

Mysteria in psalmis: Origen and Jerome as Interpreters of the Psalter

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*Mysteria sunt quae dicuntur
in psalmis et figuris plena sunt omnia.*
Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 89, 14 (s.a.)

ABSTRACT

A comparative analysis of Origen's *Homilies on the Psalms* and Jerome's *Tractatus in Psalmos* proves that Jerome does not substantially plagiarise the Alexandrian. Although partially acquainted with Origen's interpretation, Jerome introduces into his own exegesis a personal agenda and distinct sensitivities. We could even say that, in spite of his mostly cursory and, at first sight, simple-looking comments, the learned biblical scholar is, to some extent, more present in the preaching of Jerome, thanks especially to his frequent recourse to the Hebrew text, his propensity for etymologies and his display of historical erudition nurtured by the Bible. Moreover, the fact that Jerome does not rely on Origen alone, but now and then has recourse to other commentators of the Psalter, is additional proof of independence. Among these interpreters, one should point in particular to Eusebius of Caesarea and Didymus. Moreover, we are allowed to surmise the influence of other mediators of the eastern patristic exegesis to the Latin world, such as Hilary of Poitiers, Eusebius of Vercelli and Ambrose.

1. Introduction: the shadow of Origen on Jerome's exegesis of the Psalms

Jerome, acclaimed as the translator of the Bible, has not enjoyed a corresponding reputation as its interpreter, especially with regard to his exegesis of the Psalter. Over the last three decades, the *Tractatus in Psalmos*, the homilies he gave in Bethlehem at the beginning of the Vth century, has not attracted much attention since the controversial hypothesis of Vittorio Peri on their Origenian authorship was dismissed by critics¹. The renowned *scriptor* of the Vatican Library found some authoritative supporters during the eighties, among whom the most outstanding was Marie-Josèphe Rondeau. In fact, her two volumes on

¹ Vittorio Peri, *Omèlie origeniane sui Salmi. Contributo all'identificazione del testo latino*, Studi e Testi 289 (Città del Vaticano, 1980). For a brief presentation of the current state of research, see Alessandro Capone, 'Folia vero in verbis sunt: parola divina e lingua umana nei *Tractatus in psalmos* attribuiti a Gerolamo', *Adamantius* 19 (2013), 437-40.

the patristic commentators of the Psalms from the third to the fifth centuries are still unsurpassed as a comprehensive overview². The French scholar devoted a separate treatment to the *Tractatus*, regarding them, likewise, as an adaptation by Jerome of homilies originally preached by Origen³. In his review of Peri's book, Jean Gribomont, the famous Benedictine scholar who enjoyed humour, summarised its results as follows: 'À part quelques épices, toute la pâte est origénienne' ('Apart from a few spices, all the dough is Origen's')⁴. Though reacting favourably to Peri, Gribomont wondered why Jerome had contented himself with a mere reworking of Origen, instead of embarking on a more creative exegesis of the Psalms: did he perhaps feel unable to face the complexities of the Psalter, or did he more simply prefer to deal with the Prophets?⁵ It was, therefore, a specialist on Jerome's exegesis of Isaiah, Pierre Jay, who chiefly contributed to the abandonment of the attribution of the *Tractatus* to Origen. In the wake of his critique, as I hinted, a certain lack of interest seems to have surrounded it until recently, even if Jay himself recognised the influence of Origen on Jerome and invited us to uncover the Origenian materials in the *Tractatus* through new studies⁶.

Our evidence of Origen's interpretation of the Psalter was substantially modified and enriched in 2012 thanks to the discovery by Marina Molin Pradel of twenty-nine Greek homilies in a Munich codex⁷. It goes without saying that this discovery has also reopened the problem of the *Tractatus*, inasmuch as many of the new texts deal with the same psalms on which Jerome preached (Ps. 15; 67; 74; 75; 76; 77; 80; 81). At present, we only have preliminary studies, but these have already shown that Jerome was certainly acquainted

² Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques du Psautier (III^e-V^e siècles)*. I: *Les travaux des Pères grecs et latins sur le Psautier. Recherches et bilan*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 219 (Roma, 1982); *Les commentaires patristiques du Psautier (III^e-V^e siècles)*. II: *Exégèse prosopologique et théologie*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 220 (Roma, 1985).

³ M.-J. Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques* (1982), 54-5, 158-61; (1985), 137-67.

⁴ Jean Gribomont, *Review of V. Peri, Omelie origéniane* (1980), *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 2 (1981), 526.

⁵ *Ibid.* 526: 'Reste une observation sur les programmes exégétiques de l'érudit. Lui, qui avait traduit, à plusieurs reprises, le Psautier, et qui possédait dans sa bibliothèque des commentaires sur ce livre important, s'abstient de mettre en chantier une étude originale; même au temps où il ne voudrait plus passer pour un traducteur d'Origène, il se contente d'adapter superficiellement l'œuvre de celui-ci. Se sentait-il incapable d'affronter la complexité des Psaumes? Accordait-il, plus simplement, une priorité aux Prophètes?'

⁶ Pierre Jay, 'Jérôme à Bethléem. Les *Tractatus in Psalmos*', in Yves-Marie Duval (ed.), *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient* (Paris, 1988), 380: 'Toutefois restituer au prédicateur de Bethléem [...] la pleine responsabilité de ces *Tractatus*, ce n'est pas les retirer totalement à Origène. Leur dépendance origénienne apparaît en effet assez étroite pour qu'on puisse espérer dégager grâce à eux quelques matériaux sur l'exégèse des psaumes de l'Alexandrin'.

⁷ On this new collection, see my introduction in Origenes, *Die neuen Psalmenhomilien. Eine kritische Edition des Codex Monacensis Graecus 314*, ed. Lorenzo Perrone, Marina Molin Pradel, Emanuela Prinziavalli, Antonio Cacciari, GCS NF 19, Origenes Werke 13 (Berlin 2015), 1-34.

with the new homilies, although he apparently went along with his own interpretation⁸. However, a synoptic analysis of both series is not an easy, or pressing, task for several reasons. On the one hand, Jerome does not always follow Origen's text for his own interpretation of the same psalm, but is led to use materials taken from the homilies while commenting on another psalm. On the other, the appropriate method for examining the specific profile of Jerome's exegesis of the Psalter would demand that we take into account, as far as possible, the developments of patristic interpretation from the middle of the third century to the beginning of the fifth. In spite of the influential role played by the Alexandrian on Jerome, we should not forget that he was familiar with other commentators on the Psalms, such as Eusebius of Caesarea, Hilary of Poitiers and Didymus the Blind, to mention just the most important, and whose writings *ad hoc* the monk of Bethlehem recorded first in the *De uiris inlustribus* (393)⁹, and subsequently in *Letter 112* to Augustine (404)¹⁰. Jerome was a well-read scholar, and we should not isolate the Origenian imprint on his exegesis to the exclusion of other influences. Last, but not least, Jerome was also acquainted with Jewish interpretive traditions that were unknown to Origen¹¹. Such a demanding approach, as partially illustrated by some of the most recent investigations, is

⁸ See, especially, Elena Orlandi, 'Aspetti della rielaborazione delle omelie origeniane sui Salmi (*Cod. Mon. Graec.* 314) nei *Tractatus in Psalmos* di Gerolamo', in Élie Ayroulet, Aline Canellis (eds), *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme* (Saint-Étienne, 2018), 101-13; 'Esegesi e omiletica nei *Tractatus in Psalmos*. Il salmo 15 dal *Codex Monacensis Graecus* 314 alla rielaborazione di Gerolamo', in Daniele Tripaldi (ed.), *La lira di Davide. Esegesi e riscritture dei Salmi dall'Antichità al Medioevo* (Roma, 2018), 283-305.

⁹ Hieronymus, *De uiris inlustribus*, ed. Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo, Biblioteca Patristica (Firenze, 1988), capp. 81 (Eusebius of Caesarea): *edidit infinita uolumina, de quibus haec sunt: [...] et 'In centum quinquaginta Psalmos' eruditissimi commentarii*; 90 (Theodore of Heraclea): *elegantis apertique sermonis et magis historicae intelligentiae edidit sub Constantio principe 'Commentarios in Matthaeum' et 'Iohannem' et 'In Apostolum' et 'In Psalterium'*; 94 (Asterius): *scripsit, regnante Constantio, [...] et 'In psalmos commentarios' et multa alia quae a suae partis hominibus studiosissime leguntur*; 96 (Eusebius of Vercelli): *sub Iuliano imperatore ad ecclesiam reuersus edidit 'In psalmos commentarios' Eusebii Caesariensis, quos de Graeco in Latinum uerterat*; 100 (Hilary of Poitiers): *confecit [...] et 'In psalmos commentarios', primum uidelicet et secundum et a quinquagesimo primo usque ad sexagesimum secundum et a centesimo octauo decimo usque ad extremum, in quo opere imitatus Origenem nonnulla etiam de suo addidit*; 109 (Didymus the Blind): *Hic plurima nobiliaque conscripsit: 'Commentarios in Psalmos' omnes*.

¹⁰ *Id.*, *Epistula* 112, 20, ed. Isidorus Hilberg, CSEL 55 (Vindobonae, 1918): *maxime in explanatione Psalorum quos apud Graecos interpretati sunt multis uoluminibus, primus Origenes, secundus Eusebius Caesariensis, tertius Theodorus Heraclaeotes, quartus Asterius Scythopolitanus, quintus Apollinaris Laodiceus, sextus Didymus Alexandrinus. Feruntur et diuersorum in paucos psalmos opuscula; sed nunc de integro Psalorum corpore dicimus. Apud Latinos autem Hilarius Pictauiensis et Eusebius Vercellensis episcopus, Origenem et Eusebium transtulerunt: quorum priorem et noster Ambrosius in quibusdam secutus est.*

¹¹ Sandro Leanza, 'Gerolamo e la tradizione ebraica', in Claudio Moreschini, Giovanni Menestrina (eds), *Motivi letterari ed esegetici in Gerolamo* (Brescia, 1997), 18-38.

not always able to trace a clear genealogical picture¹²; in any case, it points to a more complex stratigraphy of the *Tractatus*, one going beyond the simple relationship between Jerome and Origen.

2. A preliminary picture: affinities and discrepancies between the two commentators of the Psalms

Having said that, a preliminary overview of the main affinities and distinctions between Origen and Jerome as commentators of the Psalms will prove useful, before we engage more closely in a synoptic treatment of some of their respective homilies. Both authors fully realised the special tasks a commentator of the Psalms has to face, as paradigmatically illustrated, first of all, by Origen, for the subsequent exegetes with regard to ‘the titles’ and ‘the person speaking’ in the Psalms¹³. However, their literary activity on the biblical book is comparable only to a certain extent: one should never forget the diversity of the output, greater by far in the case of Origen, notwithstanding the heavy losses his writings went through in the course of history¹⁴. However, the fragmented heritage of the Alexandrian includes several significant portions of his copious *tomoi* and the commentary volumes on the Psalms, mainly thanks to the selections made for the *Philocalia*¹⁵, in addition to a larger amount of extracts and *scholia* of more or less reliable authenticity¹⁶ preserved in the *catenae*, and a

¹² A good example of this approach in recent studies on Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmus*, is Daniela Scardia, ‘*Melius dicitur graece: termini greci ed esegesi nei Tractatus in Psalmos di Gerolamo*’, in Paolo B. Cipolla, Carmelo Crimi, Renata Gentile, Lisania Giordano, Arianna Rotondo (eds), *Spazi e tempi delle emozioni. Dai primi secoli all’età bizantina* (Acireale – Roma, 2018), 231–69. See also Franz-Xaver Risch, ‘Zur lateinischen Rezeption der *Scholia in Psalmos* von Origenes’, in Anders Christian Jacobsen (ed.), *Origeniana Undecima. Origen and Origenism in the History of Western Thought*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 279 (Leuven, 2016), 295–7.

¹³ Lorenzo Perrone, ‘Origen Reading the Psalms: The Challenge of a Christian Interpretation’, in Moshe Blidstein, Serge Ruzer, Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra (eds), *Scriptures, Sacred Traditions, and Strategies of Religious Subversion. Studies in Discourse with the Work of Guy G. Stroumsa*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 112 (Tübingen, 2018), 138–47.

¹⁴ See Ronald E. Heine, ‘Restraining Origen’s Broken Harp. Some Suggestions Concerning the Prologue to the Caesarean Commentary on the Psalms’, in Brian E. Daley S.J., Paul R. Kolbet (eds), *The Harp of the Prophecy. Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms* (Notre Dame/Indiana, 2015), 47–74.

¹⁵ Lorenzo Perrone, ‘I commenti di Origene ai Salmi nella *Filocalia*: il primato dell’ermeneutica spirituale e della grazia divina’ (forthcoming).

¹⁶ The list of the sources is as follows: Origène, *Philocalie 1-20: Sur les Écritures*, ed. Marguerite Harl, SCh 302 (Paris, 1983); Origène, *Philocalie 21-27: Sur le libre arbitre*, ed. Éric Junod, SCh 226 (Paris 1976) = Origenes, *Philocalia* (1, 29; 2-3; 26); *La chaîne paléstinienne sur le Psaume 118 (Origène, Eusèbe, Didyme, Apollinaire, Athanase, Théodoret)*, ed. Marguerite Harl, Gilles Dorival, SCh 189-190 (Paris 1972) = *Catenae in Psalmum 118*; Origenes, *Scholia in*

considerable *corpus* of homilies in Greek and Latin (29 and 9, respectively)¹⁷. These impressive remains attest to the longstanding activity of Origen as an interpreter of the Psalter, the primary occupation among his many works, starting in Alexandria and continuing in Caesarea until his final years¹⁸. Due to the exceptional amount of them, Origen's writings on the Psalms from the very beginning met with the difficulty of being preserved and transmitted¹⁹.

When compared with the huge *corpus* of the Alexandrian, the works of Jerome on the Psalter appear more limited: compared to the two series of *Tractatus* (59 and 15 homilies, respectively), we have only the *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, composed some time before them and expressly presented by the author as a reworking of Origen's *Enchiridion* on the Psalter²⁰. Here, we find *in nuce* many remarks and formulations that are generally more expanded upon, if not revised, in the Bethlehem homilies.

