

## Peter's 'Hypocrisy' and Paul's: Two 'Hypocrites' at the Foundation of Earliest Christianity?\*

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In an infamous passage in his Letter to the Galatians (2.11–14), Paul called out Peter as a 'hypocrite'. This passage, especially when read in light of Paul's own appeal to himself as 'all things to all people' in 1 Cor 9.19–23, was to cause deep trouble for later Christian interpreters, who sought to defend their movement against charges from outsiders that it had a cracked and unstable foundation in dual 'hypocrites'. This essay will introduce this 'pagan' critique and the cultural force it had, and the various solutions to the inherited dilemma from their scriptures that were offered by patristic authors (Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Jerome and Augustine). In light of this context, we turn to a sustained analysis of an untranslated homily by John Chrysostom, *hom. in Gal 2.11 (In faciem ei restiti)*, which addresses not just the hypocrisy of Peter and Paul, but also the sticky problem of the hypocrisy of the Christian who reads this text approvingly as Paul's 'in your face' to Peter. Chrysostom does this by engaging in a convoluted pretence of his own.

**Keywords:** Galatians 2.11–14, hypocrisy, Peter, Paul, John Chrysostom, Macarius Magnes, early Christian biblical interpretation, apologetics, literal meaning, allegorical meaning

### 1. A Problematic Textual Legacy

Μὴ δὲ αὐτῆ ὑμῶς θορυβεῖτω ἡ λέξις,<sup>1</sup> John Chrysostom counsels his hearers in his commentary on Galatians when addressing a portion of Gal 2.11–14,

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<sup>1</sup> 'Don't let this passage upset you!' John Chrysostom, *comm. in Gal.* 2.13 §1 (PG 61.640). Chrysostom's commentary on Galatians was excerpted and widely made available in the catenae, as in *Catena in epistolam ad Galatas (e cod. Coislin. 204)* (ed. J. A. Cramer, *Catena Graecorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, vol. 6 [Oxford: Oxford University, 1842]).

the passage in which Paul recounts that earlier he had opposed Cephas to his face in Antioch for his ‘hypocrisy’ (ὕποκρισις) about eating with Gentiles and Jews. This text was a thorn in the side for Christian exegetes from very early on, a problem that could not be avoided, but required a solution, not just because of the outright conflict reported between the two foundational figures, but because the charge at issue between them in this passage—hypocrisy—could undermine the whole religious movement with which they are associated. As John puts it, ‘Those who read this passage in the epistle literally (or: “in a simple-minded way”: ἀπλῶς) suppose that Paul is accusing Peter of hypocrisy’.<sup>2</sup> Not too few, but perhaps too many solutions were offered by early exegetes, each of which engendered its own set of problems that in turn required attention and defense against the ‘plain-sense’ implication of the Christian scriptural record: that either Cephas the accused, or Paul his accuser—or both of them—could be branded ‘hypocrites’.

The present paper highlights some of the dynamics and the stakes involved in the legacy of this text about charges of apostolic hypocrisy in non-Christian<sup>3</sup> and inner-Christian authors, and then provides a detailed analysis of a complex and under-studied source on this question, John Chrysostom’s occasional homily, *In faciem ei restiti*,<sup>4</sup> preached during his time as presbyter in Antioch (386–398 CE). In this homily John not only grapples with the imputed ‘hypocrisy’ of Peter and Paul, but also that of the Christian reader who hears this text and, swept up in its powerful rhetoric, celebrates Paul’s rebuke without realizing that it involves a betrayal of Peter, and hence of the foundation upon which he or she stands. But John has an ingenious solution to the problem, one that involves a bit of ‘play-acting’ of his own.

We begin with the initial problematic passage that Paul penned as part of the argument of his Letter to the Galatians in the early 50s:

And when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned (κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντέστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν). For before some people came from James he used to eat with the

2 *Comm. in Gal.* 2.13 §1 (PG 61.642). Πολλοὶ τῶν ἀπλῶς ἀναγινωσκόντων τουτὶ τὸ ῥητὸν τῆς ἐπιστολῆς νομίζουσι τοῦ Πέτρου τὸν Παῦλον κατηγορεῖν ὑπόκρισιν. John follows with the immediate exclamation: ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα, οὐκ ἔστιν, ἅπαγε.

3 This was well noted by Martin Meiser, *Galater* (Novum Testamentum Patristicum 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007) 97: ‘Zugleich ist Gal 2,11–14 ein Text, der für Christumskritiker die Fragwürdigkeit der neuen Religion und ihrer führenden Figuren der Anfangszeit bestätigt’.

4 There is no critical edition of this homily, for which we are reliant upon the text of Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 51, cols. 371–388. I am currently working on a translation of this and 17 other homilies by Chrysostom that have not been translated into a modern language for the Writings From the Greco-Roman World series (SBL/Brill). For a list, see M. M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (HUT 40; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr/Paul Siebeck, 2000; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002) 2 n. 7.

Gentiles, but when they came, he was withdrawing and separating himself, out of fear (φοβούμενος) of those from the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews were acting the hypocrite with them (συνυπεκρίθησαν), with the result that even Barnabas was swept away by their hypocrisy (συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει). But when I saw that they were not behaving in accordance with the truth of the gospel (ὀρθοδοῦσιν πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου), I said to Cephas in the presence of all of them: 'if you, being a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how do you compel the Gentiles to live as Jews?'

Although he was surely not the first to notice the problem, a third- or fourth-century 'pagan' critic of Christianity<sup>5</sup> astutely—and at length—articulated the dimensions of the problem of two apparent 'hypocrites' at the foundation of Christianity:

#### Peter's Hypocrisy

So it is reported that, after grazing the flock for only a few months, Peter was crucified, despite the fact that Jesus had said that even the gates of Hades would not prevail against him (Matt 16.18). And Paul condemned Peter, saying, 'For before some people came from James he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he was separating himself out of fear of those from the circumcision. And many Jews were acting the hypocrite with him (συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ)' (Gal 2.12-13a). There is a mighty condemnation (κατάγνωσις) in this, that a man who is an interpreter of the divine mouth (τοῦ θείου στόματος ὑποφήτης) lives in hypocrisy (ἐν ὑποκρίσει ζῆν) and conducts himself with a view to pleasing people (πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ἀρέσκειαν; cf. Gal 1.10); and, in addition, he trots around with a wife, as Paul puts it, 'Don't we have the authority to lead around a sister as a wife, as do the rest of the apostles and Peter?' (1 Cor 9.5). And then he adds (in 2 Cor 11.13), 'such guys are false apostles (ψευδαπόστολοι), workers of guile'. If Peter is reported to have been embroiled in such terrible misdeeds, then

5 The author is sometimes thought to be Porphyry; this is possible, but not certain. The text is preserved in Macarius Magnes, *Monogenes* (or *apocriticus*). For discussion of the authorship, title, date and sources of this work, see Richard Goulet, *Macarios de Magnésie: Le monogénès* (Tome II) (Paris: Vrin, 2003). Robert M. Berchman, *Porphyry against the Christians* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 1; Leiden: Brill, 2005) is more skeptical about our ability to prove the direct use of Porphyry behind Macarius's 'Greek', while still seeing the influence of Porphyry's critical biblical interpretation here: 'Nonetheless, if the *Apocriticus* reveals anything, it is that the critical approach to the Bible employed by late fourth-century Roman critics of Christianity was dependent upon Porphyry. Macarius is stung by the same tenacious use of gospel parallels and a "positivist" reading of the scriptures as earlier *Patres* were'. This characterization of Porphyry's exegesis may be questioned, since his reading strategies are not unusual among ancient critics (and cannot be reduced to a 'positivist' hermeneutic), including the orthodox Christian authors who rebut these accusations. As we shall see below, both the canonical reading strategy and the historical critical testing of narratives are used by the Christian exegetes, but to reach different conclusions.

isn't it terrifying to consider that it is a man who is tied up in so many offenses who holds the keys of heaven, to release and to bind?!<sup>6</sup>

#### Paul's Hypocrisy

Tell us how it is that Paul says, 'being free, I enslaved myself to all, so that I might gain all' (1 Cor 9.19). And how is it that, while calling circumcision (περιτομή) 'mutilation' (κατατομή; Phil 3.2), he himself was circumcising a man named Timothy in Lystra, as the Acts of the Apostles teaches (Acts 16.3)? Wow, look at the incredible stupidity (βλακεία) of these things! This is just what theatrical scenes (αἱ τῶν θεάτρων σκηναί) so vividly portray—a man who is like the boot of a tragic actor (ὀκρίβας<sup>7</sup>), contrivances (μηχανήματα) that are laughable. This is truly a stage trick (παράπαισιον) as is done by masters of illusion (θαυμαστοποιόι)!

