not, with prejudice to the truth, admit consideration of social position.'

[111] *Hoc est ergo quod ait, ut in media fieri.* This final phrase I take to be Victorinus' indication to the reader that after the parenthesis Paul begins a new a new grammatical construction that picks up *in media*, i.e. in midstream of the earlier, abandoned construction. Gori sees it as reference to content, not form, taking this to be a final clause with *ut* plus the infinitive ('Recuperi lessicali e semantici nei Commentarii in Apostolum di Mario Vittorino', *Orpheus* NS, 3 (1982), 103–9, 104 n. 9); he translates it as 'Therefore, following a middle path, he has said . . .' (CorPat, 215).

that they taught me nothing, they added nothing, they passed on nothing; rather, they gave their approval to my gospel. So too, nothing ought to be added by you to the gospel which I declared to you.

Rather more to the contrary, because they had seen that the gospel of the uncircumcision was entrusted to me just as the gospel of the circumcision was to Peter ([for][112] *the one who worked for Peter in his apostleship of the circumcision worked for me among the Gentiles), Peter, [James],*[113] *and John, who were deemed to be pillars, gave me their right hands, having recognized the grace which was given to me* (2: 7–9). The order of the verse: *Rather more to the contrary*, the chief men Peter, John, and James, who were deemed to be pillars, *gave me their right hands*. This means they bestowed their consent, because they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision had been entrusted to me—that is, had been entrusted to me to spread throughout the Gentile world in the same way that the gospel of the circumcision had been entrusted to Peter to preach throughout the Jewish communities. Now, the reason it was entrusted to Paul for the Gentiles has been included: *For the one who worked for Peter in his apostleship of the circumcision worked for me among the Gentiles*. That is, the God who worked it out that Peter would preach to the Jews is one and the same God who worked it out for me that I would preach to the Gentiles. With the recognition of the grace granted me—that I also have been made an apostle, in equal fashion, by the grace of God, for the Gentile world—compelled then by this grace, Peter, James, and John (these men, says Paul, explaining who and what sort of men they were: *who were deemed to be pillars*, meaning those who uphold the church as pillars hold up the roof and the rest), so men of this sort, or such a number of them, gave me their right hands. This means that they joined together in friendship, peace, and resolve; they declared they had one gospel. This having been established, you Galatians are therefore sinning. You are not following my

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[112] 'For' (*enim*) appears where Victorinus re-quotes the lemma just below. As it also occurs in Ambrosiaster's version of the VL, it should probably be restored to Victorinus' text.

[113] I have restored this name to the text here, since Victorinus' inclusion of James as a pillar along with Peter and John—both in the sentence immediately following the lemma, twice later in the paragraph where he gives the names in what was the order found in the VL text, and then once more on 2: 10 in another order—strongly suggests that his VL text contained this name. A scribe could easily have omitted 'James' (*Iacobus*) by homoioarcton or homoioteleuton with *Ioannes*. The VL's reading *Petrus* instead of *Cephas* (as the Vulgate and the Greek MSS have it) and its position in first place (instead of *Iacobus*) are a 'Western corruption' (Burton, *Galatians*, 95) found in the commentators using the Old Latin (Ambrosiaster, Augustine, Budapest Anonymous, and Pelagius). The restoration is so obvious that the failure of the critical editions or Souter to do so is peculiar.

gospel; and as you are busy adding what has not been approved by anyone, you are not following the gospel of Peter, James,[114] and John, who are the pillars of the church. Paul drives home this point throughout the whole narrative: the Galatians are sinning by adding the observance of the Jewish Law, sabbath, and circumcision to faith in Christ.

To Barnabas as well they gave the hand of fellowship. Not only to me did they give their right hands of fellowship but also to Barnabas, a fellow-worker with me. Now, Paul has included this addition lest it seem that the mission to the Gentiles had been entrusted only to him. Paul's gospel is demonstrated to be true, however, once it has been demonstrated that fellowship through their right hands was given to Paul's associate *Barnabas as well* by those who carried on the apostleship in Jerusalem and brought the news of the gospel to the Jews. From this he demonstrates that there is one gospel among all the apostles and that the Galatians are going astray.

So that we would preach among the Gentiles but they among the circumcision. They gave their right hands towards this end, bestowing their consent upon both me and Barnabas in regard to the gospel, *so that we would preach among the Gentiles but they would preach* the gospel among the Jews, which is what *among the circumcision* means.

Provided that we would be mindful of the poor (2: 10). Along these lines they would be admonishing and correcting, if there were something requiring correction—if indeed they included here what they thought was to be added.[115] What, however, is the meaning of this

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[114] That James's gospel is said to be identical with the gospel of Peter and John could be taken to indicate that Victorinus believed that this 'pillar' James was James Zebedee, the brother of John, and not James the Lord's brother, whose 'gospel' Victorinus asserted was heretical in his comments on 1: 19. (In fact, Paul could not, for reasons of chronology, have meant James Zebedee, who was executed by Herod Agrippa (Acts 12: 2) in 43 or 44 CE (Bruce, *Galatians*, 121).) On the other hand, Victorinus' initial summary (in his comments on 1: 13–14 n. 56) of the narrative section mentions only Peter and John as having confirmed their agreement with Paul and Barnabas, which would suggest, to the contrary, that he did indeed think the James mentioned at 2: 9 was the Lord's brother. But his failure to distinguish the James of 2: 9 and 2: 12 from James the brother of Lord (discussed in his comment on 1: 19) would seem to indicate that the same figure is meant. Perhaps in this passage Victorinus can include James as having the same gospel as Peter and John based on Acts 15: 13 ff., where James opposes those who demand circumcision for believing Gentiles. Both Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 24, 15–18) and Augustine (*Exp. ad Gal.* 13. 4; CSEL 84, 67, 26 ff.) avoid the difficulty by identifying the James of this verse with James Zebedee, taking all three figures to be those present at the Transfiguration.

[115] Again we see the 'if indeed' (*si quidem*) argument Victorinus favours for bringing out the implication of the text. Since the admonition to 'remember the poor' was made, we can conclude that the pillars found nothing lacking in Paul's gospel, or else it would have been included here as well.

that we would be mindful of the poor? In every letter of his, Paul is driving at this: it is not according [to works that we are justified but according to][116] faith. Accordingly, since Paul and Barnabas discussed these issues with John, Peter, and James, the gospel was accepted and confirmed in the same form as Paul was transmitting it. Just on this disputed point—that works are not accepted for salvation—did they not gladly hearken to Paul; however, they admonished only to *be mindful of the poor*. Thus they came to agree even on this matter: that the hope of salvation[117] is not to be found in our performing works for the poor. But just what are they admonishing Paul and Barnabas to do? *That we would be mindful of the poor.* Not that we should expend all our efforts on this, but that we would provide for those who do not have what is within our means. They admonished only that we should be mindful of the poor, not that we should put our concern, our worries, and all our strength into this matter, as if holding on to our salvation depended upon it. Thus Paul was scarcely corrected in the matter, but he was none the less admonished. And he does confess to being admonished that *we would be mindful* of the poor, he says; not that we would get on with it, but that we would keep it in mind. This means something less than dedicating our activity to the project and focusing exclusively on its completion.[118]

Since I too was concerned to do just that. He included something further. Besides the gospel which he was preaching, he had a concern also about this: that he would be mindful for the situation of the poor and take responsibility for it as far as he could. Indeed, no one is really poor, provided he looks forward to the wealth of his salvation while preserving the faith and believing in God. For our present

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[116] Gori has added the phrase *operas iustificemur, sed secundum*, which was arguably omitted by homoioteleuton in the transmission of the text ('Per il testo dei *Commentarii in Apostolum* di Mario Vittorino', *Rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica*, 104 (1976), 149–62, 156).

[117] Augustine's comments on this verse contain the same phrase from 1 Thess. 5: 8 (*spes salutis*), as scholars have noted (see above, Ch. 6, *ad loc.*).

[118] *quod est minus quam in hoc operam ponere et hoc solum complere. Contra* scholars who have maintained that Victorinus regarded works of charity as unnecessary— Ernst Benz considered him to have a 'quietistic' conception of faith (*Marius Victorinus und die Entwicklung der abendländischen Willensmetaphysik* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932), 19), rightly criticized by Erdt (*Marius Victorinus Afer*, 157–8)— Victorinus' comments on 2: 10 reveal that he considered such works obligatory, not only for the apostle but also for Christians in general. Compared with Jerome's more historically correct reading, for whom the 'poor' here are the Jewish believers of Acts 2: 44–5 (PL 26, 337C–D [362C–D]), Victorinus' exegesis is more actualizing; i.e. it intends to speak to contemporary Christians and advise them to be charitable but not hope for salvation from their activities in this or any other area. See his remarks on the next part of the lemma to this verse, as well as his comments on 3: 10, which clarify his view that works of charity are obligatory for Christians.

means of nourishment is slight though sufficient, the sort that comes at no great cost to the one providing or receiving it.[119]

   But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he had been reprimanded (2: 11). Not only was my gospel approved, says Paul, on the part of the apostles who were in Jerusalem; not only was I charged to be mindful of the poor (a light, albeit necessary obligation that we fulfilled,[120] something I was very concerned to do), but also I did not keep quiet about Peter's sin, he says. In this, Paul shows his freedom and boldness concerning his gospel—if indeed he reprimanded something being done in a contrary fashion by Peter. There is also the point that Peter, having been reprimanded, would in turn more readily burst out to reprimand Paul.[121] If there were any fault in me, if I were not carrying on properly with the gospel, Peter would uncover the fact and, having suffered a reproach himself, not spare me.[122] When Peter came to Antioch, says Paul, I did not address him at church and among the congregation, rather *I opposed him to his face*—that is, I spoke out against him publicly. Where did Paul get this confidence? Paul alone did not reprimand him; rather, after Peter had been reprimanded by everyone, Paul criticized and accused him, *because he had been reprimanded.* In the judgement of the congregation Peter sinned and was therefore accused.[123] And if there were some sin in me, the congregation would in an equal manner be reprimanding me just as they did him.

   [119] As Rome was accustomed to the grain dole, Victorinus assumes that this form of welfare is no great hardship for those who provide it, but is also a small enough matter not to burden with a heavy sense of obligation those on the receiving end. For the significant shift between forms of pagan 'welfare' (directed solely toward *cives*) and the efforts spearheaded by Christian bishops which brought the truly impoverished class into view, see the recent work of Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (London and Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2002).
   [120] This suggests that Victorinus understood the request to 'be mindful of the poor' (2: 10) to refer to Paul's collection for the church in Jerusalem mentioned frequently in Romans and the Corinthian correspondence.
   [121] Origen noted Peter's previous proclivity for hasty speech; thus he regarded his silence in the face of Paul's rebuke here as an indication that Peter had made progress in self-mastery. My attention to these important mentions of this passage in Origen's *Commentary on John* (32. 63) and *Contra Celsum* (2. 1) was drawn by Cocchini, 'Da Origene a Theodoreto', 297–300. See my discussion above, Ch. 6, *ad loc.*
   [122] Victorinus assumes that the leaders of the early Christian community were willing to confront conflict and exercise mutual criticism and correction. No one is depicted as infallible here.
   [123] Victorinus' frank avowal of Peter's sin appears radical by comparison with Jerome, who maintained that this scene in Antioch was only *simulata contentio*, a fake fight (PL 26, 340C [365B]). Jerome demanded that Christian exegetes find a meaning for the passage 'whereby neither Peter is shown to have sinned nor Paul to have importunately (*procaciter*) accused his senior' (PL 26, 342A [367B]).

*For before certain people from James came, Peter was eating with
Gentiles; but once they came, Peter withdrew, fearing those who were of
the circumcision. And the other Jews also went along with him, with the
result that even Barnabas went along with their pretence* (2: 12–13).
Paul forthrightly explains what sort of sin it was Peter had commit-
ted. At this point, perhaps, he could have omitted telling what the
sin was he claims to have reprimanded in Peter. It was sufficient that
Peter had been set straight by the congregation's reprimand and by
Paul's public accusation. But because it is beneficial and really
necessary for the letter, he therefore relates the story in order to
drive two points home. First, that no fault was found with Paul's
own gospel; and that although Paul reprimanded Peter, he heard
nothing in the way of a reprimand from Peter. Now, secondly, there
is that matter which I said was really necessary. Because the Gal-
atians, disregarding the gospel and even the rule of the gospel,[124]
were supposing that additions were to be made to their way of life, to
the effect that they should observe the sabbath and circumcision and
live just like Jews. Because the Galatians were doing this, the letter
was written to them. Whence the point is well made that the very
thing reprimanded in Peter by Paul was what the congregation
reprimanded as well. From there it follows that the Galatians too
are sinning.

Now, Paul has included in the narrative how Peter allowed this, or
what guilt he incurred. For earlier, he says, *before certain people from
James came, Peter was eating with Gentiles,* holding fast to the full
gospel and its rule: that the gospel about Christ be preached equally
to Jews and Gentiles; and that the food laws of the Jews not be
observed but one live simply, according to the manner of the Gen-
tiles. Peter was doing this earlier, Paul says, before there came
certain people from James. For the brother of the Lord, James,
who is the progenitor of the Symmachians,[125] was the first at

Victorinus' answer to the implicit dilemma set by Paul's occasional willingness to
make concessions was that Peter's conduct in this case endangered the Gentiles'
salvation and so was indeed sinful. Victorinus' insistence on the congregation's
prior rebuke of Peter (a marvellous quasi-egalitarian conception of congregational
power, perhaps influenced by the mention of a 'rebuke of the majority' in 2 Cor. 2:
6) may have been intended as an answer to Porphyry's criticism (further on this
point in my discussion of Gal. 2: 11–14 in Ch. 6 above).

[124] It is clear from other comments (see on 2: 4–5) that the 'rule of the gospel'
(*regula evangelii*) means the Christian way of life which does not adhere to 'works of
the Law'.

[125] On the Symmachians, see n. 73 above. Whether or not Victorinus is right in
linking this group with James, he is certainly correct in evaluating the importance
James held for various forms of Jewish Christianity. Consider his role in the
Pseudo-Clementine literature (Georg Strecker, 'Judenchristentum', *TRE* xvii.
314–25). Martin Hengel shows that we should not underestimate the significance

Jerusalem to maintain that this was to be taken upon himself: both to preach Christ and to live like the Jews, doing all the things which the Law of the Jews teaches—meaning the things which the Jews understood were to be observed for themselves.[126] Therefore, since certain people from James had come to Peter, Peter was intimidated, Paul says, and he fearfully withdrew so as not to eat with Gentiles. But this Paul reprimanded, as previously Peter *was eating with Gentiles*, and then he withdrew, *fearing those who were of the circumcision*— meaning the people who came from James. Yet what Peter did was a small thing. Where did the major sin come in? Others were also going along with him: *And the other Jews also went along with him.* Let us take *Jews* here in such wise to indicate the Jews who had none the less already accepted Christ, that those people went along in accepting both Christ and Jewish teaching and observance. For unless we take this to be the sense, what will *they went along* mean, if those people had continued to live in the traditional manner according to the Jewish teaching? Rather, the passage is talking about the Jews who had already received the gospel by believing in Christ; and how Peter himself, although he had been eating with Gentiles, later withdrew, fearing those who came from James— surely, men from the circumcision whom Peter feared. This was how the other Jews as well went along with him, so as to live no longer with the Gentiles but with the circumcision. This means that those who had also been Jews beforehand went off and lived with Jews.

With the result that even Barnabas went along with their pretence. Thus, once the Gentiles had been sent off, they dishonestly pretended to live only with Jews, says Paul, *with the result that Barnabas went along* with them. It was stated above that Barnabas was Paul's fellow-worker and held to the full gospel. None the less, he went along with those people and their pretence. So what do we understand *with their pretence* to mean? Could it be that Barnabas, the other Jews, and even Peter had really gone over to living life according to Jewish teaching? Or was it rather that for a while they

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of James in early Christianity ('Jakobus der Herrenbruder-der ersten Papst?', in E. Gräaer and O. Merk (eds.), *Glaube und Eschatologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 71–104). A recent, full treatment of James is John Painter, *Just James* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1997).

[126] This is Victorinus' version of the anti-Jewish commonplace, based on 2 Cor. 3: 14–16 that the Jews do not understand their own Scriptures (cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum* 5. 60 (ET: Chadwick, 310); Cyprian, *Ad Quir.* 1. 4). For Victorinus, the 'veil' is done away with by a spiritual understanding of the Scripture, which was also Origen's solution to the problem (see *De Prin.* 1. 1. 2; ET: Butterworth, 8).

pretended to do so on account of those present?[127] Was this the reason that *even Barnabas*—Paul says—went along with their pretence? This is how it must be taken. For neither Peter nor any of the others had gone over to the Jewish teaching, but they did go along with it for a while, as indeed from time to time pretended agreement was deemed acceptable. Even so, where in this were Peter and the others sinning? Because they put on this show of going along with them, though not in order to draw in those Jews, which Paul himself had done. He even boasts of having done so in order to get along with the Jews, although he did this to win them over.[128] But because Peter also put on a pretence, he none the less sinned in so doing, because *Peter withdrew, fearing those who were of the circumcision.* Therefore, because Peter put on the pretence from fear, and from fear held himself aloof from the Gentiles, and because Barnabas too went along with that pretence, for that reason, says Paul, I openly opposed him and accused Peter of having made a pretence in this matter from fear. Next Paul follows up the point in this way:

But because I had seen that they were not proceeding straightforwardly in the truth of the gospel (2: 14). Indeed, they had been holding to the gospel, holding it fully, and they understood that life was not to be led the way those of the circumcision live. But since they were engaged in a pretence, they were therefore interpreting the gospel badly, getting badly off track on the way to the truth of the gospel. So because I saw this, *I spoke to Peter in the presence of everyone*—which is what *I opposed him to his face* means. I spoke openly and said in the presence of everyone, *If you, though a Jew, live Gentile-style, how are you compelling the Gentiles to Judaize?* Paul clearly understood that it was on account of his timorousness that Peter made a pretence of not living with Gentiles. And so he does not charge him with this, as Peter could claim 'I was making a pretence'.[129] What, then, does Paul charge him with? You have been living with Gentiles, and you do live with Gentiles. When you have a temporary agreement, there is no question but that you do live

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[127] Victorinus is compelled by the vocabulary of the verse (*consentiret simulationi eorum*) to accept that some form of 'pretence' had occurred, but he avoids positing the kind of pretence involving a collusion between Peter and Paul, as Chrysostom and Jerome represented the matter. Such an exegesis was much deplored by Augustine in his quarrel with the latter. The similarity between Victorinus and Origen (as noted by Hennings, *Briefwechsel*, 247) should not be overplayed, as Victorinus, along with Augustine, maintained that Paul really did rebuke Peter in full earnest.

[128] *ut illos lucrifaceret.* Cf. 1 Cor. 9: 20 in the VL: *ut Iudaeos lucrifacerem.* Jerome refers to this verse to explain why Paul could not really have 'opposed the apostle Peter and heedlessly defamed his predecessor' when he himself used various strategies of pretence in dealing with Jews (PL 26, 339A [364A]).

[129] i.e. a legitimate one, such as Paul himself used.

Gentile-style. Still, because your pretence is deceiving many people, you are sinning. For you are compelling the Gentiles to Judaize. In saying this, Paul shows that he also understood Peter to have gone along with the Jews only by way of a pretence, but that he was none the less sinning. First, because he feared the men who came on the scene; in the next place, because others were deceived and the Gentiles compelled to Judaize, not understanding that Peter was making a pretence. So Paul puts it together, and he recalls having said, Why do you, Peter, although you are a Jew, live Gentile-style? That is to say, why do you live with Gentiles? How now are you compelling these same Gentiles to Judaize—that is, to carry out the Jewish teaching both in diet and religious observances?

We, Jews by birth and not from the Gentiles, are sinners,[130] *and we know that people are not justified based on works of the Law, but through the faith in Christ Jesus; and we believe in Christ Jesus that we are justified based on faith, not works of the Law, seeing as no flesh is justified based on works* (2: 15–16). The portion of the speech up to this point belongs to Paul himself accusing Peter and telling him that he inappropriately went along with Judaism, thus inducing the Gentiles to Judaize. *We Jews*, he says—that is, you and I, Peter, and the others—we who are *sinners*, however, are *not from the Gentiles*; rather, we are Jews. To be sure, we do maintain faith in Christ. What precisely is our reason, since we were Jews? Obviously, because we *know that people are not justified based on works of the Law* but are justified *through faith*, the faith *in Jesus Christ*. So since we knew this, says Paul, we have come to believe in Christ Jesus,[131] and we believe in order that we might be *justified based on faith, not works of the Law*, seeing that *no flesh*—that is, the human being who is in flesh—*is justified based on works* of the Law. So knowing this, if we have believed that justification comes about through faith, we are surely going astray if we now return to Judaism, from which we passed over to be justified based not on works but faith, and faith in

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[130] I have translated v. 15 in the idiosyncratic but syntactically possible way Victorinus has interpreted it in his comment. As Mai noted, he must have put a comma before 'sinners', instead of taking it as part of the phrase, 'not sinners of Gentile origin' (PL 8, 164 n. 4), which is how modern scholars, Jerome, Augustine, and Greek patristic commentators render the verse. Jerome (PL 26, 343A [368A]) and Augustine both understood 'sinners' to be a Jewish term for Gentiles; but the latter, in a note reminiscent of Victorinus' exegesis, goes on to say, 'none the less we too, being sinners, *have believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified*' (*Exp. ad Gal.* 16. 3; CSEL 84, 72, 6–8).

[131] This paraphrase of a bit of v. 16, *per fidem Christi Iesu* (literally, 'through the faith of Christ Jesus') indicates that Victorinus took the genitive as objective, which I have according translated as 'faith in Christ Jesus', as the English idiom demands. For references to the modern exegetical debate, see the notes on his comments on 3: 22.

Christ. For faith itself alone grants justification and sanctification. Thus any flesh whatsoever—Jews or those from the Gentiles—is justified on the basis of faith, not works or observance of the Jewish Law.

But if seeking to be justified in Christ, we too are found to be sinners ourselves, Christ is then made a minister of sin (2: 17). Certainly, because Jews are sinners, and not sinners of Gentile origin, when we Jews who maintain faith in Christ for the very reason that we have understood no human being is justified based on works of the Law, when after the acceptance of faith we continue to do what Jews do, we are turned into sinners in our wanting to be justified in Christ while observing works of the Law.[132] With this, Christ becomes a minister of sin. The Christ whom we accepted in order not to sin is made a minister of sin if, after that acceptance, we return to our sins, that is, engage in a Jewish way of life.[133] But of this, Paul says, *May it not be so!* That is, it is not right to think this way, not right to act this way such that Christ would become a minister of sin, Christ, who suffered for the very reason that sin pass away!

For if I build up again the things which I destroyed, I set myself up as a transgressor (2: 18). For when I as a Jew believed in Christ, I destroyed the Law and the works of the Law; but now, after belief in Christ, if I go back and do the works of the Law, I am building up what I destroyed and am now a transgressor who is acting in opposition to what utility, virtue,[134] and the circumstances demand. But of what am I a transgressor? Not of the Law, rather of Christ. For I am dragging Christ's commands into a transgressive collusion,[135] if I go back to Judaism and begin to observe things whose observance I rejected, because I understood that a human being is not justified based on those observances but on Christ.

For through the Law I died to the Law that I might live to God (2: 19). Paul could seem to have spoken of two laws,[136] one of Christ

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[132] Ambrosiaster, commenting on 1: 9, wrote: 'it is no light sin to be converted to the Law after faith has been accepted' (CSEL 81/3, 10, 2–3). Presumably it would bespeak, in each commentator's mind, a certain ingratitude or unwillingness to believe salvation is by Christ alone.

[133] *id est iudaizemus*: I do not translate this with 'that is, if we Judaize', as our language reserves that verb for Gentiles engaged in Jewish practices.

[134] 'Utility and virtue' were the topics peculiar to deliberative speeches (Cicero, *De inv.* 2. 51. 156; ET: Loeb, 325). In his commentary on this work, Victorinus equated *virtus* with *honestas*: 'Now the good (*honestum*) is the genus, as it were, which is indeed virtue called by another name' (Halm, 301, 23).

[135] *in praevaricationem traho*. I take Victorinus to be using *praevaricator* and *praevaricatio* here with a shade of the technical legal sense of collusion (*OLD*, 1449).

[136] As indeed Jerome does, probably following Origen, when he treats of this text: 'Now apart from the law of the letter, there is another spiritual law' (PL 26,

and another of Moses, so as to say that through the law which was given by Christ, he died to that law which was given to the Jews. This would then be the meaning of *through the Law I died to the Law*—that is, through the law of Christ I died to the law of the Jews that was given previously. However, seeing that Paul frequently expresses himself this way, as the Saviour himself also does,[137] it could seem that he has mentioned two laws here for the reason that the very same Law is twofold, so to speak: there is one law when it is understood in a fleshly manner; and there is another law when it is understood spiritually. Previously it was understood in a fleshly manner, and one kept the Law based on its works, on circumcision, and with its other observances understood in a fleshly manner. But after the Saviour, the true and spiritual light, appeared, the Law began to be understood spiritually. It was as if a different law had been created, although it was the very same Law. Therefore, the meaning of the verse will be this: For I through the Law, which is now understood spiritually, died to the Law, obviously, to that law understood in a fleshly manner; and because this is the case, since I am now understanding the Law spiritually, I have died to the fleshly law that I might live to God. People live to God when they understand the precepts laid down in the Law not in a fleshly manner but spiritually—that is, when they understand what it means to be truly circumcised, what the true sabbath and the rest mean.[138] These matters have been treated in many places and will continue to be treated.

I have been crucified with Christ (2: 20). This is the implication of now having accepted another law: that the *old self*[139] has now been crucified. This entails the crucifixion of all the flesh, all the old self

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345A [370B]). An indirect anti-Manichaean thrust to Victorinus' rejection of the notion of two laws (so A. Mutzenbecher, CCSL 44, p. xvi) seems a stretch (Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 211).

[137] Curiously, none of the critical editions indicates any gospel texts that might fit Victorinus' claim that Jesus, as later Paul, spoke of the Law as if it were 'two fold'. The 'antitheses' of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 21–48), however, do exactly this: viz., by quoting or alluding to a biblical law and then showing how the literal observance misses the mark of what a 'spiritual understanding' discovers is really thereby mandated.

[138] Scholars who want to denominate Victorinus' exegesis of Paul as 'literal' (see Ch. 4, Sect. C, above) must also admit that there is a *systematic allegorizing* when it comes to any of the key concepts of Judaism. All these notions—sabbath, circumcision, etc.—are assimilated by a spiritualizing interpretation which insists that the true referent of the term is the spiritual reality which of course belongs to Christians (cf. his comments on 2: 19).

[139] Cf. Rom. 6: 6 and Eph. 4: 22. Augustine also uses the phrase *vetus homo* (the translation of which I owe to Eric Plumer) in his treatment of these verses of Galatians (*Exp. ad Gal.* 17. 4; CSEL 84, 73, 22). Pelagius too mentions the *vetus homo* as the 'I' who 'no longer lives' (Souter, 316, 16).

with its fleshly desires. Christ has done this by his Mystery, and he did it for me. We have therefore been nailed with Christ to the cross.

But it is no longer I who am living, but Christ lives in me. This means I have already been made spirit:[140] I understand all things spiritually by understanding the commands of God spiritually. Previously I showed myself to be totally oriented around the flesh,[141] and I was obeying its desires or trying to control them, understanding nothing spiritually. So now I am living spiritually, and Christ lives in me.

But as I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of God and Christ.[142] This is truly to live spiritually: that although one lives in the flesh, one does not live on account of the flesh or based on the flesh. Rather, one lives to God and to Christ by faith in them. This is what it means to live spiritually: to meditate on Christ, to speak of him, to believe him, to direct one's desires toward him; to flee the world, to expel from one's mind all things which are in the world. This is what it means to live by faith: to hope for no other good than what is from Christ and from God.[143] This is what it means to *live in the faith of God and Christ, who loved me and handed himself over for my sake.*[144] Let us keep this worthy act in mind, so that we live in

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[140] Victorinus often emphasizes the already present aspect of the redemption in Christ, which he formulates Neoplatonically as the human being becoming spirit, e.g. in his comments on Eph. 1: 18 (Gori, 21, 34–48; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 58).

[141] *Ante totum circa carnem me exhibebam.* A number of things suggest that Victorinus is thinking of parts of Rom. 6–7, where Paul describes the life under sin. Rom. 6 contains parallels to Gal. 2: 20: being 'dead to sin' (KJV, Rom. 6: 2); 'our old man is crucified with him' (6: 6); 'we shall also live with him' (6: 8). The verb Victorinus uses here, *exhibere*, occurs four times in Ambrosiaster's VL of this section of Romans (6: 13, 16, 19); and although Paul writes there to his audience in the third person, the apostle's first person in ch. 7 could have led to the formulation of the pre-Christian Paul as similarly 'yielding' his own 'members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin' (Rom. 6: 13).

[142] Here I translate the Latin's genitive (*in fide vivo dei et Christi*) literally; but Victorinus' paraphrase just below indicates that he understood this genitive as objective, i.e. faith in God and Christ. This looser rendering, given throughout the rest of my translation, provides a less ambiguous sense. See his comments and my notes at the occurrences of this construction elsewhere in the letter (2: 15–16 and 3: 22).

[143] Thus faith is not purely a matter of reason or knowledge (*reine Vernunftglaube*), as Schmid has characterized it (*Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 66), but is on Victorinus's understanding a mode of being in the world characterized by the hope for a life beyond the limitations of this world. See my discussion above, Ch. 5, Sect. C.

[144] Victorinus makes no attempt to refer to previous passages in his commentaries where he treated similar Pauline formulations (Rom. 8: 32; Eph. 5: 3). While cross-references, both general and specific, do occur throughout the commentaries, no effort toward a complete system was intended. His comments to Eph. 5: 3 contain a partial quotation of Rom. 8: 32—*filio suo non pepercit*—but no overt allusion to that letter is made.

him through faith—in him, who to hand over so great a gift to us would give himself to death and the cross for our sake, and in so doing liberate us from our sins. Next he adds in this manner:

I am not ungrateful to God's grace (2: 21), so that, God having redeemed me through Christ and Christ having handed himself over for my sake, I would return to the hope of the Law—all the hope I have in Christ being disregarded—and would believe myself to be justified based on the works of the Law.[145] That would be ungrateful to the one who did so much for me, who for my sake would put himself in the line of fire[146] in order to liberate me from my sins by taking their penalties upon himself.

If there is justice through the Law, then Christ has died in vain. The conclusion about the errors of the Galatians and those who add Judaism to Christianity has been drawn. Surely, says Paul, if justice[147] is through the Law, Christ died for nothing. If Christ died because justification does not depend on the Law, I ought to follow Christ alone. If after the coming of Christ, however, I believe myself to be justified through the Law, Christ did not die on my account and *has died in vain*—that is, has died for no reason.[148] To believe in Christ and follow the works of the Law is inconsistent and self-contradictory. Since the Law consistently failed to justify humankind on the basis of its works, Christ came, so that there would be justification for humankind by his death. A return now to the Law after faith in Christ will make it seem that Christ died in vain and achieved nothing for us, as the Law was already supposedly doing it.[149] But in fact the Law was not doing it, and that is why Christ came to do it himself. Therefore, Christ has not died in vain; rather,

[145] Jerome, aware of Jewish-Christian sects from his days in Antioch (Kelly, *Jerome*, 65), also reads this verse as directed 'against those who after faith in Christ maintain that the precepts of the Law are to be kept' (PL 26, 346C [371C]).

[146] I am grateful to Prof. Gillian Clark for suggesting this idiom to translate *se obiceret* (literally, 'would throw himself in the way').

[147] *iustitia*, as in the lemma of the biblical text just quoted. Victorinus apparently regarded *iustitia* in the Pauline letters as equivalent to *iustificatio*, which he employs in the following sentence and elsewhere when paraphrasing his VL text, which translated δικαιοσύνη as *iustitia*, much as we find in the Vulgate. In the last two sentences of his comment on this verse, Victorinus alternates between the two nouns, thus indicating that they are synonymous in his mind. I have maintained the verbal distinction in my translation.

[148] As Luther would famously say in *The Freedom of a Christian*, 'whoever has faith will have everything, and whoever does not have faith will have nothing' (ET: *Martin Luther: Selections*, ed. Dillenberger, 58; *Weimar Ausgabe*, 7, 24: 'glaubstu, so hastu, so glaubstu nit, so hastu nit'). The redemptive work of Christ can be appropriated by faith alone.

[149] Similarly Ambrosiaster: 'Since they were putting the Law on a level with him, they were not of the opinion that salvation is complete in Christ' (CSEL 81/3, 30, 15).

through Christ himself, justification has come to us. If this is the case, there is no justice on the basis of the works of the Law.[150]

You stupid Galatians, who put a spell on you, before whose eyes Christ Jesus was expropriated[151] *and amongst you crucified?*[152] (3: 1). People do not suffer from *a spell* unless they are going strong in something good, and then come under affliction by the doings of spiteful and jealous people.[153] Because the Galatians really had received something good from the gospel (they believed in Christ and put hope in his promises), now, since they have begun to add on Judaism's teaching, he says, *Who put a spell on you* to make you renounce your own good? Therefore, you are *stupid*: you fail to understand the wrong you are doing. But what did they let happen, what are they stupid about? That they were persuaded to observe Judaism. So Christ has been *expropriated*: his goods have been divided up and sold. These goods, which certainly were among us, have been expropriated, sold, and lost by the persuasion of Judaism. So you are *stupid*, you *before whose eyes Jesus Christ was expropriated*. The result is that the goods among you disappeared, though you were present all the while. Inasmuch as the things being expropriated disappeared because you did not resist, because you did not fight back, you are on that account *stupid*. Finally, in this line of thought as well is also the fact that *amongst you* Christ *was crucified*. The Jews who were persuading you to pursue Judaism did to you too what they did to Christ when they put him on the cross.[154] Thus, by persuading you to accept

[150] Jerome, despite his condemnation of Victorinus' commentary as that of a secular academic and not a biblical scholar (PL 26, 308A [332B]), nevertheless points out that this verse is a 'partial syllogism' (*particula syllogismi*; 346C [371D]). Specifically, it is the type Quintilian calls *enthymema ex pugnantibus*, an enthymeme 'from denial of consequents' (*Inst.* 5. 14. 24–6; Loeb, ii. 362).