These short notes mainly combine a philological approach to the Psalms (by also pointing to the Hebrew) with a christological interpretation of their content²¹.

Psalmos, PG 12, 1053-1685; Origenes, *Excerpta in Psalmos*, PG 17, 105-40; *Origenes in Psalmos*, in Jean Baptiste Pitra, *Analecta Sacra* II (Tusculum, 1884), 395-483; III (Venice, 1883), 1-522 = *Fragmenta in Psalmos*.

¹⁷ See, respectively, Origenes Werke 13 and Origenes, *Omèlie sui Salmi, Homiliae in Psalmos XXXVI – XXXVII – XXXVIII*, ed. Emanuela Prinzivalli, Biblioteca Patristica (Firenze, 1991). Only of *Homiliae in Psalmum 36 I-IV* do we have both the Greek and Latin texts.

¹⁸ On the many-sided literary production on the Psalms, see Pierre Nautin, *Origène. Sa vie et son œuvre*, (Paris, 1977), 261-92; M.-J. Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques* (1982), 44-51.

¹⁹ V. Peri, *Omèlie origeniane* (1980), 12-3 stresses this problem for the homilies, but the commentaries were not unaffected by it: 'Probabilmente già al tempo di Panfilo ed anche prima chi avesse voluto prendere conoscenza dell'intera opera omiletica di Origene sul salterio non sarebbe stato in grado di procurarsela, per la vastità e la dispersione della materia in un numero ridotto di copie manoscritte'.

²⁰ According to the preface, Jerome wished to complete the concise 'map-like' digest of the *Enchiridion* with the help of other writings by Origen. See Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, ed. Germain Morin, CCL 72 (Turnhout, 1959), 177-8: *et (quod solent ii facere, qui in breui tabella terrarum et urbium situs pingunt, et latissimas regiones in modico spatio conantur ostendere) ita in psalterii opere latissimo quasi praeteriens aliqua perstringerem, ut ex paucis quae tetigissem, intellegantur et cetera, quae omissa sunt, quam uim habeant et rationem. Non quo putem a me posse dici quae ille praeteriit: sed quod ea quae in tomis uel in omiliis ipse deseruit, uel ego digna arbitror lectione, in hunc angustum commentariolum referam.* On Origen's *Enchiridion*, see Franz-Xaver Risch, 'Das Handbuch des Origenes zu den Psalmen. Zur Bedeutung der zweiten Randkatene im *Codex Vindobonensis theologicus graecus* 8', *Adamantius* 20 (2014), 36-48.

²¹ Colette Estin, *Les Psautiers de Jérôme à la lumière des traductions juives antérieures*, *Collectanea Biblica Latina* 15 (Roma, 1984), 31: 'L'ouvrage se présente sous forme de notations brèves, voire parfois quasi télégraphiques, dont le contenu est essentiellement philologique. Jérôme y rapporte de nombreuses leçons hexaplaïres et quelquefois, mais relativement peu souvent, il discute le texte en recourant à l'hébreu. Il a, par ailleurs, à cœur de donner pour la majorité des psaumes une "clef": la plupart du temps, il s'agit d'une interprétation christologique, formulée de façon globale pour tout le psaume ou détaillée sur plusieurs versets'. See also Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, ed. Siegfried Risse, *Fontes Christiani* 79 (Turnhout, 2005), 40-65.

Contrary to the *Commentarioli*, which refer laudably to Origen²², the *Tractatus* do not mention the Alexandrian anymore, so that, according to Germain Morin, their discoverer at the end of the nineteenth century, we should situate the homilies in the aftermath of the Origenist controversy (i.e. between 401 and 410). There are, nevertheless, some clues to support the idea that Jerome's homilies reflect a much longer period, ranging from 389 to 410²³. In any case, the *Commentarioli* and *Tractatus* do not represent the only evidence of Jerome's work on the Psalter. They are framed by his early revision of the Latin Psalter, then by the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, a further revision of the Old Latin translation of the Septuagint Psalter on the basis of the *Hexapla* (ca. 389-392 or even earlier) and, finally, by the *Psalterium iuxta Hebraicum*, a subsequent translation from the Hebrew (ca. 393 or a few years later)²⁴. In addition, the monk of Bethlehem deals with the Psalms in several of his letters which provide further relevant comments²⁵.

If Jerome cannot compete with Origen as regards the volume of exegetical production on the Psalms, both converge in the recognition of the correct hermeneutics required by them. In this sense, they approach the biblical text in a similar way, taking into account the complex nature of the Psalter (as did most of the Christian interpreters in Late Antiquity); that is, not only as a 'spiritual' or 'moral' book, but also as a 'prophetic' and 'mystical' one, which gives voice to God, Christ, the Church as his mystical body, and the faithful as members of this. For both exegetes, an interpretation of this kind is made possible by the adoption of allegory and recourse to analogous 'technicalities' in its wake, the most momentous of which is the introductory explanation of the 'titles' (or

²² Jerome mostly relies on the Alexandrian, according to S. Risse, *Commentarioli* (2005), 29-30.

²³ See Alessandro Capone, 'Scomposizione e composizione dei *Tractatus in psalmos* di Gerolamo', in É. Ayroulet, A. Canellis (eds), *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme* (2018), 148: 'La datazione proposta da Morin (401-410) non regge di fronte all'esame dei rinvii interni ai *Tractatus* e dei riscontri con il resto della produzione geronimiana. I *Tr. in Ps.* sono stati composti in un arco temporale molto più ampio, che è ragionevole far iniziare dal 389 circa e concludere dopo il 410'.

²⁴ See *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, eds. Bonifaz Fischer, Jean Gribomont, Editio Tertia Emendata (Stuttgart, 1983), 770-955; Eva Schulz-Flügel, 'Hieronymus, Feind und Überwinder der Septuaginta? Untersuchungen anhand der Arbeiten an den Psalmen', in Anneli Aejmelaeus, Udo Quast (eds), *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen. Symposium in Göttingen 1997* (Göttingen, 2000), 33-50; Alfons Fürst, *Hieronymus. Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg – Basel – Wien, 2003, 2016²), 107-25; S. Risse, *Commentarioli* (2005), 7-18.

²⁵ Among them, the most relevant are *Epistula* 28 (*De diapsalmate*); *Epistula* 65 (*In Ps. 44*); *Epistula* 106 (*Ad Sunniam et Fretelam*); *Epistula* 140 (*In Ps. 89*). See C. Estin, *Les Psautiers de Jérôme* (1984), 28-34; Aline Canellis, 'Saint Jérôme et l'exégèse du Psaume 89 (d'après l'*Epistula* 140 à Cyprien, les *Tractatus* et les *Commentarioli*)', in É. Ayroulet, A. Canellis (eds), *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme* (2018), 115-29.

rubrics) as a key to understanding the Psalms²⁶, and, even more so, the identification of ‘the person who speaks’ (τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ λέγον) in them²⁷.

This does not imply that Origen and Jerome always delivered the same explanation. The monk of Bethlehem can occasionally exhibit a solution different to those of the Alexandrian (and of other interpreters as well), as we see, for example, in his exegesis of the title of *Ps. 7*. Here, he distinguishes the person of ‘Chousi son of Iemeni’ (*Ps. 7:1 = Chush ben-Yemini*) from ‘Chousi the Arachi, friend of David’ (2Kgs. 15:32.37; 16:16-18; 17:5-8.14-15), thus rejecting the historical connection of the psalm with the rebellion of Abessalom against his father²⁸. On the contrary, the title has to do with Saul’s persecution of David, as he explained in the *Commentarioli*, perhaps depending upon a Jewish interpretive tradition²⁹. This case illustrates the propensity of Jerome for historical erudition concerning the Bible, which might also be regarded as one of his distinctive traits. Moreover, since the prosopological approach of Jerome mirrors the christological debates of the fourth century as a reaction to Arianism and Apollinarianism, we notice in him a different awareness of the human component in the mystery of the Incarnate³⁰.

Further distinctive aspects may surface within a substantial continuity: Jerome, initially a faithful disciple of Origen as a commentator of the Bible (and whom he will still appreciate even after becoming an anti-Origenist, in

²⁶ For example, in Hieronymus, *Tractatus siue Homiliae in Psalmos*, ed. Germain Morin, CCL 78 (Turnhout, 1958) see *Tractatus in Psalmos 1, 1: Quidam putant istius psalmi clauem super Xpisti domini nostri persona esse referendam* (3, 10-12). Like Origen, Jerome links the image of the ‘key’ to Luke 11:52, as in *Tractatus in Psalmos 82, 12: Legunt hoc philosophi et inridunt; legunt rhetores et nunc putant esse deleramenta. Non solum autem rhetores, sed et Iudaei: non habent ‘clauem scientiae’ (Luke 11:52), quoniam uelamen positum est ante oculos eorum* (2Cor 3:13-16) (94, 125-128). For a vindication of the methodical principle, see *Tractatus in Psalmos 93, 1: Semper de titulo disputamus, ut ex titulo intellegatur et psalmus* (142, 1-2). Thus, Jerome revises the opposite opinion he expressed in *Commentarioli in Psalmos 93: Et iste apud Hebraeos non habet inscriptionem: unde superfluum est de titulo disputare* (225, 1-2).

²⁷ M.-J. Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques* (1985).

²⁸ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 7, 1: Deinde ille Chusi per aliam litteram scribitur in Regnorum: ibi Chusi per ‘samech’ scribitur, hic autem Chusi per ‘sin’ litteram scribitur. Deinde ille Chusi filius Arachi; unde multi Graecorum nescientes legunt: ‘Chusi amicus David’. Non ita habet in hebraeo, sed ita habet scriptum: ‘Chusi filius Arachi, amicus David’. Videte ergo quoniam et in lectione errant Graeci* (21, 56-62). According to Alessandro Capone (ed.), Girolamo, *59 Omelie sui Salmi (I-115). Omelia sul Salmo 41 ai neofiti* (Roma, 2018), 89 n. 17, Jerome rejects the interpretation of Eusebius, Didymus and others, going back perhaps to Origen himself.

²⁹ Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos 7, 1: Plerique, et maxime ii qui hebraici sermonis scientiam non habent, hunc psalmum arbitrantur eo tempore esse cantatum, quo Chusi filius Arachi amicus David destruxit consilium Achitofel, et ad eum nuntios misit, ne in eremo ultra resideret, sed procul fugeret, ne obrimeretur a filio. Vero sciendum est vehementer errare [...]. Sciendum itaque Chusi interpretari Aethiopem et totum psalmum contra Saul esse conscriptum* (188, 2-189, 18). See S. Risse, *Commentarioli* (2005), 31-2.

³⁰ Lorenzo Perrone, “‘Four Gospels, Four Councils’ – One Lord Jesus Christ. The Patristic Developments of Christology within the Church of Palestine”, *Liber Annuus* 49 (1999), 377-83.

contrast to the condemned ‘dogmatician’), has constant recourse to the exegetical terminology of the Alexandrian. However, in the *Tractatus* (and to a lesser extent in the *Commentarioli*) he does so, as it were, in a more schematic and repetitive way than his model³¹. Jerome invariably signals the plurality of the scriptural senses with formulaic expressions, such as *secundum historiam* or *secundum litteram*, to indicate the literal meaning as distinguished from the allegorical one³². As for the latter, he introduces it mostly with the words *secundum spiritalem intelligentiam* (or simply *secundum intelligentiam*), but frequently by the standard formula *secundum tropologiam*³³. Interestingly, while the formulae κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν (or κατὰ τὸ ῥητόν) and κατὰ τὴν τροπολογίαν occur in a few passages of the homilies of Origen, τροπολογία is given moderate prominence compared to the other terms the preacher uses for the spiritual interpretation, such as ἀναγωγή or ἀλληγορία³⁴. Clearly, Jerome shares the same preference for τροπολογία, but he generalises its use to the detriment of *anagoge* and *allegoria*³⁵.

³¹ On the terminological features in *Homiliae in Psalmos*, see Manlio Simonetti, ‘Leggendo le *Omellie sui Salmi* di Origene’, *Adamantius* 22 (2016), 473-4.

³² For a few examples, see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 7, 3: *nobis curae est, non solum secundum historiam, sed secundum spiritalem intelligentiam interpretari* (23, 124-126); *ibid.* 76, 17: *Interim dicamus secundum litteram; haereamus terrae propter simpliciores* (59, 136-137); *ibid.* 76, 18: *Videtis quomodo adhuc in terra haeream et loquar secundum litteram occidentem* (59, 146-147); *ibid.* 76, 20: *Hoc secundum litteram quomodo intellegis? Propter simpliciores secundum litteram diximus; reuertamur ergo ad intelligentiam spiritalem* (60, 151-153); *ibid.* 76, 21: *Hoc secundum litteram intellegamus de Moysse et Aaron* (62, 234-235); *ibid.* 133, 3: *Hoc interim secundum litteram. Ceterum secundum intelligentiam spiritali quomodo dicitur peccatori ‘Terra es et in terram ibis’ (Gen. 3:19), sic et sancto dicitur: caelum es et in caelum ibis* (291, 246-249). Analogous to this is the picture offered by *id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 103, 6-7: *Haec omnia possunt stare et iuxta historiam: quo scilicet in similitudinem montium fluctus maris adtollantur, et rursus instar uallis unda desidat. Sed et iuxta allegoriam sequitur intellectus* (228, 6-9); *ibid.* 103, 10: *Locus iste secundum historiam manifestus est [...] Potest autem et iuxta anagogen de saeculis huius nocte cantari* (228, 10-14).

³³ *Id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 89, 10 includes much of the terminology under examination: *Hoc interim diximus secundum historiam; ceterum dicamus secundum anagogen. Et omnis quidem psalmus recipit tropologiam; et poteram nunc per singulos uersiculus currere, et spiritalem intelligentiam in singulis dicere, sed hora excludimur* (123, 116-120). See also *ibid.* 149, 6: *Gladium ancipitem: et secundum historiam et secundum allegoriam, et secundum litteram et secundum spiritum* (351, 88-90).