For how can someone who is free enslave himself to all? How can one who begs from all gain all? For if he was an 'out-law' (ἄνομος)<sup>8</sup> to the 'out-laws' as he himself says, and a Jew to the Jews, and at the same time agreeing with everyone, then truly the man who spends any occasion joining with the wickedness of the 'outlaws' and making their actions his own was a slave held captive (ἀνδράποδον) to many-turned evil (πολύτροπος κακία), a stranger and alien to freedom, truly a worker and servant of strange malefactions, a notorious zealot for unseemly deeds.

These are hardly the teachings of a healthy soul, nor the report of free reasonings, but the substance of these words belongs to a man who is feverish in mind and feeble in reasoning capacity; for if he lives with 'out-laws' and in writing (ἔγγράφως) gladly receives Judaism, partaking of each, mixing with each, then he is mingling and circumscribing (συναπογραφόμενος) himself with the failings of the ignoble. For, unsubscribing (παρὰγραφόμενος) from the command to circumcise to the point that he pronounces a curse on those who wish to fulfill it, and yet himself circumcising, he serves as his own harshest accuser (κατήγορος), when he says, 'if I build up again that which I destroyed, I commend myself as a transgressor' (Gal 2.18).

Now, our same guy, as though forgetting his own words in his prolixity, says to the chiliarch that he is not a Jew, but a Roman (Acts 22.27), even though just before this he had said, 'I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, reared at the feet of Gamaliel, educated in an accurate knowledge of our ancestral law' (Acts 22.3). So, having said, 'I am a Jew', and 'I am a Roman', he is actually neither, though he lays claim to each (ἐκατέρω προσκείμενος). For the one who plays the hypocrite (ὑποκρινόμενος) and says he is what he isn't is grounding his actions in deceit, and, putting a mask (προσωπεῖον) of deception on himself, falsifies what is clear (φενακίζει τὸ σαφές) and steals the truth (κλέπτει τὴν ἀλήθειαν), in various ways barraging the soul's reason,

6 'Macarius Magnes', *monogenes* 3.22 (the full title is Μακαρίου Μάγνητος Ἀποκριτικὸς ἢ Μονογενὴς πρὸς Ἑλληνας περὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ ζητημάτων καὶ λύσεων); text Goulet, my translation, here and throughout.

7 Like κόθορνος, an ambidextrous boot that could be worn on either foot.

8 This translation of ἄνομος is meant to reflect one of the ways the 'pagan' critic understands the derogatory implications of this term, though he clearly also recognizes that the contrast (as in 1 Cor 9.21) involves being 'Torah-bereft'.

using the wizard's craft (τέχνη γοητείας) to enslave the gullible to himself. The man who embraces such an inclination in his way of life is no different from an implacable and bitter enemy, who by hypocritical pretence (ὑποκριθείς) savagely takes captive as his enslaved prisoners all the minds of those who live beyond his borders (ὑπερόριοι). So then, Paul, by feigning hypocritically (ὑποκρινόμενος) that he is (by turns) a Jew, or a Roman, or an 'outlaw', or a Greek, when he wishes to be a foreigner and enemy to the reality of each, by sneaking into each (identity) has destroyed each, by flattery robbing each of its own character. So then, he is a liar (ψεύστης) and manifestly habituated to lying. It is superfluous to say, 'I speak the truth in Christ; I do not lie' (Rom 9.1). For a man who earlier conformed himself (σχηματιζόμενος) to the law, and now to the gospel, is legitimately deemed an evil-doer and a sham in both his private and his public life.<sup>9</sup>

Macarius's opponent, 'the Greek', here has engaged in a canonical reading of the NT scriptures, and in particular the letters of Paul and Acts, as well as the gospels, in order to construct a set of concrete proofs of the fact that neither of the foundational figures of the Christian movement was trustworthy, but both were 'hypocrites'—by which he means play-acting prevaricators whose unstable identities, as evidenced by their contradictory actions, rendered them utterly unreliable spokesmen for the divine. It is an unacknowledged irony, of course, that the word of the same Paul whom he is about to call a habitual liar is, in the earlier case of Peter, taken as a reliable witness stating the simple plain truth when he accuses Cephas of hypocrisy. In this reading 'the Greek' surprisingly stands with almost—but not quite—all Christian readers.

## 2. Dynamics of the Problem

It was a customary tactic of ancient polemics to transform inner-group invective into external accusation.<sup>10</sup> Galatians 2.12–14 was an embarrassment for Christian authors because it presented textual evidence of a 'face off' between the two apostolic chiefs of the primordial period. One solution to it was the deliberate fashioning of the myth of the *concordia apostolorum*, in compelling narrative form by Luke in the early second century in the Acts of the Apostles,<sup>11</sup> as well as in the later epistolary pseudepigrapha of the Paulinist

<sup>9</sup> *Monogenes* 3.30–31.

<sup>10</sup> Christian authors were masterful, but not unique, in this, as they used inner-biblical prophetic critiques against 'hard-hearted Israel' against Jews as outsiders, and philosophical critique of literalistic readings of the anthropomorphic features of the gods in Homeric myths and hymns against 'pagans' as 'idolators'. But this is the stuff of philosophical debate between schools, as well (as in Cicero, *de natura deorum*, a phenomenon satirized by Lucian, *Vitarum auctio*, *Icaromenippus*, etc.).

<sup>11</sup> As argued by Richard I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Salem, OR: Polebridge, 2006): 'That Luke knew Galatians seems beyond doubt; yet of all the epistles,

school—both those in the name of Paul and those that would become the ‘Catholic Epistles’ (including those purportedly by Peter and James).<sup>12</sup> However, the author of Acts, in trying to undo one contentious charge of ‘hypocrisy’, opened the door to many more, especially by introducing episodes of Paul’s accommodation to the Law (e.g. 16.1–3; 18.18; 21.23–26).

The embarrassment of Gal 2.11–14, even in the face of the powerful harmonizing narrative of Acts which would form its interpretive backdrop for most readers, would become even more acute later, as Peter and Paul become the foundational figures (Romulus and Remus) or guardians (Castor and Pollux) of the New Rome.<sup>13</sup> The twinning of the figures of Peter and Paul and their connections to Rome (a process begun in *1 Clem.* 5) will become tremendously important in the Christian imperium. A figure like John Chrysostom (the ultimate subject of this essay) from Antioch can refer to these two apostles’ entombed bodies as the great eyes that shine in the body of the church at Rome.<sup>14</sup> But how can he deal with the fact that, according to the Letter to the Galatians, they did not stand eye to eye, but face to face, opposed?

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this one exhibits more conflicts with Acts than any other... I shall argue that the author of Acts quite intentionally revised what Paul said in that letter in order to create a construction more conducive to Christian unity’ (73–4).

12 This phenomenon was facilitated both by the popularity and variable interpretations of the Pauline letters and by the lack of genuine letters by either Peter or James. See, e.g., David Nienhuis, *Not By Paul Alone: The Formation of the Catholic Epistle Collection and the Christian Canon* (Waco: Baylor University, 2007); M. M. Mitchell, ‘The Letter of James as a Document of Paulinism?’, *Reading James With New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of James* (ed. Robert L. Webb and John S. Kloppenborg; London: T&T Clark, 2007) 75–98.