[151] The Latin *proscriptus*, like προεγράφη, has the sense of 'proscribed', 'listed as an outlaw', and refers to the 'sale of confiscated property' (*OLD*, 1499, 2b) of such a person. Plumer argues that Augustine follows Victorinus in his interpretation of this expropriation as the confiscation of the believers who were Christ's property (*Augustine's Commentary*, 28).

[152] Victorinus' Latin text of Galatians contains *in vobis* ('among you'), which corresponds to a textual variant found in many Greek MSS as ἐν ὑμῖν (the Majority text), the Itala, the Clementine Vulgate, and the Syriac MS Harklensis.

[153] Jerome also associates this matter of a 'spell' (*fascinum*) with someone jealous (*invidus*) over another person's good (PL 26, 347C [372D]). Pelagius seems to be following him here (Souter, 317, 10–11).

[154] The strength of Victorinus' anti-Jewish sentiments is shown not only in the hyperbole of this equation but also in his tendency to overlook the role of the Romans in crucifying Jesus (thus in New Testament itself, e.g., Matt. 27: 24, Luke 23, Acts 2: 23) to the point where the Jews alone are identified as the responsible agents. See also his remarks on 6: 12, where again the crucifixion of Christ is ascribed to the Jews without any occasion from the text.

Judaism's teaching,[155] they crucified Christ *among you* as well. So you Galatians are stupid: you have lost Christ and his goods from your souls. Therefore I cannot imagine who put you under a spell in the matter of your goods.

This only I want to learn from you (3: 2). I will advise nothing, I will reprimand nothing. *This only I want to learn*, he says, and it is *from you* I want to learn it: *Did you receive the Spirit based on works of the Law or on hearing of faith*, by which you began to be better suited for the knowledge of God? Where did this come from? For [this][156] is the implication of receiving the Spirit. Whence did it come to you, I am saying, to receive the Spirit: based on works of the Law or on hearing of faith? So when I preached the gospel to you, you received the Spirit based on hearing of faith, therefore it was not based on works of the Law. And if it was not based on works of the Law, why are you now adding a Jewish teaching, such that you would believe you will receive the Spirit, know about God, and hope in God based on works of the Law? Why do this, when you already received the Spirit based on hearing of faith—that is, because you heard that faith in Christ ought to be pursued? Because if it is based on hearing, it is now contrary to faith when you believe you will receive the Spirit on the basis of works of the Law, because by faith alone in Christ the Spirit is given, and has been given, to you.

This is how you are stupid: that although you began with the Spirit, you are now ending up with the flesh (3: 3). Paul has described what *based on works of the Law* and *based on hearing of faith* mean. Clearly, the works of the Law aim at nothing other than placating the flesh, experiencing the feelings of the flesh, and aiding the flesh. Therefore, one who believes himself to be justified based on works of the Law is wise according to the flesh. Therefore you are *so stupid*, he says, so lacking understanding in your adding works for your justification—which implies being wise according to the flesh. So *that although you began with the Spirit* by the gospel as I gave it, you would now bring an end to your life and progress with the flesh—that is, with works you have taken up for the flesh and according to the flesh!

You have suffered so many things for no reason, [if in fact it was for no reason][157] (3: 4). Such a manner of speaking which reprimands,

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[155] Jerome also takes this verse to advocate that Christians 'pursue a spiritual understanding' of the Scriptures, in contrast with those who 'after a reading of the gospel would be persuaded [to adopt a literal approach] by some Jew or by some accomplice (*socius*) of the Jews' (PL 26, 350B–C [375C–D]).

[156] The manuscript tradition reads *Unde provenit hoc? est enim spiritum accipere*. I accept Gori's restoration of a second *hoc* to the text which could have easily been eliminated by scribal haplography.

[157] I have added the second half of the verse here, which appears to have dropped out through scribal error (homoioteleuton: *sine causa, si tamen sine causa*). Were it

admonishes, and yet reprimands in turn that very reprimand, easily induces compliance.[158] For Paul is reprimanding the Galatians, as he said, *you have suffered so many things for no reason.* But he is admonishing them when he says, *you have suffered so many things,* to the effect that because they have stalwartly borne many things, because they received faith, they would also be living spiritually. For by necessity, one who begins to live spiritually, while casting off worldly things, while with the new self one has to endure the malevolent gaze of Greeks and uncultured peoples—it is necessary that one would suffer many things, which Paul says the Galatians certainly suffered. Indeed, although you have suffered so many things, it is all the more to be regretted because it was *for no reason.* Having suffered *for no reason*, moreover, you have not obtained the recompense based on faith, for the sake of which you suffered so many things. Lest Paul appear to have abandoned hope[159] because he said *for no reason*, he corrected his reprimand, saying *if in fact it was for no reason.* For in order not to have suffered for no reason, the Galatians can be corrected, so as rather to have a reason for their perseverance in the faith, to have a recompense and corroboration of the promises based on faith in Christ.[160]

So the one who bestows the Spirit upon you and works powers among you—did he work them based on works of the Law or on a hearing of faith? (3: 5). Given that Paul said above, *you have suffered so many things*, and explained what they appear to have suffered (meaning,

not originally present here, the opening comment ('and yet reprimands in turn that very reprimand') would make no sense. That Victorinus repeats the phrase 'if in fact it was for no reason' at the end of the comment is no objection to my restoration of the text, as he often reiterates the words of the lemma in his comments.

[158] Victorinus notes here that Paul is employing a form of speech designed to move the Galatians back into his camp. Anderson points out that Paul is making use of a rhetorical figure called μεταβολή, 'a kind of reversal of one's thought, or recantation' (*Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 142, 310). While this figure seems to have functioned to win the approval of an audience after an excessively hyperbolic turn of speech (cf. Demetrius, *Eloc.* 148–9; Quintilian, *Inst.* 9. 2. 17–18 on *emendatio* and *reprehensio*), here Victorinus sees the apostle using 'such a manner of speaking' (*talis oratio*) to persuade the Galatians that what they have suffered need not be in vain.

[159] The rhetor assumes that Paul would have had an eye for the audience's psychology in formulating his persuasive strategy. Such concern was clearly a bit of stock-in-trade psychology of the rhetorical schools; hence we find similar considerations in Chrysostom and Theodore. The latter glosses the concluding phrase of 3: 4 in a very similar fashion: 'lest Paul should seem completely to have given up hope about them' (Swete, i. 38).

[160] Victorinus' phrase here (*ex fide Christi*) signals his understanding of the genitive *Christi* as stating the object of faith. The same expression in his comments on 2: 15–16 is paraphrased there to indicate that understanding. See also his comments on 2: 20 and 3: 22, verses which contain this construction.

enduring the kind of things which certainly show the Galatians had powers pertaining to endurance), he has conjoined to the preceding verse the phrase *the one who bestows the Spirit upon you and works powers among you*, the powers by which you suffered and endured so many things.[161] From this, he is clearly now making them understand that God worked a great deal of powers among them; and if God worked powers, God has bestowed the Spirit upon them. Therefore, having confirmed the fact that they suffered and—based on this confirmation—that the Spirit was given to them, the rhetorical question[162] emerges fittingly: Did God work powers in them based on works of the Law or on a hearing of faith? Now, it was certainly not based on your works. You left no trail of works, but you heard the faith, you hearkened to the faith,[163] and God worked powers among you. If God did that, God also bestowed the Spirit upon you. And God did it, God bestowed the Spirit, as is obvious from the fact that you suffered so many great things. But if this is the case, why would he say *for no reason*? The correction he made was so that it would not be *for no reason*. For he is hoping that they can be corrected. So he returns to the confirmed point that all of this has come about for them *based on a hearing of faith*, and he proves that nothing miraculous or incredible ever occurs unless one hearkens to the faith of the gospel. Accordingly, he cites a similar case from a scriptural text, which contains amazing examples of the sufferings which the Galatians suffered and endured through their faith, and therefore through the Spirit which had been given and through the power produced for them by God.

[161] His comments on this and the following verse make it clear that 'powers' for him do not mean the spiritual gifts mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 12. Augustine joins him in emphasizing the power to endure persecution (*Ep. ad Gal.* 20. 7; CSEL 84, 78, 17–21). Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 31, 18–23) and Jerome (PL 26, [377A]) are more in line with modern scholarship in pointing to charismata here.

[162] *interrogatio*. For full references to the ancients' discussion of this figure, see Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 308. Aristotle notes how the figure (ἐρώτησις) is effective 'when the opponent has already stated the opposite, so that the addition of a question makes the result an absurdity' (*Rhet.* 3. 18. 1–5; ET: Freese, Loeb, 463). The *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* (p. 20) describes it more as a technique of recapitulation (Loeb, 356–61). Jerome uses the term to describe Paul's argumentation at the beginning of ch. 3: 'There are indeed many things that can compel you by interrogation to admit that the gospel is to be preferred to the Law' (PL 26, 348C [373C]).

[163] *audistis fidem et obaudistis fidem*. Victorinus, like Augustine (Plumer, *Augustine's Commentary*, 154 n. 72), understands the phrase *ex auditu fidei* (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως) from 3: 2 and 3: 5 as 'the hearing about faith', as an objective genitive where 'faith' means 'the faith': viz. the content of Paul's proclamation but also the normative content of the church's faith which can be harkened to or obeyed. Pelagius' terse comments appear to take the phrase as the subjective genitive, in which the 'hearing' arises from or belongs to 'faith' (Souter, 318, 12–14).

For example, Abraham believed God, and it was accounted[164] *to him as justice* (3: 6). This is laid down in Genesis: *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as justice*.[165] This is the way that God *works powers*: when faith arises in people's souls, a faith such that they believe in God.[166] Because Abraham believed God, Paul says, it was accounted to him as justice. For this reason, then, you too have suffered, endured, and conquered so many things; and for this reason God has worked and does work powers among you: because you believed God through a hearing of faith.

Therefore it is understood[167] *that those who stand on the basis of faith are the children of Abraham* (3: 7). To the seed of Abraham have been promised many things. Now, Abraham himself was found acceptable, as regards justice,[168] based on his faith. All of those who stand on the basis of faith, then, are among the children of Abraham, as I have often pointed out.[169] The entire Mystery, which was enacted by our Lord Jesus Christ, requires faith alone. For then will it have been enacted on our behalf, enacted for our resurrection and liberation, if we but have faith in Christ and in the Mystery of Christ.[170] For by this treatment of Abraham, the divine reality set out beforehand and gave advance notice that human beings would be justified based on faith. As it was accounted to Abraham as justice, then, because he had faith, therefore, if we have faith in Christ and his whole Mystery, we too will be children of Abraham. This means that our whole life will be accounted to us as justice. Indeed, Paul has added along these lines that the Mystery was carried out in the case

[164] *reputatum est ei ad iustitiam*. When Victorinus uses the vocabulary of the VL in his comment on this and the following verse, he approaches the Reformation doctrine of imputed justification (for which see, Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, iv (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 149–50).

[165] Gen. 15: 6.

[166] *Ita deus operatur virtutes cum fides provenerit in hominum animis et fides ut in deum credant*. See my discussion of faith above, Ch. 5, Sect. C.

[167] *intellegitur*. Victorinus' VL has this variant instead of the *intellegite* found in Ambrosiaster's biblical text, which accurately represents the Greek γινώσκετε (the variant presupposes the reading γινώσκεται).

[168] *acceptus est ad iustitiam*. This would seem to be an indication that Victorinus did not connect justification with God's foreseeing of future merits, although he may have invoked God's foreseeing of faith in his lost commentary on Romans, much as Augustine did in his *Expositio ad Romanos* (10–11; CSEL 84, 34, 22 ff.). Augustine changed his mind on this in *De div. quaest.*, whereas Pelagius made God's justification depend on foreknowledge (for discussion, see de Bruyne, *Pelagius' Commentary*, 20–4). Victorinus' discussions of predestination and good works (found in his comments on Eph. 1: 4, 1: 11, and 2: 10) never suggest any predestination to specific works foreseen by God.

[169] Probably in his commentary on Romans.

[170] Although the 'Mystery'—i.e. the totality of the Christ-event—has objectively transpired, it demands a subjective appropriation through faith to become efficacious for the individual.

of Abraham on the grounds that human beings would be justified based on faith—obviously, the faith in Christ.

The Scripture, however, foreseeing that God justifies Gentiles based on faith, made a prediction to Abraham (3: 8). This is characteristic of prophecy: that what was carried out in the case of one person would be declared concerning others for the ages to come. *The Scripture*, he says, *foreseeing*—that is, the Scripture, seeing what things are to come—is a prophecy which has been written down. What was it *foreseeing*? That God has a plan to justify the Gentiles *based on faith*,[171] for which reason Scripture predicts the same things to Abraham. But what did it predict? That the Gentiles are justified based on faith. Then Paul adds a citation from Scripture: *that they will be blessed*—that is, inasmuch as it was accounted to Abraham as justice, obviously based on his faith. This citation is from Genesis.[172]

Therefore those who stand on the basis of faith will be blessed with faithful Abraham (3: 9). This is what *they will be blessed* means: it will be accounted to them as justice, and they will be blessed by God. Now, *they will be blessed* by God means to have been justified. And to be justified means to be freed from the law of servitude. Therefore, those who will be blessed on the basis of faith will be blessed because Abraham was. So faith is everything. How is this related to the Galatians? Obviously, because blessing and justification arise only on the basis of faith, not works. In this case, those people have gone astray who, beyond the faith in Jesus Christ our Lord which they received, maintain that the Law and its precepts are to be added on as well. This means they end up believing that justification is based on works.

Next, in order to teach what the opposing position consists in, Paul has thus added what sort of thing comes about based on works. He aims to prevent the Galatians from thinking like this and from believing that as long as they retained faith in Christ, something further could still be advantageous for them, if they would perform something based on works as well. To the contrary, the apostle denies that any blessing comes about on the basis of works; he states rather—and this is even more serious, and opposed to a blessing—that those who carry on their lives based on works are under a curse.

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[171] *Quia iustificare habet deus gentes ex fide.*

[172] No verse from Genesis (cf. Gen. 12: 3 and 18: 18) fully corresponds to the words of 3: 8b: 'all the Gentiles will be blessed in you'. Victorinus twice mentions a 'citation' here (*Deinde subiungit exemplum scripturae....Hoc exemplum de Genesi est*), but the text has only the verb *benedicentur* (and perhaps the *quod* before it, although the rest of the VL witnesses have *quia* there). Thus the words *in te omnes gentes* may have dropped out through scribal error (the sentence just before ends with *gentes*); otherwise we have to suppose a deficiency in the VL text he was using.

For all who live based on works of the Law are under a curse (3: 10). Forcefully, then, he has added that not only are those who live based on works not blessed, but also that those who live based on the works of the Law are under a curse. Now, as he said *based on works of the Law*, let us understand that there are also works which belong to Christianity,[173] especially those works which the apostle frequently commands (and also what has been commanded to him: *let us be mindful of the poor*) and the additional precepts for living which are included in this apostle's writings. Each one of these works is commanded by the apostle to be fulfilled by every Christian. The *works of the Law*, then, are something else: religious observances, obviously, offerings of a lamb (although the Passover has now been fulfilled through Christ); and there are further works which they do as well, pertaining to circumcision and foods to be observed or prepared. The works of the Law, therefore, . . . [174]

(3: 20) . . . Christ, who is in heaven and descended all the way into flesh, connects and joins the twofold church.[175] He is a mediator, then, and as a mediator—his Mystery *entrusted to angels*[176]—he liberates this church (meaning the members of the church) and brings it back to the higher church. Therefore, because Christ is a mediator—and one who is a mediator *is not a mediator of one, but God is one*—it is Christ who brings back and joins his members to the church. So does the Law do this? The Law couldn't be a mediator, could it? If it is a law, then, it is not a mediator. For because the Law is a law of deeds, it does not join whatever things have been

[173] Not that justification proceeds from these works, as he points out in his comments on Eph. 2: 9, which, despite a lacuna, are clear about this crucial point (Gori, 33, 9–14; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 67). His point is rather that the specification here of the former 'works' as 'of the Law' indicates that there are other works whose obligatory performance by Christians do not bring a curse.

[174] A substantial lacuna, containing Victorinus' explication of 3: 10–19, occurs in the manuscript tradition. This lacuna is especially lamentable, as it deprives us of what would probably be a fuller discussion of the supersession of Jewish law than we find elsewhere in the commentaries. Touching upon similar issues in his treatment of 5: 3, Victorinus appears to refer back to this passage and what was apparently a full discussion of the topic.

[175] As pointed out by Gori (CorPat, 419), Victorinus' Platonist cast of thought leads him to posit a heavenly 'church' of spiritual beings and a 'church' for those still in the world and the realm of the senses. In his commentary on Ephesians, Victorinus mentions the reunion through the work of Christ the mediator of beings hitherto separated (see his comments on Eph. 2: 14–15, 2: 20; also my analysis of these passages in *Metaphysics and Morals*, 165 and 171). Christ's descent is God's cosmic restoration programme, as discussed in the Ephesians commentary (see his remarks on Eph. 1: 4 and 4: 9–10 and my comments, ibid. 122–35 and 189–91).

[176] *mysterio sui per angelos disposito*. The latter part of the phrase, quoted also just below, belongs to 3: 19, where the Law is said to be *disposita per angelos in manu mediatoris*. Victorinus can paraphrase 'Law' with 'Mystery', since the latter is contained prophetically in the Law (see his comments on 3: 6–9).

separated; it judges only about what has been done. For that reason the Law was interposed, he says, until Christ came—that is, *until the seed came to whom was promised* the inheritance.[177] What had been *entrusted to angels*, therefore, was entrusted *to the hand* of the one who is a mediator, a mediator—clearly—between two realities. I have said 'two', *but God is one*; therefore there cannot be a mediator of God alone, because God is one. Thus there is no way the Law justifies, there is no way the Law of deeds obtains the inheritance, because the heirs are those who originate from there and receive the Spirit from there, whence their inheritance will come. All this happens, clearly, by Christ's joining the things which were separated, by his liberating the part of the church which is held here through the errors of the world, and by bringing it back to the heavenly church. For Christ himself is the only mediator. But there cannot be a mediator of one party, as we have taught. Now, God alone is one; the rest, beings coming after God, are not one.[178] So whatever is outside of God is—are—many. These can be joined together, because they are from there, or have been separated from there, because the Mystery was and is even now so disposed that they be joined, because some things are far apart, at enmity, and perishing. Therefore, because God's existence is singular,[179] the mediator is a

[177] See Gal. 3: 19.

[178] Underlying this statement is the conviction that the triune God is substantially one. The persons of the Trinity are not in view in his statement here, because for him they are not among the realities 'coming after God' (*post deum*). The issue here is the relation of God to created beings.

[179] *Solus ergo deus cum sit*: literally, 'Therefore, because God is alone' (Gori also translates somewhat expansively: 'Since, then, God is one only'). Victorinus' point is profoundly monotheistic: there is no genus of divinity with either individuals or subspecies within it. This does not, however, turn him into a Trinitarian modalist, for whom the persons are less than real. He anticipated both the Augustinian (*De trin.* 5. 2–5) and the Cappadocian solution (e.g. Gregory Nazianzen's *Third Theological Oration*, 16; ET: Hardy (ed.), *Christology of the Later Fathers*, 171) in asserting the reality of the persons to consist in relations within the one substance or nature of God, which is thereby not divided. Although Hadot (*Marius Victorinus*, 109–12) has rejected the notion that Victorinus, along with his translation of Porphyry's *Introduction to the Categories of Aristotle*, composed a commentary on the *Categories*, Franz Bömer is right to indicate the importance of this aspect of Victorinus' pre-Christian studies for his later Trinitarian theology (*Der lateinische Neuplatonismus und Neupythagoreismus und Claudianus Mamertus in Sprache und Philosophie*, (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1936), 91–6). Unnoted in this regard by Bömer is a passage in the commentary to Cicero where, speaking of human beings, Victorinus wrote: 'father and son are conjoined to each other, for neither before there was a father would a son be born, nor before there was a son would the [other person] be a father' (*pater et filius iuncta sibi sunt; neque enim ante pater quam filius nascatur, aut ante filius quam ille sit pater*; Halm, 186, 20–3). Victorinus does not state that he is dealing with the category of relation here, although it is clear that he treats the terms 'father' and 'son' as co-relatives (albeit in the case of human beings

mediator of more than God,[180] a mediator which is none the less *not a mediator of one*. Those other realities, however, which have been diversified by a certain Mystery, the mediator himself reconciles and conjoins—again, by a certain Mystery.[181] Now, we ourselves are those who have been separated by our more eminent predecessors,[182] and who have again been joined, indeed by more eminent predecessors[183] but according to Christ—that is, according to faith. From this it is apparent that we cannot be liberated without a mediator. If this is the case, it is a vain hope to believe that justification and salvation come from the Law of deeds, which, as we have said, is not a mediator. For Christ alone, who joins together what he mediates, is the mediator. So justification and liberation come about through Christ, and not through the Law of deeds.

there are substantial individuals within the substance *homo*). It is significant that this passage follows shortly after Victorinus' enumeration of Aristotle's *Categories* (Halm, 183, 31–6).

[180] *praeter deum mediator est*. Gori translates as 'the mediator is outside of God'. Given that the mediator is Christ, and Christ is God, it is preferable here to take *praeter* in the sense of 'more than'; i.e. the mediator must mediate something outside God, which is Victorinus' point here.

[181] Christ's 'Mystery' is of cosmic scope, unifying not merely human beings to the spiritual world but also certain heaven realities, as he makes clear in his comments on Eph. 4: 10.

[182] *per maiores nostros. Maiores*, appearing twice in the sentence, can mean 'ancestors' or 'more eminent beings'. Gori argues that the proximity of both uses of *maiores* demands the same meaning in each case, although he admits that this makes it difficult to take the first instance to refer to Adam and Eve (Gori, CorPat, 420). The presence of the possessive in the first occurrence of the phrase (*per maiores nostros*) could indeed indicate Adam and Eve (thus Schmid, *Marius Victorinus Rhetor*, 52); but if Victorinus is thinking about the division of Jews and Gentiles, the sons of Noah may be intended. The second use of *maiores* could be a historical reference to the first Jews and Gentiles in the church; more likely he means greater spiritual beings—the angels to whom the Mystery was entrusted, through whose agency (though ultimately *secundum Christum*) we are rejoined to the heavenly church. Victorinus thinks that redemption includes a reuniting of human souls with other spirits (see his remarks on Eph. 1: 4 and 1: 8). Any understanding of this passage is necessarily limited by the preceding lacuna, where no doubt the matter of the spiritual beings who inhabit the *superior ecclesia* was discussed at length.

[183] Gori elucidated his sense of the meaning by translating *per maiores quidem* more expansively as 'clearly through the work of the ancestors' (CorPat. 241).

BOOK II

As we have been saying, the whole letter to the Galatians works to combat one thing:[1] that the Galatians thought they had to safeguard the gospel and keep the faith in Christ in conjunction with Jewish teaching and observance.[2] The apostle teaches that this is not the case, that he did not give instructions along those lines, and that hoping for justification and salvation on the basis of the Law is in every way mistaken. For all things come about on the basis of faith: the promise was given to Abraham based on faith, and thus to his seed as well. It is clearly a promise of liberation, of justification, and of inheritance in heaven and above heaven.[3] This being the case, he teaches in every way that no justification, no liberation, no inheritance comes about on the basis of the Law and its works, even if they are fulfilled according to the precepts. It is for this reason—because the Law is under attack in every way[4]—that the question is rightly proposed:

What then, he says, *is the Law opposed to the promises?* (3: 21). And indeed, if the Law accomplishes nothing on the basis of its works and comes later than the promises (for the promises to Abraham are earlier, and the Law given through Moses comprises only the justice pertaining to deeds[5]), the Law seems somehow mistakenly given or contrary to the promises. For if works based on the Law achieve nothing and produce nothing, the Law is contrary to the promises.

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[1] *illud operatur, illud expugnat*. The transitive use of *operor* is a late formation (Souter, *GLL*, 277).

[2] Here Victorinus restates the *summa* of the letter, the 'main point' articulated in the preface to the first book of the commentary.

[3] *in caelo et supra caelum*. The sense of this phrase is probably 'in the heaven above the heavens', which blunts the edge of the rhetorical figure here, a *copulatio*, or πλοκή: 'the figure of speech in which the same word or name, used twice in close conjunction, means different things', according to the third-century CE rhetor Aquila Romanus (*De figuris sententiarum et elocutionis* §28; Halm, 31, 7). In his comments on Eph. 4: 10, Victorinus refers to 2 Cor. 12: 2 as his reason for maintaining that there are only three heavens, above which is the divine realm or heaven in the Christian sense. He accepts Paul's authority on this matter, despite his awareness of other opinions on the subject.

[4] A misprint in the CSEL text reads *omnio* instead of *omnino*.

[5] *lex enim per Moysen data factorum iustitiam tenet*. The sense of *iustitia* here is in contrast to the promise of justification (*iustificatio*) mentioned two sentences below. Yet elsewhere Victorinus uses the former term to mean the latter (see Ch. 5, sect. C, above).

Because the promises guarantee inheritance and justification, as long as this Law which is based on works calls souls away from faith, as long as it keeps souls occupied in some other thing (resulting in their looking for the promises not based on faith but on something else, that is, on works), the Law is opposed to the promises. But because God also gave the Law, it is unlikely that this same Law could on the other hand be considered opposed to the promises. At any event, the Law is opposed to the promises if it keeps us occupied with something else, I mean, that we would fulfil the works commanded on the basis of the Law and not look for what has been promised on the basis of faith, so as to obtain the inheritance of the heavens in God by faith. This is how we will interpret his response to the objection.[6]

First he gives a general denial: *Far be it!* That is, it is unfitting that something done by God would seem opposed to the promises. This would imply that the Law, in keeping people occupied with others matters, voids the promise, and makes it a matter of merit and not faith, so that we would obtain justification by merit, by having done all the works, and not by faith alone. *Far be it*, then, he says. Next he adds the reason:

For if a law were given which could provide life, justice would indeed be based on the Law. We have said[7] that the Law given by Moses teaches nothing but sins—what sins are—and advises how they are to be avoided. Scripture contains nothing apart from its task of establishing all its precepts *under sin*, about sin.[8] This Law was not given, he says, as if it were such as *could provide life*. Were the Law given along those lines, *justice would indeed be based on the Law*. As it is, however, the Law was not given along those lines. It was not given for life to be sought from it, but so that it might in its scriptural form teach about all the sins and show how they are to be avoided. So justice is not based on the Law—that is, neither justification nor salvation come from there but are based on faith, as was promised. Next he continues along these lines:

But Scripture has contained all things under sin, in order that the promise would be given to believers based on faith in Jesus Christ (3: 22). This was accomplished, says Paul, through Moses: that he would

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[6] The Law is opposed to the promise only if it is conceived of as an alternative to faith's salvation (Gori, CorPat, 420). For Victorinus, this could not have been God's intention in giving the Law, which comes after the promises. Rightly understood, it is not opposed to the promises. His attempt to maintain the integrity of salvation history (unity of both testaments) is completely traditional.

[7] Probably a reference to his lost remarks on 3: 19 (Gori, CorPat, 420).

[8] *nihilque aliud scriptura conclusit nisi ut sub peccato omnia poneret et de peccato*: The *et* of this final phrase is epexegetic and explains a difficult expression from the following verse, *sub peccato*. Scripture places all things under sin, i.e. establishes laws in relation to the sins they are meant to inhibit.

indeed institute a law about sin; that the whole of Scripture would be about sin; and that all the things which are *under sin* be contained in it, so that what was promised would come about based on faith, and the inheritance be given to those who believe *based on faith in Jesus Christ*.[9] So what is he doing, or what did he accomplish,[10] by means of all this? That faith alone in Jesus Christ would suffice for our justification and liberation.

Now before faith came, we were guarded under the Law, contained for the faith which was to come, that it might be revealed (3: 23). He says this lest the Law be esteemed devoid of purpose or opposed to the promises. How is he saying the Law was necessary? In there having been an expectation of the faith to come, and a promise through faith. Previously, he says, prior to the coming of faith, *we were guarded*: that is, with the Law as a guide and a guard, so to speak, we were cultivating a moral life[11] based on the knowledge and avoidance of sin. The intent was that because Christ was coming, we would be expecting his advent, *contained*, as it were, for that *faith which was to come*, in order that believing in this faith, and having been prepared through the Law (as we were avoiding sins and were carrying out the works of the Law), we would at his advent easily be able to have what was promised—clearly, faith in Christ. Therefore, we ought not have faith in the Law, but in his advent. For we had been *contained*, he says, by means of the Law *for the faith*—he says—*which was to come* (that is, the faith in Christ), in order that that very faith would be revealed when he came.

Accordingly, the Law was our caretaker in Christ (3: 24). Just as those who teach children give advice and demonstrate to the best of their ability a way of living without themselves being complete

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[9] Here, as elsewhere (on 2: 16), Victorinus takes the genitive *ex fide Iesu Christi* (ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) to be objective, i.e. 'faith in Jesus Christ', which I have translated accordingly. This reading of the syntax has been challenged by some New Testament scholars, who argue that the genitive should be construed as subjective: 'Jesus Christ's faith' (see Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), esp. 157–78). For an extended discussion affirming the objective genitive, see James Dunn, 'Once More, PISTIS CHRISTOU', *SBL Seminar Papers* (1991), 730–44. Neither Victorinus nor any of the ancient commentators even consider the subjective genitive; in fact, Theodore's comments on this verse work to clarify his understanding of the genitive as objective: 'the enjoyment of which [grace] we have most of all grasped according to the true promise of God through that faith which is in Christ' (Swete, i. 50, 18–19).

[10] Perhaps Paul, more probably Moses, if this may be inferred from Victorinus' putting the verb in first the present and then the past tense (*ergo his omnibus quid agit vel egit?*), which recalls the opening comment on the verse: *Hoc, inquit, actum est per Moysen.* Implied is that God gave the Law through Moses in accordance with God's plan.

[11] *vitam colebamus integram.*

instructors in life,[12] so too the Law was a kind of caretaker. But it was not as if this caretaker was to advance its own cause, or that it was a perfect caretaker for the way of life to be taught.[13] Rather, it was, he says, a caretaker *in Christ*—that is, up until the time of Christ. In this manner, the Law was guarding us by advising about sins, so that we could have our entire hope of salvation and of life in Christ.

That we might be justified based on faith. It is not based on the Law, he says, but on faith, that we might be liberated. This means that we would be justified and would lay hold of the inheritance and the promise.

But with the coming of faith (3: 25): that is, with Christ's coming. For at that time faith arose: that is, the time began to take hold for faith, and for us to believe in the one where all salvation lies, even for Jews, who in return have not believed.[14]

We are no longer under a caretaker: that is, no longer do we live under the Law, because we have kept the Law's precepts which look toward this very faith, for which we were prepared by the caretaker of the Law. When Christ himself—that is, this very faith—comes, we live *no longer under a caretaker*. Rather it is on the basis of faith that we live, or will live.

For you are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus (3: 26). For this is the inheritance: that we obtain eternal life. At that point we are sons of God. But where does this come from? *By faith in Christ Jesus.* This is when we have faith in Christ: in our believing in him, that he is the Son of God, that he himself saves us, and that he carried out that Mystery for our sake and did all those things in the gospel we have discussed. Indeed, here one must note the fact that when Paul speaks about the issues, he addresses the audience

[12] The analogy from the field of education well illustrates how we (and also God) can entrust our children to instructors who, although imperfect themselves, none the less have something to teach.

[13] The *paedagogus* was a slave designated to accompany a child to school, his duties being largely tutelary and disciplinary. He 'was not an instructor, not a ''pedagogue'' in the modern sense', although in some cases he would have made the child recite the day's lessons at home (Bruce, *Galatians*, 182). Victorinus stresses the imperfection of the pedagogue to emphasize the provisionality of the law's precepts as guide-posts for life.

[14] When commenting on Eph. 2: 17, Victorinus remarks indicating that while Jews have not in general believed in Christ, there are none the less some of Jewish descent to be found in the Christian ranks. Even these do not escape the slighting comment: 'those who come to believe from the Gentiles are said to be better sons than those who come from the Jews' (Gori, 39, 20). One we know by name, Isaac, who, according to Jerome, 'at Rome pretended to have believed in Christ' (*In Titum*; PL 26, 595C–D [631B]) while Damasus held the episcopal seat (366–84). Isaac apparently later returned to Judaism. For further information and bibliography on this figure, see *EEC*, i. 416–17.

personally,[15] whereby he can make a display of flattery, in order better to persuade them. *You are all sons*, he says. Above he said *we are under a caretaker*,[16] now he apostrophizes[17] them, so to speak: *You are sons of God*, he says, but you are sons only on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ.[18]

For whosoever of you has been baptized in Christ has put on Christ (3: 27). This means you are sons of God in Christ. What is the sense of the phrase *in Christ*? That whosoever is baptized in Christ is now a son of God. For whosoever is baptized, is baptized into Christ; and one who has been baptized in Christ has put on Christ. For whosoever is baptized has Christ and is now in Christ, in so far as he has Christ. In so far as he has Christ, he is a son of God, because Christ is Son of God.