³⁴ In addition, M. Simonetti, ‘Leggendo le *Omellie*’ (2016), 473 also records the use of σύμβολον. We find the expression κατὰ τὴν τροπολογίαν in only four passages: Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum* 36 III, 6 (147, 6-7); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 73 III, 3 (255, 17); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 77 IV, 8 (399, 14); *ibid.* IX, 5 (474, 4). As for the formula κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν, see *Homiliae in Psalmum* 36 III, 10 (152, 9); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 73 II, 8 (250, 15); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 77 IV, 5 (395, 5); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 80 I, 8 (494, 14-15). For the equivalent expression κατὰ τὸ ῥητόν, see *Homiliae in Psalmum* 73 I, 1 (225, 19); *ibid.* I, 8 (234, 13-14); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 76 III, 2 (330, 8); *Homiliae in Psalmum* 77 II, 1 (368, 16); *ibid.* IV, 8 (399, 12).

³⁵ The term appears in Greek in Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 66, 8: *Secundum τροπολογίαν autem omnes fines terrae [...] non illi qui in terra sunt media, sed qui in fine terrae sunt,*

Another feature seems to be characteristic of Jerome: the references to the Hebrew text (as well as to the hexaplaric readings of the Greek Psalter) are more frequent and specific than is the case with Origen, even though his *Homilies on the Psalms* offer richer evidence for such an approach³⁶. Jerome apparently profits both from his revision of the LXX Psalter and from the ongoing work for its translation from the Hebrew. Beyond the similarity with the Alexandrian, as far as the philological method is concerned, he also unveils his preference for the *Hebraica ueritas*, even if he does not vindicate it polemically as in his other writings³⁷. Thus, in the *Tractatus* on Ps 86 Jerome explains v. 5a first according to the *textus receptus* of the Septuagint (Μήτηρ Σιών ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος, ‘Mother Sion will say: man’), and then according to the *Hebraica ueritas*. In fact, the Hebrew text, for him, corresponds to the original reading of the Septuagint (Μήτηρ [= μή τῆ] Σιών ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος), which he also followed in the *Psalterium Gallicanum* (*Numquid Sion dicet homo*). Notwithstanding this, Jerome feels obliged to comment initially upon the common text, though interpolated, without actually dismissing it³⁸. Moreover, on Ps. 115:11 (Ἐγὼ εἶπα ἐν τῇ ἐκστάσει μου· Πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ψεύστης, ‘I said in my alarm, “Every person is a liar”’) the monk of Bethlehem is led to pay homage to the

qui relinquunt terram, et ad caelum ire festinant (39, 169-172). But the Latin form is mainly *trophologia*. Cf., for instance, *ibid.* 75, 3: *secundum trophologiam non est umbraculum Domini, nisi ubi pax est. [...] Secundum litteram possumus dicere de Hierusalem et Sion, quoniam ibi fuit templum: secundum trophologiam uero et anagogen dicimus quia in Sion habitatio Dei sit* (50, 19-28). See also *id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos 9: Totus igitur psalmus per trophologiam ad Xpisti pertinet sacramentum* (191, 4-5). Jean-Louis Gourdain, ‘L’exégèse de Jérôme prédicateur’, in É. Ayroulet, A. Canellis (eds), *L’exégèse de saint Jérôme* (2018), 196 has noted the preminence of τροπολογία in *Tractatus in Psalmos*: ‘Si dans les *Tractatus in Psalmos*, on trouve encore de nombreux *trophologia*, mais pratiquement toujours dans l’expression figée, *secundum trophologiam* (13 fois sur 14), ou quelques autres termes, comme *anagoge* (3 fois) ou *allegoria* (3 fois), pour désigner le sens spirituel, ce sont quand même les expressions *intellegentia spiritalis / spiritaliter intellegere*, fondées sur l’opposition paulinienne entre “la lettre qui tue” et “l’esprit qui donne la vie” (2Cor. 3:6), qui l’emportent avec 26 emplois’.

³⁶ Antonio Cacciari, ‘Nuova luce sull’officina origeniana. I LXX e “gli altri”’, *Adamantius 20* (2014), 217-25; Lorenzo Perrone, ‘The Find of the Munich Codex. A Collection of 29 Homilies of Origen on the Psalms’, in A.C. Jacobsen (ed.), *Origeniana Undecima* (Leuven, 2016), 209-20.

³⁷ For claims of the *Hebraica ueritas*, see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 76, 21: *Non enim dicitur secundum hebraicam ueritatem Ause, sed Osee, hoc est saluator* (63, 264-266).

³⁸ *Ibid.* 86, 5a: *Dicamus ergo primum secundum quod uulgo dicitur (neque enim debemus et illam interpretationem dimittere) [...] Dicamus et secundum Hebraicam ueritatem* (115, 165-173). V. Peri, *Omelia origeniana* (1980), 89 exploits this passage for his thesis, but we have no evidence of the comments of Origen on Ps. 86:5a (the excerpt in PG 12, 1546 D-1547 A and Pitra, 150 is a *scholion* of Evagrius). See also Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 86, 5a: ‘*Mater Sion, dicet homo*’. *Pro ‘mater Sion’, Septuaginta interpretes transtulerunt: ‘Numquid Sion dicet homo?’ Quod homo Xpistus natus sit in ea: sed uitiose RO littera graeca addita fecit errorem* (222, 16-19). Jerome does not quote the hexaplaric readings: Α. Καὶ τῆ Σιών λεχθήσεται; Σ. Περὶ τῆ Σιών λεχθήσεται; Θ. Καὶ τῆ Σιών ῥηθήσεται (see *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, ed. Frederick Field, II [Oxonii, 1875], 238-239, which I shall abbreviate as Field).

text of the Church, after following the reading of the Hebrew: ‘Every person is a lie’ (*‘Omnis homo mendacium’, quod dicitur ‘zecam’*)³⁹.

Mendacium hic dixit, quasi umbram, quasi imaginem; quemadmodum dicitur et in alio loco: ‘Verumtamen in imagine pertransit homo’ (Ps. 38:7). Eadem intelligentia et nunc dicitur: ‘Omnis homo mendacium’, hoc est omnis homo umbra. Hoc autem dicimus secundum hebraicam ueritatem. Loquamur autem et secundum septuaginta interpretes. Dicat enim aliquis: Quid ad me, quid habet in hebraico? Ego ecclesiam sequor: ‘Ego dixi in excessu meo: Omnis homo mendax’ (Ps. 115:11).

‘Here it says “lie” with the meaning of “shadow”, of “phantom”, as is said elsewhere: “In fact, a person passes through as a phantom” (Ps. 38:7). Also, now it says with the same meaning: “Every person is a lie”, that is, “every man is a shadow”. Yet we say this according to the Hebrew truth. But we should speak also according to the seventy translators. Somebody indeed could object: Does it matter me what we have in Hebrew? I follow the Church: “I said in my alarm, Every person is a liar” (Ps. 115:11)’.

Although abstaining from a tone that is too polemical, now and then Jerome does not hesitate to appreciate the Hebrew text as being better than the Greek one, that is, the text of the Septuagint, since he supports the claim of the superiority of the Hebrew by referring to the other Greek translators⁴⁰. Moreover, when commenting on the title of *Ps. 9* (Εἰς τὸ τέλος, ὑπὲρ τῶν κρυφίων, ‘Regarding completion. Over the secrets of the son’) he points again (as in the *Commentarioli* or in the *Prefaces* to the *Vulgata*)⁴¹ to the apologetic tradition,

³⁹ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 115, 11: ‘Ego autem dixi in excessu meo: Omnis homo mendax’. In hebraico aliter habet: ‘Ego dixi in excessu meo: Omnis homo mendacium’, quod dicitur ‘zecam’ (240, 16-18). *Id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 115, 2 (11) presents a different form of the Hebrew: ‘Ego dixi in excessu mentis meae: omnis homo mendax’. *Ubi nos legimus ‘mendax’, ibi in hebraeo positum est KIVZHB: quod interpretatur Symmachus ‘mendacium’, quinta uero editio ‘deficit’* (234, 3-6). For the English translation of the Septuagint, I shall follow Albert Pietersma, Benjamin G. Wright (eds), *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title* (Oxford, 2007).

⁴⁰ See, for instance, Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 5, 10: *Melius habet in hebraeo: ‘Cor eorum ἐπιβουλον’* (16, 159-160). Here, Jerome follows Aquila: ἔντερον αὐτῶν ἐπιβουλον (Field, 92), which renders the Hebrew *kirbam hawot* (the LXX has ἡ καρδία αὐτῶν ματαία). For a brief mention of a mistake in the Septuagint, see *id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 74, 1: *In hebraeo non habet ‘in finem’ sed habet ‘uictori’*. *Et Septuaginta interpretes non ualde errauerunt: siquidem uictoria perfecta est* (48, 1-2).

⁴¹ *Id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 9: *Vnde et Septuaginta interpretes Xpisti passionem et resurrectionem, quae ignota prius mundo fuit, per uerbum asconsionis celare uoluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur* (191, 6-9). See also the *Prologus in Pentateuchum* 400 on the reservations regarding the doctrine of the Trinity: *Denique ubicumque sacratum aliquid Scriptura testatur de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto, aut aliter interpretati sunt aut omnino tacuerunt, ut et regi satisfacerent et arcanum fidei non vulgarent* (Vulg. 3, 23-25). The same preface offers a historico-doctrinal explanation for the lack of the *testimonia*, meant to prevent King Ptolemy, who was well disposed towards Judaism because of his Platonism, from discovering a second God among the Jews (*Iudaei prudenti factum dicunt esse consilio, ne Ptolemeus, unius dei cultor, etiam*

according to which the seventy translators applied self-censorship or a sort of *arcani disciplina* in their work, by hiding overly explicit formulations of Christ's message out of religious-political caution towards King Ptolemy and the pagan milieu of Alexandria⁴².

As has already been hinted at, in order to overcome these limitations of the Septuagint, Jerome exploits the other *ekdoseis* of the Hexapla, even though he names the translators only in the second series (*series altera*) of the *Tractatus*, a group of fifteen homilies which seem, at least partially, to go back to a written text. An interesting case here is the treatment of *Ps. 67:7a* ('Ο Θεός κατοικίζει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ, 'God settles solitary ones into a home'), a passage on which we have Origen's comments, thanks to his *2nd Homily on Psalm 67*. After explaining the Latin rendering of the Septuagint (*Deus inhabitare facit unius moris in domo*) in a way that clearly echoes Origen's interpretation (the sinner constantly 'changes' according to his sin, whereas the righteous never changes), he adds a reference to the Hebrew⁴³. The rendering of *yechidim* with *monachi* mirrors the translation of Symmachus and Theodotion, whereas in the *Psalterium iuxta Hebraicum* Jerome will opt for *solitarii*⁴⁴. But here and elsewhere, where the *Tractatus* addresses the same psalms commented on by Origen, we can observe that the Alexandrian avoids referring to the hexaplaric readings in his preaching (even if he certainly knew of them)⁴⁵.

apud Hebraeos duplicem diuinitatem deprehenderet, quos maxime idcirco faciebat, quia in Platonis dogma cadere uidebantur (Vulg. 3, 21-23).

⁴² *Id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 9, 1: *In hebraico enim habet 'Alamoth', quod interpretatur, pro morte [...] Pro morte ergo filii in hebraeo scriptum est. Videte igitur Septuaginta interpretes, quoniam Ptolomeo gentili regi interpretabantur, et durum erat dicere mortem filii, occultum interpretati sunt. Non dixerunt: 'Pro morte filii', sciebant enim quod de filio Dei diceretur. Videbant scriptum esse, et tamen timebant Dei filium dicere esse moriturum* (28, 19-29, 27). The title of *Ps. 9* is the crown witness for Jerome's thesis, as he repeats in *Tractatus in Psalmos* 15 (*series altera*): *Post haec quaeritur, cur Septuaginta interpretes aliter quam in hebraeo et apud ceteras editiones est transferre uoluerunt. Quod et de multis aliis locis, sed maxime de praescriptione noni psalmi intellegi potest. Qui cum apud hebraeos praenotetur LAMANASSE ALMUTH LABEN, quod interpretatur Symmachus 'triumphus adolescentiae filii', Septuaginta interpretes, nolentes tam aperte Ptolomaeo regi et gentibus passionem et resurrectionem prodere Saluatoris, transtulerunt 'In finem pro occultis filii'* (365, 49-366, 58).

⁴³ *Id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 67, 7: *In hebraeo autem habet: 'Dominus inhabitare facit monachos in domo'; id est in quibus non cohabitatur peccatum* (41, 37-39).

⁴⁴ Σ. Δίδωσιν οἰκεῖν μοναχοῖς οἰκίαν. Θ. Κατοικίζει μοναχοῦς ἐν οἴκῳ (Field, 200).