13 As attested, e.g., in the epigram written by Pope Damasus (366–384) to Peter and Paul as citizens of Rome (*suos cives*) and new stars (*nova sidera*) (*Epigram.* 20.6–7); Prudentius *Liber peristephanon* 12.55–57; and in Leo the Great’s hom. 82.1 (from 441 CE). There is much literature on this development and connection of the two apostles to Rome’s mythic founders and protectors. See, e.g., Charles Pietri, ‘concordia apostolorum et renovatio urbis (Culte des martyrs et propagande pontificale)’, *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 73 (1961) 275–322; Dennis E. Trout, ‘Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33 (2003) 517–36; Gitte Lønstrup, ‘Constructing Myths: The Foundation of Roma Christiana on 29 June’, *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 33 (2008) 27–64; David L. Eastman, *Paul the Martyr: The Cult of Paul in the West* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011) especially 32–3. The artistic scene of the embrace of Peter and Paul is first attested in the fifth century, and may have its roots in depictions of the imperial tetrarchy (see H. L. Kessler, ‘The Meeting of Peter and Paul in Rome: An Emblematic Narrative of Spiritual Brotherhood’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 [1987] 266–8).

14 *Hom. in Rom.* 32.1 (PG 60.678): Διὸ καὶ ἐπίσημος ἡ πόλις ἐντεῦθεν μᾶλλον, ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων· καὶ καθάπερ σῶμα μέγα καὶ ισχυρὸν, ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχει δύο λάμποντας, τῶν ἁγίων τούτων τὰ σώματα.

Before we look at possible solutions, we should appreciate the gravity of the problem. Galatians 2.11–14 represented such a thorny issue because, as early Christian scriptures are read by educated Christian thinkers and by contemporary philosophers in the second century and beyond, they look for a consistency in the foundational teachings, on the one hand, and between the word and deeds of the teachers, on the other. The cultural cocktail of concerns within which this charge of primordial Christian 'hypocrisy' will be debated includes the following elements:

- a. Internal religious invective within first-century Judaism (e.g. Matt 6.2–5; 23.13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29, etc.; cf. Job 36.13 LXX) on religious ὑποκριταί,<sup>15</sup> which will become external religious invective used later by self-identified 'Christians' against Jews conceived as the other (on the one hand) and internal religious invective against 'heretics' (on the other hand). If the primordial figures are guilty of precisely the charge that is used to define Christians over and against others, this 'hypocrisy about hypocrisy' could be a fatal blow to the religious group's entire legitimacy.
- b. Ubiquitous Hellenistic *topoi* (in popular philosophy,<sup>16</sup> in literary criticism, in cultural evaluation of figures like Odysseus)<sup>17</sup> about saying one thing and doing another; saying one thing and meaning another; the good and bad

<sup>15</sup> As LSJ notes, the term ὑποκριτής was used in Attic for 'playing a part on the stage', a usage that was extended metaphorically to 'playing a part, hypocrisy, outward show'. This sense is not unique to Christian usage (LSJ cites Polybius 35.2.13; Lucian *Somn.* 17) but the Matthean employment of the term for external religious observance at odds with internal disposition had an influential role in the history of development of the concept.

<sup>16</sup> Including within Hellenistic Judaism, of course. See, e.g., the following passage from Paul's contemporary, Philo, which shows the confluence of these rhetorics and cultural values in first-century Hellenistic Judaism. It is occasioned by the Septuagint translation of the ambiguous Hebrew statement of Abimelech to Sarah in Gen 20.16 (תקנני כל תן) as πάντα ἀλήθευσον, to which Philo responds: 'The statement: 'tell the truth (ἀλήθευσον) about everything (πάντα)' is a command that comes from one who is no philosopher (ἀφιλόσοφος) and one with no proper training (ἰδιώτης). For if the life of human beings progressed well and admitted no falsehood (ψεῦδος), then it would be reasonable to tell the truth to all (πάντες) about every matter (πάν). But since hypocrisy (ὑπόκρισις), as in the theatre (θέατρον), holds sway and the lie is the curtain over the truth (παρὰπέτασμα τῆς ἀληθείας), one who is wise (σοφός) has need of a many-turned craft (τέχνη πολύτροπος); he will be much benefitted by this, if he imitates the actors (ὑποκριταί) who say one thing (ἄλλα λέγειν) but do another (ἕτερα δρῶν) so that they might save (διασώζειν) those whom they can' (Philo *QG* 4.69; text F. Petit, *Quaestiones in Genesim et in Exodum. Fragmenta Graeca* [Les oeuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie 33; Paris: Cerf, 1978], my translation).

<sup>17</sup> See Abraham J. Malherbe, 'Antisthenes and Odysseus, and Paul at War', *HTR* 76 (1983) 143–73; Clarence E. Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: Adaptability in Epicurean and Early Christian Psychagogy* (NovTSup 81; Leiden: Brill, 1995), and further literature and discussion in M. M. Mitchell, 'Pauline Accommodation and "Condescension" (συγκατάβασις): 1 Cor 9.19–23

σχήμα or ‘cloaking’ of the truth, either for aesthetic, rhetorical, pedagogical or duplicitous reasons.

- c. Further associated *topoi* about flattery (κολακεία), and free versus servile speech and behavior, the latter especially connected with ‘pleasing others’ (ὀρέσκεια).

These are, of course, longstanding and much-debated preoccupations of Hellenistic culture, ones made even more pressing in the Christian inheritance by Paul’s emphasis on surface versus depth-reality in religious identity (especially on the manifest Jew and the Jew in secret in Rom 2.17–29). Associated with this is an interpretive disjunction of letter and spirit/flesh and spirit (Rom 2.29, with 2 Cor 3.6) that will serve as a Christianized version of the letter/intent *topos* of ancient rhetorical literary criticism.<sup>18</sup> The hermeneutics of surface and depths, of apparent and real meaning, will be the vehicle Chrysostom uses for dealing with this problematic text in Galatians, even as it describes the serious threat it poses—of an illicit disjunction between appearance and reality at the wellspring of the Christian tradition.

### 3. Various Early Christian Solutions to Paul’s Charge Against Peter’s ‘Hypocrisy’<sup>19</sup>

Aside from those who solved the problem by championing either Paul (so Marcion) or Peter (so the Pseudo-Clementines) against the other, among those who attempted to retain the authoritative status of *both* Peter and Paul four major lines of interpretation of Gal 2.11–14 are customarily identified:<sup>20</sup>

- a. ‘Cephas’ is someone else, not Peter (Clement of Alexandria *apud* Eusebius *historia ecclesiastica* 1.12.1).

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and the History of Influence’, *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001) 197–214, 298–309.

18 On the ῥητόν/δίονοια *progymnasma*, and 2 Cor 3.6 as Paul’s Christianized version, see M. M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2010) Chapter 2.

19 Chrysostom himself surveys and critiques different λύσεις (‘solutions’) known to him for this ζήτησις (‘problem’) in the homily we shall examine (§15 [PG 51.383–384]).

20 See the valuable surveys of these and other positions by Meiser, *Galater*, 97–102; John Kenneth Riches, *Galatians through the Centuries* (Blackwell Bible Commentaries; Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) 85–104; and by Ralph Hennings, *Der Briefwechsel zwischen Augustinus und Hieronymus und ihr Streit um den Kanon des Alten Testaments und die Auslegung von Gal. 2, 11–14* (VCSup 21; Leiden: Brill, 1994). I would be less inclined than the latter to separate these out into an ‘eastern’ and a ‘western’ position; neither Tertullian nor Jerome in the west are in agreement with Augustine’s interpretation, so it is hard to see his view as representative (Jerome himself challenges Augustine to name one other authority who sides with him; *Ep.* 112.6).