For there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus (3: 28). Paul has annulled the outstanding forms of external identity[19] which can

[15] *ad personam se vertit*: literally, 'he turns himself to the person'.

[16] Victorinus omits the 'no longer' part of the lemma because his point here is only to alert his reader to the switch from the first-person-plural to the second-person verbal form.

[17] *nunc velut apostrophat ipsos*. Souter (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 31) notes how rare in Latin this loan-word from the Greek was, the noun form being less rare. The verb signifies a turn of address to a different (real or imagined) audience (see Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 305). Here Victorinus uses it to mean the switch to a direct second-person address. The figure of the *apostropha* (ἀποστροφή) is discussed by Longinus *De subl.* 16. 2, as an invocation of gods or divinized humans with an oath, a figure designed to encourage (προτροπή; ibid. 16. 4) the audience. Quintilian mentions it as a turn away from the judge in a court-room speech (*sermonem a persona iudicis adversum*; 4. 1. 63), elsewhere referring to it as *aversio* or 'turning away' (9. 2. 39; cf. 9. 3. 26–7). Full references to the primary sources in Martin, *Antike Rhetorik*, 282–4.

[18] His comments on Eph. 1: 5 distinguish sonship by adoption through faith from the sonship of Christ. There he states that Christ is 'truly a son' and the 'only son', whereas the adoption of those who have faith is something that happens *iure*, 'by law' (Gori, 13, 214–25).

[19] *Tollit ergo reliquas personas*. I have translated *personae* by 'forms of external identity', as we have no single word in English to cover all the external and material aspects of a person that our commentator here intends (see my note on *persona* in his comments on 2: 6). None of the distinctions mentioned by the apostle are for Victorinus real in the fullest sense, nor indeed are the material elements of the human person susceptible of final salvation. None the less, they must in this life be purified, as he makes clear in his allegorical treatment of Matt. 24: 39–41 and Luke 17: 34–9 in *Adv. Ar.* I 62–3 (CSEL 83/1, 162–5; ET: Clark, 190–1). These outer aspects of our identity are all accidents, things which have befallen us in the world, not part of our substantial identity (see his digression on the metaphysics of the soul while commenting on Eph. 1: 4; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 46–51). However much the Neoplatonic element of Victorinus' Christianity may have contributed to this conviction, it does not, in my judgement, detract from his grasp of the gospel here.

accrue to human beings on the basis of social status, human nature, or ethnicity.[20] For we are liable to be divided amongst ourselves by these, such that one person is a Jew and another a Greek, one person a slave and another free. These latter sets of distinctions exist on the basis of social status or law, but the other pair is natural: *there is neither male nor female*, he says.[21] So what? When all these distinctions have been annulled,[22] *you are all one*, he says, *in Christ Jesus*. Now, because you are one with the reception of the Spirit from Christ, you are Christ.[23] You are therefore sons of God in Christ.

Therefore you are the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise (3: 29). If this is the case, what was promised to the seed of Abraham has been fulfilled, whence you too *are the seed of Abraham*. As long as Christ is the seed of Abraham according to faith, and you are in Christ and you are on that account the seed of Abraham, you are *heirs according to the promise*, given that an inheritance was promised to the seed of Abraham. But you have been baptized in Christ Jesus, you have received Christ, and you are Christ; you are therefore the seed of Abraham. If an inheritance was promised to the seed, the inheritance was given to you as well, and you are heirs according to the promise.

But I am saying that as long as the heir is a child, he differs in nothing from a slave, though he be the master of all (4: 1). Paul pursues the point through a simile he has added[24] in order to teach what we were under the Law before the advent of Christ, and what we are after he

[20] *vel ex conditione vel ex natura humana vel ex gente.* It would be misleading to translate *gens* (people, nation, or race) with any of the modern terms that imply either membership in a nation-state or skin colour.

[21] Victorinus regards the division of the sexes as a fact of nature, the other distinctions (Jew or Greek, slave or free) being socially constructed (*Haec conditione vel iure*). In his probably pre-Christian treatise *On Definitions*, Victorinus classifies social status in Aristotelian terms as an 'accident': 'For because a human being is a complete entity concerning which one can ask what it is, "free" and "slave" are not parts of a human being but accidents which accrue to a person' (*De def.*, ed. Stangl, in *Tulliana et Mario Victoriana*, 12, 30–2 (quoted in Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 342)).

[22] See his comments on 5: 6 and 6: 15, where he clarifies what the elimination of these things in Christ means. It is not that these factors disappear, but that they cease to count for anything, whether in this life or the next. Augustine seems more concerned to emphasize how these factors remain 'in our mortal walk of life', and that the preservation of the order based on these differences is part of the apostolic teaching (*Exp. ad Gal.* 28. 3; CSEL 84, 93, 5 ff.).

[23] A startling formulation repeated in the comment on the next verse.

[24] *per adiunctam similitudinem.* The simile began with the notion of Christians as the heirs of Abraham and is now extended to explain why the Law is no longer to be kept. A *similitudo* was classified by ancient rhetors as a kind of probable argument that worked by comparison (see Martin, *Antike Rhetorik*, 119–22). In his commentary on *De inv.*, Victorinus followed Cicero in explaining the three ways in which a *similitudo* creates a probable argument: 'through contraries, through

has come. Resolving the problem about whether the Law was op-posed to the promise,[25] he says that the Law was given for a time. It kept us under its guardianship. By handing down precepts, the Law guarded us from sins until the time of Christ's advent, so that we could be heirs of the promises. We were therefore heirs, he says, when we were children, which was during the time under the Law before the advent of Christ. The point is that when the heirs are children, they differ in nothing from slaves. Although they will be masters of all (since they are going to inherit), still, as long as the time has not come for them to exercise the full power implied in the title of master, they are held back by a certain duty of servi-tude, as it were.[26] But this state of affairs is not to last forever, just until they are of proper age and are at liberty to be able to take on the name and authority of heir. This is what he adds:

But he is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father (4: 2). Every heir is under guardians, he says, as long as he is a child. The Law of Moses was guarding the future heirs like a guardian or steward. They were already of the sort to be heirs,[27] but were on account of their age not fully such, being unable to act on their own authority[28] and take on the effectual power, or title, of full heir. Yet they were not at that time really slaves engaged in service, but because they are living under guardianship, they are like slaves for a time appointed by the father. For this is how a steward, guardian, or custodian holds power at the behest of a father: to ensure that when the heir reaches maturity, he would act in his own right, of his own free will, and would administer the inheritance he has received. This simile relates, as I said, to those to whom the Law was given.

Thus we too, because we were children, were serving under the elem-ents of this world. But when the fullness of time came, God sent his own Son (4: 3–4). The topic of discussion concerned another matter, but in coming back to the simile he has added something else. This means he added something that went beyond the problem previously

equivalences, or through the things which fall under the same principle' (Halm, 236, 1 ff.). Here we have a case of an equivalence: the faithful are the heirs; the Law the pedagogue; and the period of minority is the time under the Law, now surpassed.

[25] i.e. the digression begun in 3: 21, discussed in Victorinus' preface to Book II of the commentary.

[26] *quasi quodam officio servitutis tenentur.* Gori translates this otherwise: 'they are, so to speak, considered as servants'. But this misses the force of Victorinus' point: viz. that the Law was obligatory for them—i.e. held them in servitude—until Christ's advent.

[27] Victorinus' qualifying clause here (*vel iam qui essent*) reflects his conviction that Jews who did not believe in Christ were disinherited.

[28] *quoniam ipsi per se agere non possunt.*

set forth. The topic under treatment concerned the Law which was
given, or imposed, after the promises. It was said that the Law was
introduced before the advent of Christ. Because we were still chil-
dren, we had been placed under the guardianship of the Law. We
were being guarded, just as Paul himself said, under the Law. The
Law was a caretaker for us, but it was none the less a caretaker in
Christ. All of the previous passage concerned the role of the Law
until the time would come when we could be heirs according to the
promise. These things, as I said, were being fully worked out by Paul
in his discussion of the Law and the simile he introduced. Now,
however, in concluding, he has brought the discussion back, not to
the Law, but to the *elements*. He says: *we too, because we were children.*
What was supposed to follow? ' . . . we were living under the law . . . '.
But this was not added; rather he followed with *we were serving under
the elements of this world*. This is either different from what came
before or is related to it.[29]

We must examine how it would not be extraneous. There is no
doubt about what was said above: whosoever of us has been baptized
in Christ has put on Christ. Now, we who have put on Christ are
neither Jews nor Greeks. But if we who have put on Christ
are neither Jews nor Greeks, we are no longer of the world.[30]
Clearly, before the advent of Christ, the world considered every person
either Jewish or Greek.[31] Although Jews and Greeks led lives in
accordance with their own laws, life was carried on under the elem-
ents of the world. For indeed, among the Jews sacrilege, theft, false
witness, and other crimes were punished, just as such things were and
are subject to penalty among the Greeks—that is, among pagans. In
truth, the elements of the world bring with them their own motions

[29] Victorinus is facing the problem posed by the fact that Paul's previous dis-
cussion is about being under the Law prior to the advent of Christ—Paul's 'we'
having the sense of 'we Jews'. But the addition of the phrase 'we were serving under
the elements of the world' seems to break from this train of thought; for, as he points
out in his comments on 4: 9, the phrase 'elements of this world' refers to pagans
rather than Jews. Victorinus' solution has two parts: to refer this new 'we' to
Christians of both Jewish and Gentile background, and to identify some universal
'elements' (i.e. cosmic forces) which both could be said to have served. The other
ancient exegetes recognized the difficulty; for their various solutions, see above,
Ch. 6, *ad loc*. Augustine locates the confusion in Paul's maintaining the first-person
plural while the signification of it has changed: now it is a 'we' of Paul and the
Galatians; and the elements of this world 'do not apply in their signification to the
Jews . . . but rather to the Gentiles' (*Exp. ad Gal*. 29; CSEL 84, 94–5).

[30] Being 'of the world' or 'not of the world' is of course language drawn from the
Fourth Gospel (cf. John 8: 23, 15: 19, 17: 14, 18: 26).

[31] *Etenim mundus hominem ante adventum Christi aut Iudaeum habebat aut Grae-
cum*. The Latin verb contains an interesting double meaning not reproducible in
translation, to the effect that the world, in classifying people as either Greeks and
Jews, 'had a hold' (*habebat*) on everyone.

and create certain necessities, so to speak, from these motions. We see this in regard to the stars, by whose rotation the life of human beings is drawn into necessity: thus human beings serve the elements, doing as the stars have commanded and the course of the world has ordained. From all of these things are released all those who, having faith in Christ, have received the Spirit as Lord of their life from Christ, so as to escape and evade every necessity of the world and every elemental force and avoid serving the world.[32] Serving Christ instead, they have liberty in their actions under the Spirit's ruling.

More than was anticipated, then, has been brought into the discussion, in order that the Galatians understand that the Jewish Law is in every way to be abandoned (including its precepts, observations, and works), as they see that even the law of the elements and of the world itself has been overturned and disempowered under Christ, and that the influence of the world's rotation is all but overthrown.[33]

But when the fullness of time came, God sent his own Son, born of a female. As there is a fullness of things, so too is there a fullness of times. Something attains its own fullness when its perfection is complete, full, and is flowing out to all things.[34] The fullness of

[32] The view that faith in Christ frees believers from the 'elemental forces' was a well-worn path in early Christianity and corresponds in many respects to an ancient (pagan) philosophical polemic against the widespread astrological fatalism (an extensive treatment of this theme is David Amand's *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1973)). How Victorinus conceived the 'necessity' that arises from cosmic bodies, and how great its extent, are not stated clearly here. The elements, he claims, exert some determining force on human beings, who are none the less freed through Christ and the reception of the Spirit. Since he mentions explictly the role of the heavenly bodies in creating this *necessitas*, he need be saying no more than that the Christian is released from the calendrical festivals of the gods (on the connection between the heavenly bodies and the sacred calendars, see Franz Cumont, *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (New York: Dover, 1960; orig. 1912), 19–20, 60–70). On the other hand, he may indeed be endorsing a view in which fate, *heimarmenē*, is conceived as a concatenation of cosmic powers, from which Christ alone saves. This is the perspective of the gnostic Christian *Excerpts from Theodotus* (69–72), preserved by Clement of Alexandria (cited in Amand, *Fatalisme et liberté*, 24–8).

[33] Thus the digression concerning the *elements of this world* relates to the discussion of the supersession of the Jewish law as an argument *a minore ad maiorem*. If the very forces which move the whole cosmos are no longer binding on those liberated by Christ, how much less could the Jewish law be considered still valid!

[34] The term *plenitudo*, occurring here in Galatians, does not receive from Victorinus the extensive attention it found in his commentary on Ephesians (see his comments on Eph. 1: 1, 1: 4, 1: 22, and 3: 19; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 44, 47–50, 62–3, 84, and my notes, 154–5, 183–4). On the notion of *plenitudo*, applied to both Father and Son in Victorinus' *Adv. Ar.* (I 13 and IV 29), see Baltes, *Marius Victorinus*, 60.

things is Christ; the fullness of times is the consummation of liber-
ation. Just as Christ joins together the members which have been
dispersed in order that the fullness be complete and perfect, and the
fullness is thereby constituted, so too the fullness of times is likewise
constituted at that moment when, with everything ripe for faith and
sins rising up to a high point, a remedy was sought for the death now
necessarily extending to all things. Whence Christ came to our aid at
the complete fullness of times. When the fullness of times came,[35]
God *sent his Son*, he says, clearly, Christ. However, let us under-
stand that Christ was God's *Son* before the time when God sent him
born of a female. At any rate, the text states, *God sent his own Son*—
meaning one who was already a son to God.[36] God sent him—but
how did God send him? *Born of a female*. This is how Christ, the Son
of God, came by his Mystery to help the world and us all. For we are
the world. By putting on flesh (which is what *born of a female*
means), Christ fulfilled everything which had to be accomplished
in the Mystery: namely, that he be seen, heard, made manifest, die,
and rise again. That is why God sent him, already God's Son, sent
him *born of a female*.

   Born of a female. Certain people put it thus: 'born of a woman'.[37]
These same people[38] then have a question on account of the word

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[35] Here I have accepted Gori's textual emendation, the addition of a phrase from
the verse under treatment, which could easily have been lost due to homoioteleuton
(ending in -*um*): *Deusque, cum <venit plenitudo temporum>, misit, scilicet Christum,
'filium', inquit, 'suum'.*

[36] *Sed 'misit filium suum', id est qui sibi fuerit filius.* Here and shortly below
Victorinus emphasizes that Christ was already Son (hence the future perfect,
or else the perfect subjunctive, relative clause of characteristic) prior to the
Incarnation.

[37] *editum ex muliere*. None of the other Latin commentators have the exact
biblical reading that Victorinus gives here: *editum ex femina*; closest is the VL text
utilized by the Budapest Anonymous (*editum de mulierem*, which the Anonymous
seems to have corrected in his remarks to *factum ex muliere*; Frede, *Ein neuer
Paulustext*, ii. 227). The rest of the Latin commentators all had the reading *factum
ex muliere, factum sub lege* (the double *factum* represents the Greek literally:
γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον). Maximus of Turin (fl. 400) used a VL
text that contains a reading showing that γενόμενον was not invariably rendered
factum: *natum de muliere, factum sub lege* (*Serm*. VI, 2; CCSL 23, 22, 52). The
fragments of an Arian author discovered in the Bobbio palimpsest apparently had a
text reading *factum per mulierem* (fr. 9, V 67; CCSL 87, 242), a variant Jerome
attributes to 'Marcion and other heresies' (PL 26, 372A [398A]). Gori is probably
right that Victorinus' VL text read *mulier*, and that he himself supplied *femina* as a
better translation of the Greek which, moreover, would not conflict with the virgin
birth (CorPat, 422). The more biblically literate Augustine (*Exp. ad Gal*. 30. 2;
CSEL 84, 95, 25; ET: Plumer, 177) adverts to this problem as one arising from the
biblical (Hebrew) idiom.

[38] He seems to be referring to translators: *Et habent ipsi propter positum a se
verbum quaestionem.*

they used. Because Mary is or was a virgin,[39] why would Paul have said 'born of a woman'? ('Female' is the way our language expresses what the Greeks call γυνή.[40]) Given the fact that Mary gave birth to Christ, why would Paul choose not to call her a woman?[41] For every female who gives birth to something is called a woman. Now, in order that the power of the Mystery—although it is both hidden and holy—might none the less be recognized as it transpires, one must consider the text in the following light. All things that are perfect are said to be a man[42] and all things that are imperfect, a female.[43] In short, when all things have been perfected, sanctified, and justified, we will have begun to come together into a man.[44] One may understand what has been said thus: since the world, or we who have been set in this world, are not perfect, we lead a woman's life in the way of

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[39] *cum virgo Maria sit vel fuerit*. I take *vel* ('or') to introduce a genuine alternative, and thus this phrase to be another indication that Victorinus accepted that Jesus had blood-brothers and sisters (see his comments on 1: 19 and 2: 12). One could also, as do the Migne editor (PL 8, 1176 n. 2) and Gori (CorPat, 255), take *vel* here as an equivalent of *et* and translate thus: 'Because Mary is and was a virgin . . . '. This has the effect of bringing Victorinus into line with the Catholic doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice, 1994), §449, p. 126).

[40] *Gunē* can mean either woman or wife, as does the Latin *femina*. Victorinus' point in prefering *femina* to *mulier* (generally, 'woman' or 'wife'), is that the former, like the Greek γυνή, is less specific and just means a female in general. He is arguing that Paul is referring to Mary in her capacity as female (rather than wife), whereby she transmits to Christ all that is 'female', i.e. imperfect, unformed, and requiring the transformative work of the Spirit.

[41] *cur non mulierem diceret?*

[42] *vir*: specifically a male human being, not *homo*, which could mean a person of either sex.

[43] *inperfecta*: that is, incomplete, lacking in full development. This is a version of Aristotle's infamous and influential position (*Generation of Animals*, 2. 1 (732a); 2. 3 (737a); 4. 6 (775a), etc.; ET: Loeb, Peck, 133, 175, 461). On this aspect of Aristotle's thought, see Lesley Dean-Jones, 'Medicine: The ''Proof'' of Anatomy', in E. Fantham *et al.*, *Women in the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 183–205, 190–4).

[44] *concurrere in virum*. This is reminiscent of Eph. 4: 13, which in Victorinus' VL text ran: *Donec occurramus omnes in unitatem fidei et agnitionem Christ, in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinem Christi*. His paraphrase of this verse (*ut occurramus et concurramus in virum perfectum*) is even closer, and his comment on it clarifies the sense of his comment to Galatians: 'For when the soul has been perfected through faith and through having come to know Christ, the perfected man is brought into being' (see my comments on this passage with references to this commonplace in *Metaphysics and Morals*, 193–4; another interesting parallel is Clement of Alexandria, *Exc. ex Theod.*, 68). In *Adv. Ar.* I 51 (CSEL 83/1, 147, 20 ff.) Victorinus develops his notion of the Son as life that goes forth and acquires a *feminina potentia* that desires to give life (parallel, with significant differences, to Sophia in the Valentinian myth). This feminized life-power returns to the father and turns into a 'man' (*vita recurrens in patrem vir effecta est*), meaning *perfectus spiritus* (on this passage, see Baltes, *Marius Victorinus*, 111–12).

women. Therefore, in order that Christ might come to us, providing or about to provide salvation for us, he was born of a female. This means he received even the sort of birth which would render him imperfect, such that he would put himself on a level with us. That is, he received flesh or the world, because he had been *born* in this world, or in this flesh, *of a female*—clearly, born of things that were imperfect. Having been sanctified by the Mystery's fulfilment, Christ arose as a man, even after his suffering and his resurrection. This means that having and receiving a perfected spirit, he could provide for us a likeness in order that we too could grow up into a 'man' from a 'female'—that is, from this life which, as it is has been subject to corruption, is rightly called female or woman. Hence evil is depicted as arising from a female; for even in the first human being there was no sin except from a female.[45]

Made under the Law. The greatest error is spawned under authority of this phrase.[46] People get a sense from this passage that the Son was not begotten, but made,[47] because Paul said *God sent his Son, born of a female, made under the Law*. It matters a great deal, however, whether he said the Son was 'made' or *made under the Law*. It is something different[48] for a son who was already a son to have been sent, especially when he was a begotten son. But now, as he was *born of a female*, he can be said to have been *made*, but *made* to this end: that he be *under the Law*. What is the significance, however, of his

[45] These last remarks indicate how Victorinus demythologizes the mythic creation narratives in Genesis, i.e. reads them as allegories containing metaphysical-ontological truths about human nature. Compare his comments on Eph. 5: 30–2, where male and female stand for the spirit and the soul (see my analysis, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 218–23). In his anthropology all human beings contain both elements, male and female, or 'perfect' and 'imperfect'.

[46] *Sub hoc verbo error plurimus nascitur*. See my discussion above, Ch. 5, sect. B. In *Ad Cand*. 29 Victorinus attempted to combat this misunderstanding by clarifying that the phrase 'he was made' (*factus est*) never refers to his being brought into existence, but to Christ's being made in such-and-such a manner (*non quod factus sit, ut esset, sed quod effectus sit ad ita esse*). There he quotes the phrase from Gal. 4: 4, *de muliere factus est* (at that time he seems not to have developed the preference for *femina* instead of *mulier*) to show that the crucial term 'made' always appears in connection with some qualifier; i.e. that it is never the divine begetting, the absolute beginning of the Christ which is described by that term.

[47] *non natum filium, sed factum*. Victorinus claims here that some people are mixing up the sense of the central Christian confession. The language of the error here expressed echoes the Latin rendering of the Nicene Creed's clause concerning Christ, as we find it in the remains of Hilary's historical work: *et in unum dominum Iesum Christum filium dei, natum de patre . . . natum non factum* (*Hist. Ar*. B II 10; CSEL 65, 150, 8–10).

[48] i.e. different from his being 'made' son at his birth from Mary, the exegesis he combats here.

saying *made under the Law*? That he was not to be born amidst the Gentiles, but among the Jews, within the teaching and Law of Moses. From there every sort of correction was available. Given that Israel was said to be the people of God, the people for whom Moses received the Law from God and to whom Moses gave it, surely God[49] was obliged both to provide help for Israel (who was misunderstanding the Law and for that reason sinning) and to take away their sins. All that people had to do was to recognize the Son of God. For were Christ born elsewhere (that is, amidst the Gentiles), it would have been possible for Israel not to have recognized him, because he would seem not to have been born among their own people. Hence the sins that people committed were greater, since Christ, born among his own people (that is, within the Law) was not recognized. Yet it was said to this very people—that is, to David— that an eternal inheritance[50] would be given to his seed.[51] So because David is a father of Israel, Christ was born there, in order that they would acknowledge him. Whence the sin is greater, since they did not acknowledge one who was *made under the Law*.

Many things can be said about why he was *made under the Law*. Because the one God was already being worshipped there. Because they had already received oracles and teachings from God. Because Moses was an image and a type of Christ. Because Christ, although he himself was what those under the Law were, taught in a different manner, and for the sake of salvation departed from the Law by not observing the sabbath and other things. From this they would know not to hope for salvation based on the Law or its works. Whence the Galatians too might understand that they have fallen into an error, if indeed the Saviour himself, in whom they have believed, was made under the Law, though nevertheless not subservient to it. However, these and many other reasons why he was made under the Law are not to be brought into consideration,[52] given that Paul himself has included the reason why Christ was made under the Law:

In order to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive adoption as sons (4: 5). This, says Paul, is the reason why *God sent*—he claims—*his Son* and sent him when he was clearly already a son. But at this point God sent him *born of a female* and *made under the Law*. What is the reason why he had to be *under the Law*? To

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[49] Gori takes Christ to be the subject here.

[50] Literally, 'inheritance and eternity'.

[51] 2 Sam. 7: 12–16.

[52] i.e., are not to be considered beyond the mere mention, despite their truth. The thread of Paul's letter must be followed closely to the exclusion of all tempting paths of thought. This is what chiefly marks off Victorinus' expository method from those of Origen and Jerome on Paul.

redeem *those who were under the Law*. So, if he was sent for the purpose of redeeming them, we are no longer bound to the Law— if we are redeemed from the Law.[53] Furthermore, in another passage,[54] when Paul is talking about women, he also speaks along these lines: that while her husband lives the woman is bound to him, but if he will have died, she is liberated from him. So because the Law was holding them, so to speak, in subjugation by its precepts[55] to a certain standard of life (and not bringing them to the hope of liberation and eternity), God sent his own Son, sent him *under the Law*— that is, in Israel—*in order to redeem* those who were there living *under the Law*. Now this is something great: that Christ would not just provide a way of life for them, or just get them excited about eternal life with his precepts, but he came *in order to redeem*, he says. This was what was accomplished in the Mystery: that he would redeem all who believe in him; that all who believe in him might become adopted sons. Therefore, because so great a boon,[56] because the whole boon is based on Christ, nothing further need be added, nor must the Law be kept. For we have been redeemed, redeemed from the Law and redeemed from this world, that we might be sons of God, but sons by adoption. We are not sons like the Son himself, but are sons through the Son. This, then, is the adoption; for us to receive it, Paul says, God sent his Son.

  But because you are God's sons, God sent the Spirit of the Son into your[57] *hearts* (4: 6). Behold the full array of these three Powers,[58] operant through their one power and one Godhead. For God, says

[53] i.e., the proposition that we are 'no longer bound' is implicit in the meaning of the redemption Christ was sent to bring.

[54] Cf. Rom. 7: 2 and 1 Cor. 7: 39.

[55] Victorinus' explication of Paul's simile contains the implicit assumption of patriarchy: viz. the domination of men over women. The Law, figured as the husband, holds power over the people, figuratively the wife, who is thus subjugated (*vinctos*) by the Law's precepts, i.e. compelled to obey.

[56] *beneficium*.

[57] *vestra*. The second-person pronoun here is a variant reading (Textus Receptus) rejected by most scholars, who prefer the first person plural, 'our' (ἡμῶν, not ὑμῶν) found in P[46], ℵ, and many other witnesses, including the VL of Ambrosiaster (*in corda nostra*). Victorinus glosses the phrase 'in your hearts' only in passing, but uses the first person there (*spiritus sanctus qui in corda nostra descendens*), which is a natural enough change for a homiletic paraphrase. Despite the presence of *vestra* in the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate (also in a mid-eighth-century manuscript Reginensis), contamination is unlikely (as Souter must have realized, there being no mention of this verse in his list, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 10–11), since the great sixteenth-century editions of the Vulgate post-date the textual tradition of the commentary on Galatians.

[58] *totus ordo trium istarum potentiarum per unam virtutem unamque deitatem*. I have capitalized 'Powers' here to distinguish *potentia* from *virtus*. A passage from *Adv. Ar.* (I 52; CSEL 83/1, 148, 3–5) gives a sense of how this language expresses his

Paul, who is the Father, sent the Son, who is Christ.[59] Christ in turn, who is himself the power of God and is God himself, Christ *sent* (*God sent*, says Paul, for now God and Christ are conjoined, especially with Christ's sanctification after the Mystery), Christ *sent the Spirit of the Son*, says Paul, the Holy Spirit, who, descending into our hearts, makes the Father easily known.[60] Therefore the Son, Jesus Christ, in whom believers believe and are made sons of God, was sent from God. To them is sent—also from God—the Spirit of the Son, meaning the Holy Spirit,[61] so that they would hasten, hurry to the Father, and cry out with a kind of inner sanctification and an inner voice.

Paul has added what they cry out: *They cry out Abba, Father*.[62] They have the words of the Spirit, and they have them even more

distinction of the realities of the Persons: 'God is the potentiality [*potentia*] of these three powers (*istarum trium potentiarum*), existence, life, happiness, that is, of "to be," "to live," "to understand."' (ET: Clark, 175). Victorinus prefers the term *potentia* (*Adv. Ar.* IV 25. 45; I 50. 4 and 10) to *persona* for expressing the Persons of the Trinity, perhaps due to the Sabellian overtones of the latter term (thus Simonetti, *Crisi*, 295).

[59] Raspanti has criticized Gori's punctuation of this sentence (*Esegeta*, 77) for 'a certain forcing of the text and a clear doctrinal incongruence', in that Gori's punctuation has Victorinus making Christ the subject of the verb 'sent'. But, argues Raspanti, 'Christ has no son whose Spirit he might send' (ibid. 90 n. 85). However, in light of Victorinus' pneumatology elsewhere documented (see nn. 60 and 61 below) and his parenthetical remark here (*iunctus est et deus et Christus . . .*), Gori is correct to maintain that Christ can be the subject of the lemma 'God sent', because Christ is God due to their single *deitas* (CorPat, 423).

[60] The motif of the descent of the Spirit into the hearts of believers is probably drawn from Rom. 5: 5, a verse that played a major part in the formulation of Augustine's mature doctrine of grace, both before and after the Pelagian Controversy (see *Ad Simpl.* 1. 1. 17 (ed. Mutzenbecher, CCSL 44, 23, 371–2; ET: Burleigh, *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, 385) and *De sp. et lit.*, 1. 5. 7 (ed. Urba, CSEL 60, 159, 15; ET: Burnaby, *Augustine: Later Works*, 197–8)).

[61] Thus he sums up the point of the following discussion. Crucial for Victorinus is that the 'Spirit of the Son' is Christ's Spirit, the Paraclete 'whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth' (John 15: 26 (NRSV); cf. also John 16: 7 and Acts 1: 8, 2: 33), so that the Holy Spirit becomes a son of Christ. Victorinus' pneumatology identifies Christ—i.e. the Spirit of Christ—with the Holy Spirit (see his explicit statement to this effect on 4: 18–19 and in *Adv. Ar.* III 16 (CSEL 83/1, 220–1, 30–45): 'Christ is the truth, the Paraclete is also the spirit of truth'). That Augustine was influenced by, then later rejected, Victorinus' identification of the Spirit's procession as a mode of generation has been demonstrated in an important article by Nello Cipriani ('La *Retractatio* agostiniana sulla processione-generazione dello Spirito Santo').

[62] Victorinus' VL has a peculiar reading here, *clamant* ('they cry out') instead of *clamantem* ('the Spirit . . . crying out'). This could be explained as the result of a scribal dropping of the final-*em* in the transmission of the VL (we have no reason to doubt that he is giving the reading of his biblical text). However, the presence of another variant, also in the plural (*clamantes*) of the Budapest Anonymous's VL

when they grasp the knowledge of the Father. Now, this very knowledge of the Father—meaning, when we come to know the Father—is the voice itself of our spirit to God, a spirit God has given to us. Knowledge in chorus with the one it knows is a kind of voice, a voice calling to the one it knows. Therefore, because we know God through God and through Christ, we are even ourselves made sons of God. It is by this knowledge that we have a voice to the Father. Just as Christ is the only one who really knows God,[63] and to the extent that he does know God, he has knowledge, a 'voice' to God, calling him Father, because he knows who God is. This is why Christ is the 'word' of God.[64] I have said that all our processes of knowledge[65] make us understand, mark out, grasp, and conceive that which we have understood. It is as if we name something what it is by knowledge.[66] We receive a word applying to that one we know,[67] about whom we know, and going to the very one we know, because we name what it is, because we have come to know by the knowledge[68] which is the complete knowledge of the reality we know. So because Christ knows God, Christ is the Word of God. And because Christ is given to us,[69] the Spirit grants us knowledge of God through its very own self. Whence it comes about that we too are a word, both to Christ and to God. For that reason, let us cry out as people who know. Now, as a knower belongs to the very thing known, it happens that the known is the Father and the knower the Son. If this is the case, we are right to conclude that when we come to

(Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext*, ii. 228) indicates that there may have been some felt need to alter the original text, in which the Spirit cries out, to a reading which has the believers (the 'sons of God') themselves crying out, perhaps in a baptismal acclamation.

[63] *Quomodo enim solus est, qui cognoscat deum, Christus*. See Matt. 11: 27, which Victorinus quotes in his Trinitarian treatises thus: *nullus cognoscit filium nisi pater nec patrem nisi filius cognoscit* (*Adv. Ar.* I 15; CSEL 83/1, 76, 35).

[64] This conclusion follows from the fact that the Latin terms here translated 'voice' (*vox*) and 'word' (*verbum*) are closer to each other than the English reveals, since both terms can have the sense of 'utterance', 'language', or 'discourse', as well as a single sound or word.

[65] *cognitiones quaeque*: literally, 'each of our cognitions'.

[66] *quasi illud, quale sit, cognitione appellamus*.

[67] *in illud*: or, 'to the Father whom we know'.

[68] *quia cognovimus ea quae est omnis cognitio eius rei quam cognoscimus*. Alternatively, taking *ea* as accusative plural, we would translate thus: 'because we have come to know the things which the complete knowledge of the thing we have known entails'.

[69] He maintains the view expressed above concerning the sending of the Spirit from the Son: Christ conveys himself to us in the Spirit, making both Son and Father known. The full order of the divine procession is recapitualated in inverse order in the retrogression of the soul *ad patrem*.

know the Father through Jesus,[70] we are made into a word of the
Father, and on that account become sons. This is why we cry out
Abba, Father.

Accordingly no longer a slave but a son (4: 7). For one who has said
Abba, Father clearly calls God 'Father'. If he calls God 'Father', he
is a son. If this is the case, in Christ there is neither slave nor free,
neither male nor female, for we are all one reality. But where is this
whole thing headed?