⁴⁵ On the contrary, see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 75, 3a: *'Et factus est in pace locus eius': quod dicitur hebraice 'in Salem'. [...] In hebraico habet: 'Et factum est in Salem umbraculum eius'* (49, 5-50, 18). The most eloquent case is *ibid.*, 76, 3: *'Manibus meis nocte contra eum: et non sum deceptus'. In hebraico aliter habet: 'Manus mea nocte extenditur, et non quiescit. Manibus meis nocte contra eum'* (55, 19-21); 76, 4: *In hebraico aliter habet: 'Memor fui Dei, et conturbatus sum'. [...] In hebraeo melius habet: 'Loquebar in memetipso, et defecit spiritus meus'* (56, 49-53); *ibid.* 76, 5: *In hebraeo aliter habet: 'Prohibebam suspectum oculorum meorum, constupebam et non loquebar'. [...] Hoc iuxta hebraicum* (56, 56-57, 61); *ibid.* 76, 11: *In hebraeo aliter habet: 'Et dixi: Inbecillitas mea'* (58, 93-94); *ibid.* 76, 18: *'Discusserunt nubes aquas'*

In the light of what we have seen so far, Jerome appears to be a diligent disciple of Origen's, eager to apply the same methods even more faithfully than the Alexandrian master himself did. This impression is further corroborated by the use that the monk of Bethlehem makes of two additional 'technicalities' of patristic exegesis: the numerological and the etymological interpretation⁴⁶. The former has a particularly interesting application within the Psalter regarding the fifteen 'Odes of the steps' (*Cantica graduum*) (*Ps.* 119-133). This number, referring in ancient sources to the fifteen steps of the Temple, results from the sum of seven and eight, as Origen briefly observes in his 'General introduction to the Psalms' (the so called *Catholica*, according to its recent editors), probably echoing *Ezek.* 40⁴⁷. However, we lack a numerological explanation by the Alexandrian, apart from a short remark in a catena fragment on *John* 11:18 (the fifteen stadia between Bethany and Jerusalem), in which he relates number 7 to the sabbath and number 8 to circumcision⁴⁸. As for Jerome, in the *Commentarioli* he abstains from giving his own interpretation, as he says, because of the abundant exegetical tradition already existing on the *Graduum psalmi*⁴⁹. Presumably, he has Hilary of Poitiers in mind, if not also Origen and other interpreters⁵⁰. On the contrary, in the

habet in hebraeo (59, 141); *ibid.*, 76, 21: *Non enim dicitur secundum hebraicam ueritatem* (63, 264-265). No comparable remarks appear in the four homilies of Origen on *Ps.* 76, about which see Lorenzo Perrone, 'Scrittura e cosmo nelle nuove Omelie di Origene sui Salmi: L'interpretazione del Salmo 76', in José Carlos Caamaño, Hernán Giudice (eds), *Patrística, Biblia y Teología. Caminos de diálogo* (Buenos Aires, 2017), 45-72. For other examples, absent in Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmos*, see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 77, 13: *In hebraico non habet 'utrem', sed 'aceruum'* (72, 249-250); *ibid.* 80, 16: *In hebraico melius habet: 'Inimici Domini negabunt eum', hoc est Iudaei inimici ipsius negabunt eum* (81, 180-182).

⁴⁶ For numerology, see Alessandro Capone, 'Numeri e simboli nell'esegesi geronimiana dei Salmi', *RCCM* 59 (2017), 172-81.

⁴⁷ Origenes, *Catholica*, in *Die Prologtexte zu den Psalmen von Origenes und Eusebius*, eds. Cordula Bandt, Franz-Xaver Risch, Barbara Villani (Berlin, 2019), 4, 18-19: 'τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν ἑβδαί', τὸν ἀριθμὸν πεντεκαίδεκα, ὅσοι καὶ οἱ ἀναβαθμοὶ τοῦ ναοῦ, τάχα δηλοῦσαι τὰς ἀναβάσεις περιέχεσθαι ἐν τῷ ἑβδόμῳ καὶ ὀγδόῳ ἀριθμῷ. See Franz-Xaver Risch, 'Die Stufen des Tempels. Zur Auslegung der Gradualpsalmen bei Origenes', in Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony (ed.), *Origeniana XII: Origen's Legacy in the Holy Land – A Tale of Three Cities: Jerusalem, Caesarea and Bethlehem*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 302 (Leuven, 2019), 254-255: 'in den *Catholica* fügt er über jüdische Tradition und mögliche Realsituationen hinaus die Vermutung hinzu, daß mit der Zahl Fünfzehn eine Gliederung in Sieben und Acht angedeutet werde. [...] Im vorausgehenden Kontext der *Catholica* hat Origenes Bemerkungen zur Sabbattheologie gemacht; ihr folgt diese Arithmetik in scheinbar freier Spekulation'.

⁴⁸ Origenes, *Fragmenta in Iohannem* 80 on *John* 11:18, ed. Erwin Preuschen, GCS 4 (Leipzig, 1903), 547: γειννῆ τοῖνον ἐν μέσῳ σταδίων ἰε', ὅσοι καὶ τοῦ ναοῦ ἀναβαθμοί. Διαιρεῖται δὲ ὁ ἰε' ἀριθμὸς εἰς τὸν ζ' τοῦ σαββάτου καὶ τὸν ἠ' τῆς περιτομῆς, οἷς μόνον μερίδα διδόναι ὁ Ἐκκλησιαστής παραινεῖ: Ἄδς μερίδα, λέγων, τοῖς ἑπτὰ καὶ γε τοῖς ὀκτώ' (*Ecc.* 11:2).

⁴⁹ Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 119: *Et quia a plerisque super his latissime disputatum est, stultum est parua dicere uelle pro magnis* (235, 1 - 236, 5).

⁵⁰ Hilarius Pictaviensis, *Tractatus in Psalmos*, ed. Anton Zingerle, CSEL 22 (Vindobonae, 1891), 547-548.

Tractatus on *Ps.* 119 he exploits the mention of the number 15 in *Gal.* 1:18: Paul spent fifteen days in Jerusalem together with Peter to ‘confront’ (*conferre*) the Old and the New Testament, symbolically equivalent to the numbers 7 and 8, respectively⁵¹. This interpretation is not attested to in Origen, but the numerological distinction of 7 and 8 in relation to the Old and New Testament finds a parallel in Didymus⁵². Moreover, Jerome, in the same *Tractatus*, appears to be a unique patristic witness to a rabbinic tradition, according to which the fifteen steps of the Temple (whose ruins he was still able to see) were not square, but shaped as a semicircle⁵³.

The difference to Origen is even more perceptible concerning the recourse to etymological interpretation, the main tool for allegorical exegesis in the Alexandrian tradition from Philo onwards. Jerome, who not incidentally translated the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius and who himself wrote a book on the Hebrew names of the Bible (*Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*)⁵⁴, is particularly fond of explaining the symbolic meaning of the biblical names of places or persons⁵⁵:

⁵¹ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 119: *Interim nunc dicamus de primo graduum, relinquentes mysterium quare quindecim sint gradus: eadem enim frequenter dicere, taedium est audientibus. Vnde et apostolus, quindecim dies fecisse apud Petrum in Hierosolyma, ut conferret utrumque testamentum, et septenarium et octonarium* (246, 24 - 247, 2).

⁵² F.-X. Risch, ‘Die Stufen des Tempels’ (2019), 257 thinks, nevertheless, that Jerome and Didymus may depend upon Origen: ‘Man verschafft sich einen Sinn, wenn man die Zahl von Sabbat und Beschneidung als Epoche der jüdischen Religion und der nunmehr metaphorischen Beschneidung im Christen liest [...] Daß es ungefähr so zu verstehen ist, bezeugen Didymus und Hieronymus, deren Exegese nicht selten Motive entwickelt, die Origenes bereitgestellt hatte. [...] Das Geben der Sieben bedeutet für beide die Anerkennung des Alten Testaments ... das Geben der Acht die Anerkennung des Neuen Testaments ... Einzig die Christen anerkennen beide Testamente und erfüllen so die Fünfzehnzahl’. For another numerological interpretation establishing a connection between the Gospel (= 4) and the Law (= 10), see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 93, 1: *Videtur igitur quoniam dies quarta, hoc est quarta sabbati, ex utroque latere duplici trinitate firmatur. Simulque considerandum, quia quartus numerus uirtute decimus est. Quomodo? Si enim computes et ordinem facias, unum, duo, tres, quattuor, decimus numerus efficitur. Videtur igitur quoniam quartus numerus effecit decimum et considerate ex hoc quia quattuor euangelia in decalogo computantur, ut quodcumque dicebatur in decalogo, hoc compleatur in quattuor euangelia, ut non dissentiat lex uetus ab euangelica dignitate* (142, 7-16). Furthermore, see the symbolism of number 10 as elaborated on in *Tractatus in Psalmos* 10 (*s.a.*) (355, 3-15).

⁵³ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 119: *Hoc igitur templum in circuitu quindecim gradus habuit* (247, 37). See F.-X. Risch, ‘Die Stufen des Tempels’ (2019), 262: ‘Die [...] Mischna *Middot* erwähnt, ohne ersichtlichen Grund, daß die Stufen “nicht eckig waren, sondern wie ein Halbkreis”. [...] Der lateinische Exeget kann der Rundung keine Bedeutung abgewinnen, vielleicht auch weil Origenes hierzu möglicherweise nichts gesagt hat’.

⁵⁴ See Hieronymus, *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, ed. Paul de Lagarde, CCL 72 (Turnhout, 1959), 57-161.

⁵⁵ See, for instance, *id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 82, 6: *Videte nominum sacramenta* (91, 36-37); *id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 107, 10b: *Idumaea autem aut ‘terrena’ interpretatur, aut ‘sanguinaria’. Et totus psalmus secundum sensum duplicem aut ad David refertur, quod super has gentes Deo se adiuvante regnauerit: aut ad Xpistum, ut secundum interpretationem nominum hebraeorum diuersas ecclesiae reputemus esse uirtutes* (231, 4-8).

for him, the names conceal ‘mysteries’ (*sacramenta*)⁵⁶. It is such a frequent feature in the *Tractatus* that there is no need to insist on it. However, it is again interesting to check it against Origen’s practice of etymology in the *Homilies on the Psalms*. The Alexandrian does not ignore it – as we also know from his other writings – but his use is generally more sober when compared to Jerome’s and, occasionally, may lead to a different outcome. Both hint, for instance, at the meaning of place names such as Edom or Bosor when quoting the christologically crucial passage of *Isa.* 63:1 (‘Who is this that comes from Edom, a redness of garments from Bosor?’), but they explain it in a partially different way: while the Alexandrian, in the 2nd *Homily on Psalm 15*, proposes the two symbolic correspondences ‘Edom’ = ‘earthly (things)’ and ‘Bosor’ = ‘flesh’⁵⁷, the *Tractatus on Ps.* 67 has only the second of them. Instead, ‘Edom’ means, for Jerome, ‘blood’⁵⁸. He therefore revises his own previous interpretation in the *Commentarioli*, where he gave to ‘Edom’ the meaning of ‘earthly’ or ‘deficient’⁵⁹. In fact, as proved elsewhere by his writings, Jerome strives to provide a more correct etymology for both Edom and Bosor, whereby he expressly criticises those who, like Origen, interpret ‘Bosor’ as ‘flesh’, instead of reading the Hebrew word for Bosra⁶⁰. Even if a larger amount of the etymologies attested to by Jerome probably goes back to Origen, we should not overlook his efforts at elaborating on his own opinions, thanks to his familiarity with the Hebrew and knowledge of Eusebius and other commentators. Proof of this is *Epistula* 78 to Fabiola, his ‘response’ to the famous 27th *Homily on Numbers* by Origen on the forty-two mansions of Israel in the desert (*Num.* 33:1-49), in

⁵⁶ *Id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 82, 9: *Videtur quia difficillima loca sunt, uidetur quia obscura sunt, et in singulis sermonibus magna sunt sacramenta, et necessitate compellimur in uerbis hebraicis et plenius mysteriis diutius immorari. Neque enim nunc rhetoricum locum euentilamus, sed id quod ab Spiritu sancto dictum est, interpretari nitimur. Nisi enim sic interpretemur ut diximus, quid prodest ecclesiis Christi legere tabernacula Idumaeorum et Ismahelitae et cetera nomina?* (93, 86-93).

⁵⁷ Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 15* II, 8: *Ξενίζονται γοῦν αἱ δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τῇ καινῇ ἱστορίᾳ, ὅτι βλέπουσι σάρκα ἀναβεβηκυῖαν εἰς οὐρανὸν καὶ λέγουσι· ‘τίς οὗτος ὁ παραγενόμενος ἐξ Ἐδὼμ’, τουτέστι τῶν γῆνιων, ‘ἐρυθρὸν ἱματίων’ (*Isa.* 63:1a); *Βλέπουσι τὰ ἴχνη τοῦ αἵματος καὶ τῶν τραυμάτων· ‘ἐκ Βοσόρ’, τῆς σαρκός, ‘οὕτως ὠραῖος ἐν στολῇ βία μετὰ ἰσχύος; ἐγὼ διαλέγομαι’ (*Isa.* 63:1bc) (105, 19-106, 3).**

⁵⁸ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 67, 24: *Edom interpretatur sanguis, Bosor caro: ipsum significat Dominum nostrum crucifixum* (45, 160-161).

⁵⁹ *Id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 136, 7a: *Quia uero Edom ‘terrenus’ siue ‘deficiens’ interpretatur, intellege contrarias inimicasque uirtutes semper hoc agere, ut nihil in ecclesia, nihil in Ierusalem remaneat* (242, 22-24).

⁶⁰ *Id.*, *Commentarii in Esaiam* 10, 34, 1-7 in *Commentaires sur le Prophète Isaïe. Livres VIII-XI*, eds. Véronique Somers, Roger Gryson et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1996): *Et nonnulli existimant, quia Bosor caro dicitur, per uictimam Domini in Bosra, tormenta omnium in carne monstrari, qui pio labuntur errore. In praesenti enim loco non per Sin litteram, quae in Bosor, hoc est in carne, ponitur, sed per Sade scribitur, et Bosra appellatur, quae iuxta Iesum et Hieremiam non in Edom, id est, Idumaea, sed in terra Moab inuenitur* (420, 81-87). See also *ibid.* 17, 63, 1ab (721, 53-63). For other occurrences, see Girolamo, *59 Omelie sui Salmi*, ed. A. Capone (2018), 148 n. 38.

which Jerome shares the numerological explanation of the Alexandrian, but modifies in several places the list of the toponyms and their interpretation⁶¹. On the other hand, Jerome, despite his strong interest in etymology, may sacrifice it when following more closely in the footsteps of Origen. The Alexandrian is actually surprisingly silent on the names which play an important role in his spiritual explanation of the Psalter, as we can see with the names of Ephraim and Manasse in the *Homilies on Psalm 77*, although he displays their etymology elsewhere: Ephraim = ‘fructification’, Manasse = ‘oblivion’. Jerome is, indeed, acquainted with both in the *Tractatus*, but he does not mention them either when preaching on *Ps. 77*⁶².