- b. Peter and Paul did disagree, but it was not so severe, since it was only about a point of behavior (specifically, *conversatio*), not about the gospel proclamation (*praedicatio*) (Tertullian *Praescr.* 23.10). Like Peter, Paul was variable in his behavior; the apostles all knew that variable behaviors should be judged according to basic historical factors such as the times, the persons and the contingent circumstances (*Praescr.* 24.3, *pro temporibus et personis et causis*).
- c. It was a feigned quarrel (Jerome *comm. in Gal.* and *Ep.* 112,11 [=Augustine *Ep.* 75] called it a *utilis simulatio*, invoking among other authorities Chrysostom and Origen,<sup>21</sup> who termed it οἰκονομία/*oikonomia*, συγκατάβασις/*synkatabasis*, 'adaptation', 'accommodation' to the weak). Peter pretended to side with the Jewish-Christians on the matter of observance of the Law (though their position was wrong) to allow Paul to issue the proper rebuke through his example and silent acquiescence to the critique.<sup>22</sup>
- d. It was a genuine rebuke that Peter nobly accepted from Paul (Augustine). Peter's error was not that he colluded with the Jewish-Christians' keeping the Law (which was in fact acceptable for them in that early era), but that he did not clearly articulate that they did so only in honor of ancestral traditions, not because it had any salvific power. Further, Jerome's solution, of a *utilis simulatio* or *dispensatio*, would require apostolic *mendacium*, which is out of the question (and would be worse than the alleged hypocrisy, because it calls into question the trustworthiness of the scriptures).<sup>23</sup>

#### 4. Chrysostom's *In illud, in faciem ei restiti*

Jerome's rounds of disputes with Augustine on this passage are well known, and have been carefully analyzed.<sup>24</sup> What has not been appreciated is

21 We do not have independent evidence of this interpretation in Origen's extant works, however.

22 Meiser cogently identifies 5 motifs of this line of interpretation: '1. die Behauptung, Paulus habe dem Petrus nicht wirklich widerstanden, 2. die Bezeichnung des Apostelstreites als οἰκονομία bzw. *dispensatio*, als zeitweise Verstellung, die von den Heidenchristen freilich nicht als Verstellung durchschaut worden war, 3. die schweigende Zustimmung des Petrus zu dem ihn tadelnden Paulus, durch die die Judenchristen dazu bewogen werden sollen, die Worte des Paulus als wahr anzuerkennen, 4. die Betonung der σύνεσις und der Bewunderungswürdigkeit beider Apostel, 5. das Motiv der zu wahrenen Einheit der Kirche' (*Galater*, 99).

23 Augustine, *Epp.* 28.3-5; 40.3-7; 82.4-30; Dolbeau 10.13.30 [Carthage, Lent 397]: 'Once an Apostle could be thought to lie or to have colluded in a simulated incident, it was as if a moth had entered the precious cupboard of the Scriptures. Its larvae would devour the entire texture of revealed truth as surely as they would ruin an entire case of clothes' (as paraphrased by Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* [new ed., with an Epilogue; Berkeley: University of California, 2000] 450).

24 Notably Hennings, *Briefwechsel*, esp. 121-30.

that John Chrysostom's position on this passage (which Jerome claimed as an ally to his view that it was a 'feigned quarrel')<sup>25</sup> was given a different cast and presentation in the Antiochene's own occasional homily on this passage, as compared with his commentary on Galatians.<sup>26</sup> The homily shows better than the commentary that Chrysostom was well aware of how vulnerable his own interpretation was, and of why it was so important—especially in the face of 'pagan' critique—that Christians have a fully convincing solution to the potential and severe disqualification that this passage seemed to offer to the Christian movement. Through a deft combination of selective historical argumentation and rhetorical ingenuity, Chrysostom seeks to address not just the hypocrisy of Peter and Paul, but also the sticky problem of the hypocrisy of the Christian reader who reads this text approvingly as Paul's 'in your face' to Peter.

John begins this homily with a customary *prooimion*, in this case focusing on how sorely grieved he was—like a child being weaned from its mother—when separated from his congregation for the last *synaxis*, even though he was brought news and some of the eucharist to share with them from a distance. John uses this introduction to summon his audience to show the same eagerness (προθυμία, σπουδή) for listening to his homily that they have shown before:

I am asking you to grant me this favor yet again today. For our homily is not on any random topics, but it concerns the most important matters (μέγιστα πράγματα). Therefore I ask that all throughout your eyes be keen of sight, your minds alert, your thoughts awake, reasonings well-ordered, your soul sleepless and vigilant. For you have all heard the apostolic reading (τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα τὸ ἀποστολικόν). So, if anyone attended keenly to what was just read, s/he knows that we have great contests (ἀγῶνες) and exertions (ἰδρωῶντες) before us today! 'For when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face'.<sup>27</sup>

25 It is not clear whether Jerome was directly dependent upon Chrysostom's interpretation when he wrote his commentary on Galatians (c. 386–390), however, as Chrysostom's preaching career began in Antioch in February, 386, and the commentary and homily we treat here are both of uncertain date (though situated in the Antiochene period, 386–398 [see n. 29 below]). In the later correspondence with Augustine (covering the period 394–419), Jerome refers to John as bishop of Constantinople (*Ep.* 112.6).

26 Hennings treats the two works as though entirely of a piece with one another (*Briefwechsel*, 230–4; as does Meiser, *Galater*, 97–102); in this paper I seek to highlight some unique characteristics of the occasional homily. Hennings judges that the sermon 'könnte in Stil und Aufbau durchaus ein Teil des Kommentars sein' (*Briefwechsel*, 231 n. 48). While the line between commentary and homily in Chrysostom's oeuvre is difficult to establish, in this case I think there is a decided difference, which may account for the purported '*jeu d'esprit*' in which John engages in the homily.

27 §1 (PG 51.373).

Chrysostom calls his audience to vigilance, for the stakes here are high. Next he goes further, and incorporates their reader response into his interpretive task with a question:

So then, does it not disturb each of those who hear it that Paul opposed Peter (οὐ θορυβεῖ ἕκαστον τῶν ἀκουόντων τοῦτο, ὅτι Παῦλος ἀντέστη τῷ Πέτρῳ)? That the pillars of the church were knocking heads and fighting with one another? For truly they are pillars, comprising and holding up the roof of the faith, both pillars and bulwarks, eyes of the body of the church, fountains of good things, treasures, harbors, and any other (good) thing one can mention, without ever attaining their true worth. But however great are their praises (ἐγκώμια), the contest (ἀγών) we have (in this homily) is all the greater. So now stay awake! For our homily concerns our fathers (πατέρες), with our goal being to knock off the accusations being circulated against them by 'the outsiders' and those who are strangers to the faith (ὥστε ἀποκρούσασθαι τὰ κατ' ἐκείνων φερόμενα ἐγκλήματα παρὰ τῶν ἕξωθεν, καὶ τῶν τῆς πίστεως ἀλλοτρίων).<sup>28</sup>

The kinds of accusations that are being waged against these two 'fathers' of the Christian movement that John mentions here are precisely of the sort that Macarius Magnes's 'Greek' hurled—that both Peter and Paul were 'hypocrites'. Chrysostom will mount an argument of defense (ἀπολογία), but before he does, he implicates his hearers in the problem, addressing them directly with the assumption that they read this text too credulously:

Perhaps you praised Paul for his boldness (παρρησία), because he was not afraid of Peter's rank, because, for the sake of the truth of the gospel, he did not blush before those who were present. But if this is indeed to Paul's praise (ἐγκώμιον) it is to our shame (αἰσχύνη). Why, if Paul acted rightly (καλῶς ἐποίησεν)? Because then Peter in turn acted wrongly (κακῶς), if he was not behaving rightly. What benefit is it to me if one of my team of horses is hobbled?<sup>29</sup>

The audience of Christian believers in the ἐκκλησία παλαιά at Antioch that day<sup>30</sup> has a stark choice—praise or shame—when faced with a text that seems to require them to side with one apostle (the speaking one) over the other (the silent one). John offers a third way. He outlines his plan for his unorthodox defense speech for the apostolic duo, a plan that requires him to adopt a fictional role himself.<sup>31</sup> He is going to engage in *prosopopoiia*—a dissimulation of his own, acting as the lawyer

28 §2 (PG 51.373).

29 §2 (PG 51.373).

30 Wendy Mayer, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom—Provenance: Reshaping the Foundations* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 273; Rome: Pontificio istituto orientale, 2005) 291, 319, 360 ('a sermon clearly delivered at Antioch').