And if a son, also an heir through God. If one is given the name *son*,
according to the previous discussion,[71] one is also an heir, not,
though, by things done or by one's works, rather by the mercy and
grace of God. This is Paul's implication, that it is rather *through
God*, just as has been demonstrated in many passages: that *it is not of
the one who runs but of the one who shows mercy*,[72] and that all things
are through the grace of God.

*But as you were indeed ignorant of God at that time, you served those
beings which are not gods*[73] (4: 8). I have often said, I have often made
the point that not knowing Christ means being ignorant of God. For
God is known through Christ. Now, however, because Christ has
appeared, who taught me and showed me God through himself,
showed himself to be God, and through himself showed the Father,
it is no longer permissible to be ignorant of God. Previously, how-
ever, because you were ignorant—he says—*of God*, you Galatians,
you *served those beings which are not gods*. I have often pointed out
that gods in the plural are spoken of even in the Law. In reality, there
is one God; the rest are angels and other powers honoured by this
name, as is said: *the God of gods*.[74] And would that you had served
those beings! But you served beings, moreover, which were not
gods—namely, all those worldly powers and other false, imaginary
powers which are made up and passed off as real by the devil.[75]

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[70] An interesting moment for Victorinus to invoke Jesus, rather than just Christ,
perhaps from a concern to evoke the particular historical juncture of the revelation.

[71] I have accepted Gori's textual emendation here: *Ergo si filius appellatur*,
<secun>dum superiora, erit et heres.

[72] Rom. 9: 16.

[73] The lack of the phrase 'by nature' (φύσει, accepted by Nestle-Aland[27] as
original) in the relative clause is a peculiarity of Victorinus' VL text of Galatians
(in the same clause, the CSEL edition has omitted the negative particle *non* through
typographical error).

[74] *deus deorum*: Gori references Ps. 136: 2 (LXX and Vlg: 135), *Confitemini deo
deorum*. Cf. also Ps. 50: 1 (LXX/Vlg.: 49): *Deus deorum, Dominus, locutus est*.
Victorinus gives one traditional Christian understanding of this verse (cf. Origen,
Contra Celsum 8. 3–4 (ET: Chadwick, 455)); Irenaeus presents another early line,
in which the church and believers are the 'gods' in question (*Adv. haer.* 3. 6. 1 (ET:
ANF 1, 419)).

[75] *omnibus scilicet mundanis ceterisque falsis imaginariis et diabolo fictis atque
simulatis*. The deceptive work of demons in originating and maintaining pagan

But now that you have come to know God, or rather have come to be known by God, how are you turning back again to the infirm and beggarly elements of this world[76]? (4: 9). It is as if he added on something else against the Galatians: that they have also gone over to a Gentile teaching. Or is he continuing with the same charge which was the concern from the first, that they were adding on the Jewish law in regards to circumcision, sabbath, and food? And from this point, is he accusing them so as to say, after you came to know God through the gospel as I gave it, *how are you turning back again to infirm* things? Which is surely what these things are, as you may gather, whether the verse applies to the Jewish law or to pagans, who are themselves also infirm. But when he added *beggarly elements of this world*, it relates in a way more to pagans, who even work up gods for themselves from the *elements of this world* or make the elements themselves gods, so as to worship fire, water, earth, and air. For there is no doubt that they do say these single elements are gods, a discussion of which is a lengthy matter.[77] It suffices to know that pagans say all of the individual elements are gods, or that the gods are the originators of the elements themselves, or that from the elements they make gods for themselves, making gods from earth but by means of fire. Then they would also call certain daemons[78] aerial, then again others are called igneous, aquatic, or terrestrial, that is, earthy, watery, airy, and fiery.[79] If it is pagans who do these things, then, it is as if Paul is rebuking the Galatians for this too: that they have even turned back to paganism! He does this most of all

religion was a standard Christian commonplace: e.g. Justin, *Apol*. 54–6 (ET: Cyril Richardson (ed.), *Early Christian Fathers* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 277–9); Tatian, *Or. adv. Graec*. 13–18 (ET: ANF 2, 70–3); Tertullian, *Apol*. 22 (ET: ANF 3, 36–7); Origen, *Contra Celsum*. 3. 37 (ET: Chadwick, 153–4).

[76] The phrase 'of this world' (*huius mundi*), although evidently found in the VL text Victorinus used, is a unique variant that must have resulted from contamination with a similar mention of the 'elements' at Gal. 4: 3.

[77] This is a piece of what Varro in his *Antiquities* called 'physical theology' (cited in Augustine, *City of God*, 6. 5). Victorinus takes the primary meaning of *elementa* to be the four elements he enumerates above. This is a philologically sound understanding of στοιχεῖα, which in his exegesis below he takes to refer to the rudiments of the Jewish law. Good discussion of 'the elements of the world' is found in Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 67–77. For references to ancient authors where the physical elements have a religious significance, see the entry στοιχεῖον, in Gerhard Friedrich (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971), vii. 670–83.

[78] The Latin *daimones*, a loan-word from Greek, should not here be translated as 'demons' (which term belongs to the conceptuality of ancient Judaism and Christianity), as Victorinus is speaking the language and conceptuality of Graeco-Roman paganism.

[79] Victorinus uses the Greek terms first in transliteration (*aerios, empyrios, enydros, geinos*) and then gives the Latin equivalents.

when he said: before you knew God, when you were ignorant of God, you were serving *those beings which are not gods*. This must surely be understood to pertain to pagans also in regards to what was said above. None the less, since the whole speech and this whole discussion was taken up that Paul might rebuke the Galatians because they turned back to Judaism, and since all these sorts of things[80] must be understood to pertain to Jews, how do we understand *you are turning back again to infirm things*? Therefore, because he specified the *beggarly elements of this world*, let us understand that the Galatians, understanding the Law in a fleshly manner, appear to have turned back to elements which are *beggarly*. For flesh always goes begging,[81] and it is always longing to be comforted with foods, drinks, and its desires—all of which things, however, are *infirm*. So why, says he, are you turning back *to infirm and beggarly elements*, that is, to things which always go begging? For the soul and the spirit need beg for nothing, nor do they long for anything except those things which are their own. Now, because he said *you have come to know God, or rather have come to be known by God*, he preserves the integrity of his own precept: that those who come to Christ are those whom God sends, those whom God calls; and that those who know God are those whom God has known.[82] (We have said many things above about this subject.[83]) Having been known by God, they receive the Spirit by which they come to know God. But surely, for them to be known by God and to have been known to God, they are now led by that leading spirit which was given so that the soul would be inscribed by the divine precepts of its Father.[84] The soul, as it rouses itself, God knows it, and thus it knows God. Now, that he said *beggarly elements of this world* does not imply that there exist

[80] *ista omnia*.

[81] Literally, 'For flesh is always lacking' (*eget*). I have translated it more loosely to bring out the connection with the 'beggarly (*egena*) elements'.

[82] 'Preserving the integrity of his precept' (*virtutem praecepti sui*) probably refers to Paul's teaching in Rom. 8: 29–30 (NRSV: 'For those whom he foreknew he also predestined . . . those whom he predestined he also called', etc.). Victorinus is claiming that Paul has a consistent position on God's initiative in the order of salvation.

[83] Gori refers this statement back to Victorinus' comments on 4: 6 concerning the voice of our spirit, the link being between the verb *vocare* here and the noun *vox* there. But other passages in Paul feature God's calling of believers more prominently. Apropos of Paul's calling, Victorinus remarked on 1: 15 that no one knows God without having been called by God. But this brief mention hardly qualifies as 'many things' (*multa*), so perhaps the reference is to a more extensive treatment of this issue in comments on Rom. 8: 29–30. His quotation of a phrase from Rom. 9: 16 when treating 4: 7 above indicates that Victorinus associated closely the discussions of grace, mercy, and the call in both letters.

[84] The activity of the Holy Spirit—'that leading spirit' (*principali illo spiritu*)— upon the individual soul is the cause of the soul's knowledge of God. A similar turn of phrase occurs in the comments on 4: 3, where the soul that is released from the

other elements (whereby there would be *beggarly elements of this world* as well as other elements which are beggarly), although we can speak about elements even in regards to higher realities.[85] But this is far removed from the normal usage.

Which once again you want to serve. Obviously, before you came to know God, as he said above, you were serving those beings which are not gods; so now *once again you want to serve* them. *You want*, he says, meaning that it is of your will, and not of necessity. Now, in order to come across as saying these sorts of things to Jews and about Jews (that is, to the Galatians who are embracing the teaching of the Jews for themselves), he has added what follows:

You are observing days, months, times, and years (4: 10). Although *times* is the genus for all these, it has been placed among them as another thing that could occur like days, months, and years. For it is one thing to observe days (as when one rests on the sabbath), another to observe months (as when the new moon is observed at the ending or beginning of its cycle), another to observe years, and indeed something else to observe times, such as the Fast,[86] Passover, Unleavened Bread, and other times of this nature, of which there are many among the Jews. They are neither years, months, or days, but *times*.

I fear for you, lest perchance I have worked amongst you for no reason (4: 11). That is, I am very alarmed, lest all my work in the gospel, by which I built you up that you might have faith in Christ, lest this work—he says—come to no effect. For what I have taught you will be in vain, when you begin to keep the teaching and observances of the Jews.

Be as I am, since I am as you are (4: 12). For in the manner in which I—he says—passed over from the teaching of the Jews and believed in Christ, I serve that one and am carrying on differently. I taught you this, and I became the kind of person I made you. Live as I myself live, then, even as I am living as you live.[87]

Brothers, I beseech you, you have done me no wrong. You know that I preached the gospel to you during a weakness of the flesh long ago (4: 13). This bit here, which has been interposed, relates to his attempt

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necessity of the elements is said now to be guided by the Spirit (*habeat spiritu regente in suis actibus libertatem*). Cf. a similar motif in Victorinus' *Hymn II*: 'I recognize, O Lord, your command; I recognize the way of return (*reditum*), written in my soul' (CSEL 83/1, 292, 44–5). Plato had likened the soul to a book in *Philebus* 38e–39a (ET: Loeb, 299).

[85]   See n. 121 below.

[86]   *ieiunium*. The Day of Atonement was called the 'Fast' or 'the Great Day' (Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*, 138). Acts 27: 9 refers to an unspecified 'fast' (Vlg.: *ieiunium*) that, given the time of year, must refer to this holiday.

[87]   I have accepted Gori's textual emendation here: *et <ut> vos vivitis, vivo.*

to persuade them that we should follow Christ in everything. Now, to make this point more persuasively, he recalls the beginnings of his gospel. First, he draws attention to his own labours. Although he had then been weak[88] in the flesh and was under duress, he none the less took the labour upon himself and preached the gospel to the Galatians. He also included the words *long ago*—that is, at an earlier point. Whence your love toward me and your faithfulness toward Christ ought to have been strengthened, if indeed it has been a long time. I did not spare my flesh, he says, but *I preached the gospel to you during a weakness of the flesh*, and I preached it to you *long ago*. So why are you adding other things which I did not preach to you? Now, when he said *you have done me no wrong*, he interjected another point: I did not withhold anything from you, I omitted nothing in speaking to you, which is what someone who is wronged does. Moreover, lest they believe themselves to have been some kind of burden to Paul when he preached the gospel while weak in the flesh, he for that reason says, *you have done me no wrong*. Even though I had been weak in the flesh, for your sake *I preached the gospel to you long ago*. And this they surely know.

And you neither spurned nor disdained your testing in my flesh (4: 14). What we should take *your testing*[89] to mean is ambiguous to me: that you are testing me or that I am testing you? That you are testing me makes no sense. For the Galatians did not test Paul. But on the other hand, could it be that Paul tested them, Paul, who was speaking the truth, who was preaching Christ? Preaching the gospel does not involve putting people to the test. What, then, can it mean, as there is no third alternative? Or do we think that when Paul came to the Galatians, they wanted to test him, that is, to examine him and to make some inquiries about Christ to see whether he was informed? This could indeed have left the impression of a testing, as the Galatians saw Paul as a weak person, weak in the flesh. It was obvious to them that although Paul is serving and proclaiming God, he is weak in the flesh. This was the Galatians' thinking: Let us examine him, let us see what this fellow who is weak in the flesh will answer about Christ. This was what *you did not spurn in my flesh*,

[88] *infirmis*. This seems to have been the original reading, which was changed in the process of transmission to the more usual *infirmus*. For discussion, see Gori, 'Recuperi lessicali', 107.

[89] The word *temptatio* in classical Latin means an 'attempt', and the root verb, *tempto*, means to try out, attempt, or investigate. Victorinus solves the exegetical problem he poses here by adopting the classical meaning for the word (see *OLD*, 1915, 'tempto' 3b) and not the special Christian sense of a 'temptation'. His exposition below clarifies that the testing which the Galatians carried out was not a bad thing, but a sign that they understood that his bodily weakness was irrelevant to the question of the soundness of his message.

Paul is saying: You tested me, and you did not despise your testing *in my flesh*. But had they despised[90] the testing—that is, had they not questioned him and had they been thinking they might hear a false response to what they were inquiring about, that is, what they were examining him about (which is what 'they were testing him' means), they would have been acting under the belief that they might get a false response from a man who was weak in the flesh. But indeed you persisted, and you did not despise *your testing in my flesh*.[91] Rather, you came to me to find out whether I was standing firm in my faith and persisting in the gospel. So you tested a man who was weak in the flesh: you were carrying out an examination to see if my intention[92] of preaching the gospel would persist, even though I was weak in the flesh. This is to say that you did not[93] disdain him as the sort of person who was weak in the flesh and less capable of responding, or as one liable to change his intention on account of being weak in the flesh. In this verse Paul also gives the reason why it could not, or did not, happen that his intention of preaching the gospel would be altered. For it was in the flesh that I was weak, not in my mind or in my spirit. Thus Paul has stated that the Galatians too had more or less taken note of the fact that I was weak in the flesh, not in the spirit; and it was for that reason that they went on to test him, neither disdaining nor declining to test him. This is what it means to say you did not despise him and that you did not spurn your testing. Then, in what follows, he teaches that the Galatians themselves understood Paul to have been weak in the flesh, not in the spirit:

But you accepted me as an angel [of God],[94] *as Christ Jesus*. In fact, it was no hindrance to you that I was weak in the flesh; rather, you

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[90] *Contemnerent autem*: I have translated this present counterfactual verb as if it were a past counterfactual, since Victorinus is clearly talking about an incident of the past which he puts in the present tense for the sake of vividness.

[91] His first-person paraphrase arises from the exegencies of the commentary. Because the lemma contains Paul's first-person speech and the Galatians are in the second person, Victorinus moves into the first person to integrate the lemma into the explanatory paraphrase that directly follows.

[92] *interrogantes si ea mihi evangelizandi esset perseverans sententia*. Gori translates *sententia* as 'dottrina' ('teachings' or 'doctrine') here and twice more just below (CorPat, 267). However, nothing in Victorinus' comment suggests that the Galatians were concerned at this point to find out if Paul was going to change the content of his proclamation, but only whether the apostle would continue preaching at all in his condition.

[93] 'Not' (*non*) is a textual emendation suggested by Mai in his Migne edition and accepted by Locher and Gori. The *non* is required in light of the fact that the lemma has the same verb with the negative particle.

[94] I have added 'of God' to the lemma, apparently dropped here by scribal error. That it was in Victorinus' VL text is evident from the presence of the full phrase 'angel of God' thrice in the comment. Souter's observation of this (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 11) went unheeded by both Locher and Gori in their critical editions.

welcomed me *as an angel of God*, that is, as a messenger, a preacher sent by God (for here is the meaning of *an angel of God*[95]), and you took me in as Christ Jesus, whom I was preaching to you. Thus you truly did take in Christ Jesus, if you received me as an angel of God, just as you received Christ Jesus.

What blessedness was therefore yours![96] (4: 15). Here he is showing that they are now in a bad state, if indeed blessedness had previously been their lot when they received Jesus Christ, having received Paul as an angel of God. Great, he says, was your blessedness! *Was*, he says; so now the situation is clearly different, with you adding on things which I did not teach and did not instill, things which are outside the gospel, clearly, those things which I have been discussing above.

I bear you witness, that had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. You took me in in this way, you had such enthusiasm toward me, such goodwill toward me, so that even your very eyes—nothing is dearer to people than their eyes[97]—you would have wanted to tear out and give to me. Therefore, because you loved me in this way, and also loved me on account of the gospel, where did you get this notion of yours to attach things not preached by me to the teaching? That is, how is it that beyond Christ you would perform something of the Law, instead of hoping for all things in Christ (which is the gospel as I transmitted it in its simple form), having hope, faith, and an inclination to believe?[98] How is it that you wouldn't believe you could obtain all things in Christ: the remission of sins, sanctification, and the glory of God?

Have I then become your enemy by proclaiming what is true to you? (4: 16). For if you have begun to do other things, I have become an

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[95] Latin *angelus* is a loan-word from the Greek ἄγγελος, which means messenger or envoy. The term came to mean 'divine messenger' in Hellenistic Judaism through the LXX translation of the Hebrew *mal'âk*, but it was, according to C. A. Newcome (art. 'Angels', *ABD*, i. 249), 'only with the Vulgate that a systematic distinction was made between angelic emissaries (Lat. *angelus*) and human ones (Lat. *nuntius*)'—this latter term being precisely the synonymn chosen by Victorinus in his explanation of the Greek word.

[96] The VL (also in Ambrosiaster and Augustine) records a variant here (*quae ergo erat beatitudo vestra*) that appears in some Greek MSS (τίς instead of ποῦ). From his comment below, we see that Victorinus takes the verse as an exclamatory statement, not a question, as appears in most translations.

[97] A commonplace found in Latin poetry: e.g. Terence, *Adelph.* 701; Catullus, 14. 1; Horace, *Sat.* 2. 5. 35 (cited in Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater*, 149 n. 9). Aristotle famously observed in the opening of his *Metaphysics* that sight was preferred to all the senses on account of its connection with knowledge (*Meta.*, A I. 1 (980a)).

[98] *credulitas*. The translation of this as 'inclination to believe' preserves the connection with *credere* ('to believe') in the next sentence and elsewhere.

enemy to you. But because I preached to you and proclaimed Christ and the gospel, which is truly that Christ is the one Son of God through whom are all things, in whom are all things, and who is before all things[99]—because this is true, and is the truth itself,[100] why have I become an enemy to you? For an enemy ought to be someone who, when asked what is true, teaches what is false. Whereas because I spoke what is true (for one who proclaims Christ speaks what is true), it is unlikely that I would have become your enemy.

They are badly emulous of you and want to exclude you, in order that you would be emulous of them; be[101] *emulous, however, of better things* (4: 17). He warns them, as he does frequently, to be on guard against conspiracies, because those who engaged in persuading the Galatians to follow also the Jewish law *are emulous of you*, he says, meaning they are jealous of you. For emulating can signify two different things. One is when someone is emulous because something is pleasing, because something is good. Another is when some people are emulous because they are jealous.[102] These people, he is saying, *are badly emulous of you*. By this he shows that they are emulous out of jealousy. Next he has added, *they want to exclude you*: that is, from that happiness of yours and from your blessedness, because by knowing Christ you have the hope of salvation and heavenly glory. It is from this that they crave *to exclude you*. Now, because he has added *in order that you would be emulous of them* (in the sense that you would follow them), he has thus employed this dual significance of emulating in different parts of the verse, as emulation means imitation, especially when one imitates a good thing. This is what Paul is saying here: *in order that you would be emulous of them*—that is, that you would follow some supposed good of theirs. But on the other hand, at the beginning of the sentence (when we said *they are emulous of you*), Paul added *badly* to show that emulation was employed there to mean jealousy. *But be emulous of better gifts*, not those things which Jews have, which are not gifts and are in fact not better. Be emulous, however, of things which are good and are *better gifts*: that is, be emulous of whatever consists in faith and love toward Christ, and follow this!

[99] Cf. Rom. 11: 36 and Col. 1: 17.

[100] Cf. John 14: 7, a verse Victorinus often refers to in his Trinitarian works (e.g. *Adv. Ar.* I 11; III 13; IV 6).

[101] This phrase is a textual variant reproduced in the VL which derives from a contamination with 1 Cor. 12: 31 (Gori, CorPat, 424). Nestle-Aland[27] records several Greek MSS containing this reading (*D**, *F*, *G*, *a*, *b*).

[102] A similar distinction is found in Augustine's comments on Gal. 5: 19–23, occasioned by the appearance of *aemulationes* in 5: 19 (see above, Ch. 6, *ad loc.*).

To be emulous of what is good is always better (4: 18–19). To be emulous is not a good thing, but to be emulous of better things is always good. *And not only when I am present with you, my children,*[103] *with whom I am again in labour until Christ be formed in you.* Not only ought you to be emulous in my presence, he says, but *always*. Therefore, to the point he established by saying *always*, he added, *and not only when I am present with you*. Going further, however, he added *my children*. People are called children in many ways:[104] sometimes from love, sometimes from nature, sometimes from kinship, at times even in regards to religion, with reference to which Paul now says *my children*. He calls them this because the man who brings a baptized person to perfection (or who receives one who is perfect) is called a father by virtue of the baptismal rite,[105] where rebirth takes place.[106] Alternatively, he calls them children because when he restores them to Christ, he makes them his own children, which is why he adds, *with whom I am again in labour*—that is, those whom I long to bring forth into the light, whom I long with great labour and great pangs of my soul to be reborn to life and to salvation. This is what he is saying: *until Christ be formed in you.* For every soul is capable of receiving Christ. The human soul, if it makes use of reason, I say, if it realizes that the world is not its own,[107] if it distinguishes all things in the world, and if it recognizes it own creator, the human soul is capable of receiving Christ. More precisely, Christ—that is, the Spirit—is formed in that very soul. By the grafting in and increase of the Spirit, the soul is liberated through its inclination to believe, and it attains to the heavenly realms, obtaining the salvation of the eternal light. Now, the force and the power of what he says—*until Christ be formed in you*—is great. But the level of discussion we are now engaging in involves

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[103] (*Filii*) (here 'children') is translated elsewhere in the commentary as 'sons'. The gender exclusivity implied by 'sons' notwithstanding (I have no reason to obscure the patriarchalism of the Roman Empire here), it would be misleading to render *filii* throughout as 'children', which necessarily implies a state of immaturity in some respect. The latter sense is found in the term *parvuli* in 4: 3 and is appropriately glossed by Victorinus.

[104] A similar analysis of the metaphor of parent and child is found in *Ad Cand.* 30. 27 ff. (CSEL 83/1, 46): 'Those who are widely learned say that one can be a son in three ways: by truth; by nature; and by position. . . . There are also other ways [of being a son], as by customs, by age, by teaching, even as Paul says *I have begotten you*' (1 Cor. 4: 15).

[105] *per baptismum.* Thus Augustine refers to Simplician as a 'father to the then bishop Ambrose in the receiving of grace' (*Conf.* 8. 2. 3; ET: Chadwick, 134).

[106] He makes a similar remark in his comments on Eph. 3: 15, referring to one who is called 'a father in the mysteries', i.e. the Christian mysteries of baptism.

[107] As in his remarks on 4: 3–4, Victorinus here employs Johannine language (cf. John 1: 11, 8: 23) to express aspects of his metaphysics of the soul.

only a simple explication of the words, whence I believe the amount we have said above is sufficient. Now, what Christ is, or what it means for Christ to be formed, and to be formed in a human being, a deeper and more adequate explication is offered and explained by us elsewhere.[108]

But I would like to be with you now and change my tone, because I am upset with you (4: 20). These precepts are given throughout the letter, as we have noted them. Now, this remark was made with great annoyance, such that he would be saying: If only I were with you now, I would take action! For this is what *change my tone* means. Not a change by which I would proclaim the gospel differently, but that I would express myself in anger.[109] For the moment he admonishes them through the letter he is sending. But he has included the reason for his just anger, as he said *I am upset with you*: that is, I feel ashamed, because you were quickly turned back, because you are throwing away so much faith, because you are not holding on to my work and to the truth of the gospel as it was instilled. This is the source of my great consternation about you. Next he has added, if indeed angrily, none the less in a tempered manner:

Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, have you not read the Law? (4: 21). He wants to persuade them on the basis of the Law itself, to which they have switched over. If only they would read the Law itself! He is striving to persuade them, I am claiming, on the basis of the Law itself, in order that they understand that it was written in such a manner that it would relate to Christ,[110] so that our inclination to believe, applied to Christ, would constitute total liberation, total salvation, and complete blessedness. So it is with great annoyance that he says *Tell me!* I am not going to admonish you; rather, you respond to me yourselves! You clearly switched over to the Law and want to be under the Law, and yet you have not read the

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[108] Both Hadot (*Marius Victorinus*, 302) and Gori (CorPat, 425) conclude that this reference is probably to a lost work. Part of his comment on the phrase *until Christ be formed in you* resembles material from the philosophical digression on Eph. 1: 4, especially the remarks on the soul's recognition of itself and God (Gori, 8, 54–66; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 48); but we find there no discussion of Christ 'being formed' in the believer. The 'lost work' in question is likely to be one of his commentaries on Paul, where the apostle uses language containing, in Latin translation, compounds containing the root *forma-*, e.g. Rom. 8: 29 or 2 Cor. 3: 18.

[109] Modern scholars generally take Paul to mean just the opposite: that he wishes to be with the Galatians so that he can soften his angry tone and speak 'in a fundamentally joyous and affirmative manner' (Martyn, *Galatians*, 426). See above, Ch. 6, *ad loc.*, for a comparison with other patristic exegetes, among whom Ambrosiaster and Augustine share Victorinus' exegesis.

[110] *quia scriptum ita est ut in Christum conferatur*. Christians are to take the Law exclusively in this regard, i.e. in light of Christ.

Law in which it is so written. And Paul adds a verse whereby he can prove what is the Law, the teaching, the hope and faith of the Jews, and what is the faith, the hope, and the blessedness in Christ.

It is written that Abraham had two sons, one from the slave-girl and one from the free woman (4: 22). The illustration is from Genesis.[111] He wants this proved: that the Law, which belongs to the Jews, and the entire people are the son from the slave-girl, as it were. At the same time now, the son from the free woman signifies the church and Christians. This is what is written. Abraham, who is the father of faith, had a son, Ishmael, from the slave-girl—that is, from Hagar. He had another son, Isaac, from the free woman—that is, from Sarah. Clearly, Paul is indicating that there are two peoples, but the better one, who is from the free woman, is Isaac. For figuratively, Isaac is Christ.[112] Next, he adds along these lines:

But the son of the slave-girl was born according to the flesh, while the one from the free woman was born through the promise (4: 23). Clearly, having been born of a slave-girl, the one son signifies the flesh, but the one from the free woman signifies the spiritual, on account of the fact that he was promised by God. For God made a promise to Abraham, who believed that although both he and his wife were 100 years old, they were going to have a baby. Therefore, since the two of them were joined[113] when his seed, and even her womb, had lost vitality, it could no longer be from the flesh but only from the spirit that they procreated the son they had. And this was the promise: that they were going to have a son. We, however, are going to compare these two sons, and likewise their mothers, to different peoples, to the churches of the Jews and the Christians.[114] Paul, having indeed interpreted the passage differently,[115] adds as follows:

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[111] See Gen. 16: 5 and 21: 2–9.

[112] Literally, 'for Isaac is in a figure of Christ' (cf. his remarks to the same effect on 4: 27). For the early Christian understanding of Isaac as a 'type' of Christ, see Jean Daniélou, 'La Typologie d'Isaac dans le christianisme primitif', *Biblica*, 28 (1947), 363–93.

[113] *iungerentur*: a common euphemism for sexual intercourse (J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 179).

[114] Victorinus refers to the religious communities of both groups as *ecclesiae*, perhaps due to the classical meaning of the word *ecclesia* as 'assembly' (his comments on 4: 27 continue this usage). The interpretation of Paul's allegory in terms of the different peoples is not innovative on Victorinus' part: see Jerome's comments, doubtless reflecting his Greek sources (PL 26, 390C [417A]); also the pseudo-Cyprianic treatise *De montibus Sina et Sion*, 11 (ed. Hartel, CSEL 3/3, 116, 9–12; ET: Laato, *Jews and Christians*, 179).

[115] Paul's allegorizing of the text of Genesis gives Victorinus licence to offer an alternative—and vehemently anti-Jewish—allegorical interpretation which highlights the fact of two different peoples. Paul's allegory emphasized the idea of covenant.

These things are said through an allegory (4: 24–5). We have cer-
tainly made the interpretation *through an allegory*, so to speak. (An
allegory is when one thing is said and another is meant.[116]) Paul has
none the less interpreted this same allegory differently, as he adds:
*For these are the two covenants: one is from Mount Sinai and gives birth
into servitude, which is Hagar. Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which is
associated with the one of Jerusalem now, [and she is in servitude along
with her children].*[117] The son from the slave-girl signifies, he says, a
people or a covenant. Now, the slave-girl was Hagar, who was from
Mount Sinai.[118] As the slave-girl Hagar was in servitude, so too that
people is in servitude. But since Mount Sinai is associated with that
city which is Jerusalem, Paul wanted by that 'mountain' the city to
be understood, and through the city, the Jews. Through the moun-
tain, however, is signified the slave-girl, who was from that very
Mount Sinai and gave birth in servitude. For that reason, Jerusalem
too (that is, the people of that very city and the covenant which has

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[116] *Sic utique nos interpretati sumus, quasi per allegoriam. Cum aliud dicitur, aliud
significatur, haec allegoria est.* This is a standard definition of allegory, clearly based
on the Greek etymology. Cf. Severian's definition in his remarks on the same
verse: 'Some things are explicated through other things, and this is the proper form
of allegory' (ἄλλα δι' ἄλλων εἰσάγεται, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ἀλληγορίας εἶδος κύριον (Staab,
2nd edn., 302, 22). Similarly Ambrosiaster: 'the characters Ishmael and Isaac
signify one thing from another (*aliud ex alio*)' (CSEL 81/3, 51, 2–3). Jerome refers
the matter to secular learning: 'Allegory is properly part of the art of grammar,
where as schoolchildren we learn to distinguish it from metaphor or others tropes.
Allegory sets out one thing in words but signifies something else in meaning (*Aliud
praetendit in verbis, aliud significat in sensu*)' (PL26, 389B–C [416A]). He goes on to
mention that 'it is clear Paul was not ignorant of worldly learning (*litteras saecu-
laras*); and the thing he has here spoken of as allegory, he has elsewhere called
spiritual understanding' (he then cites Rom. 7: 14 and 1 Cor. 10: 3–4). Theodore
observes that allegory is a form of 'comparison' (σύγκρισις) between past and present
events (Swete, i. 79, 18–19). Good discussion of Paul's allegory and the rhetorical
figure is found in Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 1st edn., 151–8, albeit he
misunderstands the force of Victorinus' remarks, 155 n. 399.

[117] Although the last phrase of this verse is absent from the MSS, Gori (CorPat,
425) has noted that Victorinus' final comment on the verse (*in servitute est cum filiis
suis*) presupposes that it originally stood in his biblical text (Ambrosiaster's VL has
serviens cum filiis suis; that of Pelagius and the Budapest Anonymous, *et servit cum
filiis suis*).

[118] Gori (CorPat, 425) points out that Victorinus does not explain this statement,
and wonders whether he could have known that 'Hagar' in Arabic means 'Mount
Sinai'. The etymology is dubious (see Betz, *Galatians*, 244–5); but the Targums
refer to the location Shur (which is mentioned in Gen. 16: 7 in connection with
Hagar's first flight) as 'Hagra' (discussion and references in Pitta, *Lettera ai Galati*,
287). The wilderness of Shur is in the northern Sinai peninsula, one of the putative
locations of Mt Sinai (Jebel Halal). How Victorinus came by such a geographical
link between Sinai and Hagar is unclear; it is not impossible that he had read a
Greek commentary on Galatians, say, by Origen, who knew Jewish traditions and
tended to provide encyclopaedic information.

been written concerning that very city) *is in servitude along with her children.*[119]

But the Jerusalem on high is free, the mother of us all (4: 26). Paul returns to that other people—that is, to the sons of Abraham who are from the free woman—and he says that this kind of Jerusalem, which he calls free, is in heaven. This is what he says: *but the Jerusalem on high*, the Jerusalem above the heavens, in no way serves, because she is not in the world. For whatever is in the world serves. Therefore this Jerusalem, along with her peoples, is free. He says that this Jerusalem is the mother of all of us,[120] meaning Christians, but that other Jerusalem is the mother of the Jews. What it means for there to be a Jerusalem above the heavens, and for there also to be a Jerusalem on earth (whence one may understand that there is earth here and earth there above the heavens,[121] for Jerusalem, which is a city, is not without earth)—so what it means, I emphasize, that there is earth both here and there, and a city both here and there (but that one being free and this one a slave) would entail a different and extended treatise.[122] Let us just grasp the point: that the free city is our mother, to whom we must hasten. In passing now, I'll draw attention to the fact that the city which is higher is spiritual, and the one below is fleshly.

For it is written: 'Rejoice, barren woman, you who bear no children, break forth and cry out, you who are not in labour, since the sons of the desolate woman are many more than those of the woman who has a

[119] Jerusalem and her children were in a political sense *in servitute* to Rome. This point is made explicitly by Ephrem in his commentary on Galatians: 'That simile pertains to the Jerusalem which is in subjection and, along with her children, is in servitude to the Romans' (Venice, 135; cited in Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 194; see his full discussion of the various problems posed by this verse and the textual variants, pp. 192–8).

[120] There is a similar emphasis in Origen on the heavenly nature of the 'mother of us all'. The rich history of this theme is traced by Joseph Plumpe's *Mater Ecclesia: An Inquiry into the Concept of the Church as Mother in Early Christianity* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1943), 69–80.