3. Jerome’s preaching on the same psalms as Origen: a free ‘counterpoint’ to the Alexandrian?

The affinities and diversities that we have noted between Jerome and Origen lend support to the idea that the former inclines to develop, so to say, a free ‘counterpoint’ to the latter. To what extent this might be true ought to be further verified by a synoptic treatment of the homilies that the two authors devoted to the same psalms. However, since a detailed examination of their respective *corpus* would demand a more thorough investigation than is possible at present, I shall again sketch an overview based on some exemplary cases as a prelude to future study.

Leaving aside the two *Homilies on Psalm 15*, which undoubtedly offer the most conspicuous evidence for Jerome’s acquaintance with the texts of the Alexandrian⁶³, let us first of all briefly evoke the interpretation given by the two preachers on *Ps. 67*. This difficult psalm demanded from Origen seven homilies, two of which survive in the Munich collection. Originally, then, it

⁶¹ Aline Canellis, ‘L’exégèse de Nombres 33, 1-49: d’Origène à saint Jérôme (*Epist. 78 à Fabiola*)’, dans Emanuela Prinziavalli, Françoise Vinel, Michele Cutino, *Transmission et réception des Pères grecs dans l’Occident, de l’Antiquité tardive à la Renaissance. Entre philologie, herméneutique et théologie* (Paris, 2016), 57-79. As observed by Antonio Cacciari, ‘Omelia XXVII: Ascesa e tappe’, in Mario Maritano, Enrico dal Covolo (eds), *Omelle sui Numeri. Lettura origeniana* (Roma, 2004), 130-131: ‘all’interpretazione aritmologica [...] sono affidate alcune funzioni di grande rilievo: anzitutto, di saldare le vicende del cammino d’Israele verso le “promesse” al cammino di Cristo nella storia; poi, di riaffermare l’unità dell’Antico e del Nuovo Testamento; infine, di conseguenza, di dare la chiave di lettura complessiva di questo passo e dell’intero contesto di Nm altrimenti destinato al rifiuto’.

⁶² Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 107, 9: *Manasses interpretatur ‘ex obliuione’ [...] Et Efraim interpretatur ‘fructifer’* (204, 112-117). See Origenes, *Commentarii in Iohannem* XXVIII, 24, 213, ed. Erwin Preuschen, GCS 10 (Leipzig, 1903), 420, 16-18: Ἐρμηνεύεται δὲ Ἐφραΐμ καρποφορία, ἀδελφὸς ὢν Μανασσῆς, πρεσβυτέρου τοῦ ἀπὸ λήθης (Gen. 41:51-52) λαοῦ.

⁶³ As has been proved by Elena Orlandi, ‘Esegesi e omiletica nei *Tractatus in Psalmos*. Il salmo 15 dal *Codex Monacensis Graecus* 314 alla rielaborazione di Gerolamo’, in Daniele Tripaldi (ed.), *La lira di Davide. Esegesi e riscritture dei Salmi dall’ Antichità al Medioevo* (Roma, 2018), 283-305.

was the second largest series after the nine sermons on *Ps.* 77. Although a closer comparison with the *Tractatus* is limited only to vv. 2-7, extensively commented on by Origen, but mainly the object of short ‘glosses’ by Jerome – who proceeds in the same manner until the end (v. 36) – it is, nevertheless, possible to detect some points of similarity.

The first aspect that deserves attention is the identification of the *prosopon*: for the Alexandrian, v. 2ab (‘Let God rise up and let his enemies be scattered’) initially means God (the Father), and only subsequently the Lord (as the resurrected Christ)⁶⁴. On the contrary, Jerome (like Hilary of Poitiers) applies the verse, in particular, to Christ in his passion and resurrection⁶⁵ and, in a more general sense, to the faithful who experience tribulations and beg for God’s help⁶⁶. He thus omits the long and brilliant developments of the *1st Homily on Psalm 67* on the biblical anthropomorphisms of God, but he exploits, like Origen, the same quotation from *Ps.* 43⁶⁷. However, Jerome combines it with *Matt.* 8:25 (the appeal to Jesus by his disciples for the stilling of the storm) to express the urgent call to the Lord in a situation of distress, without discussing in what sense the Scriptures speak of God as ‘sleeping’ or ‘awaking’. However, he manifestly reuses these passages of the *1st Homily on Psalm 67* in another occasion, when he illustrates the different scriptural *schemata* of God in the *Tractatus* on *Ps.* 81.

Here, Jerome is more didactic and orderly than Origen, but his list of the ‘four different forms’ of the behaviour of God (*quattuor schematibus Dei*) – actually, there are five – essentially corresponds to Origen’s discussion of *Ps.* 67:2a, although in a slightly different order: (God is namely said by the Scriptures) 1) ‘to stand’ (*stare* = ἐστηκέναι), 2) ‘to walk’ (*ambulare* = περιπατεῖν), 3) ‘to sit’ (*sedere* = καθέζεσθαι), 4) ‘to sleep’ (*dormire* = ὑπνοῦν), and 5) ‘to wake up’ / ‘to rise up’ (*euigilare* / *consurgere* = ἀνίστασθαι). In any case, the scriptural quotations for the changing states of God in relation to humankind do not differ in either author, although Origen inserts, as

⁶⁴ For the transition to the christological interpretation, see Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 67* I, 4 (185, 14-16).

⁶⁵ Hilarius Pictaviensis, *Tractatus in Psalmos 67: Est autem ipse totus sacramentis legis euangeliorumque contextus magnaue et ex praeteritis et ex futuris allegoricorum dictionum interpretatione confertus: qui et legis latae in se doctrinam contineat et adsumptae a domino carnis adferat notionem et impietatem populi anterioris exprobret et futurae cognitionis nostrae fidem nuntiet et domini super caelos complectitur ascensum et futuri regni eius gloriam comprehendat* (276, 22 - 277, 5).

⁶⁶ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 67, 2: Et specialiter intellegitur iste psalmus, et generaliter. Specialiter in ipsum Dominum, ut resurgat a mortuis, et disperdat inimicos suos, hoc est diabolum et exercitum suum, aut Iudaeos. Generaliter autem, quando in tribulatione sumus et angustia, et dicimus: ‘Exsurge, ut quid dormitas Domine? ed adiua nos’ (Ps. 43:24.27)* (40, 1-6).

⁶⁷ Respectively, vv. 24a.25 in Origen and 24a.27 in Jerome.

usual, more references⁶⁸. In turn, Jerome makes the frame of ‘sinner / saint’, in relation to the different *schemata*, more explicit than is the case with the Alexandrian⁶⁹.

⁶⁸ Cf. Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum* 67 I, 3 (180, 2-181, 11) with Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 81, 1 (82, 1 - 83, 23; 83, 37-84, 48; 84, 49-52).

Ζητητέον γὰρ ὁ θεὸς πότε μὲν ἀνίσταται, πότε δὲ ὑπνοῖ· τοιαῦτα γὰρ τινα ἐν τῇ κοινῇ ἐκδοχῇ λέγουσι περὶ αὐτοῦ αἱ θεῖαι γραφαί, νοῆσαι δὲ δεῖ πῶς ταῦτα ἀναγέγραπται. Περί μὲν γὰρ τοῦ ὑπνοῦν αὐτόν φησί τις ἐν ψαλμοῖς εὐχόμενος· ‘ἀνάστηθι, ἴνα τί ὑπνοῖς, κύριε; ἴνα τί τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀποστρέφεις; ἐπιλανθάνῃ τῆς πτωχείας ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν’ (Ps. 43: 24a.25); Περί δὲ τοῦ καθέζεσθαι· ‘ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῶν χειρῶν ἐμφάνθη, ἐναντίον Ἐφραΐμ καὶ Βενιαμὴν καὶ Μανασσῆ’ (Ps. 79:2c-3a). Περί δὲ τοῦ ἐστηκέναι θεόν, αὐτὸς τῷ Μωϋσῆ λέγει· ‘σὺ δὲ αὐτοῦ στήθι μετ’ ἐμοῦ’ (Deut. 5:31). Καὶ περὶ τοῦ περιπατεῖν, ἐν τῇ Γενέσει ἀναγέγραπται, ὅτι μετὰ τὴν παράβασιν ἤκουσεν ὁ Ἀδάμ ‘κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ περιπατοῦντος ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τὸ δειλινόν’ (Gen. 3:8). [...] Οὕτως οὖν ὡς πρὸς μὲν τὸ ἀληθὲς ἄτρεπτος καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος ὁ θεός· δι’ ἡμᾶς δὲ, ὅτε μὲν καθέζεσθαι λέγεται, τῷ δὲ ἐπὶ τινι καθεζόμενος οἶον τῷ κρινομένῳ. Μὴ γὰρ εἶη αὐτὸν ἐστηκέναι τῷ κρινομένῳ!· ‘βίβλοι γὰρ ἠνεώχθησαν καὶ κριτήριον ἐκάθισεν’ (Dan. 7:10), καὶ καθέζεται ὅτε κρίνει. Τῷ δὲ ἀγίῳ καὶ μακαρίῳ, ᾧ ἀρμόζει τὸ ‘ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κρίνεται’ (John 3:18), οὐ καθέζεται ἀλλὰ ἐστηκεν. Διὸ λέγει ὁ ἐστηκὼς τῷ ἤδη ἀξίῳ ἐστηκέναι μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ· ‘σὺ δὲ αὐτοῦ στήθι μετ’ ἐμοῦ’ (Deut. 5:31). Ὅτε δὲ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ τῷ ἀναξίῳ προνοίας καὶ χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ ‘ὁ μὴ νυστάζων, ὁ μὴ ὑπνώτων ὅταν φυλάττῃ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ’, ὑπνοῖ· κἂν μετανόησῃ ἐκεῖνος, ᾧ ὑπνοῖ ὁ θεός, λέγεται· ‘ἐξηγέρθη ὡς ὁ ὑπνῶν κύριος, ὡς δυνατὸς καὶ κεκραιπαληκὸς ἐξ οἴνου’ (Ps. 77:65)· οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἀνίσταται. Ὅσον οὖν ἐφ’ ἑαυτῷ ἄτρεπτος καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος καὶ ἀμετάβλητός ἐστιν ὁ θεός τῶν ὄλων, διὰ δὲ σὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπον οἰονεὶ μεταβολὰς λέγεται ἔχειν, γινόμενος ἐκάστῳ ὡς ἄξιον αὐτὸν ἐκάστῳ γενέσθαι.

Multa sunt schemata. Frequenter enim sedemus, interdum stamus, interdum iacemus, interdum currimus, interdum ambulamus. Ita et Deus describitur pro uarietate hominum, et status ipsius diuersus inducitur. Si sancti sumus, et sumus similes Moysi, dicitur ad nos: ‘Tu uero hic stam tecum’ (Deut. 5:31). Hoc enim dicit Deus ad Moysen. Stabat enim Moyses super petram: propterea et Deus stabat illi. Si uero sancti prius fuerimus, et postea peccatores, iam non nobis stat Deus, sed ambulat: hoc est, mouetur de loco suo, qui nobis ante steterat. Postquam nos moti fuerimus, et ipse nobiscum pariter commouetur. Denique et Adam quamdiu in paradiso fuit, et legem seruabat, stabat ei Deus. Postquam uero transgressus est, audiuit uocem Dei ambulantis in paradiso. Vis scire quia ambulat ei Deus? Quid ei dixit? Adam, ubi es (Gen. 3:9)? Qui ante stantem Deum non fugerat, postea ambulatam fugit.

Diximus de stante, diximus de ambulante: dicamus de sedente. Quandocumque sedens inducitur Deus, dupliciter inducitur: aut quasi rex, aut quasi iudex. Quando uero quasi iudex inducitur: ‘Throni positi sunt et libri aperti sunt’ (Dan. 7:9.10). [...] Diximus de Deo quod aliis stet, aliis ambulet, aliis uero sedeat quasi rex aut quasi iudex: aliis uero dormit. Si quando nos derelinquit temptationibus: licet simus sancti, tamen relinquimur temptationibus, ut probemur: eo tempore nobis dormit Dominus. Denique quid dicit et psalmista? ‘Exsurge, utquid dormitas Domine’ (Ps. 43:24a)? Et apostoli quando erant in nauis, et nauis fluctibus tundeatur. Denique excitant eum, et euigilat, et statim tempestas quiescit. Diximus de quattuor schematibus Dei, quia aliis stat, aliis ambulat, aliis sedet, aliis quasi dormit, aliis uero euigilat et consurgit. In qua ipsa synagoga nostra diuersa deus habet schemata; aliis stat, aliis sedet, aliis ambulat, aliis dormit. Cum ipse sit immutabilis, pro nostra uarietate mutatur. Vide hominis dignitatem.

⁶⁹ For a similar argument, partially resting on the same quotations (Gen. 3:8; Deut. 5:31; Dan. 7:10.9), see Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 98, 1c.

Origenes, <i>Homilia in Psalmum</i> 67 I, 3	Hieronymus, <i>Tractatus in Psalmos</i> 81, 1
ὕπνοῦν: <i>Ps.</i> 43:24a.25	<i>stare</i> : <i>Deut.</i> 5:31
καθέζεσθαι: <i>Ps.</i> 79:2c-3a / <i>Dan.</i> 7:10	<i>ambulare</i> : <i>Gen.</i> 3:9
ἔστηκέναι: <i>Deut.</i> 5:31 (twice) / <i>Dan.</i> 7:10 /	<i>sedere</i> : <i>Dan.</i> 7:9.10
<i>John</i> 3:18	<i>dormire</i> : <i>Ps.</i> 43:24a
περιπατεῖν: <i>Gen.</i> 3:8	<i>euigilare</i> / <i>consurgere</i> : <i>Ps.</i> 43:24a
ἀνίστασθαι: <i>Ps.</i> 77:65	

Not only does Jerome feel free to adapt and better arrange the exegesis of Origen, he also extrapolates important motifs from it by retelling them in his own way. While the Alexandrian deals in a long section of the *1st Homily on Psalm 67* with the destiny of ‘enemies’ and ‘sinners’ in the wake of vv. 2-3, Jerome interprets Origen’s idea of an unavoidable connection between the righteous and sinners more simply and directly as an indication for the preservation and repentance of sinners. Consequently, v. 2b (‘Let his enemies be scattered’) does not mean that the sinners should perish, but merely that they should ‘flee from the face of God’⁷⁰. And, without any apparent embarrassment for v. 3 (‘As smoke vanishes, let them vanish; as wax melts from before fire, so may sinners perish from before God’), Jerome again insists on the idea that the enemies should not be annihilated and perish, but rather convert and repent⁷¹. This may sound like a typically Origenian motive⁷², but now and then in his *Tractatus* the monk of Bethlehem proves to be even more open toward such a perspective than happens in the homilies of the Alexandrian⁷³. As we shall shortly see, the remarkable passages about the salvation of the Jews, in the light of *Rom.* 11, fully conform to this attitude.