31 There is nothing comparable to this in his *comm. in Gal.*

arraigning Paul for the faults associated with his accusation against Peter. But Chrysostom's audience is forewarned about the pretense: 'I am not really directing my speech at Paul, but at the outsiders. Therefore I urge you to listen carefully!'<sup>32</sup> Adopting with ironic purpose a conventional rhetorical strategy known to us from the *technai* and *progymnasmata*, ἀϋξῆσις,<sup>33</sup> John promises first to amplify the accusation (ἀϋξάνειν τὴν κατηγορίαν), and make it worse, in order to arouse his audience's zeal for the right mode of defense, ἀπολογία, against it. His defense involves demonstrating that the scriptural text, and the words in it, have a meaning deeper than its 'plain-sense'. The language that he uses for this interpretive move is most fascinating for one supposed to be an 'Antiochene literalist':

So now, if I might begin to amplify (ἀϋξῶ) the accusation, don't think that the statements made represent my own opinion (γνώμη). For by my argument I am deepening (βαθύνω) your understanding of the meaning (διάνοια), I am excavating the sense (νοῦς), so that by fixing the thoughts (νοήματα) at this deep level, I might safeguard their retention.<sup>34</sup>

Two forms of contrast between surface and reality are in view here—that between John's own words and his real intent, on the one hand, and the words of Galatians 2 and their deeper meaning, on the other. No wonder these late fourth-century Antiochenes are exhorted to stay awake! But the reward, the preacher promises, will be great, because the 'apparent battle' (ἡ δοκούσα μάχη) that took place in their fair city long ago will redound to their praises, for the ostensive conflict was 'more useful than any peace'. The goal of the homily is to show that, not only is the Antioch incident no proof of apostolic adversity, but that—when interpreted correctly—it is the greatest proof that Peter and Paul were 'bound together with one another by the bonds of love'.<sup>35</sup>

In the first section of proof, Chrysostom plays the prosecutor, out to demonstrate that 'the things said by Paul [in Gal 2.11–14] are a strong accusation (κατηγορία) unless we track down the meaning hidden in the words (ὄν μὴ

32 Οὐ γὰρ πρὸς Παῦλόν μοι νῦν ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἔξωθεν. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ παρακαλῶ προσέχειν (§2 [PG 51.374]).

33 On ἀϋξῆσις in rhetorical training and its relationship to κοινὸς τόπος, see Malcolm Heath, 'Invention', *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C.–A.D. 400* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 89–120, especially 95; detailed discussion and references in R. Dean Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 24; Leuven: Peeters, 2000) 26–9.

34 §2 (PG 51.374).

35 οἱ ἀπόστολοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἦσαν συνδεδεμένοι τοῖς τῆς ἀγάπης δεσμοῖς (§2 [PG 51.374]).

τὸν ἐναποκεκρυμμένον τοῖς ῥήμασι θηρεύσωμεν νοῦν).<sup>36</sup> This begins with direct address to Paul,<sup>37</sup> invoked as present and subject to cross-examination:

What are you saying, Paul? Did you rebuke Peter when you saw that he was not behaving in accordance with the truth of the gospel? Good enough. But why 'to his face'? Why 'in the presence of all of them'? Should the reproof (ἔλεγχος) not take place without any witnesses (ἀμάρτυρος)? But how is it that you instead make the teaching a matter of public record (δημοσιεύεις), making many witnesses of the accusation?<sup>38</sup>

Chrysostom chides Paul for giving his reproof in public, which is contrary to the teaching of Christ in Matt 18.15. He characterizes the public nature of what Paul did in Gal 2.11–14 in the strongest possible terms; not only did Paul give a public rebuke, but he boasted about doing it (μέγα φρονεῖς), and not just orally and not just to a few people:

You not only issue the reproof in public (δημοσίᾳ ἐλέγχεις), but also you engraved the battle, as though on a pillar, in letters (καθάπερ ἐν στήλῃ, τοῖς γράμμασι τὴν μάχην ἐγγαράξας), and made the memory of it eternal. Thus not only those who were present then, but all the people who inhabit the world might learn of what had happened through the epistle (ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ τὴν οἰκουμένην οἰκοῦντες ἄνθρωποι μάθωσι διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τὸ γεγενημένον)!<sup>39</sup>

This extreme violation of Christ's command to rebuke in private by Paul's epistolary advertising campaign includes also direct hypocrisy on Paul's part (i.e. saying one thing and doing another), since it looks like the act arose from ethical failings of just the type that Paul himself characterizes as ἔργα τῆς σαρκός later in the letter (Gal 5.19–21): 'Who would not say that you do this from enmity (ἀπέχθεια), from jealousy (φθόνος) and contentiousness (φιλονεικία)?'

And now comes the coup de grâce accusation, that, in condemning Cephas for accommodating the weakness of the believers about dietary *halachah*, Paul sounds utterly contradictory to his own claims in 1 Cor 9.19–23:

Were not you the one who said, 'I have been to the weak as weak'? What does that mean, 'to the weak as weak' (οὐ σὺ ἦσθα ὁ λέγων, Ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ὡς ἀσθενής; Τί δέ ἐστι, Τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ὡς ἀσθενής;)?<sup>40</sup>

36 §3 (PG 51.374).

37 There is a brief passage with three direct questions to Paul in *comm. in Gal.* §5 (PG 61.642) on 2.14, but nothing as extensive as we find in the occasional homily.

38 §3 (PG 51.374).

39 §3 (PG 51.374).

40 §3 (PG 51.374).

The accused (Paul) is allowed to respond:

Accommodating to them and dressing their wounds, and not allowing them to fall into shamelessness, he says (Συγκαταβαίνων καὶ περιστέλλων αὐτῶν τὰ τραύματα, φησὶ, καὶ οὐκ ἀφιεῖς εἰς ἀναίσχυντίαν ἐκπεσεῖν).<sup>41</sup>

The ‘prosecutor’ accepts that explanation, but counters: ‘Then do you show such care and magnanimity (φιλόανθρωπος) for the disciples, but for a fellow-apostle you are so inhumane (ἀπάνθρωπος ἐγένου)?’ John adds a further comparison to strengthen the point of inconsistency between treatment of disciples and apostles: when Paul came to Jerusalem the apostles there granted him a private hearing over his gospel (κατ’ ἰδίαν, Gal 2.2),<sup>42</sup> and did not parade him in public. Paul’s violation is all the more egregious since this is precisely the apostolic courtesy he did not give to Peter. By multiplying these arguments (in much the same fashion as did Macarius’s ‘Greek’) Chrysostom makes the accusation against Paul, the strident public accuser, seem more and more heinous ... if true.

Leaving aside for a moment the manner in which Paul reprimanded Peter, John (as the putative Pauline prosecutor) next turns to the charge itself. Is it even categorically possible that Paul was right, and Peter did play the hypocrite out of fear?

What are you saying (Paul)? That Peter was cowardly and unmanly (δειλὸς ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ἄνανδρος)? Was he not named Peter precisely for this, since he was unshakable in the faith? What are you doing, man? Have some respect for the Master’s designation which he gave his disciple. Peter cowardly and unmanly? Who will put up with you saying such a thing?!<sup>43</sup>

Surely Paul does not want to contradict Christ’s assessment of Peter’s character, does he? After this opening, Chrysostom trots out proof after proof,<sup>44</sup> mostly from Acts, of Peter’s extraordinary bravery. Most important for John is that Peter was the first to speak up in the theatre of Jerusalem and proclaim the resurrection (Acts 2.24, 34–35). He stood up against the crowds of ‘Jews’ in Jerusalem, proving himself to be a man of completely free and bold speech

41 §3 (PG 51.374).

42 John adds as further evidence the same apostolic forbearance and accommodation offered by the Jerusalem apostles to Paul in Acts 21.20–24. Εἶδες πῶς φεῖδονταὶ σου τῆς ὑπολήψεως; πῶς κρύπτουσί σε τῷ προσώπῳ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἐκεῖνης, τῇ θυσίᾳ, τοῖς ἄγνισμοῖς σε περιστέλλοντες; Διὰ τί μὴ τοσαύτην κηδεμονίαν ἐπεδείξω καὶ σὺ; (§3 [PG 51.375]). Note especially the theatrical language of ‘mask’ connected with both hiddenness and ‘accommodation’.

43 §4 (PG 51.375).

44 This section of the proof is paralleled in *comm. in Gal.* (PG 61.640) though the treatment is much condensed. There is also more of an emphasis there that, since Peter was giving his own life for the Jewish people, πῶς ἂν ὑπεκρίθη ποτέ.