[121] Unlikely to be a signal that Victorinus partook of millenarian ideas about the materiality of the kingdom, a remote possibility raised by the Migne editor (PL 8, 1186 n. 2). Victorinus would not have to have departed from Neoplatonism to make sense of an 'earth above the heavens'. According to Plotinus, 'All that is here below comes from there, and exists in greater beauty there. . . . All the universe is held fast by forms from beginning to end: matter first by the forms of the elements (ἡ ὕλη τοῖς τῶν στοιχείων εἴδεσιν)' (*En.* 5. 8. 7; ET: Armstrong, Loeb, v. 259). Anything composed of matter and form here obviously has a form in the intelligible realm (cf. also *En.* 2. 4. 6; ET: Armstrong, Loeb, ii. 119). Victorinus deliberately avoids digressing into a philosophical account of what he here calls 'Jerusalem above the heavens' (Rev. 21: 2), but this indicates neither discomfort about nor disinterest in the subject.

[122] *alius tractatus est longus.* Locher's suggestion in his Teubner edition (p. 55) that this remark refers to a lost commentary seems unwarranted.

husband' (4: 27). This quotation is from Isaiah,[123] and it is intended to counter what they are trying hardest to persuade: that the Galatians, along with worship of and faith in Christ, would none the less also observe a Jewish teaching they had taken on for themselves. In order to counter this, I am claiming, in order that the Galatians would reject that teaching and hold only the gospel about Christ, Paul took up the previously cited passage to teach that Abraham had two sons,[124] one from the slave-girl and another from the free woman. But the free woman, who was indeed his wife, was sterile, and would not have given birth if God had not provided her a son on account of his promise. From this one can understand that Abraham had a son, not from their taking up bodily activity,[125] but based on the promise of God—if indeed the son of the free woman was born of a barren woman and conceived by a certain spirit, rather than by copulation.[126] Therefore, it was this barren woman who produced a son, Isaac, who was born to be an image and type of Christ, the very one who has liberated his people. Therefore, when he says *Rejoice, barren woman, you who bear no children*, the meaning is that God is making sons for you; and in the same way when he says *break forth and cry out, you who are not in labour*, it means that sons are created for you without pain. For to be *in labour* involves being in pain when the offspring is brought forth. This is certainly not the way it goes with the church, which contains an image, or rather, whose image is that free-born wife of Abraham.[127] It is the church, I am claiming, which has many children, sons of God and sons of the Spirit, whom she has with greater joy and not with pain. Clearly, even if that slave-girl had a son, she had him in pain, she had him from a man.[128] So when he spoke of *many children of the desolate woman*, he has made a

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123 Isa. 54: 1.

124 i.e. the reference to Genesis in Gal. 4: 22.

125 *non ex adsumptione inter se corporum.*

126 This fleshes out one aspect of the way in which Isaac figuratively means Christ, as Victorinus remarked on 4: 22. Sarah's pregnancy came from the Spirit, not the flesh, which had lost its vital powers. Thus Sarah prefigures Mary, so Isaac is a type of Christ in this regard. Next he develops other parallels between the two.

127 When Victorinus calls persons or events of the Hebrew Bible images, types, or figures (*imago, typus, figura*), he is saying that they are prototypes of realities revealed in the life of Christ and the early church (on the relation of typology and allegory, see Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 186–202). This allows him to read the Old Testament as containing a second level of meaning, an allegorical level, very much in the mainstream of Christian interpretation. See the excellent discussion in the Introduction to David Dawson's *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

128 *habuit ex dolore, habuit ex viro.* English cannot maintain the parallel prepositional phrases of the Latin. There may be a slight echo here of the conditions God imposed on Eve after the first sin: that she will bear children in pain, yet not cease to desire her man (Gen. 3: 16).

reference to the church, when he presented an image and type of it above.[129] Then, as he said *the sons of the desolate woman are many more than those of the woman who has a husband*, he shows what he was indicating above:[130] she had a son without a man, having had one spiritually instead. Sarah would never have given her husband to this woman unless she had a sense that a son[131] would come not by intercourse with her husband, but that she would receive him because of a spiritual promise.[132] And clearly, says Paul, *the sons of the desolate woman are many*. Certainly, since Sarah had one son, the phrase is not to be referred to Sarah, but to the church which has many sons.[133] Thus the woman who has a husband stands for the Law and the church of the Jews, which assents in a corporeal manner.[134] Joined to itself corporeally, it is unable have a son spiritually.

But you, brothers, are sons of the promise according to Isaac (4: 28). He distinguishes these two sorts plainly enough by a comparison, so that Jews would appear to be sons of the slave-girl, whereas Christians would appear to be sons of the free woman. Just as a spiritual son, who is Isaac, was promised to Sarah, so too you—you who are

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[129] *ad ecclesiam rettulit, cum imaginem et typum praestitit supra.* 'Sarah' must be understood as the 'image and type' of the church presented at 4: 22–3. This is clear from the following reference to the Genesis story here.

[130] i.e. at 4: 23, where the distinction was made between being born 'according to the flesh' and 'through the promise', i.e. 'from the spirit', as he explains in the comment to that verse.

[131] I have accepted Gori's conjecture *filium* for the reading of the MSS, *virum*, 'husband' or 'man' (Gori, 'Altre note al testo dei *Commentarii in apostolum* di Mario Vittorino', *Studi storico religiosi*, 1 (1977), 377–85, 379).

[132] This comment suggests that Sarah regarded herself as the bearer of the promise, albeit he transforms her role in the story somewhat, for Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham because she despaired of being able to conceive (Gen. 16: 1–4). In Victorinus' presentation, however, Sarah is forsaken by Abraham, but maintains a pious belief in God's promise, assuming she will conceive solely through that promise, apart from the embrace of her husband. It may be that Victorinus has been led to this view under the influence of the citation from Isa. 54: 1 at Gal. 4: 27, which calls Sarah a desolate or deserted woman (*deserta*) and then refers to another woman, Hagar, as having a husband. Thus he finds a parallel between Christ and Isaac regarding their mothers, both of whom, on his reading, conceived in a purely spiritual manner.

[133] As in Origen's exegesis (*De prin.* 4. 2. 5–9; ET: Butterworth, 277–87), the impossibility of a literal interpretation gives rise to the necessity to find a more plausible allegorical meaning, which is set up by Paul's own co-ordination of the story from Genesis with the passage from Isaiah.

[134] Because Victorinus thinks that Judaism interprets the Scriptures *corporaliter*, he finds it spiritually sterile, incapable of spiritual birth. The turn of phrase he uses here (*corporaliter cum sibi iungitur*) seems to echo the gnostic myth of the conception by Sophia of the non-spiritual offspring, Achamoth, due to an abortive attempt to conceive by herself (see Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1. 1. 7; ed. Harvey, i. 31; ET: ANF 1, 320).

sons of faith—are sons of the free woman *according to Isaac*. This is what it means that she[135] had her son Isaac according to faith. Everyone who exists according to faith, then, becomes a son. For it is according to faith that one spiritually receives a son, even the spiritual son Isaac.[136]

But just as [the one born according to the flesh persecuted the one][137] *who was according to the spirit back then, so too now* (4: 29). Providing a full explanation, he shows that Ishmael, *who was born according to the flesh*—that is, from the slave-girl—*persecuted the one*—Isaac, clearly—*who was according to the spirit*, just as is stated in Genesis.[138] *So too now*, those people who have an understanding according to the flesh persecute those who live according to the Spirit—that is, Christians.[139] Next, to show the force of the argument that he has conceived, he added these words:

But what does Scripture say? 'Cast out the slave-girl and her son, for the son of the slave-girl will not be an heir along with my son Isaac' (4: 30). From this quotation, which is found in Genesis,[140] Paul makes it sufficiently clear that anyone who knows and accepts the Law of the Jews, so as to accept it in a fleshly manner, is a son according to the flesh. About such a son the Law has pronounced, and it has given the sentence that the slave-girl and her son be cast out. The reason lies in the fact that the son of the slave-girl was unable be heir along with the son who is from the free woman, who is Isaac. Therefore you too, because you have added on the observance of the Law according to the flesh in order to become heirs more effectively, may you too be sons of the free woman. That is, embrace Christianity alone, embrace the law of Christ and the gospel leading to Christ, and take nothing from the son of the slave-girl, so to speak. This means following nothing of the Jewish teaching.

Therefore, brothers, we are not sons of the slave-girl but of the free woman (4: 31). Paul himself makes the point more clearly by adding this: Those of you who have now received Christ and my faith are not sons of the slave-girl. This means you do not think in a fleshly

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[135] Although Gori thinks that Abraham is the unspecified subject of *habuerit* (CorPat, 279), Victorinus' train of thought seems rather to concern the birth of two 'churches'—Jewish and Christian—from their two mothers, so that the subject here will rather be Sarah, mentioned just above.

[136] i.e. Christ according to the typology that Victorinus has been establishing.

[137] These words are missing in the MSS and have been supplied by Gori, following Souter's observation that on the basis of the comment, some of the lemma must have dropped out of the text (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 11).

[138] Gen. 21: 9.

[139] Those who have a carnal understanding of Scripture naturally think that God's commands, e.g. circumcision, remain valid after the arrival of faith. Necessarily they will be hostile to those who interpret the text differently.

[140] Gen. 21: 10.

manner; because the slave-girl's son[141] is the fleshly one, but you are sons of the free woman—that is, sons of faith. This is what Isaac was, according to his faith and God's promise: a spiritual son.[142]

By which freedom[143] *Christ has freed us* (5: 1): by that freedom, clearly, by which our mother is a free woman, being free, obviously, by faith. For this is true freedom: to maintain faithfulness in relation to God, to believe God and all God's promises.[144] It is according to our faith, then, that Christ has led us back to freedom, and he has freed us by the freedom of faith.[145]

Stand then, and do not be again confined by the yoke of servitude. An exhortation had to be added, so that the Galatians would persevere in the same things which they had received from him, and not go back again to the condition of servitude to the Law. *Stand*, he says—a thing impossible for someone under a yoke, who bends his neck with a submissive nape, so as not to stand upright. *Stand then*, he says—which means to hold the body erect with one's limbs free—*do not be again confined*, he says, *by the yoke of servitude*. For previously you were acting in service, whether to the Law or to Gentile religion. This is why he said *again*, in case we would return to the same old things.

Look, I Paul am saying to you that if you get circumcised, Christ will have given you nothing beneficial (5: 2). He shows clearly that Christ

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[141] *quoniam ancillae <filius> carnalis est*: Mai's insertion of 'son' in the text has been accepted by Locher and Gori.

[142] I have added 'his' and 'God's' for clarification. God's 'promise'—to Abraham, Sarah, and others—is a key piece of Paul's theological vocabulary in Galatians and Romans; Victorinus maintains that emphasis in his commentary.

[143] Victorinus' VL text has a variant (*qua libertate*) found in some Greek MSS (ᾗ ἐλευθερίᾳ), unsupported by the best Greek MSS, which read 'by freedom' (τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ). The effect on the level of meaning is slight; the reading with the pronoun links 5: 1a back to 4: 31 (as we see in Ambrosiaster, who has the same variant), whereas with the article a new sentence, and also a section break, is begun (discussion in Burton, *Galatians*, 270–1).

[144] The proto-Lutheran character of Victorinus' conception of faith as trust in God and what God has promised is evident here. Cf. Luther's *Freedom of a Christian*: 'when the soul firmly trusts God's promises, it regards him as truthful and righteous' (in *Martin Luther: Selections*, ed. Dillenberger 59).

[145] The motif of being led back to freedom needs to be understood in light of his discussion of the pre-lapsarian existence of souls in his philosophical digression to Eph. 1: 4. There he describes the transformation of the human person from the status of 'souls conquered by the powers of sensory things who have nothing in their minds but the world, matter, flesh, and body', to that of mature spiritual beings, who—thanks to the revelation of the Mystery—have fulfilled the potentials given them at creation. The passage is replete with imagery of captivity and liberation (ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 47–51). Good discussion of Victorinus' view of the peregrinations of the soul by Mary Clark, 'The Psychology of Marius Victorinus', *AugSt* 5 (1974), 149–66.

does not benefit any who put their hope in circumcision, in fleshly circumcision. So when you add on the life-style of the Jews,[146] their precepts and teaching, if you base your salvation and liberation on these things, I, Paul, am saying to you, he says—he, obviously, the one who promised you this previously, when he called you to the gospel of God—*I Paul*, he says, I deny that Christ benefits you, I deny that he brings help in anything if you put your whole hope in circumcision. Although the Galatians seem both to have accepted Christ and to have added the Jewish teaching, Paul has none the less asserted his own official role,[147] as if to make binding what is expressed in his saying *Christ will avail you nothing if you get circumcised*. In the way Paul has reasserted this point (that Christ will have been of no avail if the Galatians get circumcised), some kind of hidden element can seem to be present. This is evident from the fact that the Galatians do follow Christ and, following Christ, put their hope of salvation in him. For although the intention and the faithfulness toward Christ have been preserved, they are doing something in addition. They are not, at any rate, deserting Christ, but neither are they putting their faith in Christ. But let us go back to their intention, inclination, and desire. Although they accepted Christ from Paul, and they took up faith in Christ (and this is the true gospel), they clearly supposed that they were not going to get enough from Christ[148]—which already smacks of blasphemy and their lack of faith. This is why after the acceptance of Christ, they desired to get circumcised and devote themselves to the Law and its workings. If this is the situation, their faith in Christ is non-existent; because if there is a lack of faith, or the presence of a little and therefore practically non-existent faith, that would be the basis for adding on some other potentially beneficial thing. Rightly, Paul says *Christ will avail you nothing*.

But I testify to every man who gets himself circumcised: he is indebted to do the whole Law (5: 3). He says this to prevent the Galatians from maintaining that only certain items of the Law, like circumcision, are to be adopted for themselves and from rejecting others which relate to diet, to the observance of days, or to intercourse[149]—what sort and between which persons is specified in the Law. Certain of these elements of the Law are superfluous; others are abhorrent and thus abandoned by the true and really pure Christian. I will mention just one: the case when a man's wife is joined to his brother for the sake of

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[146] *morem Iudaeorum.*

[147] *tamen adfirmavit et personam suam.*

[148] Literally, 'something less from Christ' (*a Christo minus*), less than what Paul's gospel promises.

[149] *vel in cibis vel in observantia dierum vel in coniunctione. Coniunctio* was also used with the sexual meaning in his comments on 4: 27.

raising up offspring.[150] There are also other things of this sort, practices being done or recorded as having been done. Likewise, there are the other things I have discussed: those concerning foods, then religious observances, and the many other things to be assumed by one who gets circumcised. For if you do not do these other things, you have had recourse to circumcision in vain. For *I testify* that *to every man who gets circumcised*, the necessity sets in that he is *indebted* to do all the things which belong to the Law. Paul is making them out to be sinners, therefore, in terms of the very Law they have adopted, in so far as they are not doing everything but are selecting which things they judge are to be done. Moreover, when it comes to Christ's law, when it comes to the gospel, they have altogether strayed and will stray even further if they do all the things which belong to the Law. Next, given their present stance of doing some of the things which Jews do, he has added a conclusion—on the basis of this stance, I emphasize—that they seem estranged from Christ.

You have been evicted from Christ, you who are justified in the Law; you have been cut off from grace (5: 4). For the whole power of anyone believing in Christ rests in the grace of God. Grace, however, is based not on one's merits, but on God's mercy.[151] Therefore, you are now *cut off from grace*, if you set your justification in the Law, as seems to be the case, since you are labouring at works, since you are observing the sabbath and getting circumcised. If you believe your-selves to be justified from that, you have been cut off from grace, and *you have been evicted from Christ*. For if you believe that justification comes from the Law, you no longer have any hope from Christ; you are not hoping there would be grace for you in accordance with his passion and resurrection.

For we await the hope of justice in spirit and faith (5: 5). We Christians, says Paul, those who follow Christ, we have hope in

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[150] Deut. 25: 5–6.

[151] *ex dei pietate*. Whereas *pietas* in classical Latin bespeaks the reverential attitude and actions of a son toward a father, of a people toward the gods, of citizens toward the state, in Christian Latin the term came to be used for God's loving kindness toward humanity. See Cyprian's reference to the story of the prodigal son in *Ep.* 55, 23: 'how much more is that one true father good, compasionate, and merciful (*pius*)—or rather, is himself goodness, compassion, and mercy (*pietas*).' Augustine notes in the *City of God* that one encounters this improper use of the word among the common people (*more . . . vulgi*) to refer to works of mercy, and that this usage is to be traced to the fact that God has commanded such works (10. 1; CCSL 47, 273, 77–82). Victorinus used such language on Eph. 1: 18, speaking of the *pietas dei*, the 'mercy of God' which 'receives us in adoption' (Gori, 22, 57). His remarks on Phil. 4: 6 contain a similar usage: 'that we would give thanks because we have obtained so great a gift by God's mercy' (*tantum donum dei pietate*; Gori, 220, 17).

spirit, in faith, and in the justification of God;[152] our hope is not based on works. For the whole power of the Mystery has worked to this effect: that an indulgence of sins would come about for us through the grace and mercy of God,[153] and that eternal life would be supplied, as we have often taught, on the basis of God's grace, not works or merits. But this happens through the Spirit. On the other hand, when one hopes for justification on the basis of one's works, the hope is not based on the Spirit. Hope based on the Spirit is what *we await*, and this is what it means to follow the gospel of Christ.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but faith which works through love counts (5: 6). Everywhere Paul states that when it comes to faith, all else ceases to count. This means social status, gender, or anything done that concerns the body, whether about, on, or for the sake of the body: circumcision, works, and other practices of this sort. None of these, he says, counts as anything in Christ. Therefore, circumcision is useless, although it is not as if we count as anything in Christ on the basis of our uncircumcision.[154] Because we have taken up faith in him, because we believe his promises, and because we ourselves rise up on the basis of his resurrection, and as we have suffered all things with him, we also rise with him—though through him—to life, our faith is sure. Through this faith comes our working for salvation; and it behooves us to take it on[155] through the love which we have for Christ, for

[152] Licensed perhaps by the use of the verb *iustificare* in the previous verse, Victorinus paraphrases the VL's *iustitia* ('justice') with *iustificatio* ('justification'), much as does Ambrosiaster (CSEL 81/3, 55, 20). The meaning of justification is filled out in the next sentence by the phrase 'indulgence of sins' (*relaxatio peccatorum*). Fuller discussion of this topic in Ch. 5, sect. C, above.

[153] *per gratiam et dei pietatem*.

[154] *neque ex eo quod praeputium est, valemus in Christo*. Perhaps this should be more pointedly translated as 'nor do we count in Christ because of our foreskin'.

[155] *per quam fidem operatio fit ad salutem et per caritatem accipere nos oportere*. The object of the verb *accipere* ('to take [it] on') is unspecified. Gori (CorPat, 287) judges it to be the 'salvation' just mentioned, with the sense that we 'receive salvation' (at the judgement) through our works of love but not because of them. (This would fit Victorinus' insistence in his comment on the previous verse that the eternal life attained is not based on works or merit, which at any rate must be understood as the presupposition behind the whole discussion.) However, the unspecified object of *accipere* could also be 'our working' (*operatio*), which I think renders a better sense along the lines clarified in his discussion of Phil. 2: 12–13 (KJV: 'Therefore, he says, *work out your salvation*, but this very working is none the less from God. For God works in you, and works that you would will thus [*sc.* as in the lemma, *pro bona voluntate*]; and the will is ours, as it were (*et velle quasi nostrum est*), whence we work out salvation for ourselves. None the less, because this very will from God works in us, it happens that we have both working and will on the basis of God's activity (*fit ut ex deo et operationem et voluntatem habeamus*)' (Gori, 195, 26–31). In line with this, his point on Gal. 5: 6 is that the faith inspired by God produces love for God, Christ, and the neighbour. Thus faith and love fulfil the law of Christ, as he states in the conclusion of this comment.

God, and hence toward every person. For these two have the greatest corrective effect on every life, fulfil the whole force of the Law, and contain all those things which are precepts in the Decalogue—if it follows of necessity that those who keep faith would uphold love. These two fulfil all that the law of Christ teaches.[156] I have dealt very often with these matters: that faith liberates and love builds up.[157]

You were running well—who hindered you? (5: 7). This means that you were holding a good faith in regard to the gospel. Why were you changed? Why were you called back from the right path, as if by some spell?[158] What I taught you through preaching the gospel was the full truth; this new thing is false, the opposite of truth, and will profit nothing. And he has added this: *so as not to obey the truth*. *Who hindered you*—he says—*so as not to obey the truth?* Truth is certainly on our side, which you were obliged to obey, to keep you from any other religious observance. This is why he sounds sort of astonished at first, saying *who hindered you?* Next he admonishes what is now to be done and what is not to be done:

Do not go along with anyone.[159] He fights on every front, lest they change their opinion and add on something beyond what was taught them by Paul through the gospel. Do not adjust, he says, what has been established to the views of others.

Your persuasion is[160] *from God who called you* (5: 8). This means that whatever you were persuaded about, be it by me, be it something you already held as persuaded by God, what you have been persuaded is by God, who called you, just as was said above: *whom God called, God also predestined*, and the other things which have been stated in order.[161]

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[156] Cf. Matt. 22: 37–40. Ambrosiaster makes the reference explicit and quotes from this passage of the Gospel in his comments on the same verse (CSEL 81/3, 56, 2).

[157] In connection with 1 Cor. 13 and probably elsewhere in his commentaries.

[158] This phrase (*quasi fascino quodam*) picks up the vocabulary from 3: 1, clearly associating the two verses, as they both allude to the persuasive efforts of those attempting to push circumcision on the Galatians (similarly, Martyn, *Galatians*, 474).

[159] This phrase at the end of 5: 7 is a textual variant that shows up in a couple of Greek MSS (*F, G*) and the VL (brief discussion in Zahn, *Galater*, 252).

[160] The VL used by Victorinus lacked the negative particle found in the majority tradition.

[161] Rom. 8: 30. By 'other things' (*caeteraque*) Victorinus appears to mean the rest of the verse, which he regards as laid out in a distinct order (see his reference to the same verse in his comments on Gal. 4: 9). The way he references Romans here (*sicuti supra dictum est*) suggests that he conceives of his commentaries on the epistles as a single, integral work. Remarks on 6: 14 contain a similar reference to Corinthians as epistles already treated (*de quo supra tractavimus*).

Do you not know that[162] *a little yeast spoils the entire mass?* (5: 9). All yeast involves a spoiling of bread; and bread, when spoiled, is flour. A mass of flour, when it is allowed to sit out, ferments, and from this yeast is made. Now, when a little bit of yeast is inserted into a mass, the mass is spoiled. You do well, he says, to be unleavened. So your supposed little bit that you have added—namely, that you would observe circumcision and other things—that little bit of yours, since it is spoiled, spoils the mass of our gospel. The result is that your full hope is not invested in Christ, and Christ does not regard you as his own, as people who have their hope from him. For faith liberates, and anyone, as we have said, who hopes for help in any way besides Christ, even if it be along with Christ, does not have faith.

I am confident about you in the Lord, that you will know nothing else (5: 10). I am very confident about your future now, he says: that you will have *nothing else* in your hearts and in your wisdom,[163] but only faith in Christ, in accordance with my gospel.

But the man who is unsettling you will bear the judgement, whosoever he be. With the threat of a future judgement he strikes fear in those who were doing the seducing, and fear in the Galatians themselves: the man who is upsetting you, he says, *will bear the judgement.* But even to mention *the judgement* suffices, at which mention there was no need to say that they would suffer punishment, but only judgement.[164] Next he signals that the judgement is going to be at the hands of that very one.[165] Paul, however, has already evoked the dread associated with punishment,[166] when he said *will bear.*

But brothers, if I preach[167] *circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution?* (5: 11). He demonstrates in every way that he is not in favour of the precept which they thought ought to be added. Paul suffers persecution from the Jews. For what reason, except that I do not

[162] These first words (*nescite quia*) do not correspond to any Greek version, but appear to have been imported from 1 Cor. 5: 6, an otherwise identical verse. The question is whether this insertion crept into the text of the commentary (Gori's initial explanation) or is a variant reading of the VL biblical text, as it also occurs in Lucifer of Caligari, *De non conv*. 14 (Gori, CorPat, 426). This latter suggestion is to be preferred in light of the fact that the VL version of Galatians found in Lucifer, like the one of Victorinus, both has the extra phrase tacked on to 5: 7 and lacks the negative particle usually present in 5: 6 (ed. G. Hartel, CSEL 14, 31, 2–4).

[163] 'Wisdom' (*sapientia*) picks up the cognate vocabulary (*nihil aliud sapietis*) of the lemma and renders it in a clear paraphrase.

[164] This interpretation is in line with the literary-critical dictum that veiled language functions to prompt unease and fear (see Demetrius, *On Style*, 100; Loeb, 412).

[165] *ab ipso*: Christ, no doubt, at the Last Judgement (cf. Rom. 2: 16).

[166] Gori follows Souter's correction (*Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 12) of the MS reading *paene* (printed in Migne and the Teubner edition) to *poenae*.

[167] Victorinus' VL text lacked anything corresponding to the particle ἔτι ('still') found in most Greek witnesses.

preach circumcision? So I did not preach circumcision in the gospel to you, which is why the Jews are persecuting me. He has also added on another argument to prove that he does not preach circumcision:

Then the scandal of the cross has been nullified. In vain do those who crucified Christ incur punishment; what was evilly done *has been nullified.*[168] For this is *the scandal*[169]*of the cross*, whence the Jews too were unsettled. Here he does not attribute this just to his own preaching, but also to the power of the thing itself. This is why I do not preach circumcision:[170] because *the scandal of the cross* remains and has not *been nullified.* Therefore, the Jews have to pay the penalty.[171] If the Jews who created the scandal of the cross have to pay for it, it follows that I would not preach circumcision and that you ought not to pursue it.

Would that those unsettling you be cut off! (5: 12). Paul has struck those who are applying new persuasions and unsettling the Galatians with a curse. May they *be cut off,* he says, from the truth of the gospel; may they be separated from themselves, or be tormented by punishments. Now, it is in virtue of his great fidelity that Paul has brought a curse[172] upon them, to show that he is not afraid of those

[168] Paul's ironic utterance of 5: 11b functions as a contrary-to-fact statement, despite the indicative mood of the verb (Burton, *Galatians*, 287–8). The full sense is: 'if I were preaching circumcision, the scandal of the cross would be nullified'. Victorinus' first comment continues in the indicative, but the reader must understand the consideration to be contrary to fact (Gori, accordingly, translates these indicatives with the conditional).

[169] This word is not found in the text according to the surviving MSS, but was supplied by Mai and followed by Gori. The force of the comment is not clear to me: perhaps the 'this' means the wrongful crucifixion (the *male factum* of the previous sentence).

[170] *Ideo enim non praedico quia scandalum crucis manet, nec evacuatum est.* I have supplied the 'circumcision' as an object of the verb, in accordance with how Victorinus introduces his comment on this latter part of verse 11: *Adiungit et aliud argumentum ut ostendat quod circumcisionem non praedicat.* Without supplying the object, the comment makes little sense. He oftens omits elements that are clear from the context: e.g., just below, *Debent ergo poenas. Quod si debent Iudaei . . . .* (so too on 5: 16: *Ambulate ergo, inquit, in spiritu, id est, vitam agite* [sc. *in spiritu*]).

[171] A similar animus is evident in his remarks on 3: 1 about the 'Christ crucified in you' and on 6: 12b about the penalty for crucifying Christ. Victorinus' eagerness to bring the punishment of the Jews into view here, without much occasion from the text, appears wholly gratuitous and is probably best understood as an expression of the strength of his anti-Jewish sentiments. It is not clear to me whether the 'penalty' Victorinus thinks the Jews must pay consists of the many historical calamities (thus Eusebius, *EH* 2. 6. 8; 3. 5. 6; 4. 6. 3–4; ET: Williamson, 43, 69, 108) following the First Jewish Revolt (66–74 CE) and then the Bar Kokhba rebellion (132–5), or whether he is thinking of one specific consequence of the latter revolt: viz. the *fiscus iudaicus* (for which see Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, ii. 128–31).

[172] Victorinus freely admits that this was a curse, albeit an extreme measure granted to the apostle on account of difficult conditions. Not all the patristic

people from whom he said earlier that he was suffering persecution. Thus, I neither fear persecution because I preach true things and because I do not preach circumcision, nor do I fear suffering persecution. *Would that those unsettling you be cut off!* Let them not only be snipped around,[173] but let them also get it[174] *cut off*. This word too, which relates to circumcision, has been laid down in such manner as to imply that there could also be a cutting-off.

For you have been called into freedom; just do not abuse your freedom as an occasion for the flesh (5: 13). The law of Christ, which is spiritual, does indeed grant the freedom by which we depart from the world and return to the Father and to the beginning. But because we are still in the world (that is, in the flesh), we ought not to exercise this liberty which we have received such that we would walk according to the flesh and that we would have a kind of *occasion* for acting in the flesh, since Paul confirms that we are free people by our faith toward Christ.[175]

Serve each other through love of the Spirit.[176] We have received the freedom that was granted us; none the less, we ought to *serve each other* amongst ourselves through love, *through love of the Spirit*, not of the flesh.

For among you[177] *the whole Law is fulfilled in one word* (5: 14). Frequently Paul has laid down this thought, and we too have treated it:[178] that the whole Law, and the entire working of the Law, is fulfilled by this word—that is, love. A person who loves another neither kills, commits adultery against, nor steals from the other. This is what it means to love Christ and to love God. The things which the Decalogue lays out are fulfilled, in a certain way, by this

commentators on Paul were so sanguine about this (see Ch. 6, *ad loc.*, for the range of comments).

[173] *circumsecentur* can also mean 'circumcised', but the more literal translation better preserves Paul's nasty joke which Victorinus adverts to only at the end of his comment.

[174] I have supplied an object, not in the Latin, to express Paul's *double entendre* that Victorinus here elucidates.

[175] The 'freedom' here is thus not only an eschatological freedom 'from the world' mentioned above, but also an ethical freedom in which the 'flesh' no longer dominates our will, presumably because of the formation of Christ in the soul (see the comment on 4: 18–19).

[176] The VL text contains a variant 'of the Spirit' found in a small number of witnesses (cf. Betz, *Galatians*, 274 n. 20). Victorinus takes it as an objective genitive, as the next sentence shows. The love for the Spirit is diametrically opposed to the love of fleshly things.

[177] Another minority reading, 'among you' (*in vobis*) is found in Victorinus' biblical text here.

[178] See Rom. 13: 8, which passage Victorinus doubtless discussed at length in his commentary on that epistle.

precept alone, just as we said in earlier letters.[179] Paul, however, has added the citation from Exodus:[180]

Love your neighbour as yourself. We ought to accept every human being[181] as a neighbour, and then we will also have Christ as our neighbour. Therefore you too ought to have love among yourselves, but in the Spirit. From this point in the letter, as if the previous question and issue had been dropped, he now seems to give a precept for exhortation: that they not crave discord but would have a mutual love for each other. Now, this can happen if you love each other mutually and love in the Spirit, not in the flesh, the work of the flesh, or the religious observation of the flesh. One who loves another envies nothing in the other, steals nothing from the other, and neither harms, despises, nor harshly criticizes that other person.[182]

Because if you are gnawing at each other and blaming each other, watch out that you do not eat each other up (5: 15). An exhortation to harmony ensues from this, as he engages in teaching what evil disharmony creates. For if you blame each other and gnaw at each other—that is, if you want to harm each other, or if you do so—you will eat each other up. Practice mutual love amongst yourselves, then, and love each other, and you will fulfil the Law by love alone, not—as you are thinking—by circumcision, works, and other things. His treatment of love, then, has been fittingly applied to the previous discussion, where he was teaching them that they were outside the gospel which had been delivered to them by Paul himself, because they were thinking to observe the Law in terms of circumcision and works. Yet the Law is complete by this one thing: their loving each other in a mutual fashion.[183]

But to you I say: walk by the Spirit and you will not bring the flesh's desire to fruition (5: 16). This is the whole power of the gospel: to know according to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit, to hope according to the Spirit, to believe according to the Spirit, to have nothing of the flesh in one's mind, activity, and life. This means not even holding on to any hope from the flesh. So walk in the Spirit, he

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[179] Or, 'in previous discussions' (*sicut in superioribus diximus*), probably in connection with Rom. 13: 8–10 and 1 Cor. 13.

[180] The verse is actually Lev. 19: 18.

[181] Victorinus follows Paul in universalizing this command, which—as Lev. 19: 18 clarifies—was spoken with respect to 'your people' (NRSV), i.e. fellow Israelites.

[182] *neque contemnit an obiurgat. Obiurgare* must mean here a harsher form of criticism than that meted out by Paul to Peter in the Antioch incident. Victorinus uses *obiurgare* in a positive sense as a helpful reprimand when the word occurs in the VL text of Eph. 5: 11–13; but in the Galatians commentary he regularly employs a different vocabulary for corrective criticism (*reprehendere, contradicere, arguere, accusare*).