We may even catch some more echoes of Origen in the subsequent comments by Jerome, synthetic and quick as they are. The distinction between ‘contemplation’ (= *cantare*) and ‘action’ (= *psallere*) that he extrapolates from v. 5a (‘Sing to God; make music to his name’), mirrors the wider elaboration on the same passage by Origen⁷⁴. It presumably goes back to the Alexandrian,

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 67, 2c: ‘*Et fugiant qui oderunt eum a facie eius*’. *Non dixit: ‘Pereant’, sed ‘fugiant’, quia peccatores in conspectu Dei stare non possunt* (40, 9-10).

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 67, 3a: *non ut ad nihilum redigantur, sed ut quiescant a peccatis suis* (40, 11-12); v. 3b: *sic et isti non pereant, sed deponant duritiam suam, et sic conuertantur ad paenitentiam, et saluentur* (40, 13-15).

⁷² As stated by Coppa in Origene-Gerolamo, *74 Omelie sul libro dei Salmi*, ed. Giovanni Coppa (Milano, 1993), 145 n. 3.

⁷³ See, for instance, Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 67, 20b: ‘*Prosperum iter faciet nobis Deus salutarium nostrorum*’. *Securus esto, peccator, noli dubitare quod cotidie possis benedicere Deum; ecce enim dicit: ‘Prosperum [...] Deus’*. *Ergo Deus adiuvat nos, et cooperatur nobis. ‘Salutarium nostrorum’*. *Bene dixit pluraliter, salutarium: quod quanta peccata commisimus, tot et salutes habemus* (44, 131-137).

⁷⁴ Compare Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum* 67 II, 3-4 with Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmum* 67, 5: *Cantate Deo, psalmum dicite nomini eius. Cantate, in theoria semper significat scriptura: hoc est, considerate mysteria et sensum diuina scripturae. Psallere autem in bono*

as does the interpretation of *psallere* as pointing to the body as a ‘psalter’ that one should harmoniously play in all of its many chords in order to practise virtue⁷⁵, or the idea of the voluntary death of Jesus in v. 24b (‘so that your foot may be dipped in blood, the tongue of your dogs, from enemies, by him’)⁷⁶. But here we have already entered *terra incognita*, where we do not have at our disposal the text of Origen’s homilies anymore. Checking the few *scholia* transmitted under his name against the *Tractatus* demands much caution, as shown, for instance, by Jerome’s comment on v. 14 (*Si dormiatis inter medios clericos, pennae columbae deargentatae, et posteriora dorsi eius in pallore auri*, ‘If you lie down among the allotments – a dove’s wings covered with silver and its back feathers with golden greenness’); according to him, the two ‘allotments’ (*cleri*) are the Old and the New Testament, both covered by the ‘dove’s wings’ of the Holy Ghost and thus requesting a spiritual interpretation of their ‘mysteries’⁷⁷. Origen occasionally quotes *Ps.* 67:14, but he interprets it in a different way, without referring to the two Testaments⁷⁸.

opere significat scriptura (40, 23-41, 1). On the equivalence ‘to sing’ = *θεολογία* in Origen, following *Ps.* 67:5a, see Lorenzo Perrone, ‘Dire Dieu chez Origène: la démarche théologique et ses présupposés spirituels’, in Bernard Pouderon, Anna Usacheva (eds), *Dire Dieu. Principes méthodologiques de l’écriture sur Dieu en patristique* (Paris, 2017), 129-57.

⁷⁵ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmum* 67, 5: *ut auditum suum opus praestet, similiter et os, et oculi, et manus, et omnia membra quasi consentiant, et ita percutiant psalterium in uirtutibus*. See Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum* 67 II, 4 (209, 1-211, 2).

⁷⁶ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmum* 67, 24b: ‘*Ex inimicis autem: submissi a daemonibus negare Saluatorem et blasphemare eum. Aliter: quoniam ipse tua uoluntate uenisti et passus es, et tua uoluntate crucifixus es a Iudaeis* (45, 164-167). See *id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 67, 23-24: *Vt autem hoc totum fieret, ipsius Saluatoris uoluntas fuit* (215, 38-39); M.-J. Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques* (1985), 147: ‘Mettre en relief la liberté et l’initiative du Christ en soulignant que ce ne sont pas les juifs qui on eu le dessus sur lui, mais que c’est parce qu’il l’a voulu et que Dieu l’a voulu qu’il a subi la passion, est tout à fait origénien’.

⁷⁷ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 67, 14: ‘*Si dormiatis inter medios clericos: hoc est, su quiescatis inter nouum et uetus testamentum. Cleri dicuntur et singuli libri: hoc est Genesis, Exodus, Iudicum, Euangelia, Apostolus. Pennae columbae deargentatae. Inuenietis in duobus testamentis gratiam Spiritus sancti. Deargentatae: clarum uerbum significat diuinae scripturae. Et posteriora dorsi eius in pallore auri: hoc est, in interioribus spiritaliter mysteria intelleguntur* (42, 79-43, 86). See also *id.*, *Commentarioli in Psalmos* 67, 14: *Cum duobus credideris Testamentis, inuenies in utroque Spiritum sanctum. Et licet sit pulchritudo etiam iuxta litteram scire quae legas, tamen uis decoris omnis in sensu est. Exterior itaque uerborum ornatus in argenti nomine demonstratur: occultiora uero mysteria in reconditis auri muneribus continentur* (214, 10-15). For other references, see S. Risse, *Commentarioli* (2005), 158 n. 116.

⁷⁸ *Ps.* 67:14 is quoted by Origenes, *Commentarii in Canticum canticorum* III in Origenes, *Homilien zu Samuel I, zum Hohelied und zu den Propheten. Kommentar zum Hohelied in Rufins und Hieronymus Übersetzungen*, ed. Wilhelm Adolf Baehrens, GCS 33, Origenes Werke 8 (Leipzig, 1925), 173, 20; 224, 6; 233, 19; 234, 1; *id.*, *Fragmenta in Ezechielem*, GCS 33, 543, 27; *id.*, *Homiliae in Lucam* XXVII, in Origenes, *Die Homilien zu Lukas*, ed. Max Rauer, GCS 49, Origenes Werke 9 (Berlin, 1959), 160. As for *id.*, *Fragmenta Commentarii in Lamentationes* 83 in Origenes, *Jeremiahomilien, Klagegedichtkommentar, Erklärung der Samuel- und Königsbücher*, ed. Erich Klostermann, GCS 6, Origenes Werke 3 (Berlin, 1983²), 267, 7, Klostermann indicates

Moreover the excerpt attributed to him in the *Fragmenta in Psalmos* is, in fact, a *scholion* by Evagrius⁷⁹.

The *Tractatus on Ps. 74*, a much shorter piece than the corresponding small homily by Origen⁸⁰, does not seem to offer any significant elements for a comparison. Jerome is more concerned with the explanation of the title and the author, than with that of the psalm itself, limiting his exegesis to vv. 1-3. Nevertheless, he shows the influence of other commentators, since he expressly appeals to ‘other’ (*alii*) and ‘old’ (*ueteres*) interpreters. As for the title, he signals a different form of the Hebrew (*uictori*), moving closer to Eusebius, who (like Symmachus) speaks likewise of a psalm ἐπινίκιος⁸¹. Moreover, the discussion on context and authorship – David or Asaph? – indicates an interest in the historical nature, more akin to Eusebius’ approach (if not to rabbinical exegesis)⁸². Furthermore, instead of understanding spiritually the words ‘Do not destroy’ (*Ps. 74, 1a: Μὴ διαφθείρης*) in the title, as the Alexandrian immediately does, Jerome hints at a plurality of interpretations. One of these considers the words as an appeal

a reference to *Ps. 54:7* (‘And I said, “Who will give me wings like a dove, and I shall fly away and be at rest?”’). See further the quotation in *id.*, *Commentarii in Canticum canticorum* III, 1, 6, speaking of the eyes of the dove as the symbol of the Spirit and spiritual understanding: *Sed et si ‘dormire’ quis possit, hoc est collocari et requiescere ‘in medio sortium’ atque intellegere rationem sortium et agnoscere diuini iudicii causas, non solum ‘pennae columbae’, quibus in spiritalibus intellectibus uolet, promittuntur ei, sed et ‘deargentatae pennae’* (cf. *Ps. 67:14*), *id est uerbi et rationis ornamento decoratae* (494). The second passage in *ibid.*, IV, 2, 22 could have inspired Jerome, although Origen refers to the Church in the middle of the two calls to Israel: *Quia autem dedit ei et pennas columbae* (cf. *Ps. 54:7*), *posteaquam ‘dormiuit in medio sortium’* (cf. *Ps. 67:14*); *media enim inter duas uocationes Istrahelis ecclesia uocata est, quia primo Istrahel uocatus est, post haec ubi ille offendit et cecidit, uocata est ecclesia gentium, cum autem ‘plenitudo gentium introierit’, tunc iterum ‘omnis Istrahel’ uocatus ‘saluabitur; in medio’ ergo harum duarum ‘sortium dormit’ ecclesia; et propter hoc dedit ei ‘pennas columbae deargentatas’, quod significat rationabiles pennas in sancti Spiritus donis* (710-712). Hilary also has a different exegesis.

⁷⁹ Origenes, *Fragmenta in Psalmos* 67, 14, PG 12, 1508 B = Evagrius, *Scholia in Psalmos* 67, 14 (10): Τοὺς κλήρους καὶ τὰς πτέρυγας οἱ μὲν εἰρήκασι Παλαιῶν καὶ Καινῆν Διαθήκην· οἱ δὲ πρᾶξιν καὶ θεωρίαν· ἄλλοι δὲ γνῶσιν σωμάτων καὶ ἀσωμάτων· ἕτεροι δὲ γνῶσιν Θεοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἀποσταλέντος ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ.

⁸⁰ Lorenzo Perrone, ‘*Ne corrumpas* (Sal 74, 1): l’omelia di Origene sul Salmo 74 nel codice di Monaco’, in Gennaro Luongo (ed.), *Amicorum Munera: Studi in onore di Antonio V. Nazzaro* (Napoli, 2016), 99-113.

⁸¹ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 74, 1: *In hebraeo non habet ‘in finem’ sed habet ‘uictori’*. *Et Septuaginta interpretes non ualde errauerunt: siquidem uictoria perfecta est* (48, 1-2); Eusebius, *Commentaria in Psalmos* 74: Οὐκοῦν περὶ ἀφθαρσίας ὁ λόγος τῆς τοῖς δικαίοις ἀποκειμένης, οἷς καὶ τὰ τῆς νίκης ἀποτεθαύριστα βραβεῖα. Διὸ καὶ ἐπινίκιος εἴρηται (PG 23, 868 A). *Homilia in Psalmum 74* does not mention the rendering of Symmachus (‘ἐπινίκιος περὶ ἀφθαρσίας’ [Field, 219]), although Origen refers implicitly to him (*ibid.*, 1: ἀνθ’ οὗ εἰς τὸν ἐρμηνευσάντων – ἀντι τοῦ ‘εἰς τὸ τέλος μὴ διαφθείρης’ – πεποίηκεν ‘ὑπὲρ ἀφθαρσίας’ [269, 3-4]).

⁸² Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 74, 1: *Alii dicunt, quoniam iste psalmus a Dauid compositus est, et ab Asaph cantatus est; alii autem, quoniam ipse Asaph et conposuit et cantauit* (48, 9-12).

addressed by David to a friend in order to preserve the life of Saul, and Jerome finally opts for this explanation⁸³. In any case, we notice only a partial agreement with Origen on the prosopological interpretation: for the Alexandrian, until v. 2b ('We will acknowledge you, O God; we will acknowledge and call upon your name') the person speaking is a collective one, that is, the Church; from v. 2c (Διηγῆσομαι τὰ θαυμάσιά σου, 'I will tell of your wondrous deeds') to the end, it is a single person, that is, Christ⁸⁴. Did Jerome think, perhaps, of the Alexandrian when he presented this exegesis as traditional, inasmuch as Eusebius indicates 'apostles, disciples and evangelists' as the collective *prosopon*?⁸⁵ But Jerome, in contrast to Origen, extends the collective subject until v. 2c (as signalled by the plural *narrabimus* in Latin for the singular διηγῆσομαι in Greek)⁸⁶. There is another important difference in v. 2: Jerome understands the 'confession' by the Church in v. 2 (*Confitebimur* / Ἐξομολογησόμεθα) as a proclamation of the glory of God⁸⁷, whereas, for Origen, the Church of the Gentiles avows its trespasses before obeying the call of the Lord⁸⁸. Jerome probably follows the interpretation of Eusebius, who rejected the penitential value of the 'confession' of the Church by putting it in the mouth of the 'righteous', as an additional identification of the person speaking⁸⁹.

In addition, for the *Tractatus* on Ps. 75 it would be excessive to consider Jerome's preaching a 'counterpoint' to Origen's homily: the monk of Bethlehem

⁸³ *Ibid.* 74, 1: *Ergo secundum Septuaginta hoc dicit: O Domine, qui me custodisti, ut non mittam manum meam super christum tuum Saul, usque ad finem custodi me* (48, 12-14).

⁸⁴ Origenes, *Homilia in Psalmum 74* 1: Τὸ πλῆθος μὲν γάρ φησι· ἔξομολογησόμεθά σοι, ὁ θεός, καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου' (*Ps.* 74:2b), εἷς δὲ τὸ 'διηγῆσομαι τὰ θαυμάσιά σου, ὅταν λάβω καιρόν' (*Ps.* 74:2c-3a). Τοῦτο ποιεῖ εἰς λέγων μέχρι τέλους (269, 8-13).