(ἐλευθεροστομία, παρρησία), who bravely opened the door for all the rest of the apostles who would follow (including you, Paul). This courage exemplified by Peter was seen even before the crucifixion,<sup>45</sup> and all the more so after it. Chrysostom sharpens this point both by augmenting the invective against 'the Jews' in Acts as 'bloodthirsty dogs' 'boiling with zeal' and 'breathing murder',<sup>46</sup> and then by two then-and-now comparisons. First, the 'Jews' who before Christ's crucifixion sought to put anyone who confessed him outside the synagogue (John 9.22) were now, when Peter confronted them in Acts 2 after the death and resurrection, all the more vicious. Second, how could this man who was so brave in the hostile territory of Jerusalem be a coward in Antioch, χριστιανικωτάτη πόλις ('the most Christian city') seventeen years<sup>47</sup> later?<sup>48</sup> By assembling this body of evidence for Peter's bravery, Chrysostom has constructed a proof against the truth of the literal sense of Paul's account of the Antioch incident as we have it in Gal 2.11–14. Given this litany of brave deeds, 'How can you dare to say that "out of fear of those from the circumcision he was withdrawing and separating himself"?'<sup>49</sup>

Chrysostom applies good historical-critical criteria to his assessment of whether or not the event could possibly have occurred as stated. He concludes that the charge is simply not credible (... οὐκ ἔστι πιθανὴ ἡ κατηγορία) because

neither the time nor the place nor the caliber of the persons involved (καίρως, οὔτε ὁ τόπος, οὔτε ἡ ποιότης τῶν προσώπων) allow us to believe the things said as stated (ἀφίησιν ἡμᾶς πιστεῦσαι τοῖς λεγομένοις οὕτως ὡς εἴρηται),

45 John offers a selective citation of Matt 16.13; Mark 10.33–34; Matt 16.21; 17.4; Matt 26.21 to substantiate this point, arguing that Peter spoke when all the rest were silent (he was ἡ γλῶττα τῶν ἀποστόλων), an index of his uncommon bravery.

46 μετὰ τσσαυτῆς παρρησίας πρὸς τοὺς αἰμοβόρους κύνας ἐκείνους, καὶ τῷ θυμῷ ζέοντας ἔτι, καὶ φόνου πνέοντας (§4 [PG 51.375]); πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων μαινομένων αὐτῶν καὶ οἰδούντων ἀπὸ τοῦ φόνου, ὡμολόγησε μετὰ παρρησίας (§5 [PG 51.376]; 'he confessed boldly before all of the others who were crazed and bloated from the murder [of Christ]'). Peter, by the opening salvo of Acts 2, 'broke the front line of the Jewish phalanx' (τὸ μέτωπον τῆς φάλαγγος τῆς Ἰουδαϊκῆς διαρρήξας) (§5 [PG 51.376]). Chrysostom's severe invective against Jews is well known; see the analysis by Robert L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage 4; Berkeley: University of California, 1983).

47 John does the math from Gal 1.18 and 2.1 (§7 [PG 51.377]), but conflates the date of the writing of Galatians with the date of the incident of which it speaks (Νυνὶ δὲ, ὅτε ταῦτα Παῦλος ἔγραφεν, ἐπτὰ καὶ δέκατον ἔτος εἶχε τὸ κήρυγμα). He also appears to assume (despite his emphasis on Peter as inaugural leader), that one can date the gospel proclamation from Paul's call!

48 This argument is also found in *comm. in Gal.* (PG 61.640).

49 Πῶς οὖν τολμᾶς λέγειν, ὅτι φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς, ὑπέστελλεν ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀφώρισε; (§6 [PG 51.377]).

and to condemn Peter for cowardice (καὶ καταγῶναι τοῦ Πέτρου δειλίαν).<sup>50</sup>

So what is the solution (λύσις) to the apparent problem (ἡ δοκοῦσα ζήτησις)? Pronouncing the first part of his proof complete ('our argument has overturned the accusation'<sup>51</sup> against Peter on the basis of improbability), John returns to the twin apologetic concern:

But as I said at the beginning, there is no benefit to me if Paul acted rightly but Peter has been shown not to have acted so (for the accusations and shame against us remain even if the former was the one at fault), so now again I say that there is no benefit to me if Peter is proven to be free of the accusation (ὄν Πέτρου τὴν κατηγορίαν ἀποσκευασμένου), but Paul appears to be rash and inconsiderate in accusing his fellow apostle (ὁ Παῦλος φαίνεται θαρσαλέως καὶ ἀπερισκέπτως<sup>52</sup> τοῦ συναποστόλου κατηγορῶν).<sup>53</sup>

Can it be the case that Paul accused Peter out of enmity (ἀπέχθεια) for his fellow-apostle, or out of vainglory (κενοδοξία) or contentiousness (φιλονεικία)? 'No one could possibly say this—no way!'<sup>54</sup> The first counter-proof is Paul's apostolic humility, in that he saw himself as a 'slave to all the apostles' (although he exceeded all by his labors), and the least of them (1 Cor 15.9). And not only his words, but his deeds show this. In particular, despite the fact that Paul had been entrusted with care for ἐκκλησίαι throughout the whole world, and faced constant battles—not only with people, but with powers, principalities and forces of darkness for the salvation of humanity—he left all these aside and went up to Jerusalem expressly to see Peter (Gal 1.18). And what's more, he stayed there for 15 whole days! This is proof of his εὐνοια and φιλοφροσύνη for his fellow apostle.<sup>55</sup>

In the next movement of the speech (after again counseling his audience to stay with him in this long speech),<sup>56</sup> Chrysostom offers his own version of the

50 §7 (PG 51.377).

51 ἀλλ' ἰδοὺ περιέτρεψε τὴν κατηγορίαν ὁ λόγος (§7 [PG.51.378]).

52 There is a parallel here with John's defense earlier in the homily of Peter's 'unconsidered' (ἀπερισκέπτος) speech at Matt 16.22; 17.4 and his silence at 26.21; cf. John 13.24 (§5-6 [PG 51.376]).

53 §7 (PG 51.378).

54 Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἔστιν εἰπεῖν. μὴ γένοιτο §7 (PG 51.378).

55 §8 (PG 51.378-379).

56 Ἐνταῦθα προσέχετε, καὶ διανύσθητέ μοι, καὶ συντείνετε ἑαυτοὺς, ὥστε δέξασθαι σαφῆ τὴν ἀπολογία. Καὶ γὰρ ἄτοπον ἐμὲ μὲν τὸν διασκάπτοντα τοσοῦτον πόνον ὑπομένειν, ὑμᾶς δὲ τοὺς ἐξ εὐκολίας μέλλοντας τὸ χρυσίον ὄραν, τῇ ῥαθυμίᾳ τὸ κέρδος τοῦτο παραδραμεῖν (§9 [PG 51.379]). 'Pay attention here, stay awake now, and extend yourselves so you can receive this crystal-clear argument of defense. For it would be absurd for me, who is digging down to the bottom of this problem, to endure such labors



myth of concordant Christian origins.<sup>57</sup> He begins with the state of affairs right after Christ went up to heaven (Acts 1.9) after leaving a (singular) word of teaching (ὁ λόγος τῆς διδασκαλίας) behind to his own apostles. Now all humanity had a single nature (φύσις), and there was no αἴρεσις on the face of the earth, John wistfully recalls; there were no Manichaeans, no Marcionites, no Valentinians or others. All the inhabitants of the world were either Jews or Greeks, so Christ, like a wise king (βασιλεύς), divided his squadron in two, setting one portion under the leadership of Peter, to the Jews, and the other under that of Paul, to the Gentiles (Gal 2.8). After explaining the metonymy of περιτομή for Jews, John emphasizes that all humanity had the same nature, and the king (Christ) is one, so the distinction between the two missions is ἐν σχήματι μικρῶ τι τῆς σαρκός, οὐκ ἐν τῇ τῆς οὐσίας ἐναλλαγῇ ('in a minor feature of the flesh, but not in a variation of nature').<sup>58</sup>