[183] *cum solo hoc plena lex sit, si se invicem diligant.*

says—that is, lead your life in the Spirit. Because if you do this, you will not bring the flesh's desire to fruition—that is, you will commit no sin which is born of the flesh.[184] For there is no lust except from the flesh. This is why Paul has added:

For the flesh lusts against the spirit, but the spirit [*against the flesh* (5: 17). This*]*[185] had to be added, so that these Galatians might in every way understand that they ought to make no provision concerning the flesh, which exists in regards to circumcision and the other observations based on Jewish teaching, as among themselves they teach that these sorts of things are opposed.[186] Not only does the flesh lust, but it also lusts *against the spirit.* For the flesh has its own movements and powers of sense perception, and it is not aroused only by the soul,[187] seeing that one may understand these movements to exist even in things which do not have a soul. This is the case with water, which has its own impulses and its own powers, whether in its taste, its motion, its quality, or by its quantity. The same goes for fire, and equally for earth and the other elements from which, as it were, a certain mixture arises; and flesh has been made from the moist . . .[188]

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[184] On Eph 2: 11 he remarks in similar fashion: 'For what good can it do to circumcise the flesh, since every vice grows all the more out of the flesh?' (Gori, 35, 37).

[185] The words in brackets are not found in the MSS, but are Gori's conjecture to fill the obvious lacuna.

[186] *cum inter se docent ista adversa.* It is not clear to me whether 'these sorts of things' (*ista*) mean Jewish practices (which he would then be crediting the Jews with employing on the side of spirit against flesh) or the realities of flesh and spirit themselves (an admission that Jews too consider them antithetical). Alternatively, Gori (CorPat, 293) translates the phrase thus: 'as among themselves they teach these sort of adverse things', i.e. practices opposed to Paul's gospel. I am less inclined to this solution, because then the comment becomes simply a repetition of the well-known fact of the Jewish observance of these practices, and it has no bearing on the verse.

[187] *Habet enim motus suos caro habetque sensus.* Victorinus elaborates the role of the senses in his digression on the metaphysics of the soul in his comments on Eph. 1: 4. Unfortunately the rest of Victorinus' comments on this verse are missing; but the general sense is that lust comes from the material nature of flesh (as stated on the previous verse), whence it can arise independently of the soul's initiative.

[188] The text breaks off here in a lacuna that extends into his comments on 6: 1. The loss is a great pity, as it deprives us of one of Victorinus' philosophical digressions, which provide his readers with the modicum of technical knowledge necessary for a basic understanding of Paul's utterances. Traces of Victorinus' excursus on the nature of the flesh have been detected in the work of John Eriugena (*Comm. Jn.* 3. 2. 51–4 (PL 122, 317A)) by Gustavo A. Piemonte, '*Vita in omnia pervent': El vitalismo eriugeniano y la influencia de Mario Victorino* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Patristica et Mediaevalia, 1988), 17–18. The loss of his comment on the second part of this verse (KJV: 'these are contrary the one to the other') also prevents us from seeing how he would have treated the similar and difficult passages of Rom. 6–7, so important for the history of Pauline exegesis.

(6: 1) . . . those *who are spiritual people*. It is as if Paul has moved the discussion from those *who are spiritual* to an individual, so that each one of them would take thought, lest he himself be tempted.[189] For that reason, each one ought to come to the aid of and instruct a person of this sort and, by the Spirit which has been given, recall him through discussion to modesty and equality.

Bear each other's burdens (6: 2). Paul has reverted to the plural address,[190] in order that every person would bear the other people's faults, so that what one suffers, each would endure, put up with, and correct in so far as possible. For this is what it means to bear burdens: to endure patiently the weakness of another person and correct it.

And in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. For Christ himself was patient in this way: he both bore our ills and put up with adversity on account of our ills. The *law of Christ*—he says—*you will fulfil*, not simply the Law.

For if anyone considers himself to be something, although he is nothing, he leads himself astray (6: 3). Now Paul proves by reason why that person who exalts himself because of a lust for glory is to be corrected and instructed in the Spirit: because the very one who misleads, fools, and deceives himself is an unhappy person, considering himself to be something, *although he is nothing*. And indeed, if the sum of the Law is this, that each and every one be humble, downcast, and lowly (for thus it is from the lowly that God chooses whom to lift up and make high[191]), every person who claims something for himself and considers himself to be something is without a doubt nothing. For what does it mean to be something in the world, *although he is nothing* in the world?[192] And to live accordingly, *although one is nothing* in the world—this is what it means to be something before God.[193] Further, if anyone maintains that he is

[189] Augustine's comment on this verse is similar: 'nothing disposes one to mercifulness so much as the thought of one's own peril' (CSEL 84, 131, 5).

[190] The imperative 'bear' is a second-person plural (*portate*).

[191] Cf. Luke 1: 52. Victorinus has interpreted the religious language of the Magnificat, replete with its economic and political overtones, in a purely psychological and spiritual key.

[192] I have translated this literally to preserve the hyperbole. It is a feature of Victorinus' Platonism that he regards the realities of the sensory world as less than real. For his technical elaboration of the grades of being which various realities possess, see *Ad Cand.* 4–12 (CSEL 83/1, 19–30; ET: Clark, 63–9). For full discussion of the philosophical background, see the notes of Hadot in *SC* 69, 700–14.

[193] i.e. only by living on the basis of our understanding of the nullity of worldly existence can we be somebody in God's sight. The relative nothingness of Christians' lives in the world while awaiting the return of Christ must have been a theme Victorinus treated in connection with 1 Cor. 7: 29–31. The next sentence contains a clear allusion to that letter.

something in the world—a wise man, someone in the know, a lord, a king, a rich man, or possessed of something of these (be it in his riches, his mental capacity, his ability or virtue)—this person, since the wisdom of the world is foolishness before God,[194] this person is nothing, I am claiming; and *although he is nothing*, he himself fools and deceives himself.

But let each one appraise his own work, and then he will have a boast[195] *in himself only and not in another person* (6: 4). Great exhortations, great teaching too! Let no one, he says, make any claim for himself or have the opinion that he is something; only just let him appraise his own work, whether in light of his own judgement or with the help of other people. Rather, let each one appraise his own work, lest his appraisal of himself result from having had recourse to a bad judge, lest he appraise himself as having done well when perhaps he has not done well. So let him appraise his own work, and let him make his work worthy of appraisal. The work having been appraised, *then shall he have a boast in himself only and not in another person*. And indeed, one who considers himself to be something is exalting himself and seeking to boast by means of another person; but someone who appraises his own work, whether he himself appraises it or appraises it with the help of others,[196] has a boast from himself and before himself and does not look for it from another. For I do not want, he says, to be lauded by a human being or to be highly appraised by human beings but by God.

For each one will bear his own burden (6: 5). *Burden* is put in an unspecified manner: a good burden or a bad one.[197] So all will bear a burden, he says, and each and every one will bear his own.

But let the one who is catechized in the word grant a share in all good things to the one who catechizes (6: 6). This is the meaning: κατηχεῖν [katechein] signifies to sound around or to resound nearby, which happens when someone is at the initial phase of becoming a Christian. God and Christ resound and are spoken into the ears and sent

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[194] Cf. 1 Cor. 3: 19.

[195] Previous occurrence of the word *gloria* (and its verbal cognates) have been translated as 'glory', as indicated by the Greek underlying the *gloria* of 1: 5 (δόξα) or by the context (cf. his opening comment on 6: 3). Behind the VL's *gloria* in this verse (and in 6: 13–14) is καύχημα (and its verbal cognates in 6: 13–14), which must be translated as 'boast'.

[196] *vel ipse probat vel aliis probat*. Victorinus imports the idea, foreign to the text, that one might have a salutary recourse to the judgement of others, presumably others within the church. This recourse to fraternal counsel is thus different from the boasting which requires making favourable impressions upon other people by one's self-presentation.

[197] *Onus in medio ponitur sive bonum sive malum*. Commenting on 5: 10, Jerome makes a similar observation: 'in the Scriptures a burden can be taken in both the good and the bad sense' (*onus et in bonam et in malam partem*; PL 26, 403D [431A]).

into the mind. This is the meaning of *the one who is catechized in the word*; that is, when someone is catechized, it happens through the word, such that the word would resound to him through the invocation.[198] So let the one *who is catechized in the word* grant a share *in all good things to the one who catechizes*; that is, let there be nothing unshared with him. But let the sharing with *the one who catechizes* the word be in all good things, so that one would have all things in common with him—or rather, all things which are good. For because it was said above, *instruct a person of this sort in a spirit of modesty*,[199] what is taught in the catechism is certainly good, and the one who is catechizing this word that is so good catechizes in regard to good things. Therefore, let the one who is catechized in the word grant a share to the one who does the catechizing.

Do not be mistaken, God is not mocked (6: 7). Paul has added another precept, which indeed applies as a general precept to all things but relates to the earlier point: let the Galatians not follow anything beyond the gospel; that is, let them not add on the teaching and works of the Jews as well. *Do not be mistaken*, he says. For all of those things which they are taking up outside of the gospel are mistakes. He also adds on the force of necessity to the precept: *God is not mocked*, he says. He did not say 'for God knows all things'. Lest they hope for some kind of indulgence of their mistake, or hope that something could be hidden from God, he says *God is not mocked*. And Paul has added what lies in store for those who make this mistake, for those who limit their life to earth:[200]

For what a man has sown, that too shall he harvest. That is, one who sows wheat will have a harvest of wheat; but if one sows tares, one

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[198] *per invocationem*. By *invocatio* Victorinus does not seem here to mean the ἐπίκλησις, or invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the bread and wine in the eucharist (for which see the full discussion by Fernand Cabrol, 'Épiclèse', in *idem* (ed.), *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, v., (Paris: Letouzey et Ané 1907–53), 142–84), but perhaps the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the waters of baptism (ibid. 179). This latter sense we find in Tertullian, *De bapt.* 4. 4–5, a passage containing some of Victorinus' favourite vocabulary: 'So with the waters having been in a sense healed through the intervention of an angel, the human spirit is purged corporeally by the waters (*in aquis corporaliter diluitur*) and the flesh is spiritually cleansed (*spiritaliter emundatur*) in the same' (CCSL 1, 280, 32).

[199] Gal. 6: 1.

[200] *quid futurum sit his qui errant et his qui in terram vitam tenent*. The two phrases stand in synonymous parallelism (a feature of biblical language); two different groups are not envisioned here. The denial of any afterlife was a common position in non-biblical religions, according to Ramsey MacMullen, 'Two Types of Conversion to Early Christianity', *VC* 37 (1983), 174–92, 180–1. J. M. C. Toynbee considers that such total denial was exceptional, if widespread and witnessed by a variety of epitaphs, e.g. the 'recurrent formula' *non fui, fui, non sum, non curo*: 'I was not, I was, I am not, I don't care' (*Death and Burial in the Roman World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), 34).

will also harvest this.[201] Whosoever sows something evil is a har-
vester of evil. One sows something good? One will enjoy the harvest
of the good. As is the seed, so too the harvest.

*Because the one who sows in his flesh shall harvest corruption from the
flesh; but the one who sows in the Spirit shall harvest eternal life from
the Spirit* (6: 8). In the flesh and from the flesh the Galatians have
their hopes. They thought that the teaching of the Jews was to be
taken upon themselves to the effect of observing the sabbath, under-
going circumcision, and—being fleshly minded—doing other things
of this sort. Whosoever has hope in the flesh, then, and sows his hope
around the flesh will have a harvest from the flesh—that is, will have
the fruit from the flesh. What fruit now? *Corruption,* he says. And
flesh is indeed subject to corruption, and this is its end: to be
corrupted, rot, perish, and be destroyed.[202] All things which are
from the flesh, then, rot and contain corruption. So no one ought
to have hope from the flesh or sow in the flesh—that is, set any hope
on the flesh. For if one sets one's hope there, one will get one's fruit
from the flesh. What fruit? Destruction and corruption. For this is
the fruit of the flesh. Therefore it is better to set one's hope on the
Spirit, that we might have hope from the Spirit, a hope from the
Spirit whose fruit is from the Spirit. This is what to *sow in the Spirit*
means: to sow eternal life. Surely, this life is life, not eternal life.
Those, however, who live here in the Spirit and act according to the
Spirit, do nothing in a fleshly way. They are sowing life eternal for
themselves; and this will be the harvest for them: departing from
here they will receive eternal life.

But let us not falter[203] *in doing good* (6: 9). It is not enough that we
would do a good deed;[204] nor is our worthiness immediately evident
to God if we would do a good thing, but only if we *not falter in doing*
it. For many people begin; many keep at it somewhat, but later leave
off, being worn down or led astray. Rightly does Paul admonish: *let
us not falter* in any way at all, lest faltering we abandon what we
began when we set out to do a good thing.

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[201] This language is drawn from the Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13: 24–30).

[202] *ut corrumpatur, putrescat, pereat, intereat.* A similar string of verbs is found in
Jerome's comments on 5: 9: 'lest the whole house . . . burn, be corrupted, rot, and go
to ruin' (*ardeat, corrumpatur, putrescat, intereat*; PL 26, 403B [430C]). Perhaps the
phrase from Victorinus stuck in Jerome's mind, as he freely admits in the case of the
Greek commentators whom he read and whose thoughts became mixed with his
own such that he no longer recalled the proper sources of them (PL 26, 309A
[333A–B]).

[203] *Bonum autem facientes non deficientes.* The play on words (not found in the
Greek) is not reproducible in English without losing the meaning, e.g. 'Let us not
be undone in doing good'.

[204] *Parum est bonum faciamus.* Gori may be right to translate thus: 'It is not
enough to say, Let us do good' (CorPat, 299).

Not faltering, we will harvest in its time. Nice addition! There are many people in this way of life[205] who, as it is said to be good, when they suffer some evil, say that there is no reason to continue doing good. They tire of it and cease to do good. So what has Paul added? *Not faltering*, because although we do not obtain today the fruit of our doing good, later on *we will harvest*, he says. This means we will have a harvest of the good we have done, as long as we have not faltered in doing good.

Therefore, let us work while we have time (6: 10). He has placed utmost necessity upon doing good. The times threaten, life quickly comes to an end, now, even now the end is upon the world. *While we have time*—meaning, time in our lives or the time of this life here in the world—*let us work at what is good for all*. Let us work, but let us work at what is good, let us work at what is good for all, so that there are no exceptions and no other doings. Rather, let us work at what is good, and let us work at what is good for all. And indeed, if *love builds up*,[206] we ought to consider every person to be of value. Every good which we work at doing, we work to do it for all.

But most of all for the family of faith. Paul said *let us work at what is good for all*. None the less, he created a gradient, so that the good which we work for all, we would most of all work for those who are *the family of faith*—that is, for those who have taken up faith in Christ and in God. With a great closing he has laid down in his exhorting what most of all pertains to the Galatians. Surely, as they were adding certain items from Judaism as well, they were not acting on the basis of faith, but were somehow operating under the belief that they were going to get a reward[207] based on their works, based on their fleshly observance. For that reason Paul has added: *most of all* let us work good *for the family of faith*, because they have taken up faith only in the gospel, that is, faith in Christ and God.

Look how much[208] *I have written you with my own hand!* (6: 11). To display the intimacy of their relationship, and to prevent their feeling shame because others know that they sinned or are being

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[205] *in hoc vitae genere*: probably the Christian way of life.

[206] 1 Cor. 8: 1. Victorinus frequently quotes phrases from other Pauline letters and assumes his readers will pick up on the allusion without any explicit reference. Cf. his comments on 1: 6, 5: 8, and 6: 14 for other examples of this.

[207] Literally, 'fruit' (*fructus*), in line with the metaphorical language of 6: 7–10, which Victorinus has been amplifying through his comments on these verses.

[208] *Ecce quantis litteris*. The VL text used by Victorinus has this singular variant; the other Latin commentators have *qualibus litteris* (preceded by *scitote* or *vidistis*) in their versions of the VL, as does the Vlg. It is not clear whether *quantis litteris* represents Paul's original πηλίκοις . . . γράμμασιν or the (classical) variant ἡλίκοις, found in P⁴⁶ and B* (see Betz, *Galatians*, 313–14, for exegetical discussion).

corrected,[209] *I have written you*, he says, *with my own hand*, and have given a sign of my love.[210] A change of life is easy for you when you are being corrected by me, since it is only to me that you owe an account of your conscience.

Whosoever wants to make a pleasing impression in the flesh, they are compelling you only[211] *to be circumcised* (6: 12). Here Paul has openly laid out the very thing which he was criticizing in the Galatians who were transgressing the command of the gospel: they wanted to get circumcised. All these men, he says, who *want to make a pleasing impression in the flesh*, they are persuading you to be circumcised, which consists only in this fact, your being circumcised, and not in any help toward salvation.

In order not to suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. They were calculating, he says, that if you or they themselves would add also circumcision to the gospel (that is, to the confession about Christ),

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[209] So eager is Victorinus to read all aspects of the letter as persuasive that he appears here to have forgotten that his analysis of the epistolary opening argued that Paul associated 'all the brothers with him' in order precisely to shame the Galatians (see his comments on 1: 1–2 above). Perhaps there is no real contradiction here. Paul, in Victorinus' mind, could have written on behalf of the 'brothers' without letting them know the embarrassing details of the rebuke; thus, at the end of the letter, Paul could be construed as releasing the Galatians from the increasing feelings of shame with the announcement that he alone has written the letter.

[210] Modern exegetes tend to follow Jerome, who, drawing on the Greek exegetical tradition, maintained that, 'lest any suspicion of a forged letter arise, Paul did the writing from this point to the end with his own hand, showing the earlier parts [of the letter] to have been written out by another person' (PL 26, 434A [462D]). A different interpretation is maintained by both Ambrosiaster and Augustine, who agree with Victorinus that the verse indicates that the original letter was an autograph and not dictated. Ambrosiaster sees Paul attributing *auctoritas* to his writing to elicit obedience (*ubi enim olografa manus est, falsum dici non potest*) and to prevent anyone from evading the force of the letter by claiming 'either that it is a falsification or not the apostle's' (CSEL 81/3, 65, 23–4). Augustine remarks that the verse was intended to warn them against epistolary falsification and to demonstrate his lack of fear of the Jews intent on persecuting those abandoning the ancestral traditions (*Exp. ad Gal.* 62, 2–3; CSEL 84, 137–8). Pelagius gives no indication that he thinks Paul took over the writing from the scribe at this point (Souter, 341, 12–13); nor does Theodore of Mopsuestia, who thinks Paul is merely increasing the size of his letters—'indicating that he neither blushes at nor denies the things he has written'— prior to launching a final attack on his adversaries (Swete, i. 107; cf. the surviving Greek fragment). Chrysostom, ever aware of the psychology of persuasion, is closest to Victorinus: 'Here he hints at nothing other but that he himself wrote the entire letter, which is a sign of his great sincerity' (PG 61, 678; compare his πολλῆς γνησιότητος σημεῖον with Victorinus' *et ex caritate signum dedit*). Chrysostom, however, thinks that the πηλίκοις γράμμασιν refers to the poor shape (ἀμορφία) of the letters made by Paul's untrained hand, not the the length of the letter itself.

[211] As Gori notes in his apparatus, Victorinus takes 'only' (*tantum*) to go with the first part of the verse, instead of the second half, as generally punctuated (*tantum ut = μόνον ἵνα*).

they would not have to pay the penalty for persecuting Christ and crucifying him. But there too they are sinning, in that although all our hope is from Christ (more properly, from his cross), we or they themselves would maintain hope to be also from circumcision; and that is why they would try to make the case, as if they would then not have to suffer persecution for the cross of Christ—meaning, because they put Christ on the cross.[212]

For not even those who are circumcised keep the Law (6: 13). Those people do not keep the Law by the fact of their being circumcised. For in Christ neither uncircumcision nor circumcision counts. So what law has he mentioned? Either the one which must be understood spiritually, or else that one which Christ gave, which is without doubt a spiritual law, teaches spiritual things, and must be carried out spiritually.

But they want you to get circumcised so that they might boast in your flesh. He shows also the cunning of the people who are engaged in persuading you in order that they would appear to have persuaded you, *so that they might boast in your flesh*, although circumcision is none the less of no advantage. But it is the boast alone that is sought by them. Once it has been done *in your flesh*, they reckon to achieve what there is no hope of without this: that they should appear to have won the point that hope is not from Christ alone but requires adding on the teaching of the Jewish Law in the matter of circumcision.

Now far be it from me to boast in anything (6: 14). Previously[213] he rebuked the boasting of those men. The boasting of those men is a boasting in the flesh. But I, he says, I do not boast *in anything*: neither in the flesh, nor in a human being, nor in any of these things, not even in myself. However, this has already been said and has often been pointed out: that everyone *who boasts, let him boast in God*, which we have examined earlier.[214]

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[212] The logic of the opponents' case, as Victorinus construes it, is not apparent to me. The obscurity of these remarks is in great measure due to his taking 'persecution for [literally: 'of'] the cross of Christ' to mean persecution for killing Christ on the cross, instead of persecution for preaching the cross (the solution of other exegetes, both ancient and modern). This peculiar interpretation fits the pattern of an almost obsessive insistence on a theme: in his remarks on 3: 1 and 5: 11 as well, Victorinus inveighs against the Jews for crucifying Christ, with no occasion from the text beyond the bare mention of the cross.

[213] In 6: 3–4.

[214] See 1 Cor. 1: 31 and 2 Cor. 10: 17, where Paul quotes Jer. 9: 24 to this effect, although the apostle says 'boast in the Lord', not 'boast in God', as Victorinus puts it here. His way of referring to a previous treatment of this (*de quo supra tractavimus*) indicates that he conceives his commentaries as a unified whole with a definite order (see Appendix 1 for discussion of this issue).

Except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is, let our entire hope be put there, and let our boasting and our joy be from that source. Because there *in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ* lies our salvation and the eternity we have sought.

Through whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world. This is the boast, the cross, obviously, of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the Mystery hung his flesh upon the cross for a moment, and triumphed on it over the power of this world,[215] and the whole world was crucified through him. And because he had a body consisting of the universal nature of all humankind, everything that he suffered he made universal—that is, so that all flesh would be crucified in him. So I too was nailed to the cross, I was nailed to the world. I, he says, that fleshly person[216] whose way of thinking was from the flesh. I was nailed to the world—that is, when I was nailed to the world for punishment.[217]

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but there is a new creation (6: 15). We have treated this above.[218] Although this idea is everywhere, he is reminding them what the Mystery has achieved: that in Christ Jesus there is no social status or any discrimination; all who follow Christ acquire eternal life equally. For it is not because of circumcision that one becomes something in Christ; nor because the foreskin is there does one

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[215] Victorinus seems fond of the image from Col. 2: 15 of Christ triumphing over 'the principalities and powers' on the cross. He brings it up in discussing Phil. 3: 19, speaking of those who do not understand the Mystery of 'Christ in a human being nailed to the cross, through which he conquered sin and triumphed over the powers, triumphed through his flesh nailed to the cross' (Gori, 214, 45). *Adv. Ar.* III 3 contains a similar allusion, again in the context of discussing the salvific impact of the Incarnation and the full unfolding of the Mystery: 'But, when he took on flesh, he took on the universal *logos* of the flesh. It was for that reason that he triumphed in the flesh over the powers of all flesh and for that reason came to the aid of all flesh' (CSEL 83/1, 196, 30–2). There are many such remarks in his commentary on Ephesians, as this letter contains the richest expansion of the Pauline theme of 'the Mystery' (e.g. his remarks on Eph. 1: 4, 1: 18–22, 2: 6–15, 3: 4–12; ET: Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 49–50, 58–62, 66–70, 75–80).

[216] *Ego, inquit, carnalis ille*. Cf. Rom. 7: 14 in the VL (and Vlg.): *ego autem carnalis sum*. The trace of Romans here may give us some idea of how Victorinus treated the notoriously difficult first person in Rom. 7 (the various solutions, modern and patristic, are discussed in the Anchor Bible Commentary of Joseph Fitzmeyer, *Romans* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 463–5): viz. as an expression of Paul's former self.

[217] *id est, cum mundo adfixus ad poenam*. Perhaps *cum* is the preposition (as Gori takes it) and not the conjunction, in which case we would translate, 'I was nailed with the world in punishment'. I think it less likely that *mundo* is governed by *cum*, as the noun stands without the preposition in the preceding phrase, *mundo fixus sum*. Victorinus' point is that Paul is describing a past state of being, hence the temporal *cum*.

[218] See his comments on 5: 6.

become something in Christ. Rather, in whichever of these condi-
tions one is, whatsoever one be, all people will count as something in
Christ, provided one is reborn and becomes a new person by the
Mystery.

And whosoever follows in line with this rule, peace upon them and[219]
upon the Lord's Israel (6: 16). He comes to the conclusion that this
should be the only rule: to have hope in Christ, and not to discern the
power of Christ in respect of foreskin or circumcision but by *a new
creation*, whatsoever it will have been. Through Christ and in Christ
is the full hope of salvation, of eternity, and of glory. For those who
follow along with this rule (not as you Galatians wanted to have it!),
for those who follow along in this glory, *peace* be *upon them and*, he
adds, *upon the Lord's Israel*. Not over Israel in the sense of any Jew
whatsoever, but over *the Lord's Israel*. And indeed Israel truly
belongs to the Lord, if it should follow the Lord and not hope for
its own salvation from some other source.

For the future, let no one create worries for me (6: 17). That is,
henceforth let no one make me distressed by their sins, make me
sadly endure worries. For we spoke to this effect in the beginning:[220]
that he reacted painfully and was aggrieved at their having sinned. In
the last part of the letter, then, he admonishes that they are not to
turn to other sins, lest they create worries.

For I bear the marks of our Lord Jesus Christ in my body. That is,
I bear all the suffering, even those sufferings he bore on the cross: his
body pierced by nails, a spear-wound through his side, and the other
marks of our Lord Jesus Christ in my body, he says. This means that
I too have suffered, and when I serve Christ in the Mystery, I suffer
the Mystery of Christ. Whence you too ought to bear up under all
those many adversities, because those who suffer with Christ will be
with Christ. The things which Christ suffered, Paul too has begun to
suffer from his opponents, who are opposing him on account of his
activity. From this he shows what he himself would suffer, and how
much he would obtain from Christ, and what we too ought to suffer
if we want to be with Christ.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers
(6: 18). The letter comes to a close. There is a prayer and a blessing:
let there be grace, but let it be with your spirit, he says. Because you
are living in Christ, let the grace of Christ be with your spirit.

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[219] Victorinus' VL lacked the additional noun 'mercy' found in the Greek, the
Vlg., and the rest of the VL witnesses.

[220] *Ita enim in principio diximus quod*: Probably he means the beginning of this
commentary (see the third sentence of his preface, where he said that Paul was
'upset by these things'), although perhaps he means the opening of the letter itself,
as he writes of its final part in the next sentence (*Monet igitur in postrema epistola*).

Appendix 1

The Order of the Commentaries

Substantial objections have been raised by Marcello Marin[1] to the order in which Victorinus' commentaries on Paul are presented in Gori's editions for the Corona Patrum series and the Vienna corpus. The problem is rooted in the manuscript tradition, where all three commentaries are intermixed with Victorinian *spuria*. (In the 17th century Sirmond copied only the works on Galatians and Philippians). Locher's Teubner edition reproduced the transmitted order (Gal., Phil., Eph.), to the satisfaction of none, as the one on Philippians refers back to the one on Ephesians. But the order of the commentaries on Ephesians and Galatians is not thereby clarified. Given the ambiguities of the basic data, all the evidence must be re-examined. The major point of disagreement concerns the chief piece of internal evidence: the first sentence of the commentary on Galatians. On one side are aligned Hadot,[2] Erdt,[3] and Gori[4]; and on the other, Frede,[5] des Places,[6] Marin, and Raspanti. The former group have sought support from the order of Pauline citations in the Trinitarian treatises for their reading of this ambiguous passage. For this reason we shall begin there.

After an exordium, the treatise *Adversus Arium* proceeds to the matter at hand: whether the New Testament can substantiate a Nicene conception of Christ. Victorinus combs through many passages from John's gospel and then turns to the Pauline epistles in the following order: Rom., 1 Cor., 2 Cor., Eph., Gal., Phil., Col., 1 Tim. Although he does not cite all the letters (since not all fit his purpose), this order suggests that Victorinus made use of a copy of the Pauline epistles in which, contrary to the canonical order, Galatians followed Ephesians. Hadot has pointed out that this order resembles that of a papyrus of the Chester Beatty Codex, P^{46}; a similar arrangement is found in the 'Western' order of the epistles which features

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[1] Marcello Marin, 'Sulla successione delle epistole paoline in Mario Vittorino', *Vetera Christianorum*, 26 (1989), 377–85.

[2] Although Hadot (*Marius Victorinus*, 287–8 n. 19) now argues for the order Eph.–Gal.–Phil., he had previously interpreted the Latin of the crucial piece of evidence otherwise (SC 69, 758).

[3] Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 17.

[4] Gori, CorPat, 4–5, 412.

[5] Hermann Josef Frede, 'Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe und der Platz des Kolosserbrief in Corpus Paulinum', in *idem*, *Vetus Latina* (Freiburg: Herder, 1966), 290–304, 297).

[6] Édouard des Places expressed his views in a review of Locher's Teubner edition ('Marius Victorinus commentateur de saint Paul', *Biblica*, 55 (1974), 83–5).

Ephesians before Galatians, with the Thessalonian correspondence between them.[7] Scholars who maintain that his commentaries were composed in that order, with Ephesians before Galatians, argue that the succession of citations in *Adversus Arium*—presumably the order found in the codex he used while composing that work—establishes the likelihood that a few years later he would have commented on them in an identical order. The force of this argument, however, is blunted by the fact that when Victorinus cites Scripture in the former work, 'la plupart du temps, il traduit lui même du grec', as Hadot has observed.[8] F. F. Bruce found signs of the same as regards the Latin quotations from the gospels in the Trinitarian treatises.[9] That the citations from Ephesians, Galatians, and Philippians in *Adv. Ar.* I 21[10] are indeed his own translations from the Greek can be readily discerned in a number of passages. We will compare the Latin versions of the passages there with the VL text found in the commentaries and the Greek text (Nestle-Aland[27]) on two passages of Ephesians and one each from Galatians and Philippians.

The Latin versions of Eph 2: 12 which Victorinus quotes in both works are very similar except in their rendering of the participial phrase ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, which the VL found in the commentaries gives as *alienati a conversatione Israel*. The citation in *Adv. Ar.* I 21 reproduced the prefix on the Greek verb: *abalienati conversatione Israhel*. The translation of Eph. 4: 3 in the VL (*solliciti servandae unitatis spiritus in vinculo pacis*) is a less literal rendering of the Greek (σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης) than the version found in Trinitarian treatises, which reproduces the syntax of the present participial phrase with infinitive: *cupientes custodire unitatem spiritus in colligatione pacis* (note also how *in colligatione*, with its prefix, is a more literal translation of ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ than *in vinculo*). A similiar example of a more exact rendering concerns the pronoun αὐτὸ in Gal. 1: 12a. The VL gives *illud*, where the quotation in *Adv. Ar.* I 21 reads

[7] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 288. Hebrews, however, is not cited after Romans by Victorinus in *Adv. Ar.* I 17–26 (CSEL 83/1, 78–101), so his order is not fully identical with that of P^{46}; see Frede, 'Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe', 292–3. (The fact that Victorinus cites here neither Hebrews nor either of the Thessalonian letters makes their position in his codex uncertain.) Frede identifies the order of the epistles cited in *Adv. Ar.* as 'die "westliche" Grundordnung ohne Hbr', which he calls W 2 (p. 297). Actually, since Victorinus later quotes Heb. 1: 3 (*Adv. Ar.* I 59), Frede assumes that it is at the end of his codex of epistles (this order being W 3, the order given in the canonical list in the Pseudo-Gelasian Decretals). Important for the present issue is Frede's observation that '[d]ie Liste folgt offenkundig lokaler römischer Tradition' (ibid.).

[8] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 261.

[9] F. F. Bruce, 'The Gospel text of Marius Victorinus', in E. Best and R. McL. Wilson (eds.), *Text and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 69–78, 70: 'He frequently appears to quote from memory, sometimes substituting a word or construction which he regards as better Latin, and sometimes giving an independent rendering when he is dissatisfied with the current version of a text' (see also p. 77).

[10] CSEL 83/1, 88–90.

ipsum. In all of these cases the VL used in the commentaries agrees with the VL utilized by Ambrosiaster, whereas the version of Paul in Victorinus' Trinitarian treatises differs from both.

Our final example is Phil. 2: 5–7, which I quote in full from the two Latin versions found in Victorinus and the Greek text, highlighting the salient points of comparison. First, the VL of his commentary, then the Latin version in *Adv. Ar.* I 21, and finally the Greek:

hoc enim *sentite* in vobis quod et in Christo Iesu, qui, cum in forma dei *constitutus esset*, non rapinam arbitratus est, *ut esset aequalis* deo, sed et semet ipsum exinanivit et *servi sumpsit formam* in similitudine hominum *factus* et *habitu* inventus tamquam homo.[11]

istud enim *sapite* in vobis quod et in Christo, qui forma dei *exsistens* non rapinam arbitratus est *esse aequalia* deo, sed semet ipsum exinanivit *formam servi accipiens*, in similitudine hominis *effectus* et *figura* inventus sicuti homo.[12]

τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐκ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος. καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος.