⁸⁵ Eusebius, *Commentaria in Psalmos*: Διὸ ἐκ προσώπου μὲν τῶν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ μαθητῶν καὶ εὐαγγελιστῶν ἀναφωνεῖ τὸ· ἔξομολογησόμεθά σοι, ὁ θεός, καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου' (PG 23, 824 D).

⁸⁶ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 74, 2: Narrabimus mirabilia tua. 'Hoc dicit ecclesia, hoc dicit multitudo credentium'. Narrabimus mirabilia tua. 'Iste uersus cum prioribus iungitur, iste autem qui sequitur ex persona Domini dicitur: sic enim interpretati sunt ueteres'* (48, 20-23).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 74, 2a: 'Confitebimur tibi Deus'. 'Hic 'confitebimur' non paenitentiam significat, sed gloriam. 'Et inuocabimus nomen tuum'. *Nomen Dei Pater est: antea enim ignorabatur* (48, 15-16).

⁸⁸ Origenes, *Homilia in Psalmum 74* 1: ἐπεὶ οὐχ οἷόν τέ ἐστιν οὕτως ἐπικαλέσασθαι τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου ὥστε τυχεῖν τοῦ 'πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται' (*Joel* 3:5), ἂν μὴ πρότερόν τις ἀποταξάμενος τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ἐξομολογήσῃται περὶ τῶν προημαρτημένων, διὰ τοῦτο γέγραπται· ἔξομολογησόμεθα καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου' (270, 3-7). For further differences in the themes, see L. Perrone, 'Ne corrumpas' (2016).

⁸⁹ Eusebius, *Commentaria in Psalmos 74, 2: ἐκ προσώπου δὲ τῶν δικαίων τὴν καταρχὴν ποιεῖται εἰπών· Ἐξομολογησόμεθά σοι, ὁ Θεός, ἐξομολογησόμεθά σοι, καὶ ἐπικαλεσόμεθα τὸ ὄνομά σου' (*Ps.* 74:2). Μόνους γὰρ αὐτοῖς πρέπει ἡ εὐχαριστήριος ἐξομολόγησις. [...] Ἐπειδὴ διττός ἐστιν ὁ τῆς ἐξομολογήσεως τρόπος, ἀναγκαίως δεύτερον εἴρηται ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος τὸ, Ἐξομολογησόμεθά σοι· τοῦ μὲν πρώτου, ὡς εἰκὸς, ἐφ' ἁμαρτίας τὴν ἐξομολόγησιν δηλοῦντος, τοῦ δ' ἐξῆς τὴν ἐφ' οἷς εὖ πεπόνθασιν οἱ τὸ πρῶτον ἐξομολογησάμενοι εὐχαριστίαν (PG 23, 868 B-C).*

goes his own way of interpretation and sets different accents⁹⁰. For instance, in v. 7 ('At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, those mounted on horses became drowsy') he displays his biblical learning of 'bad and good horses' in the Scripture, whereas Origen is interested only in the symbolic equivalence of 'horse' = 'body'⁹¹. On the contrary, Jerome ignores this and does not quote, as the Alexandrian, *Ps.* 32:17a ('Unreliable is a horse for deliverance'), a verse he will refer to when commenting in a similar fashion on *Ps.* 146:10a ('To the dominance of the horse he will not be disposed')⁹². Interestingly, to further emphasise the diversity between the two preachers, Jerome does not use v. 2 ('God is known in Judea; in Israel his name is great') for his polemics against Israel and Judaism. Conversely, Origen criticises the pretensions of the 'chosen people' to the land of Judah and the city of Jerusalem as the 'place of God', thus extending polemical implications to v. 3⁹³.

Ps. 76 was the object of four sermons by the Alexandrian. These should be reckoned among the most beautiful of the newly discovered homilies, since they meditate on the mystery of God and his providential design through creation and redemption, discreetly hinting at the final salvation of humankind⁹⁴. Jerome's *Tractatus* is, for the most part, rather cursory and the contacts with Origen seem, at best, to be scanty or non-existent. The available text lacks remarks on the title of the psalm, whereas the Alexandrian indicates Asaph as the author and Idithoun as its singer⁹⁵, an explanation corresponding to what we read, on the other hand, in the *Commentarioli*⁹⁶. Perhaps, instead of looking for echoes of Origen, it is better to focus on Jerome's particular approach, which is not devoid of interesting insights. Among other aspects, we can see that he exploits his recourse to the Hebrew to describe the condition of the sinner and his relationship with God⁹⁷. This illustrates a distinctive accent in

⁹⁰ G. Coppa in Origene-Gerolamo, *74 Omelie* (1993), 158-160 tries, as usual, to use *Fragmenta in Psalmos*, but most of them are *scholia* by Evagrius.

⁹¹ Origenes, *Homilia in Psalmum 75* 6: 'Ἀπὸ ἐπιτιμῆσεώς σου, ὁ θεὸς Ἰακώβ, ἐνύσταξαν οἱ ἐπιβεβηκότες τοῖς ἵπποις'. Τροπικῶς πολλαχοῦ τῆς γραφῆς ὁ ἵππος τὸ σῶμα λέγεται (287, 8-9).

⁹² Cf. respectively Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 75*, 7 (51, 59 - 52, 84) and *ibid.* 146, 10 (334, 176-335, 200).

⁹³ See, for instance, Origenes, *Homilia in Psalmum 75* 2: Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν τόπον ζητεῖωσαν τοῦ θεοῦ, τὴν πεπτωκυῖαν, τὴν κάτω Ἱερουσαλήμ, περὶ ἧς εἶρηκεν 'ἰδοὺ ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν' (*Matt.* 23:38) (281, 14-15).

⁹⁴ See L. Perrone, 'Scrittura e cosmo' (2017).

⁹⁵ Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 76* I, 1: Ὁ μὲν γράψας τὸν ψαλμὸν ἦν ὁ Ἀσάφ, εἷς τῶν προφητῶν τυγχάνων· ᾧ δὲ ἔδωκεν αὐτὸν γράψας ἦν ὁ Ἰδιθούμ, τεταγμένος ἐπὶ τῷ ὑμνεῖν τὸν θεόν, ἵν' ἐκεῖνος λαβῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀσάφ ἀνυμνῇ τὸν θεόν.

⁹⁶ Hieronymus, *Commentarioli in Psalmos 76*, 1: 'In finem, pro Idithun'. In hebraeo 'per Idithun' habet: ut significet, non pro eo, sed per eum psalmum fuisse cantatum. Quod autem sequitur, 'Asaph psalmus', in ueteribus exemplaribus non habetur.

⁹⁷ *Id.*, *Tractatus in Psalmos 76*, 4a: In hebraico aliter habet: 'Memor fui Dei, et conturbatus sum'. Consideraui mansuetudinem ipsius, consideraui pietatem, consideraui immunditiam: et

his interpretation, which at times seems to focus more on the meditation on personal faults than on the mystery of God and his mercy towards man. For instance, in v. 6 ('I considered days of old, and years of long ago I remembered and meditated') the awareness of his own sins first inspires Jerome's rethinking of the history of salvation⁹⁸, and although his mind, then, is totally given to God with v. 7 ('at night I would commune with my heart, and I would probe my spirit'), this thinking results in questioning the fall of man and his ejection from paradise⁹⁹. Yet, in the end, God's mercy wins over his wrath, an idea that was obviously common to the two authors¹⁰⁰.

However, the diversity of Jerome's approach also emerges in v. 19 ('A voice of your thunder was in the wheel; your lightnings gave light to the world; the earth shook and was set atremble'), a passage that elicits from Origen a complex interpretation, literal as well as allegorical, on 'the thunder in the wheel'¹⁰¹. To clarify the image of the 'wheel', Jerome quotes, like Origen, *Ezek.* 1:16 ('And the aspect of the wheels was like the aspect of tharsis, and the four had one likeness, and their construction was just as if a wheel was within a wheel'), but he resorts to a different explanation. First, he sees the 'thunder' as the sound of Christ's message throughout the world. Then, he speaks of the 'two wheels' of Ezekiel as the Old and New Testament, after adding a more specific interpretation of the 'wheel' as referring to the 'inner man' or 'the saint'. At this point, at least, one might wonder whether Jerome was influenced by the 4th Homily on Ps. 76¹⁰². But, once again, we note that the two authors rely on

uidens me ipsum immundum, uehementer conturbabam (56, 49-53); *ibid.* 76, 5: '*Anticipauerunt uigilias oculi mei*'. In hebraeo aliter habet: '*Prohibebam suspectum oculorum meorum, constuprebam et non loquebar*' (Ps. 49:16). *Quod dicit, hoc est: considerans peccata mea, oculos ad caelum erigere non audebam. 'Peccatori enim dixit Deus: Utquid tu enarras iustitias meas? Propterea stupebam, timebam, loqui non poteram* (56, 56-61); *ibid.* 76, 11: In hebraeo aliter habet: '*Et dixi, inbecillitas mea*' hoc est, quod patior, non est de crudelitate Dei, sed de peccatis meis (58, 93-95).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 76, 6: '*Cogitauit dies antiquos, et annos aeternos in mente habui*'. *Quantum pro peccatis meis est, desperabam, et renuerat consolari anima mea. Coepi cogitare ab initio mundi, quando hominem fecit Deus, usque ad annum meum, ab Adam usque ad tempus meum* (57, 71-75). Cf. Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 76 I*, 9: 'Διελογισάμην ἡμέρας ἀρχαίας καὶ ἔτη αἰώνια ἐμνήσθην καὶ ἐμελέτησα' (Ps 76, 6) ὁ βουλόμενος ὠφελεῖσθαι καὶ τὰς ἀρχαίας ἡμέρας διαλογίζεται ἀρχαίος ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀδάμ· τί γέγονε τῷ Ἀδάμ, τί συμβέβηκε τῷ Κάϊν, τί πέπρακται τῷ Ἐνὼχ, τί ἀποβέβηκε τῷ Νῶε καί, φέρ' εἰπεῖν, ὅλας τὰς ἡμέρας τὰς ἀρχαίας ἐκλογιζόμενος τὸν νοῦν ἐξετάζει τῶν πραγμάτων τῶν ἀναγεραμμένων γεγονέναι ἐν προτέραις ἡμέραις (308, 9-14).

⁹⁹ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 76*, 8: '*Numquid in aeternum proiciet Deus?*' *Haec erat tota cogitatio mea. Deus hominem fecit de terra, et repromisit ei uitam aeternam; quomodo ergo de paradiso eiectus est, de regno Dei?* (57, 83-58, 86).

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* 10b: '*Aut continebit in ira misericordias suas?*' : *Non potuit pulchrius dicere. Quam diu se teneat ut non misereatur, tamen uincit illum misericordia sua* (58, 90-92).

¹⁰¹ Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 76 IV*, 2 (342, 19 ff.).

¹⁰² Compare Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 76*, 19 with Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 76 IV*, 3.

a set of different scriptural passages and develop their own particular motives. While Origen appeals to *Matt.* 6:5 to support his idea of the saint as ‘round’, that is, perfect, Jeromes introduces an ascetical perspective: like a wheel only partially touching the ground and moving forward, so the saint contents himself with few earthly goods and advances upwards to heaven¹⁰³. Consequently, the modest similarities that one also detects in the comments to this verse confirm the general impression about this *Tractatus*: whether Jerome was acquainted with these homilies of Origen or not, he does not depend on them, either directly or indirectly.

The case of the *Tractatus* on *Ps.* 77 appears to be less negative, in spite of the fact that Jerome comments on a very short portion of this quite long psalm (only fifteen of seventy-two verses), while Origen devotes to it the longest series of his homilies on the Psalter (nine sermons!)¹⁰⁴. To begin with, both authors share the view of the ‘mystical’ character of *Ps.* 77, an idea that even prompted Jerome to introduce two ‘prologues’ (also as an apology for his selective treatment): after the proper preface at the beginning¹⁰⁵, he has, again, a sort of hermeneutic prolegomenon before commenting on v. 9 (‘Ephraim’s sons, though bending and shooting their bows, were turned back on a day of war’)¹⁰⁶. This certainly mirrors the importance the two exegetes accorded to this verse, even if their heresiological polemics reflect a different urgency and different aims¹⁰⁷. In the wake of the Alexandrian – who commented on v. 9 in the

¹⁰³ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 76, 19: *Rota modico quodam uestigio stat in terra, et non solum stat, sed quasi percurrit: non stat, sed tangit et praeterit; denique cum uoluitur, semper ad altiora conscendit. Ita et sanctus uir, quoniam in corpore est, necessitatem habet aliqua de terrenis cogitare; et quando uenerit ad uictum et uestitum et cetera huiusmodi, his contentus est tangens terram, et ad altiora festinat* (61, 185-191).

¹⁰⁴ Lorenzo Perrone, ‘Origen’s Interpretation of the Psalter Revisited: The Nine Homilies on Psalm 77(78) in the Munich Codex’, *ASE* 36 (2019), 135-58.

¹⁰⁵ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 77: *Praecipit scriptura diuina, quando ad diuitis prandium inuitati fuerimus, cum intelligentia mittamus manum nostram ad epulas (Prov. 23:1). Igitur et nobis diuitis prandium praepositum scripturarum est. Venimus in pratum, habet flores plurimos [...] si rosam colligimus, liliu relinquimus; si liliu tulerimus, uiolae nobis supersunt. Ita et in septuagesimo septimo psalmo, qui mysticus est et sacramentis plurimis inuolutus, quamcumque aspexeris litteram, flores sunt, flores diuersi, et non possumus totos eligere. Eligamus autem omne quod possumus* (64, 1-11). For the image of the ‘meadow’, see A. Capone, ‘*Folia uero in uerbis sunt*’ (2013), 445-6.