This insistence on the unity of the gospel proclamation leads John into a lengthy excursus on an anticipated objection—why was not Paul, rather than the illiterate fisherman Peter, the one who was entrusted with preeminent leadership (προστασία) over the Jews, given his deep training in the ancestral laws, his education at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22.3) and blamelessness according to the righteousness in the Law (Phil 3.6)? John's polemical answer is that this was Christ's special calling to Paul in view of Jewish opposition to him (Acts 22.19–21). Paul's keen ability to examine the nature (φύσις) and logical progression (ἀκολουθία) of realities, John argues, would have been lost on the Jews, who are 'more ignorant than all people' (πάντων...ἀγνωμονέστεροι), not looking at probability (τὸ εἰκός), reason (τὸ εὐλογον) or necessity (τὸ ἀναγκαῖον), but only with a view to their own love for contention (φιλονεικία). For John, Paul's philosophical acumen (thus described) would presumably be lost on 'Jews',<sup>59</sup> and thus he was sent to the Gentiles.<sup>60</sup> Now, John allows, Paul had great love for his own people (as Rom 9.3; 10.1 show), and did try to teach Jews, such as in the Letter to the Hebrews, but he did so there without employing his usual epistolary prescript, instead writing that letter anonymously, as though with a 'mask' (προσωπεῖον) over his face, hiding his identity.<sup>61</sup> So Paul customarily approaches

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while you, who at leisure are about to see the golden ring, run right past this great gain due to your sloth!

57 This section and the next are unparalleled in *comm. in Gal.*

58 §9 (PG 51.379).

59 As always with John (author of 8 infamous discourses, *Adversus Judaeos*), this kind of invective represents a marriage of biblical statements (Acts 22.19–20; John 12.43) and rhetorical *topoi*, fueled by his own rivalry with contemporary Jews in Antioch.

60 §11 (PG 51.381).

61 Διὰ τοῦτο τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἅπανι γράφων, τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ προστίθησιν ἐν τῷ προομίῳ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν, Ἑβραίοις δὲ ἐπιστέλλον, οὐδὲν τοιοῦτον ἐποίησεν ... Ἴνα γὰρ μὴ

Gentiles undisguised with the gospel message and instruction, but Jews under cover, each strategy designed for maximum persuasiveness.

Chrysostom emphasizes that there was one κήρυγμα<sup>62</sup> shared alike by Peter to Jews and Paul to Gentiles. The only difference was in the observance of food laws, circumcision and ‘the other Jewish customs’ (τὰ ἄλλα τὰ Ἰουδαϊκὰ ἔθη). Peter in dealing with his Jewish disciples did not dare to tell them φανερώς καὶ διαρρήδην (‘openly and explicitly’) that they must put away these things all at once (καθόπαξ). He knew that they were like a tender planting standing next to an ancient tree (John’s metaphor for their long-time prior disposition for the Law [ἡ χρονία ἢ περὶ τὸν νόμον πρόληψις]); if he plucked out that dead tree too soon, the young faith might be uprooted with it. So Peter by concession allowed these Jewish converts to keep some of these old customs. Paul, meanwhile, did not have to do this, since he was preaching to Gentiles who never did have this πρόληψις (‘predisposition’).

But in fact both Peter and Paul engaged in ‘concession to the weakness of the disciples’ (τῆ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀσθενείᾳ συγκαταβαίνοντες) in the matter of the Law. Paul did this in Jerusalem, where he followed Jewish customs when the occasion (καιρός) required (Acts 21.20–26), not because of a change in judgment or intent (γνώμη), but by way of accommodation (οἰκονομία). Not coincidentally,<sup>63</sup> it was in that same city that Peter in turn ‘legislated the same freedom from the Law’ (τὴν αὐτὴν ἐλευθερίαν νομοθετῶν) which Paul was proclaiming to the Gentiles. Peter did this when he could see that the καιρός had come to dispense with that concession and to hand over the teaching in pure and unadulterated fashion<sup>64</sup> (Acts 15.7, 10–11). Peter offered this teaching openly with Paul present, and he even wrote it down in a letter that Paul carried around (the so-called ‘apostolic decree’), so Paul knew well Peter’s position; therefore why does he now accuse him (in Gal 2.12) of having acted ‘out of fear of those from the circumcision’?

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μετασχῆ τοῦ μίσους τὰ γράμματα, καθάπερ προσωπεῖω τινὶ, τῆ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἀφαιρέσει κρύψας ἑαυτὸν, οὕτως αὐτοῖς λανθανόντως τὸ τῆς ἐπιτίθησι φάρμακον (§11 [PG 51.381]).

62 One with resonances of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed: Τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ ἀμφότεροι καὶ Ἰουδαίους καὶ Ἑλλήσιν ἐκήρυττον· οἶον, ὅτι Θεὸς ὁ Χριστὸς, ὅτι ἐσταυρώθη καὶ ἐτάφη, καὶ ἀνέστη, καὶ ἔστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρὸς, ὅτι μέλλει κρίνειν ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα ἦν, ὁμοίως καὶ Παῦλος καὶ Πέτρος ἐκήρυττον (§12 [PG 51.381]).

63 Either for John or for Luke.

64 Ὅρας ὅτι ἡνίκα μὲν καιρὸς συγκαταβάσεως ἦν, καὶ Παῦλος ἰουδαΐζειν· ἡνίκα δὲ οὐχὶ συγκαταβάσεως καιρὸς ἦν, ἀλλὰ δογματίζειν ἔδει καὶ νομοθετεῖν, καὶ Πέτρος ἐκείνης τῆς συγκαταβάσεως ἀπαλλαγείς, εἰλικρινῆ καὶ καθαρὰ τὰ δόγματα παραδίδοσι (§13 [PG 51.382]).

The preacher urges his audience one more time to hold their attention just a little while more, as they have now arrived at 'the very depths of the solution' (πρὸς γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ βάθος τῆς λύσεως κατηντήσαμεν). First it requires rehearsal of the history (ἱστορία) as a background for comprehending the actions. According to Chrysostom, the Jewish believers at Antioch, because they were so far away from the mother-city of Jerusalem, gradually fell away from Ἰουδαϊκὰ παρατηρήσεις and hence by attrition already were holding to the καθαρὰ καὶ ἀνόθευτος τῆς πίστεως διδασκαλία ('pure and genuine teaching of the faith', i.e. the Law-free gospel). So, when Peter went there, he saw that (unlike the Jewish believers in Jerusalem) they did not need any συγκατάβασις, and so he joined them in 'living like a Gentile' (ἔθνικῶς ἔζη). But when the Jews from James came (which, for Chrysostom, means Jewish believers from Jerusalem), they had never seen Jews behaving apart from the Law (ἑτέρως πολιτεύεσθαι). Peter could see that these visitors were still weak (ἀσθενέστερον διακείμενοι ἔτι) and out of fear—not *of* them, but *for* them, lest they become scandalized and leave the faith<sup>65</sup>—he changed his tack (μετετάξατο) again, leaving aside his Gentile lifestyle and returning to his former concession (ἐπὶ τὴν προτέραν συγκατάβασιν ἦλθε) by observing the food laws.<sup>66</sup>

Then the Jews, the ones who lived in Antioch, seeing Peter acting this way and not knowing the intent (γνώμη) with which Peter was doing these things, were also swept up and were compelled to act like Jews (ἠναγκάζοντο ἰουδαΐζειν) on account of their teacher. And it is this that Paul accuses (ἐγκαλεῖ).<sup>67</sup>

John now rereads the text in full aloud, with his interspersed commentary, to anchor this way of reconstructing the history. But he is still not completely satisfied with this argument by appeal to the history. The 'apparent accusation' (τὸ δοκοῦν ἔγκλημα) of hypocrisy remains a problem he has not yet fully resolved. How will he rebut it in full?

First John names other solutions (such as that this Peter is another person, or that Paul rightly rebuked Peter), but only to refute them, the first by exegesis, and the second by the apologetic concern announced at the outset to rescue both apostles from censure.<sup>68</sup> He returns to his opening refrain that what must be

65 See the similar argument in *comm. in Gal.* 5 (PG 61.641), there by appeal to Paul's own similar 'fear' in Gal 4.11 and 2 Cor 12.20.