There are a number of signs that the Latin of the Pauline epistles quoted in *Adversus Arium* was Victorinus' own translation from the Greek. The tendency toward literalism is so extreme that it produces a somewhat peculiar Latin: οὐκ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ is rendered *non rapinam arbitratus est esse aequalia deo* (the VL has *ut esset aequalis deo*). We find a greater exactitude in the reproduction of syntax or word order, as noted in a previous example: μορφὴν δούλου λαβών comes out as *formam servi accipiens*, not the *servi sumpsit formam* of the commentary's VL. An aspect of the translation in *Adv. Ar.* I 21 seems dictated by the desire to be philosophically or theologically exact: ὑπάρχων is there rendered *exsistens* (as opposed to the VL's *constitutus esset*); γενόμενος as *effectus*, not *factus* as in the VL, which he rejects in his remarks to Phil. 2: 8.[13] Similarly σχήματι comes out as *figura* in the Trinitarian work, which he uses to gloss *habitus* in his remarks on the verse in his commentary.[14]

Victorinus' use of a Greek codex when writing the Trinitarian treatises makes sense in terms of his engagement in the doctrinal controversy, where one needed to argue from the original. This Greek text of the epistles, whatever its order, gives us no information concerning the disposition of the Latin copy Victorinus used a short time thereafter as the basis for his commentaries. This latter was, as Souter says, 'a European (or as some would prefer to say, an Italian) type of text', one very similar to the pre-Vulgate sort used by Ambrosiaster in his commentaries on Paul.[15] So we

[11] Gori, 183, 49; 187, 1–4.
[12] CSEL 83/1, 89, 29–32.
[13] Cf. his comment on Phil. 2: 8: *Ecce, in hoc ipso cum dixit: 'subditus factus', graece autem aperte et plene cum dictum:* ὑπήκοος γενόμενος, *quod est subauditor effectus* (Gori, 190, 89–91).
[14] *accipiamus igitur 'habitum' figuram et ut se homo habeat* (Gori, 190, 74).
[15] Souter, *Earliest Latin Commentaries*, 15–16. Ambrosiaster's commentaries follow the canonical order Gal. – Eph., although the oldest MS (Monte Cassino

cannot consider the order of Pauline letters quoted serially in *Adversus Arium* to be of much significance to the present question.[16] Further, since Victorinus refers in commenting on Gal. 2: 4 to alternate readings from a variety of codices, both Latin and Greek,[17] he may have examined a number of versions of the epistles in the time—approximately five years—between his writing *Adversus Arium* and the composition of the commentaries. This would be consonant with his practice of citing the Old Testament in his Trinitarian treatises, where he had recourse to more than one Greek version.[18] Thus there is no reason to think he was bound to write his commentaries in the same order he quoted from the epistles in *Adversus Arium*.

The second piece of external evidence alleged is the sequence of contents in the codex Vaticanus Ottobonianus Latinus 3288, called *O* (a fifteenth-century manuscript and our earliest witness for the commentaries): first comes the commentary on Revelation by the late-third-century bishop Victorinus of Petovium;[19] then our Victorinus on Galatians and Philippians, in that order; then two pseudo-Victorinian *opuscula*; then—in a different hand[20]—the commentary on Ephesians; lastly, another small pseudonymous work written in the same hand as the last commentary, *De physicis*. That Philippians follows immediately after Galatians in the same scribal hand might suggest this to have been the original order at least of these two letters (but see *infra*); that the Ephesians commentary could have originally followed both—as *O* has it—is excluded by the fact that this latter is explicitly referred to in the one on Philippians.[21] This same order

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150) presented his commentaries in the variant order Rom., Cor., Gal., Phil., Eph., Thess., Titus, Col., Tim. (Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 161). Victorinus' text of Paul is of the type **I** (the earlier branch) in Frede's classification (ibid. 138 and 146).

[16] The extent to which Hadot's case—and he is followed by Erdt and Gori—relies upon the evidence from *Adv. Ar.* is clear from his own words: 'Il est presque sûr que Victorinus a commenté les Épîtres de saint Paul en suivant l'ordre donné par son manuscrit, donc dans l'ordre suivant: Éphésiens, Galates, Philippiens. Nous savons en effect que tel était bien l'ordre des Épîtres dans le manuscrit utilisé par Victorinus. C'est selon cet ordre qu'il cite les Épîtres dans l'*Adversus Arium*' (*Marius Victorinus*, 287–8).

[17] *Quoniam tamen in plurimis codicibus et Latinis et Graecis ista sententia . . .* (Gori, 114, 7).

[18] A. Vaccari, 'Le Citazioni del Vecchio Testamento presso Mario Vittorino', *Biblica*, 42 (1961), 459–64.

[19] Modern Ptuj, some 75 km north of Zagreb.

[20] Gori, p. x.

[21] *plene de hoc et hic tetigi ad Ephesios* (Gori, 118, 18–19). Bruce takes this to be an indication that the order was Gal. – Eph. – Phil. ('Marius Victorinus and his Works', 217). Despite this cross-reference (Frede thinks it was added after the completion of the series—an unlikely suggestion, as it is the single such out-of-order reference), which appears clearly to point backward, Frede does not think we can thereby come to a firm conclusion that Victorinus' commentaries followed in the order Gal. – Eph. – Phil. ('Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe', 299 n. 1). He points out that the pseudo-Augustinian *Speculum* presents an order Gal. – Phil. – Eph. (which he calls W 4), and then goes on somewhat cautiously to say: '[v]ielleicht

of Gal. – Phil. – Eph. is reported in a mid-twelfth-century index found in the library at Cluny which mentions a volume containing Victorinus' commentaries;[22] thus we must suppose that whatever accident was responsible for this odd order happened prior to that time. The order—or disorder—of the various commentaries and treatises in *O* was probably already in its archetype, the very ancient codex Herivallensis.[23] If this codex presented the commentary on Ephesians after the one on Philippians, and that order is contradicted by the internal evidence just mentioned, the manuscript sequence Gal. – Phil. can hardly be regarded as reliable beyond question. Hadot explains the disorder of the manuscript tradition by supposing that the work on Ephesians, originally preceding the other two, somehow got placed after them; thus Victorinus would have commented on them in the same sequence he cited them in the Trinitarian treatises.[24] He supports this conclusion with the ambiguous sentence that opens the commentary on Galatians. The ambiguity of the passage is reflected in the fact that Hadot himself has changed his mind on how to read it.[25] If other evidence indicates that the work on Galatians went before the one on Ephesians, the order of the manuscript tradition could be explained in a manner no more speculative than Hadot's hypothesis about how the commentary on Ephesians came to follow the others.[26] The incomplete condition of the one on Philippians, moreover, must be taken into account here. In the state we have it, this commentary takes up midstream with remarks on Phil. 1:17; the preface and the comments on the first sixteen verses are missing. That this lengthy lacuna was present in

befolgte Marius Victorinus in seinem Paulus-Kommentar . . . die gleiche Ordnung'. Frede also raises the possibility that Victorinus, like Jerome, did not maintain any specific canonical order in composing his commentaries. While not an impossible suggestion, I do not see how Jerome's practice is material to the issue, as he—unlike Victorinus, who probably intended to produce a full series—wrote only on select epistles (Philem. Gal., Eph., and Tit., in that order; see *Patrology*, iv. 232).

[22] This index records *volumen in quo continetur Victorinus in Apocalipsim, et in aliquid de physica, et epistolas tres ad Galathas, ad Philippenses, ad Ephesios, habens in fine quiddam expositionis de caelesti hierarchia sancti Dionysii* (Gori, p. xiv).

[23] See Gori's discussion (Gori, pp. ix–xiv).

[24] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 287–8.

[25] See n. 2 above.

[26] The difficulty about all such speculation is that we need to explain the disorder not of *O* but of the codex from which it was copied, whose lacunae, marginalia, and corrections it shares (Gori, pp. x–xi, esp. p. xiv n. 18), all of which suggest that codex Herivallensis contained the commentaries in the same order we find in *O*. Mai concluded that the lacunae found in the MSS were already present in their archetype, since the copyists made reference to them (PL 8, 1192 n. 6). In this necessarily highly speculative realm, one could imagine that some of the contents of the Ephesians commentary—its Origenist-sounding utterances about the pre-existence of souls apropos of Eph. 1:4—could have led to a judgement on the part of a scribe that this commentary was too unorthodox to be worthy of transmission. Another scribe, overseeing the first fellow's work, could have been of a broader mind-set and so have decided to include the commentary on Ephesians, thus disrupting the order which would have been found in the exemplar. We know for a fact that Victorinus' utterances in the commentaries could raise the orthodox

O's archetype is clear from the same gap in *S*, the autograph of the commentaries on Galatians and Philippians made by Jacques Sirmond from that same lost codex.[27] It may be that the accident which mutilated the opening of the commentary on Philippians—an accident which clearly occurred prior to the production of the codex Herivallensis[28]— was reponsible for the jumbled contents of the subsequent manuscript tradition. Further, that the conclusion of the commentary on Galatians is intact, while the opening of the one on Philippians is not, prevents our making any confident assertion about what other work or works (perhaps a commentary on Colossians as well as Ephesians) was originally positioned in between these two.[29] Therefore I do not regard the clearly disordered state of the manuscript tradition to be determinative of the original order of the commentaries.

A minor but significant piece of internal evidence for the original order is the aforementioned reference to the Ephesians commentary in the one on Philippians (see n. 21 above). Along similar lines, Gori thought to find in the preface to the Ephesians commentary a further clue to support Hadot's contention concerning their order. To account for Paul's apostolic greeting in Eph. 1: 1a, Victorinus quotes parallel phrases from Romans and both letters of the Corinthian correspondence. Gori maintains that this constitutes an argument (admittedly *e silentio*) for the Ephesians commentary following immediately after the (no longer extant) one on 2 Corinthians. Had Victorinus already covered Galatians, why was the formulaic greeting to that letter not cited alongside the other three?[30] Marin, however, has exposed a weakness in this argument: Victorinus' quotation of the greetings from Romans and the Corinthian correspondence is determined by his desire to indicate parallels to the opening phrase of Ephesians, *Paulus apostolos Iesu Christi per voluntatem dei*. Whereas both Romans and the letters to Corinth offer comparable formulations that allow the commentator to launch into his point about Christ being the eternally existent will of God, the greeting to the Galatians furnished no such obvious opening, which thus explains why he did not cite it here. Marin further shows, by extension of Gori's *argumentum e silentio*, that Victorinus' failure to cite

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hackles of copyists. This seems to have been the case with the third correcting hand of *O*, *O*[3], as Locher has indicated in 'Dogmatische Interpolationen in einer vatikanischen Handschrift aus Hohenemser Besitz', in *Montfort, Vierteljahrschrift für Geschichte und Gegenwart Vorarlbergs*, 36 (1984), 149–65. Oddly, while *O*[3] seems to have worked assiduously on the Galatians commentary, in the one on Ephesians his hand is present only as far as the preface and the first verse and is completely absent from the work on Philippians—at least so far as I can discern from Gori's critical apparatus.

[27] Gori, pp. xii–xiii.

[28] The humanist Sirmond (1559–1651) characterized this codex as follows: 'et hunc [*scil.* codicem] porro, si spectanda erat antiquitas, praeponi omnibus oportuit' (ibid.).

[29] For the order Col. – Phil., see Frede, *Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 163 (for details of the MSS containing this order, see *idem*, *Vetus Latina 24/1*, (Freiburg: Herder, 1962–4), 11*, #75).

[30] Gori, p. ix.

while discussing the multiple signatories in the opening of Galatians the greeting from Ephesians alongside his quotations from Romans and Corinthians as an example of Paul's normal solo authorship, would have to be considered proof that the commentary on Galatians preceded the one on Ephesians. I agree with Marin's judgement that neither of the arguments *e silentio* are probative, and that the issue will have to be resolved on other grounds.[31]

The preface to the Ephesians commentary contains a small scrap of internal evidence, heretofore unconsidered. Victorinus begins by stating that the letter to the Ephesians *summam illam tenet quae totius disciplinae semper esse debet*. This *summa* includes *cognitio theologiae* and *praecepta vivendi*, which he promises to discuss in the same order found in the letter. He then goes on to assert that the problem in the Ephesian church is the same one his readers will have been familiar with from a previous letter and his commentary upon it:

Sane materia illa est similiter, quae in omnibus custoditur, quod *etiam* Ephesii a pseudoapostolis depravati videbantur uti Iudaismum iungerent Christianae disciplinae.

To which of Paul's erring congregations does Victorinus here allude? Despite the fact that 'adding on Judaism' is the main bone of Paul's plaint against the Galatians according to Victorinus,[32] we cannot completely rule out the possibility that his remark—'the Ephesians too appeared to have been misled so as to add Judaism to Christian teaching and practice'—refers to Corinthians. In 2 Cor. 11: 13 Paul refers to 'pseudo-apostles' who make a point of their Jewish background; and issues concerning Jewish observances are touched upon several times in 1 Cor. 7–10. Thus it is not impossible that in his lost commentaries on Corinthians, Victorinus would have diagnosed the problems at Corinth to have been the result of adverse Jewish-Christian influence. The supposedly Marcionite Prologues to the Vetus Latina Pauline corpus, which probably influenced Victorinus into thinking the Ephesians had been waylaid by

[31] Marin, 'Sul successione', 380–1. I am omitting from this discussion Marin's rejection of another even more slender piece of evidence from Victorinus' remarks on Eph. 1: 1 tentatively offered by Gori (p. ix). This concerns Victorinus' first comment on Eph. 1: 1a (Gori, 2, 5–6): *Eodem modo et in ceteris, ut post dicemus*. Gori argues that *in ceteris* means *in ceteris epistolis,* such that Victorinus would be pointing forward to the similar epistolary opening of Galatians. However, Marin ('Sul successione', 382–3) points out that the referent of what 'we shall speak about in other places' is not the epistolary opening but the statement that immediately precedes the remark in question: viz. *omnem virtutem et evangelii et intellegentiae in Christo Iesu consistere* (Gori, 2, 3–5).

[32] Gori, 95, 3–5: *Summa autem huic epistolae haec est: errare Galatas quod evangelium fidei, quae est in Christo*, adiungant *ad Iudaismum*; 96, 23–4: *non esse* iungendum *corporale intellectum Iudaismi*; 96, 27: *et longe errare eos qui Iudaismi praecepta* iungunt *et observationem*; 99, 21: *et vana sunt illa quae Galatae* adiungunt, *id est Iudaismus*; 99, 9 ff.: *Si qui igitur aliud* adiungit, *id est ut Iudaismum. . . . Cum igitur Galatae* adiungendum *putaverint Iudaismum ad evangelium apostoli*; 100, 26–7: *uti* sociemus *Iudaismi disciplinam*. There are approximately a dozen more occurrences of similar formulations in the first book of the commentary on Galatians.

false apostles,[33] also state of the Corinthians that they had been *subversi multifarie a falsis apostolis, quidam a philosophiae verbosa eloquentia, alii a secta legis iudaicae inducti sunt*. On the other hand, in the Galatians commentary he uses the term *pseudoapostoli* (which does not appear in that letter) to indicate 'those who maintain that other things—being circumcised, observing the sabbath and the rest—must be added on to this gospel'. Then he refers to the *subinducti falsi fratres* of Gal. 2: 4 as those 'who were combining Judaism with Christianity' and clarifies that 'there are many pseudo-apostles whom he calls *false brothers*'[34]—no doubt including in this crowd those who were 'troubling' the Galatians. Thus while his remark *etiam Ephesii a pseudoapostolis depravati videbantur* could indicate as the Ephesians' predecessors in error either the Corinthians or the Galatians, I think the latter are the more likely candidates, in so far as the problem of Jewish practices is so much more central in that letter than in those to the Corinthians.

The major piece of internal evidence is found in the opening of the commentary on Galatians. Any argument for establishing the original order as regards Ephesians and Galatians must contend, independently of considerations arising from the various other pieces of evidence, with the grammar of the opening sentence:

Epistola ad Galatas missa dicitur ab apostolo ab Epheso civitate, et idcirco quidam illam praemittunt epistolam, hanc ordinant consequentem. Summa autem huic epistolae est: errare Galatas quod evangelium fidei, quae est in Christo, adiungant ad Iudaismum.

A similar ambiguity pertaining to the Latin demonstrative pronouns can be reproduced in English:

The letter to the Galatians is said to have been sent by the apostle from the city of Ephesus. For this reason, some put that letter first and order this one after it. Now, the main point of the letter is this: the Galatians are going astray, because they are linking the gospel of faith, which is a faith in Christ, to Judaism.

As previously mentioned, Hadot was the first to regard *illam* as referring to Galatians and *hanc* to Ephesians. Despite the lack of explicit mention of the letter to the Ephesians, Victorinus (thus Hadot) will have associated it closely enough to the just mentioned name of the city as to designate it with *hanc*.[35] However, the fact that the letter to the Ephesians is not

[33] Thus Schäfer, 'Marius Victorinus und die marcionitischen Prologe zu den Paulusbriefen'. Nils Dahl ('Origin of the Earliest Prologues to the Pauline Letters') is rightly sceptical, in my opinion, about their Marcionite origin; but see now the objection of Enrico Norelli, 'La Tradizione ecclesiastica negli antichi prologhi latini alle epistole paoline', in *La Tradizione* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1990), 301–24. Texts of all the prologues are given by Schäfer, Norelli, and Peter Corssen, 'Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des Römerbriefs' (*ZNW* 10 (1909), 1–45, 97–102), who provides an abbreviated critical apparatus to them (pp. 37–40). These prologues were first attributed to a Marcionite by Corssen and Donatien de Bruyne, 'Prologues bibliques d'origine marcionite', *Rbén* 24 (1907), 1–16.

[34] Gori, 113, 3–6, and 114, 19–24.

[35] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 288 n. 19.

explicitly mentioned in the text, may be grounds for thinking that *illam* refers to it as something more distant from the readers' attention. This kind of usage of these pronouns is nothing extraordinary, whence it is unsurprising that the scholarship on the commentaries prior to Hadot did not even mention this passage as problematic. Of all the scholars who noted the reference to the commentary on Ephesians in the one on Philippians, neither Koffmane,[36] nor Monceaux,[37] nor Séjourné[38] were led to Hadot's conclusion: in fact they rejected the presentation of the order in the Migne edition (Gal. – Phil. – Eph.) and took the order of the commentaries to be that of the canonical sequence. Nor was Marin the first to take *illam* as referring to Ephesians and *hanc* to Galatians, the latter being *mentally closer* to the commentator, as he argues.[39] Frede, although he thinks the order of the commentaries may have been Gal. – Phil. – Eph. (see n. 21 above), reads the opening of Galatians exactly as Marin does: 'Im Prolog zu seinem Galater-Kommentar hebt Marius noch einmal hervor, daß *quidam* diesen Brief erst auf den Epheserbrief folgen lassen, wie er selbst in *Adversus Arium* tut.'[40]

That Victorinus does not use *ille* and *hic* in a rigid fashion is clear from a number of passages in his commentaries. Remarking on Gal. 2: 14, he refers to Peter as *illum*, despite having just mentioned him: *Ita et intellexisse ostendit [Paulus] consensisse Petrum Iudaeis, sed simulatione, et tamen illum peccare, primo quia timuit eos qui venerant*, etc. He similarly interprets the same demonstrative pronoun in Phil. 3: 21 to refer to something implied but not mentioned in the text.[41] So too on Gal. 4: 26: the demonstratives do not refer to the relative order of antecedents in the text but to what is closer in reality.[42] He does not hestitate to use *illa* alone to

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[36] Koffmane, *De Mario Victorino*, 8.

[37] Monceaux, *Histoire littéraire*, iii. 402.

[38] Séjourné, 'Victorinus Afer', 2898.

[39] Marin, 'Sul successione', 385: 'l'opposizione *illam/hanc* designa con *illam* la *lettera agli Efesini*, che, sebbene implicitamente richiamata dalla vicina espressione *ab Epheso civitate*, è lontana dalle preoccupazioni esegetiche di Vittorino; con *hanc*, invece, è indicata *la lettera ai Galati*, la lettera che in quel momento constituice l'oggetto esclusivo del commento'. He also (his n. 6) points to a passage already observed by Gori in the commentary on Phil. where Victorinus uses *illud* (Gori, 185, 97) to indicate something said just previously but distant from the immediate focus of his attention (see Gori's translation and comment, CorPat, 325 and 429).

[40] Frede, 'Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe', 297.

[41] His VL presented this verse thus: *Qui transfiguravit corpus humilitatis nostrae ut sit aequiforme cum corpore gloriae ipsius, secundum operationem potentiae suae, ut possit etiam universa illi subdere*. Victorinus worries about the referent of this *illi*: *Quo igitur referimus 'illi'? Constat quidem quoniam ob hoc operatur Christus uti universa deo subiciat, sed hic dei significatio nulla est. Quo igitur referimus? Intellegendum quomodo breviter et aperte tamen posuerit deum.... Ergo ubi dixit: 'potentiae suae', hic intelligitur deus, cui scilicet subdit universa, et propter hoc operatur ut possit etiam universa illi subdere* (Gori, 216, 35–53).

[42] Victorinus, in distinguishing a spiritual Jerusalem from an earthly one, writes as follows: *ergo quid sit istud, inquam, esse et hic et ibi terram, esse et hic et ibi civitatem,*

refer to something near in the text but far from his liking, as we see in a comment on Gal. 4: 27.[43]

The other argument that Marin marshalls, which I have found most convincing, is that if *illam* refers to Galatians and *hanc* to Ephesians, the use of *huic* in the very next line, clearly meaning Galatians, would be product-ive of confusion. It would be a very rough transition to switch the referent of the same demonstrative within a short space of a few words. To function in a sentence, the demonstrative pronouns must retain continuous refer-ences within a passage of text, even if the principle of spatial referentiality (relative distance from the referent) is violated, as in this passage.[44] What is less improbable? To take *hanc* with Marin to refer to the mentally closer but spatially more distant Galatians,[45] or to read the line with Hadot as follows: *quidam illam* [= Gal.] *praemittunt epistolam, hanc* [= Eph.] *ordinant consequentem. Summa autem huic* [= Gal.] *epistolae est . . . ?* Hadot maintains that by making this opening comment Victorinus 'nous signale que certains manuscrits présentent l'ordre inverse'.[46] On this line of argument, Victor-inus would be giving the reader a bit of interesting but irrelevant informa-tion about a variant order of the epistles. But why then, if Ephesians truly preceded in his commentaries, would he not have made that remark in the preface to that letter, where indeed it would have been called for? In my view, Victorinus' remark on the order of these two letters was provoked by his own awareness of having presented the epistles in that variant order previously in his major theological treatise. If we do away with Hadot's

sed illam liberam, hanc servam, alius tractatus est longus (Gori, 154, 12–15). The demonstrative pronouns do not refer to what was farther or nearer in the text (*esse et hic et ibi civitatem*) but rather to what is farther or nearer in reality. The free city, Jerusalem above, is more distant and so is designated by *illa*; the earthly Jerusalem, nearer to the speaker, is signified by *haec*.

[43] 'Although the Galatians have taken up the Christian *disciplina* and the faith in Christ', he begins, *observarent tamen etiam Iudaicam disciplinam; ad hoc excluden-dum, ut illam reicerent et solum evangelium de Christo haberent, adsumpserat superius exemplum* (Gori, 154–5, 6–9). The context of the sentence demands that *illa* here refers to the Jewish teaching (*disciplina*), despite the fact that it is the nearest referent of this pronoun, and not to the Christian *disciplina*, which although further back in the text is more proximate in the mind of the author and in religious history, as Gori has pointed out (CorPat, 425).

[44] Once the pronoun sequence is established, then the principle of spatial refer-entiality can be violated without causing confusion. We see this in the ancient Latin translation of Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on Ephesians. In the preface, *haec* and *ipsa* are established to mean Ephesians; Theodore then continues: *habet autem ipsa epistola aliqua ex parte similitudinem secundum intellectum ad illam epis-tolam quam ad Romanos dudum scripsisse uidetur. nam et in* illa *adnititur ostendere Christi aduentum hominibus multorum bonorum causam extisse conlatorum* (Swete, i. 113, 3–7). The second *illa* continues to mean Romans, despite the fact that the mention of this letter is closer to it.

[45] Allen and Greenough's *New Latin Grammar* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916) treats this usage as a rare but not unheard of exception to the common pattern (p. 177, §297a). References to such exceptions are found in J. B. Hoffmann and A. Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1965), 182.

[46] Hadot, *Marius Victorinus*, 288 n. 19.

assumption that the order of the epistles as given in *Adversus Arium*, with Ephesians before Galatians, is determinative for the order of the commentaries' composition, we will be led to conclude that Marin, Frede, and others have read the Latin in a more convincing manner.

One aspect of Marin's argument, despite my endorsement of it in an earlier publication,[47] is less than clear: it concerns the logic of *idcirco* in the disputed passage.[48] Marin, having laid out the rationale of Hadot's reading, goes on to object:

> Ma a tale interpretazione si oppone immediatamente la logica interna del passo, nel quale *idcirco* instituisce una evidente coordinazione conclusiva, mentre l'affermazione 'la lettera ai Galati è stata mandata dall'apostolo dalla città di Efeso, e perciò alcuni pongono *Galati* prima di *Efesini*' (?!) appare, oltre che poco perspicua, decisamente ingiustificata.

But the chrono-logic of Hadot's translation seems simple: Paul wrote to the Galatians while in Ephesus; departing that city, he then wrote to the Ephesians. Why this reading would be 'decisamente ingiustificata' is not apparent to me. But Marin goes on to maintain that in his reading of the demonstratives,

> esiste una chiara connessione causale—sottolineata da *idcirco*—fra la composizione della *lettera ai Galati* ad Efeso e la successione *Efesini – Galati*, che vorebbe evidentemente prospettarsi come topografico-cronologica.[49]

The logic of the *idcirco* according to Marin would be as follows: given the fact that Galatians was written from Ephesus, some arrangements of the epistles put Ephesians—for some unstated reason—before Galatians. This is the inverse of Hadot's understanding. Why this order of the epistles would follow from Galatians being written from Ephesus seems no more natural or obvious than deducing the reverse order from the same fact. Both Marin's and Hadot's interpretations of the sentence require the reader to make an inference about the chronology of the two epistles; and either interpretation would make sense if the reader provided the appropriate inference. Only after making a decision about the demonstrative pronouns can one reconstruct the logic of *idcirco*, which cannot (without *petitio principii*) be used to solve the mystery of the pronouns, since there was no regnant view in the fourth century concerning the chronology of the Pauline letters. That issue cannot be approached except by a consideration of the orders of the epistles variously witnessed in biblical codices, canonical lists, and ancient commentaries. Frede has explored the matter minutely, and I shall follow his presentation.[50]

In the first place, we must observe that neither the order—similar to P^{46}—found in *Adversus Arium* and proposed by Hadot for the commentaries (Rom.– Cor.– Eph.– Gal. – Phil.) nor the one Marin is attempting to

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[47] Cooper, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 38 n. 135.

[48] *Epistola ad Galatas missa dicitur ab apostolo ab Epheso civitate, et* idcirco *quidam illam praemittunt epistolam, hanc ordinant consequentem.*

[49] Marin, 'Sulla successione', 384.

[50] See n. 5 above.

establish for the commentaries (Rom. – Cor. – Gal. – Eph. – Phil.) has any pretension of chronological arrangement. Both orders are based on decreasing length; no ancient chronology ever regarded Romans as early. Given this principle of arrangement, the fact that Galatians and Ephesians are approximately the same length is one reason for their varying position.[51] We have evidence of some ancient chronological arrangements (in Marcion and the Syriac tradition); but these begin with Galatians and put Ephesians in the fifth or sixth position, along with the other 'prison letters' (Phil., Col.). The other early chronological canonical order is that given by the Muratorian canon, which puts the Corinthian correspondence in first place, followed by Ephesians and the other two prison letters, and then Galatians.

But in fact, Victorinus' statement that Galatians was written from Ephesus tells us nothing about which letter he thought, or some people thought, had been written earlier. Along the line of Marin's reasoning, Victorinus is just reporting, without endorsement or criticism, the 'topographical-chronological' rationale some people offered for putting Ephesians first. Moreover, as none of the ancient exegetes seriously doubted the authenticity of Ephesians, nothing ruled out the possibility for them that Ephesians had been written prior to Paul's arrival in that city—Acts reports two visits, one brief (18: 19–21), one for over two years (chs. 19–20)—and hence prior to the composition of Galatians. This was the conclusion reached by Theodore of Mopsuestia[52] and Severian of Gabala.[53] Why these exegetes settled on this theory, and why Victorinus may have shared this opinion (despite his following what was becoming the dominant canonical order), can be seen in his presentation of Ephesians, which inadvertently sheds light on his assumptions concerning the chronology of the epistles.

Victorinus nowhere discusses Paul's itinerary or the chronology of the letters. Nothing suggests that he had developed a full-blown chronology of the apostle's career based on a careful comparison of Acts and the epistles.[54] However, one source of putative information concerning Paul's

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[51] Frede notes that Codex Sinaiticus gives the same number of lines for both epistles, 312 ('Die Ordnung der Paulusbriefe', 293).

[52] Hence the opening line in the Latin translation of his commentary on Ephesians: *Scribit Ephesiis hanc epistolam beatus Paulus, eo modo quo et Romanis dudum scripserat quos necdum ante viderat* (Swete, i. 112, 1–2). He repeats the same view later in his prologue in a passage preserved by the Greek catena: Παῦλος δὲ οὐδὲ τεθεαμένος αὐτοὺς ἐπιστέλλων φαίνεται (Swete, i. 116, 19).

[53] Ὥσπερ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ἔγραφεν, ὅτε μηδέπω αὐτοὺς τεθέατο, οὕτω καὶ τοῖς Ἐφεσίοις (Staab, 2nd edn., 304, 18–19).

[54] Victorinus refers twice to Acts in the commentary on Galatians. First is a mention of the Matthew who filled Judas's shoes (Gori, 97, 23; Acts 1: 25); and this seems no more than a recollection that he did not bother to check, as he mistakenly states that this Matthew was someone *qui ab hominibus didicit*, obviously not recalling the passage well enough to remember the context which states 'one of these men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John . . . one of these must become a witness with us' (Acts 1: 21–2, NRSV). Victorinus would not consider someone

travels and letters which we know him to have utilized in composing his commentaries are the much-disputed Vetus Latina prologues to the Pauline epistles.[55] The old prologue to Ephesians has been demonstrated to be the source of Victorinus' conviction that the Ephesians were *a pseudoapostolis depravati*.[56] The one to Galatians provided him with the by no means obvious notion[57] that this letter was written from Ephesus: *hos* [sc. *Galatas*] *apostolus revocat ad fidem veritatis scribens eis ab Epheso*. Victorinus relates this not as a fact he definitively endorses (a non-committal *dicitur* introduces the claim), but only as a piece of tradition that he shows little concern to dispute. His point in mentioning this is to explain why certain manuscripts or people (*quidam*) maintain a different order than his

who heard Jesus during his life to be 'taught by men'. The second citation of Acts is in connection with his discussion of Gal. 2: 4 (Gori, 114, 12–13), where he wants to point to the fact that Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16: 3). Additionally, his comments on Eph. 3: 1 (*vas electionis dictus est Paulus*) are a clear quotation of the phrase σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς from Acts 9: 15, but this too is no evidence of his having made a deep study of that book. None of the nine citations of Acts found in his Trinitarian treatises (see Gori's scriptural index) are of passages pertaining to Paul's missionary journeys.

[55] See n. 33 above for the literature; the article by Dahl gives the fullest exposition of the matter. A brief overview can be found in the *ABD* article 'Marcionite Prologues to Paul' by J. J. Clabeaux (iv. 520–1). Even Dahl, who rejects the Marcionite origin of these prologues, admits that Victorinus 'seems to have read a Prologue to the Ephesians that corresponded exactly to what Prol Col makes us expect the preceding prologue [*sc.* to Laodiceans/Ephesians] to have contained' (Dahl, 'Origin', 249). According to the accepted theory, this pre-Vulgate prologue to Ephesians, utilized by Victorinus, originally read: *Laodicenses* [sc. *Ephesiani*] *sunt Asiani. Hi praeventi erant a falsis apostolis. . . . Ad hos* non accessit ipse apostolus . . . *hos per epistolam recorrigit* (Schäfer, 'Marius Victorinus', 8, cf. 10–14). Frede, who has also strongly contested their Marcionite origin (*Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 171–3) and may thus be considered a very sceptical critic, seems also to regard the hypothesis of this (reconstructed) prologue as thoroughly possible (Frede, *Vetus Latina*, 24/2, 301). See my *Metaphysics and Morals*, 115–16, for a brief discussion of the influence of this prologue on Victorinus' reading of Ephesians.

[56] In addition to the article of Schäfer cited in n. 33 above, see also his very clear presentation, 'Marcion und die ältesten Prologe zu den Paulusbriefen', in P. Granfield and J. Jungmann (eds.), *Kyriakon* (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1971), 135–50. However, I think Schäfer wrongly contends (p. 140) that when the originally Laodicean prologue became the (now lost) original prologue to the VL version of Ephesians, it would have contained the phrase *apostolus scribit eis a Roma de carcere*. I conclude this from Victorinus' commentary on Ephesians, where, although he makes mention of Paul being in chains (see his comments on 6: 20–2; Gori, 92–3), he includes no geographical location. Nor does he make any such statement in his preface to that letter, which is where he would have put any information of this sort. More likely is Schäfer's concluding suggestion that Ambrosiaster's assumption that Ephesians was sent from Rome derived from the extant but modified prologue to Ephesians that this commentator utilized (ibid. 149).

[57] This is Corssen's opinion, who calls it '[d]ie im Altertum keineswegs allgemeingültiges Annahme' ('Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte', 41).

regarding Ephesians and Galatians. But other information, not to be over-looked, was provided him by the VL prologues. As reconstructed, the prologue to the Ephesians contained something like the following: *ad hos non accessit ipse apostolus . . . hos per epistolam recorrigit*.[58] This clue Victor-inus seems to have taken more seriously, much as he was influenced by the prologues in other matters.[59] The reading of Ephesians sustained through-out his commentary, at any rate, nowhere assumes any personal contacts between Paul and the Christians of that city at the time of the letter's composition. One can readily see why: the letter is devoid of specific information about the situation of the recipients, to such an extent that Victorinus must strive mightily to find Paul addressing their particulars at all.[60] In light of the lengthy stay and considerable contact that Acts 19 depicts Paul having with the Ephesians, and particularly the effusive fare-well scene of 20: 17–38, who could imagine Paul writing to them so impersonally? This is probably why other ancient commentators adopted the solution that the apostle wrote to the Ephesians before ever having laid eyes upon them; one modern conclusion is to regard Ephesians as having been 'sent to a Christian community, or more probably communities, which Paul had not visited'.[61] Although Victorinus assumes Paul to have been in prison when he wrote Ephesians (as implied by the letter itself), he does not state where.[62] His silence on this last point is some indication that neither the prologues nor any other sources provided him with the where-withal to construct a relative chronology pertaining to Ephesians and Galatians.