¹⁰⁶ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 77, 9: *O quanta mysteria, o quanti flores. Non dico dies, sed totus mensis ad intelligentiam istius psalmi non potest sufficere. In singulis uerbis sensus sunt. Habemus et thesaurum in uasis fictilibus (2Cor. 4:7), hoc est in uerbis rusticis scripturarum* (69, 151-160).

¹⁰⁷ On the heresiological discourse of *Homiliae in Psalmos* see Alain Le Boulluec, ‘La polémique contre les hérésies dans les *Homélie sur les Psaumes* d’Origène (*Codex Monacensis Graecus* 314), *Adamantius* 20 (2014), 266-73; M. Simonetti, ‘Leggendo le *Omélie*’ (2016), 456-61. Jerome, on the one hand, evokes more directly the historical episodes of the schism and, on the other, denounces the philosophical connections of the heretics: *Dicat aliquis: Quare fecerunt uitulos aureos? Noster thesaurus repositus est in uasis fictilibus. Ecclesiastici enim rustici sunt*

magnificent 2nd *Homily on Psalm 77* – Jerome also has recourse to *Hos.* 7:11 (‘And Ephraim was like a dove, silly without heart’) in order to interpret the ‘sons of Ephraim’ historically as the schismatic tribes of Israel and, allegorically, as the heretics. But he does not comment on the whole pericope of *Hos.* 7:11 – 8:11 in detail, as Origen did. He nevertheless explains the following verses (*Ps.* 77:10-12) according to the same interpretive key, whereas his vindication of a coherent explanation by means of an allegorical interpretation seem to echo the analogous statement of Origen dealing with the text of Hosee¹⁰⁸.

Due to these parallels, we are allowed to assume that Jerome also knew the 1st *Homily on Psalm 77*, in which Origen discusses the erroneous attribution of *Ps.* 77:2 (‘I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter problems from of old’) to ‘the prophet Isaiah’ instead of Asaph in *Matt.* 13:35, according to many Gospel manuscripts. For both the Alexandrian and Jerome, the substitution of the name of the prophet was due to the ignorance of the copyists. However, Origen exploited this mistake for his polemics against those who, like the Marcionites, dared to interpolate the text of the Scripture. In turn, Jerome adds other similar cases of errors made by copyists in the text of the Gospels, rejecting, by the way, the critique by Porphyry of *Matt.* 13:35. He thus demonstrates his concern for the use of the prophetic *testimonia* in the New Testament, as we know from his commentaries on the Prophets elsewhere. Finally, Jerome and Origen agree on the change of *prosopa*: respectively, Christ (vv. 1b-2) in the initial verses and, starting with v. 3a, a collective subject, which Jerome simply identifies with the apostles¹⁰⁹. The Alexandrian is, at first, less assertive than Jerome, but subsequently he too indicates the apostles as the *prosopeon to legon*¹¹⁰, so that this further feature might enable us to recognise this *Tractatus* as an interesting example of a ‘counterpoint’ to Origen.

et simplices: omnes uero haeretici Aristotelici et Platonici sunt. Denique ut sciatis quoniam omnis eloquentia saecularis aurum dicitur, hoc est, quoniam lingua eorum quasi propter splendorem aurum dicitur: ‘Calix aureus Babylon in manu Domini’ (Jer. 51:7). Videte quid dicat, Babylon confusionis. Ergo mundus iste calix aureus est. De hoc calice aureo omnes gentes propinantur (70, 198-71, 4).

¹⁰⁸ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 77, 9: Dicat aliquis, nostram esse sententiam. Videamus consequentia (71, 213-214); ibid. 77, 13-14: Vim facis scripturae: simpliciter enim dicitur de populo Israhel, quando eductus est de terra Aegypti (71, 226-227). See Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 77 II, 5: Ἄλλ’ ἔστω ἡμῶς, ὡς ὑπονοήσαι ἄν τις ἀκούων τῶν τοιοῦτων διηγήσεων, βεβιάσθαι τὸ ῥητὸν τοῦτο ἀναφέροντας καὶ ἐξομαλίζοντας αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν αἰρέσεων (375, 1-3).**

¹⁰⁹ Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos 77, 3: ‘Quanta audiuiimus et cognouimus eas’. Hos uersiculos ‘Adtendite, populus meus, legem meam’ usque in istum uersiculum ‘Eloquar propositiones ab initio’ ex persona Christi dicuntur, ipse Saluator loquitur. Iam ceteros uersiculos usque ad finem psalmi ex persona apostolorum debemus accipere (68, 107-111).*

¹¹⁰ Origenes, *Homiliae in Psalmum 76 I, 3: ἀλλά τινα λέγει τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ προφητικὸν περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ ἢ ἀπλῶς πλῆθος καὶ ἐκκλησία λέγει τὰ ἐξῆς. Ταῦτα μὲν εἰς τὸ καθᾶραι τὸ λέγον πρόσωπον (356, 10-12); ibid., I, 7: Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος*

Although well disposed to encourage such an impression, we should pay attention to the personal note which Jerome introduces just at the conclusion of this homily. Once more, it is proof of a Christian ‘philo-Judaism’, if we may use this notion somewhat paradoxically to characterise Jerome’s more benevolent attitude toward the Jews, in spite of his anti-Judaic agenda¹¹¹. Here, he also represents the traditional attacks against a ‘Jewish’ reading of the Scriptures, which, in his eyes, is merely a historical reading devoid of the Spirit of God. However, at the same time, he, along with Paul (*Rom.* 11), warns the faithful not to take for granted their being chosen in place of the Old Israel, and transforms the final prayer of the homily into a prayer for the salvation of the Jews.

Credite mihi: quotienscumque uideo synagogas, semper illud habeo in mente, quod dicitur ab apostolo, quoniam non debemus exultare super oliuam cuius fracti sunt rami, sed timere; quoniam si rami naturales praecisi sunt, quanto magis nos, qui inserti sumus de oleastro, timeamus ne fiamus sicut patres nostri [...] Ego synagogas eorum nihil aliud intellego, nisi sepulcra in deserto. Lege libros ueteres. Oremus autem Dominum, ut et ista sepulcra resurgant. Si enim filii Abrahae facti sunt lapides, filii Adam, qui mortui sunt, possunt resurgere, si uoluerit Iesus. Licet enim mortui sunt et iacent in sepulcra, etiamsi quatruiduani sunt, etiam si foetent, potest eis dicere Iesus: ‘Lazare, ueni foras’ (John 11:43)¹¹².

‘Believe me: every time I see a synagogue, it always comes to my mind what the Apostle said. For we should not exult over the olive tree whose branches have been broken, but we should fear. If the natural branches have been cut, how much we, who have been taken from a wild olive tree, should fear that it may happen to us what happened to our fathers [...] I regard their synagogues as sepulchres in the desert. Read the ancient books. Let’s then pray to the Lord that these sepulchres may also be resurrected. In fact, if the sons of Abraham became like stones, the sons of Adam, who are dead, can be resurrected, provided that Jesus wants it. Even if they are dead and lie in the sepulchre, even if they are dead for four days, even if they stink, Jesus can tell them: “Lazarus, come out”’.

This theme is totally absent in the homilies of Origen, who does not even quote the Pauline passages on the rest of Israel and its salvation in *Rom.* 11, contrary to Jerome, as we can observe once more in the *Tractatus* on *Ps.* 80. Here, commenting on v. 16 (‘The enemies of the Lord lied to him, and their season will be forever’), he wonders whether the Jews shall perish and addresses himself to God, asking: ‘Why did you make promises to the fathers and do

εἰρημένα, ἀποκρίνονται <δὲ> οἱ ἀπόστολοι πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ πάντες αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ἐκ προσώπου αὐτῶν ταῦτα λέγεται: ‘ὄσα ἠκούσαμεν καὶ ἔγνωμεν αὐτά’ (*Ps.* 77:3a) (364, 20-22).

¹¹¹ See, for instance, Régis Courtray, “‘Que sons sang retombe sur nous et sur nos enfants’”. L’exégèse de Matthieu 27:25 chez saint Jérôme’, in Jean-Marie Auwers, Régis Burnet, Didier Luciani (eds), *L’antijudaïsme des Pères. Mythe et/ou réalité? Actes du colloque de Louvain-la-Neuve (20-22 mai 2015)* (Paris, 2017), 151-8.

¹¹² Hieronymus, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 77, 15 (73, 278-93).

not fulfil them for their children?’ The answer comes in the quotation of *Rom.* 11:25-26: in the future, the Jews will also believe¹¹³. Furthermore, the extent to which Jerome was concerned with the destiny of the chosen people is also proved by the *Tractatus* on *Ps.* 105 and 108. In both cases, he extrapolates a prayer for the salvation of the Jews, since he interprets *Ps.* 105:4-5 (‘Remember us, O Lord, in the good pleasure of your people; regard us in your deliverance, that we may look at the kindness of your chosen ones, that we may be glad in the gladness of your nation, that we may be commended with your heritage’) as a prayer made by David on behalf of the *uetus Israel*, that he too may participate in the grace of Christ¹¹⁴. In the *Tractatus* on *Ps.* 108, it is Jesus himself who prays on the cross for the Jews and, in this way, establishes for us the model we should follow: instead of condemning the Jews, we should pray ‘for our roots’!¹¹⁵

4. By way of conclusion: Jerome’s profile in the *Tractatus in Psalmos*

The cases that I have examined have proved that the image of the *Tractatus* as a ‘counterpoint’ to the preaching of Origen is only partially valid¹¹⁶. The exegesis of the Psalter by Jerome definitively avoids the accusation of being

¹¹³ *Ibid.* 80, 16: *Sed isti inimici qui negaturi sunt eum, ergo perient? Ergo reliquiae non erunt? Et quomodo iurasti Abrahae, Isaac et Iacob, quoniam semen ipsorum sit quasi stellae caeli et sicut arena maris? Quare promisisti patribus et non reddis filiis? ‘Inimici Domini negabunt eum’ (Ps. 80:16a). Sed quid dicit? ‘Et erit tempus eorum in saeculum. Cum introierit plenitudo gentium, tunc omnis Israel saluus fiet’ (Rom. 11:25-6). In futuro credent, modo non crediderunt. Nunc dicam ad Iudaeos. Solent enim sibi adplaudere et dicere: ‘Et erit tempus eorum in aeternum’ (Ps. 80:16b). Nos dicamus: Verum est, credituri enim sunt de Iudaeis (81, 182-91).*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* 105, 4: *propterea ergo rogo, quoniam ego prius natus sum in ueteri lege, ut inopes mihi mercedem cum nouo populo (194, 54-6); ibid., 105, 5: Hoc est ut cum euangelio et nos habeamus partem, qui in ueteri lege facti sumus. Abraham enim pater noster uidit diem tuum, et gauisus est (see John 8:56). Videamus ergo et nos, et gaudeamus cum hereditate tua (194, 67-70).*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 108, 29: *Non dicit contra Iudaeos, sed pro ipsis dicit. Creator enim est et illorum et noster: non eos omnino eradicauit [...] Nos in radicem ipsorum inserti sumus, nos rami sumus, illi radix. Non debemus maledicere radicibus, sed debemus orare pro radicibus nostris. Qui inserti sumus in radicem deprecemur Dominum, ut sicuti rami salui sunt, sic et radix saluetur. Forte aliquis dicat: Tu pro Iudaeis oras, pro blasphemis? Oro Dominum pro ipsis: si enim ipse persecutorum suorum miseretur, quanto magis mei miseretur? (220, 343-353).*

¹¹⁶ Hieronymus’ *Tractatus in Psalmos* 80 and 81 do not modify this impression. On *Ps.* 80:7 (‘He removed his back from burdens; his hands slaved at the basket’) both exegeses agree on the interpretation of the baskets in Egypt and its connection with the miracle of multiplication. Presumably, Jerome has Origen’s *Homiliae in Psalmum* 80 I, 8 in mind, if not at hand. He stresses the mystery of the multiplication and adds a *quaestio* to emphasise the necessity of a spiritual interpretation. Origen only hints at the *quaestio*, but Jerome formulates and resolves it, after criticising the literalists: *Requiro a te, qui tantum litteram sequeris: in deserto loco non inueniuntur nisi quinque panes, et duodecim cophini quomodo inueniuntur? So desertus erat locus, utique duodecim cophinos habere non poterat (79, 124-5).*

more or less a plagiarism of the Alexandrian. It is no longer a question of some 'spices' in the 'dough' provided by Origen, as Jean Gribomont vividly put it. In fact, Jerome is able to introduce into the interpretation of the Psalms a personal agenda and his own sensitivities. We could even say that, in spite of his mostly cursory and, at first glance, simple-looking comments, the learned biblical scholar is, to some extent, more present in the preaching of Jerome, thanks especially to his frequent recourse to the Hebrew text, his propensity for etymologies and the display of historical erudition nurtured by the Bible. Moreover, the fact that Jerome does not rely on Origen alone, but now and then has recourse to other commentators on the Psalter, is additional proof of independence. Among these interpreters, we have pointed in particular to Eusebius of Caesarea, but we should not forget Didymus. Apart from these two Greek authors, we are allowed to surmise on the influence of other mediators of the eastern patristic exegesis to the Latin world, such as Hilary of Poitiers, Eusebius of Vercelli and Ambrose. Regarding this aspect, however, there is certainly a need for further study.

The historical and personal situation in which Origen and Jerome preached on the Psalter was deeply different. The Alexandrian was still engaged in a battle for preserving the Christian Bible endowed with the two Testaments and protecting the Church from doctrinal deviation through heresies, while strengthening the moral vigour and spiritual solidity inside the Christian communities against the many challenges coming from outside. On the contrary, Jerome lived in a time marked by the triumph of Christianity and yet troubled by doctrinal problems and ecclesiastical quarrels. As a response to this new context, his exegesis of the Psalter mirrored the monastic experience in which he was personally engaged, with its ascetic ideals and difficulties, far from the rosily optimistic view of monasticism. Not incidentally, the awareness of the sinful condition of man and the need for repentance in order to reconcile with God constitute a dominating note in the texts of the monk of Bethlehem. And the fact that he lived in the Holy Land, and was himself in touch with Jews in everyday life, certainly contributed to the particular emphasis on their future salvation.