66 §14 (PG 51.383).

67 §14 (PG 51.383).

68 §15 (PG 51.383–384). Briefly, it must be the same Peter, since Barnabas and the others were persuaded by his illustrious example. But if it was really Peter, and Paul rightly accused him, 'As I said at the beginning of this homily, our task is not to show that Paul rightly issued this accusation, because in that way the problem (ζήτημα) remains, since Peter will appear to be liable to blame'. The exegesis is determined by this intent.

sought is a solution that exonerates both apostles from accusation.<sup>69</sup> For this there is only one possible method. True meaning must be hidden, behind text and behind action, in motive, but it is accessible ‘if we learn the intention (γνώμη) with which the one rebuked and the other was rebuked, and unfurl its very meaning (διάνοια)’.<sup>70</sup> Peter wanted to free the people from James from the Law, but the two apostles realized that these believers from Jerusalem would not have accepted a direct statement from Peter to that effect, because they would retort that he (Peter) was in effect a hypocrite, proclaiming in public things that contradict both his words and his prior actions (ὡς ἐναντία ἑαυτῶ δημηγορῶν, καὶ τοῖς ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ γεγενημένοις ἅπανσι κατὰ τὸν ἔμπροσθεν χρόνον).<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, they would not have listened to Paul, because they had a deep aversion to him due to his reputation (Acts 21.21). So what could they do?

Neither of them directly rebuked those who came from James, but instead Peter arranged with Paul in advance (παρασκευάζειν) to reprove *him* in an exaggerated fashion (μεθ’ ὑπερβολῆς) and attack him, so that this ‘fabricated rebuke (ἐπίπλαστος ἐπιτίμησις) might offer a just opportunity and pretext for boldness against them’ (δικαίαν αὐτῷ παρῆρησίας κατ’ ἐκείνων ἀφορμὴν παρέχῃ καὶ πρόφασιν).<sup>72</sup> Both Peter and Paul knew the truth, which resided in each other’s shared γνώμη about the Law. The silence (σιγή) of Peter, Chrysostom argues, was more effective than the tongue (γλῶττα) of Paul to correct those who came from James, and also return the Jewish believers at Antioch to their original position.

The apostolic collusion which Chrysostom imagines was not a ruse or prevarication. It was a deliberate plan based on the apostles’ common understanding (γνώμη)<sup>73</sup> of the Law-free gospel, and their sage recognition that the Jewish believers from Jerusalem would not accept a direct rebuke from either of them.

But since Paul turned his statement toward Peter, those men (from James) received a fruitful benefit unknowingly (λανθάνόντως), when Peter was

69 τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον, καὶ τοῦτον κάκεινον ἀπαλλάξαι τῶν ἐγκλημάτων (§16 ([51.384]).

70 Πῶς οὖν ἔσται τοῦτο; Ἄν τὴν γνώμην, μεθ’ ἧς ὁ μὲν ἐπετίμησεν, ὁ δὲ ἐπετιμήθη, μάθωμεν, καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτὴν ἀναπτύξωμεν (§16 [51.384]).

71 §16 (51.384–385).

72 §17 (51.385): παρασκευάζει τὸν Παῦλον ἐπιτιμῆσαι μεθ’ ὑπερβολῆς, καὶ ἐπιπλήξαι, ἵνα ἡ ἐπίπλαστος ἐπιτίμησις αὐτῷ δικαίαν αὐτῷ παρῆρησίας κατ’ ἐκείνων ἀφορμὴν παρέχῃ καὶ πρόφασιν. This carefully crafted sentence (note the paronomasia with ἐπι-compounds) contains multiple terms that can have a positive or a negative implication (παρασκευάζειν: ‘prepare’ or ‘connive’; ἐπίπλαστος: ‘fashioned’ or ‘fabricated’; πρόφασις: ‘pretext’ or ‘pretence’), but by hyperbaton the δικαίαν is thrown forward for emphasis so as to turn attention to the positive valences—that it was a ‘just(ifiable)’ action.

73 The term is key to the argument. It means both ‘underlying intention’ and ‘judgment/opinion’ about whether believers must keep the Law (thereby uniting the teacher and the teaching).

rebuked and remained silent and his full intention was revealed (τῆς γνώμης αὐτοῦ πάσης ἐκκαλυπτομένης)—not by himself (οὐ παρ' ἑαυτοῦ), but by his fellow-apostle (ἀλλὰ παρὰ τοῦ συναποστόλου), and his former behavior ('living like a Gentile') was brought out into the public eye (τῆς ἀναστροφῆς τῆς προτέρας εἰς μέσον ἀγομένης).<sup>74</sup>

John 'unfurls' the true γνώμη of Peter from his silence. On this account, Paul is not Peter's adversary, but his interpreter.<sup>75</sup> Paul becomes the spokesman for both apostles and for both parts of his fellow apostle, Peter—by attesting to his words *and* his deeds. Paul brings Peter's full hidden judgment out into view<sup>76</sup> (where it is met with a silence of acquiescence) and he proves the case by invoking Peter's own prior lifestyle.

Because the two apostles were united in this single γνώμη, there is no ground for accusation against either or against both. Further, since Paul wrote down this account in the Letter to the Galatians by this same γνώμη that led him to issue the revealing rebuke, there is no fault in it, but rather great benefit, extending from the people of James to the Galatians and to all readers down through time.<sup>77</sup> After this very long homily the preacher pronounces his work a success: 'thus through our homily each of the apostles has been freed from accusations (ἐγκλήματα) and shown worthy of a myriad of praises (ἐγκώμια)'.<sup>78</sup> The homily ends with a call to emulate this holy ὁμόνοια.

## 5. Conclusion

For Chrysostom the Antioch incident (and its written version in Gal 2.11–14) was not a conflict, but neither was it a deceptive trick.<sup>79</sup> Rather than revealing the hypocrisy of one or both major apostles, when rightly unfolded, it can be seen as a counter-movement against hypocrisy, against a *perceived* variance between internal and external realities, one solved by Pauline speech and Petrine silence. In this inventive proof Chrysostom seeks both to address outside detractors and to instruct the insiders. The very length of the speech shows that, despite

74 §19 (51.387).

75 'That is why Peter did not introduce this judgment (γνώμη) about the Law himself, but put up with it being spoken by another (I mean, Paul), and was silent, so that the teaching would be readily accepted' (§17 [PG 51.386]).

76 Earlier John said that Paul's words demonstrated that 'Peter had these teachings in his own soul' (ταῦτα εἶχεν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ δόγματα) (§17 [PG 51.386]).

77 οὕτω δὲ καὶ οὗτος νῦν μετὰ τῆς αὐτῆς γνώμης, μεθ' ἧς ἐπετίμησε Πέτρῳ, γράφει ταῦτα, ἅπερ ἔγραψε Γαλάταις (§20 [PG 51.388]).

78 §20 (PG 51.388).

79 Chrysostom does not use direct language of falsehood, or as overt language of dissimulation or dissembling as does Jerome. He walks that line most carefully in the sentence analyzed in n. 72 above.

its inventiveness, this is no mere *jeu d'esprit*, but a very serious preoccupation for him. Can the Christian scriptures stand up to scrutiny?

At stake in such discussions about primordial Christian 'hypocrisy' among late antique interpreters of the Christian scriptural record is nothing less than the conception of truth<sup>80</sup>—as unitary or variable, hidden or available, consistent or inconsistent, in itself and in its spokesmen, divine and human and in their various media: public/private; word/deed; written/oral communications. The Antiochene orator, Chrysostom, engages in a kind of 'allegory of the apostles' in his reading: by exegeting an intent that lies deep below the surface of the text and of the events it records, he finds the *concordia apostolorum* that he knows must be there.

80 In this respect, Hennings's argument (*Briefwechsel*, 123) that what differentiates Augustine (in contrast to 'the Greek exegesis') is that he is the first interpreter to see the problem in light of the general question of the *auctoritas* of Scripture is I think not quite sustainable. Chrysostom is keenly aware of the hermeneutical stakes in needing to maintain the biblical text as it is but to find an acceptable reading of it to safeguard the truthfulness of the scriptures and the apostolic witness.