The presence of *idcirco*, therefore, does not compel us to accept either Hadot's or Marin's reading. Our translation of the disputed passage cannot rest on any assumptions about what either of the parties—Victorinus himself, or the *quidam*—would have believed concerning the relative chronology of Galatians and Ephesians, as this was not a fixed matter for

[58] See n. 55 above. I would add here that the scholars agree that when the addressees in the prologue 'to the Laodiceans' were changed to 'the Ephesians', another modification would have appeared necessary to anybody but a dunce: viz. the removal or alteration of the phrase *scribit eis ab Epheso* (see n. 56 above). Along these lines I find it not improbable to suppose that the person responsible for the modification, being familiar with Acts, would have altered the *ad hos non accessit ipse apostolus* to a more sensible *ad hos* nondum *accessit ipse apostolus*.

[59] For full discussion see Erdt, *Marius Victorinus Afer*, 198–208.

[60] He picks up on the author's *literary* address to the audience; but his attempts to forge a connection between the author and his audience never get very particular: e.g. his remarks on Eph. 1: 13 and 1: 15 (see my translation and comments, *Metaphysics and Morals*, 56–7, 143–5).

[61] Ernest Best, 'Recipients and Title of the Letter to the Ephesians', in *ANRW* II. 25.4 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987), 3247–79, 3247.

[62] The mention of his many 'imprisonments' in 2 Cor. 11: 23 could have led ancient exegetes to presume more incarcerations than are reported in Acts. Pelagius, for one, did not regard Acts as a comprehensive account when it came to Paul's labours, imprisonments, the lash, the thirty-nine blows, etc. Thus he comments: *Quinque vicibus tricenas et nouenas quasi transgressor legis accepit: haec autem in Actibus non omnia repperiuntur, quia nec in Epistolis omnia quae ibi scripta sunt continentur* (Souter, 295, 21 ff.).

ancient critics. Thus the decision must rest upon the other factors I have discussed, none of which offers much support for the contention that Victorinus commented on the Pauline letters in the same order he cited them in *Adversus Arium*. Most decisive against taking *hanc* to refer to Ephesians, as Hadot would like, is the fact that a mere five words later the identical pronoun (*huic*) indubitably stands for Galatians. I cannot see that the arguments of Hadot, Erdt, and Gori can escape this problem.

It is instructive to note that Raspanti's adoption of a compromise solution to this question—accepting Marin's reading of the Latin and simultaneously upholding the order maintained by Hadot[63]—falls apart when he clarifies his reasons for holding to Hadot's solution: that the manuscript used by Victorinus in writing *Adversus Arium* presented Ephesians prior to Galatians. If this was indeed a Greek manuscript, and if—as universally accepted—Victorinus used an already existent Vetus Latina version later for his commentaries, Raspanti's grounds for following Hadot collapse beneath him. He then becomes one more advocate of Marin's reading of the Latin. Raspanti, moreover, sets out a condition under which he would admit that the conclusion of Marin regarding the commentaries' *order* is valid: 'bisogna dimonstrare che Vittorino ha composto i commentari secondo un piano predeterminato che lo ha spinto a mutare la successione con cui i manoscritti che aveva dinanzi gli presentavano le Lettere di Paolo.'[64] The 'predetermined schema that pushed him to alter the sequence' was none other than an up-to-date version of the Vetus Latina. This codex must then have had—*ex hypothesi*—Galatians before Ephesians, much as did the version utilized shortly thereafter in the same general area (Italy) by Ambrosiaster for his commentaries. Indeed, Victorinus' adaptation of an order in his commentaries that differed from the one presupposed by his practice in *Adversus Arium* falls in line with a general crystallizing, in the latter part of the fourth century, of the final canonical order.[65]

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[63] 'In effetti, il deittico *hanc* non può che riferirsi al termine piú vicino, ma ciò non tanto nell'ordine della parole, come vuole Hadot, quanto piuttosto nell'ordine delle idee: dunque *hanc* non può che riferirsi alla Lettera ai Galati che sta in quel momento all'attenzione del commentatore. . . . Ma anche adottando tale spiegazione non crediamo che l'ipotesi dalla successione Ef, Gal, Fil, venga invalidata. Infatti, nulla nel testo vittoriniano autorizza a ritenere che i *quidam* di cui parla Vittorino siano ''altri'' rispetto a cui l'autore intenda differenziarsi' (Raspanti, *esegeta*, 141).

[64] Ibid. 140–1.

[65] Evidence for this is found in Jerome's re-publication of a lightly edited version of Victorinus of Pettau's commentary on Revelation. The original text from the late-third-century bishop and martyr had cited the Pauline epistles with Ephesians before Galatians, which Jerome emended (CSEL 49, cf. 28, 8–10, and 29, 8–10).

Appendix 2

Misreading of the Greek of Gal. 1: 10

Commenting on Gal. 1: 10 Victorinus first gives an amplified paraphrase of the sense of the Vetus Latina he has before him, but then goes on to remark that 'the Greek has it otherwise' (*Graecus aliter habet*). He proceeds to elucidate the meaning of the Greek, which runs—as he reads it—along lines other than those of the Latin. An examination of the point reveals that he is indeed construing the Greek in a syntactically possible, if contextually unlikely, sense. This 'misreading' appears to have been begotten of his desire to find one more scriptural witness to the divinity of Christ.[1]

In Gal. 1: 9 Paul pronounces a curse upon any preachers of 'another gospel'. Verse 10 consists of two rhetorical questions, the first a double question and a contrary-to-fact statement. The verse has been something of a *crux interpretum* for New Testament scholarship, which has disputed the force of these rhetorical questions and the answers expected.[2] Verses 9–10 run as follows in the KJV, the Vetus Latina of Victorinus, and the Greek (Nestle-Aland[27]):

(v. 9) As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (v. 10) For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

(v. 9) Sicuti praediximus et nunc iterum dico, si qui vobis evangelizaverit, praeterquam quod accepistis, anathema sit. (v. 10) Modo enim hominibus suadeo an deo? Aut quaero hominibus placere? Si adhuc hominibus placerem, Christi non servus essem.

(v. 9) *ὡς προειρήκαμεν καὶ ἄρτι πάλιν λέγω· εἴ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ'ὃ παρελάβετε, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.* (v. 10) *Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἤ τὸν θεόν; ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἤρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἤμην.*

Victorinus deals separately with each of the two rhetorical questions in 10a. The first question—*Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἤ τὸν θεόν*—his Vetus Latina rendered *Modo enim hominibus suadeo an deo?*[3] As do most

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[1] See Ch. 5, Sect. B, above.

[2] Thus Pitta, *Lettera ai Galati* refers to this verse as 'uno dei versetti più complessi dell'epistolario paolino' (p. 77).

[3] This agrees with the VL utilized by Augustine in his *Exp. ad Gal.* 5 (CSEL 84, 59) and by the Budapest Anonymous (Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext*, ii. 220). The Latin texts found in the commentaries of Ambrosiaster, Jerome, and Pelagius agree with the Vlg. in having *aut* instead of *an*.

modern commentators,[4] he maintains that Paul expected a negative response to the first part and a 'yes' to the second part of the double question of 1.10a:

Modo enim hominibus suadeo an deo? Non enim, inquit, hoc quod ago, ago propterea ut hominibus suadeam, sed suadeo ante deo, deo velim placere, ut id quod mandat exsequar.[5]

Thus he, like most moderns, assumes the presence of a zeugma[6] whereby *suadere* has a different force with 'God' as its object than it does when it takes 'human beings'. That is, in the second part of the double question, the meaning of *suadere* has slid over into the sense of the verb *placere* found in the second rhetorical question of the verse (ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; VL, *Aut quaero hominibus placere?*). His comments explain this: 'not that I would persuade human beings, but I make my persuasion before God, I would like to please God.' Having given a clear explanation of the sense of the Vetus Latina, Victorinus then takes the opportunity to consult the Greek.[7] He comes up with an exegesis, undreamt of by moderns nor attempted by the surviving Greek commentators of the fourth and fifth centuries:[8]

Graecus aliter habet: modo enim ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἤ τὸν θεόν? Hoc est non evangelizo homines quam deum. Persuadere enim non homines volo, sed deum Christum. Ergo et sic habeo necessitatem et metum vera dicendi et non alia et alia dicendi.

While we will admit generally that the translator of the *libri platonicorum*—the books which struck Augustine with so much force—was not unskilled in the Greek language, scholars seem to have followed the editor of the Migne edition of Victorinus' commentaries, Cardinal Mai, in not being swayed by Victorinus' contention that the meaning of the Greek differs from the Latin version.[9] However, it is not apparent to me that Victorinus has even been understood, wrong though he may be. The note on this passage that Franco Gori appended to his Corona Patrum edition and

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[4] e.g. Lightfoot, St *Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, 78 n. 10; Zahn, *Der Brief*, 51–2; Albrecht Oepke, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, 2nd edn. (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1960), 26–7; Mussner, *Der Galaterbrief*, 63; Martyn, *Galatians*, 137–40. Others argue that a 'no' is expected to whether Paul seeks to 'persuade God', e.g. R. Bultmann, art. πείθω, *ThWNT* vi. 2; A. Feuillet, '"Chercher à persuader Dieu" (GA 1:10ᵃ)', *Novum Testamentum*, 12 (1970), 350–60; Betz, *Galatians*, 54–5. Francesco Saracino ('Come si persude Dio', *Biblica*, 63 (1982), 84–9), while agreeing with Betz on the background of Paul's questions, concludes that the apostle expected an affirmative answer to the question.

[5] Gori, 102, 1–4.

[6] First explicitly stated by Oepke: 'Die Verbindung von πείθειν mit dem Object τὸν θεόν . . . behält etwas Zeugmatisches' (*Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater*, 26).

[7] See the index of Greek words Victorinus uses in Gori, 288–90.

[8] Saracino ('Come si persude Dio') does not even consider this syntactical possibility in his survey of the possible meanings of this phrase.

[9] Mai: 'Graecum textum (ut certe est in codice) a latine differre mihi non persuadet Victorinus' (PL 8, 1150 n. 2).

translation of the commentaries seems to betray—if I am not mistaken—a certain misapprehension of the sense of Victorinus' Latin here:

Graecus aliter habet: la divergenza sta nel valore attribuito a ἤ: mentre nel testo latino la particella è intesa come interrogativa disgiuntiva (*an*), Vittorino la ritiene congiunzione comparativa (*quam*). Ciò non ha alcuna rilevanza per l'esegesi perché fondamentalmente il significato non cambia. L'osservazione, quindi, va considerata come una divagazione di carattere puramente grammaticale, e nemmeno esatta, se si considera che il testo greco, in questo versetto 10, ha un secondo ἤ inteso come particella disgiuntiva anche da Vittorino.[10]

Gori's contention that Victorinus' point has only to do with the force of ἤ (*an* in the VL, *quam* in Victorinus' explanatory translation immediately following) seems to be a counsel of despair. It is not only for its comparative sense that Victorinus prefers *quam*: he substitutes *quam* for *an* because he wants to paraphrase Paul's (rhetorical) question with a clear statement of its implication; and *quam* is more suitable than *an* for a declaratory sentence.[11] Gori admits that the difference he discerns is negligible and does not affect the actual meaning; this, however, is Victorinus' claim. Gori's explanation, moreover, does not account for all the elements that follow in the comment and thus cannot be considered sufficient.

The key to Victorinus' comment on the Greek is found in his explanatory translation, introduced by the formulaic *hoc est*, which follows immediately upon his citation of the original: *hoc est non evangelizo homines quam deum*. Notably, Victorinus offers the loan-word *evangelizo* as a paraphrase for πείθω, thus indicating, in accordance with his use elsewhere in his commentaries on Paul, that the accusatives signify not the person subject to the persuasion—as Gori thinks, misled perhaps by the use of 'evangelize' in modern languages[12]—but rather the object or content of the persuasion. Why should Victorinus' use of *evangelizare* with the accusative here have any meaning other than in his regular use of this construction throughout his commentaries?[13] This reading is confirmed by his next remark—*persuadere enim non homines volo, sed deum Christum*—intended to elaborate the implications of the Greek. Here *persuadere* with the accusative indicates a sense distinct from that of the VL's rendition *suadere* with the dative. This can be confirmed by a comparison with his other usages of *persuadere* and *suadere*, both in the commentary on Galatians[14] and that on Cicero's

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[10] Gori, CorPat, 413.

[11] *OLD*, 125, art. 'an' (9) indicates that the few occasions when *an* is found outside of direct or indirect questions concern merely a matter of an alternative between commensurate quantities—and Victorinus clearly wants to stress a greater disjunction here, i.e. between persuading human beings and persuading God.

[12] Thus he translates *hoc est non evangelizo homines quam deum* by 'Cioè: non evangelizzo gli uomini piutosto che Dio' (Gori, CorPat, 193).

[13] e.g. in his comment on Gal. 1: 13 (*etenim Iacobus admixto Iudaismo Christum evangelizabat* (Gori, 107, 64)); on Eph. 2: 17 (*Adventus enim domini evangelizavit pacem* (Gori, 39, 4)). The usage is common throughout the VL, as might be expected when translating εὐαγγελίζομαι.

[14] e.g. on 1: 7 (*Porro autem cum in Christum credideritis et in Christo omnia speranda, quae ex Christo, volunt vos conturbare cum aliud suadere* (Gori, 101, 19–21)) and on 1: 22 (*iam se evangelium suum omnibus persuasisse* (Gori, 111, 7)).

De inventione. In the latter the verb is consistently employed with the accusative indicating the object or content of persuasion.[15] Along these lines, *persuadere enim non homines volo, sed deum Christum* ought not to be translated as a choice of either persuading people or persuading God, meaning Christ (thus Gori: 'Infatti non voglio persuadere gli uomini, ma Cristo Dio'[16]). Instead we must represent the thought somewhat awkwardly: 'I do not want to make human beings the object of my proclamation, but rather Christ, a God'.[17]

Doubtless Victorinus' desire to assert the divinity of Christ has led him into this ingenious reading of the Greek. In both the Trinitarian treatises and the commentaries he assiduously squeezes Nicene doctrine out of Scripture.[18] But what can be said of his contextually improbable reading of the Greek? While πείθω usually takes the accusative of the person being persuaded, LSJ also cites classical usages with a double accusative of the person and the object persuaded,[19] and one instance of an accusative of the object.[20] It is this latter we find here in the passage from Victorinus. The construction is not unknown in the New Testament. Bauer's *Wörterbuch* gives a manuscript variant of Acts 19: 8 as an example of the 'Akkusative der Sache' without specification of person.[21] To these we may add, from a Greek rhetor of Victorinus' day, a number of passages in Libanius' epistles where we have the single accusative of the object persuaded.[22] Thus

[15] e.g. *aut cum aliquid faciendum vel non faciendum verbis persuadet* (Halm, 163, 30); *Quando aliquid faciendum persuademus, ab honesto, ab utili, a possibili persuademus* (168, 10). Additional examples: Halm, 174, 34–40, and 301, 2. His comments on Gal. 3: 1 use the dative with *persuadere* to indicate the persons persuaded, retaining the accusative to express the content of the persuasion: *Sic et persuadendo vobis Iudaismi disciplinam et in vobis Christum crucifixerunt* (Gori, 126, 20).

[16] Gori, CorPat, 193.

[17] Alternatively, one could opt for a colloquial translation: 'I am not trying to push men, but Christ as God.' 'Push' has the advantage of preserving some of the negative valences which various commentators have argued would have been associated with πείθειν in a religious context (Betz, *Galatians*, 54–5, esp. n. 108).

[18] *Adv. Ar.* I 2–27 (CSEL 83/1, 56–102). For discussion of such passages in his commentaries, see Raspanti, *Esegeta*, 73–81.

[19] Herodotus 1. 163 (Loeb, 204: μετὰ δέ, ὡς τοῦτό γε οὐκ ἔπειθε τούς Φωκαιέας, ὅ δὲ πυθόμενος τὸν Μῆδον παρ᾽ αὐτῶν ὡς αὔξοιτο, ἐδίδου σφι χρήματα τεῖχος περιβαλέσθαι τὴν πόλιν); Plato, *Ap.* 37A (Loeb, 13): πέπεισμαι ἐγὼ ἑκὼν εἶναι μηδένα ἀδικεῖν ἀνθρώπον, ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς τοῦτο οὐ πείθω). Cited in LSJ 1353 A. 2.

[20] Thucydides, 4. 17 (Loeb, 238): Ἔπεμψαν ἡμᾶς Λακεδαιμόνιοι, ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, περὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ ἀνδρῶν πράξοντας ὅ τι ἂν ὑμῖν τε ὠφέλιμον ὂν τὸ αὐτὸ πείθωμεν καὶ ἡμῖν ἐς τὴν ξυμφορὰν ὡς ἐκ τῶν παρόντων κόσμον μάλιστα μέλλῃ οἴσειν.

[21] καὶ πείθων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ is contained in BDΨ 1175. 1891ᶜ; the τὰ is omitted by ℵ AE 33. 1739 and many other witnesses, which reading is adopted by Nestle-Aland²⁷ (Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland (eds.), *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 6th edn. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), 1288).

[22] A *bon mot*: πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ὁ καιρὸς τὰ μὲν ἔπεισε, τὰ δὲ ἠνάγκασεν (*Ep.* 1198, 3; Foerster (ed.), Teubner, xi. 281). We also find the participles taking the accusative of the thing: εἰ δὲ τῷ μὲν λαβεῖν ἡσθήῃ, τῷ δὲ μὴ πάλαι μέμψῃ, τοῦ μὴ πάλαι ταῦτα πείσαντος κατηγόρει (*Ep.* 1299, 2; p. 365); εἰ δὲ σὲ Ἀντιοχέα γραφόμεθα, γάμου ταῦτα πείθοντος καὶ γυναικὸς καὶ οἴκου καὶ παίδῶν μὴ θυμάσῃς (*Ep.* 1354, 6; p. 404).

this passage from his commentary on Galatians cannot be considered evidence of any lack of mastery of Greek on Victorinus' part, which has been questioned at times by scholars, often in light of Boethius' criticism of the former's Latin translation of Porphyry's *Isagoge*.[23] While Victorinus' reading of Galatians 1: 10 cannot recommend itself to contemporary New Testament scholarship as a serious exegetical option, it is another reminder of how theological controversy compelled even the philologically astute to press biblical texts unduly in service of their cause.

[23] Cf. Paul Monceaux, 'L'Isagoge latine de Marius Victorinus', in *Philologie et linguistique* (Paris: Machette, 1909), 291–310, 293. See also Luigi Adamo, 'Boezio e Mario Vittorino traduttori e interpreti dell' 'Isogoge' di Porfirio', *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, 22 (1967), 141–64. These two scholars, along with Henry Chadwick (*Boethius* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 115–18) have convincingly argued that Boethius's criticisms of Victorinus are not indices of the latter's weak grasp of Greek, but rather of his translation and adaptation strategies.

Appendix 3

Vetus Latina of Galatians in Victorinus' Commentary

Lacunae are marked by asterisks. Square brackets indicate restorations to the text based on words found in the comment (see notes in the translation above ad loc.*, where such restorations are justified). The punctuation and paragraph breaks follow Victorinus' treatment of the text.*

(Ch. 1) [1] Paulus apostolus non ab hominibus neque per hominem, sed per Iesum Christum et deum patrem qui suscitauit illum a mortuis, [2] et qui mecum sunt omnes fratres ecclesiae Galatiae. [3] gratia uobis et pax a deo patre et domino nostro Iesu Christo, [4] qui se dedit pro peccatis nostris ut liberaret nos de praesenti saeculo malo secundum uoluntatem dei et patris nostri, [5] cui est gloria in saecula saeculorum.

[6] miror quod sic tam cito transferimini ab eo qui uos uocauit in gratiam in aliud euangelium: [7] quod non est aliud, nisi si aliqui sunt qui uos conturbant et uolunt auertere euangelium Christi. [8] sed et si nos uel angelus de caelo uobis euangelizauerit praeterquam quod euangelizauimus uobis, anathema sit. [9] sicut praediximus, et nunc iterum dico: si quis uobis euangelizauerit, praeterquam quod accepistis, anathema sit. [10] modo enim hominibus suadeo an deo? aut quaero hominibus placere? si adhuc hominibus placerem, Christi seruus non essem. [11] notum enim facio uobis euangelium quod euangelizatum est a me, quia non est secundum hominem. [12] neque enim ego ab homine accepi illud, neque doctus sum, sed per reuelationem Iesu Christi.

[13] audistis enim conuersationem meam aliquando in Iudaismo, quia super modum persequebar ecclesiam dei et expugnabam, [14] et proficiebam in Iudaismo supra multos coaetaneos meos in genere meo abundantius, aemulator exsistens paternarum traditionum. [15] sed cum placuit ei, qui me separauit de utero matris meae, [16] reuelare filium suum in me, ut eum euangelizarem inter gentes, continuo non adquieui carni et sanguini. [17] neque ueni Hierosolymam ad praecessores meos apostolos, sed abii in Arabiam et iterum reuersus sum Damascum. [18] deinde post annos tres ueni Hierosolymam uidere Petrum, et mansi apud eum diebus quindecim. [19] alium autem apostolorum neminem uidi, nisi Iacobum fratrem domini. [20] quae autem scribo uobis, ecce coram deo, quia non mentior. [21] deinde ueni in partes Syriae et Ciliciae. [22] eram autem ignotus facie ecclesiis Iudaeae quae sunt in Christo. [23] tantummodo audiebant quod is, qui persequebatur nos aliquando, nunc euangelizat fidem, quam aliquando

expugnabat. [24] et in me magnificabant deum. **(Ch. 2)** [1] deinde post annos quattuordecim iterum ascendi in Hierosolymam cum Barnaba et adsumpto Tito. [2] ascendi autem secundum reuelationem et exposui illis euangelium quod praedico inter gentes. seorsum autem his qui firmamenta uidebantur esse, ne forte in uacuum currerem aut cucurrissem. [3] sed neque Titus, qui mecum erat Graecus, conpulsus est circumcidi. [4] sed propter subinductos falsos fratres, qui subintrauerunt auscultare libertatem nostram, quam habemus in Christo, ut nos in seruitutem redigerent, [5] ad horam cessimus subiectioni, ut ueritas euangelii permaneat apud uos. [6] ab his autem qui uidentur esse aliquid, quales aliquando fuerint, nihil mea interest, deus hominis faciem non accipit, mihi enim, qui aliquid existimantur, nihil contulerunt. [7] sed magis contra cum uidissent quoniam creditum est mihi euangelium praeputii, sicut Petro circumcisionis ([8] qui [enim] operatus est Petro in apostolatum circumcisionis, operatus est mihi in gentibus) [9] et cognita gratia quae data est mihi Petrus [et Iacobus] et Iohannes, qui uidebantur columnae esse, dexteras dederunt et Barnabae societatis, ut nos in gentibus, ipsi autem in circumcisione: [10] tantummodo ut pauperum memores essemus, quod etiam sollicitus fui etiam hoc ipsum facere.

[11] cum autem uenisset Petrus in Antiochiam, in faciem illi restiti quoniam reprehensus erat. [12] prius enim quam uenirent quidam a Iacobo, cum gentibus edebat; cum autem uenissent, subtrahebat se timens eos qui erant ex circumcisione. [13] et consenserunt cum illo et ceteri Iudaei, ita ut Barnabas consentiret simulatione eorum. [14] sed cum uidissem quoniam non recte ingrediuntur ad ueritatem euangelii, dixi Petro coram omnibus: si tu cum sis Iudaeus gentiliter uiuis, quomodo gentes cogis iudaizare? [15] nos natura Iudaei et non ex gentibus peccatores, [16] scientes quia non iustificatur homo ex operibus legis nisi per fidem Christi Iesu, et nos in Christo Iesu credimus ut iustificemur ex fide et non ex operibus legis, quoniam ex operibus non iustificatur omnis caro.

[17] si autem quaerentes iustificari in Christo inueniemur et ipsi peccatores, ergo et Christus peccati minister est. [18] si enim quae destruxi iterum haec aedifico, praeuaricatorem me constituo. [19] ego enim per legem legi mortuus sum ut deo uiuam. cum Christo crucifixus sum. [20] uiuo autem iam non ego, sed uiuit in me Christus. quod autem nunc uiuo in carne, in fide uiuo dei et Christi, qui me dilexit et tradidit se pro me. [21] non sum ingratus gratiae dei. nam si per legem iustitia est, ergo Christus gratis mortuus est.

(Ch. 3) [1] o stulti Galatae, qui uos fascinauit, ante quorum oculos Christus Iesus proscriptus est et in uobis crucifixus? [2] hoc solum uolo discere a uobis: ex operibus legis spiritum accepistis an ex auditu fidei? [3] sic stulti estis ut, cum spiritu coeperitis, nunc carne consummemini. [4] tanta passi estis sine causa, si tamen sine causa. [5] qui ergo tribuit uobis spiritum et operatur uirtutes in uobis, ex operibus legis operatus est an ex auditu fidei? [6] sicut Abraham credidit deo et reputatum est ei ad iustitiam. [7] intellegitur ergo quoniam qui ex fide sunt, hi filii sunt Abrahae. [8] prouidens autem scriptura quia ex fide iustificat gentes deus, praedixit Abrahae ***. [9] ergo qui ex fide sunt, benedicentur cum fideli Abraham. [10] quicumque enim ex operibus legis sunt, sub maledictione sunt. *** [20] non est autem unius mediator; deus autem unus est.

²¹ quid ergo? lex aduersum promissa? si enim data esset lex, quae posset uiuificare, uere ex lege esset iustitia. ²² sed conclusit scriptura omnia sub peccato, ut promissio ex fide Iesu Christi daretur credentibus. ²³ prius autem quam ueniret fides, sub lege custodiebamur, conclusi in eam fidem quae futura erat ut reuelaretur. ²⁴ itaque lex paedagogus noster fuit in Christo, ut ex fide iustificemur. ²⁵ ueniente autem fide iam non sub paedagogo sumus. ²⁶ omnes enim estis filii dei fide in Christo Iesu. ²⁷ nam quicumque in Christo baptizati estis, Christum induistis. ²⁸ non enim est Iudaeus neque Graecus, non seruus neque liber, non est masculus neque femina; omnes enim uos unum estis in Christo Iesu. ²⁹ ergo Abrahae semen estis, secundum promissionem heredes.

(Ch. 4) ¹ dico autem: quamdiu heres paruulus est, nihil differt a seruo, cum dominus sit omnium. ² sed sub curatoribus est et actoribus usque in praefinitum tempus a patre. ³ ita et nos cum essemus paruuli, sub elementis huius mundi eramus seruientes. ⁴ cum autem uenit plenitudo temporis, misit deus filium suum editum ex femina, factum sub lege, ⁵ ut eos qui sub lege erant redimeret, ut filiorum adoptionem reciperemus. ⁶ sed quoniam filii estis dei, misit deus spiritum filii sui in corda uestra: clamant abba, pater. ⁷ itaque iam non est seruus, sed filius. si autem filius, et heres per deum. ⁸ sed tunc quidem ignorantes deum, his qui non sunt dii seruistis. ⁹ nunc autem ut cognouistis deum, immo cogniti estis deo, quomodo conuertimini iterum ad infirma et egena huius mundi elementa, quibus rursum seruire uultis? ¹⁰ dies obseruatis et menses et tempora et annos. ¹¹ timeo uos, ne forte sine causa laborauerim in uobis. ¹² estote sicut ego, quoniam et ego sicut uos. fratres, obsecro uos: nihil me laesistis. ¹³ scitis quia per infirmitatem carnis euangelizaui uobis iampridem. ¹⁴ et temptationem uestram in carne mea non spreuistis neque respuistis, sed ut angelum [dei] excepistis me, ut Christum Iesum. ¹⁵ quae ergo erat beatitudo uestra? testimonium uobis perhibeo quoniam, si fieri posset, oculos uestros eruissetis et dedissetis mihi. ¹⁶ ergo inimicus uester factus sum, uerum praedicans uobis? ¹⁷ aemulantur uos non bene et excludere uos uolunt, ut illos aemulemini; aemulamini autem meliora dona. ¹⁸ bonum est, aemulari meliora semper, et non solum cum praesens sum apud uos, ¹⁹ filii mei, quos iterum parturio, donec Christus formetur in uobis. ²⁰ uellem autem nunc adesse apud uos et mutare uocem meam, quoniam confundor in uobis. ²¹ dicite mihi, qui sub lege uultis esse, legem non legistis? ²² scriptum est enim quod Abraham duos filios habuit, unum de ancilla, unum de libera. ²³ sed is quidem qui de ancilla secundum carnem natus est, qui autem de libera per repromissionem. ²⁴ quae sunt per allegoriam dicta. nam haec sunt duo testamenta, unum quidem ex monte Sina in seruitutem generans, quod est Agar. ²⁵ Sina mons est in Arabia, qui coniunctus est ei qui nunc est iuxta Hierusalem [et in seruitute est cum filiis suis]. ²⁶ quae autem sursum est Hierusalem, libera est, mater omnium nostrorum. ²⁷ scriptum est enim: laetare, sterilis, quae non paris, erumpe et clama, quae non parturis, quoniam multi filii desertae magis quam eius quae habet uirum. ²⁸ uos autem, fratres, secundum Isaac, promissionis filii estis. ²⁹ sed sicut tunc qui secundum carnem natus est persequebatur eum qui secundum spiritum erat, sic et nunc. ³⁰ sed quid dicit scriptura? eice ancillam et filium eius; non enim heres erit filius ancillae cum filio meo

Isaac. ³¹ ergo, fratres, non sumus ancillae filii, sed liberae, **(Ch. 5)** ¹ qua libertate Christus nos liberauit.

state ergo et nolite iterum iugo seruitutis contineri. ² ecce ego Paulus dico uobis, quoniam si circumcidamini, Christus uobis nihil proderit. ³ Testificor autem omni homini circumcidenti se, quoniam debitor est uniuersae legis faciendae. ⁴ euacuati estis a Christo, qui in lege iustificamini; a gratia excidistis. ⁵ nos enim in spiritu et fide spem iustitiae exspectamus. ⁶ nam in Christo Iesu neque circumcisio aliquid ualet neque praeputium, sed fides quae per caritatem operatur. ⁷ currebatis bene, quis uos inpediuit ueritati non oboedire? nemini consenseritis. ⁸ suasio uestra ex deo est qui uos uocauit. ⁹ nescitis quia modicum fermentum uniuersam massam corrumpit? ¹⁰ ego confido de uobis in domino, quod nihil aliud sapietis. qui autem conturbat uos, portabit iudicium, quicumque fuerit. ¹¹ ego autem, fratres, si circumcisionem praedico, quid adhuc persecutionem patior? ergo euacuatum est scandalum crucis. ¹² utinam abscidantur qui uos conturbant! ¹³ uos enim in libertatem uocati estis, fratres; tantum ne libertatem in occasionem carnis abutamini. per caritatem spiritus seruite inuicem. ¹⁴ uniuersa enim lex in uobis uno sermone inpletur: diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum. ¹⁵ quod si mordetis et accusatis inuicem, uidete ne consumamini ab inuicem. ¹⁶ dico autem uobis: spiritu ambulate et desiderium carnis non perficietis. ¹⁷ nam caro concupiscit aduersus spiritum, spiritus autem [aduersus carnem]. *** **(Ch. 6)** ² alter alterius onera portate. et ita inplebitis legem Christi. ³ nam si aliqui aestimat se esse aliquid, cum nihil sit, ipse se seducit. ⁴ opus autem suum probet unusquisque et tunc in semet ipso tantum habebit gloriam et non in altero. ⁵ nam unusquisque proprium onus portabit. ⁶ communicet autem, qui catechizatur uerbum, ei qui catechizat, in omnibus bonis. ⁷ nolite errare, deus non deridetur. quae enim seminauerit homo, haec et metet. ⁸ quia qui seminat in carne sua, de carne et metet corruptionem, qui autem seminat in spiritu, de spiritu et metet uitam aeternam. ⁹ bonum autem facientes non deficiamus. nam tempore suo metemus non deficientes. ¹⁰ ergo dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes, maxime autem ad domesticos fidei.

¹¹ ecce quantis litteris scripsi uobis mea manu! ¹² quicumque uolunt placere in carne, hi compellunt uos circumcidi tantum, ut crucis Christi persecutionem non patiantur. ¹³ neque enim qui circumcisi sunt ipsi legem custodiunt, sed uolunt uos circumcidi, ut in uestra carne glorientur. ¹⁴ mihi autem absit gloriari in nullo, nisi in cruce domini nostri Iesu Christi, per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo. ¹⁵ in Christo enim Iesu neque circumcisio aliquid est neque praeputium, sed noua creatura. ¹⁶ et quicumque hanc regulam sectantur, pax super illos et super Israel domini. ¹⁷ de cetero nemo mihi molestias praestet. ego enim stigmata domini nostri Iesu Christi in corpore meo porto. ¹⁸ gratia domini nostri Iesu Christi cum spiritu uestro, fratres.

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