Claiming the Wilderness in Late Roman Gaul

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The enthusiasm with which Christian authors of late Roman Gaul adopted the ideal of desert asceticism is well known. There is also general agreement that the appeal of the wilderness was, for many of these individuals, more rhetorical than actual. What has not been fully acknowledged is the extent to which their attitudes to wilderness were influenced by classical thought in addition to biblical and hagiographical literature. To the educated classical mind, the cosmos was built on a fundamental dichotomy between order and chaos that permeated the physical and natural world. Wilderness, in its raw natural form, was a manifestation of chaos, while human civilization reflected the principles of order. The argument of this article is that this dichotomy, thanks to a tradition of classical education, helped structure the response of educated Gallo-Romans to the Christian desert tradition as its ideals spread to the west. Despite the appeal of monastic asceticism *per se*, its association with the desert provoked suspicion among those who had been trained to regard wilderness as the antithesis of civilization and culture. It is, however, possible to detect an evolution in attitudes over the last century of Roman rule in Gaul, as successive generations responded to social and political transformations and, drawing on both Christian and classical tradition, developed new ways of relating to the natural world.

INTRODUCTION

The last fifty years have seen a revolution in scholarly understanding of the late antique world. Even concerning the end of the western Roman empire historians now talk of "transformation" as often as "decline," and they generally agree that in many respects it saw

as much continuity as disruption, or rather a complex interplay between the two.[1] This applies to cultural as well as to political or economic developments. Peter Brown, for instance, has shown how ideas about wealth, which developed "in a hesitant and conflict-laden manner" between 350 and 550, were rooted partly in the attitudes of early Christian communities.[2] Meanwhile, Alan Cameron has emphasized how the ancient Roman literary tradition "continued to exercise real power and influence" on educated Christians of the late western empire, to such an extent that modern scholars have been all too quick to interpret respect for the classical past as evidence of diehard paganism.[3]

The aim of this article is to contribute to our understanding of such cultural transformations in the final century of the western empire. My focus will be on religious attitudes towards the natural world, in particular those parts perceived as being devoid of human habitation and cultivation, for which we might use the modern English word "wilderness."[4] As is well known, segments of the Christian elite during the last century of Roman Gaul (ca.380–ca.480) became promoters of the ascetic ideal, modelling themselves on the traditions of the eastern desert fathers. These traditions included celibacy, fasting, prayer, and the rejection of both physical comfort and social prestige. Ascetics who joined together in communal life were by the end of the fourth century generally referred to as *monachi*, "monks."[5] In its most extreme form, asceticism took the form of anchoritism, or long-term isolation in the wilderness. It appears to have mattered little whether the wilderness in question was to be found in desert, mountains, marsh, forest, or sea; Latin authors were indiscriminate in their use of the terms *solitudo*, *desertus*, *(h)eremus*, and (less often) *secretum* to describe these places.[6]

The enthusiasm with which fifth-century Gallo-Roman bishops took up the ascetic ideal was unparalleled in other parts of the western empire.[7] This does not mean that they spent much time in the wilderness, however. On the contrary, the fifth century saw what

Conrad Leyser has called "the taming of the desert." Promoters of asceticism, wary of the spiritual pride and unstable charisma that could result from prolonged isolation in the desert, warned their followers away from the dangerous allure of anchoritism. Instead they promoted a cenobitic, urban form of monastic life under the firm guiding hand of a local bishop.[8] At the same time, the very allure of the desert, and the ascetic ideal it represented, ensured that it remained a source of moral authority. It was accessible, if not physically, then rhetorically, through "a long apprenticeship in the wisdom of the Scriptures and the Desert Fathers."[9] Indeed, the potency of the desert motif was such that it thrived in Gallic religious literature well beyond the end of Roman period.[10]

It is generally accepted that the Christian elite of late Roman Gaul felt an aversion to the physical wilderness that belies their rhetorical enthusiasm for it. However, the origins of this tension have yet to be fully explained. A central problem is that scholars have paid insufficient attention to the enduring influence of the classical world-view on fifth-century Christian authors. My contention is that Gallic suspicion of the wilderness derived not merely from a fear of ascetic pride, real as this was, but from a tradition of classical education that embodied a cosmic dichotomy between order/civilization and chaos/barbarism, with wilderness associated firmly with the latter. As far as urbane Christians of Gaul were concerned, asceticism had a place within an ordered, civilized life. Such a belief had a long history in the counter-cultural stream of classical philosophy.[11] Anchoritism, however, in as much as it entailed long-term residence in the wilderness, was a step too far. At best, a temporary sojourn in the wilderness could test and reinforce moral and physical fortitude; and this, too, was a motif of classical literature. Thus by examining contemporary perceptions of the natural world, in this case wilderness, we can see how a section of Gallo-Roman society negotiated contrasting cultural traditions—Christian and classical—during a critical period of cultural evolution and adaptation.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Robert Markus observed in 1974 that, while classical culture was well integrated into Christian culture by the late fifth century, the process by which this actually happened is not always easy to discern.[12] Michele Salzman has since emphasized, in the context of the conversion of the late Roman aristocracy, that this process of cultural integration was not one-way. While aristocrats did adapt their ways of life and outlook to Christianity, the spread of Christianity also depended, at least to some degree, on the adaptation of the Christian message to the values of the aristocracy. These values included the honor derived from office-holding, the respectable accumulation and disposal of wealth, a common literary heritage, patterns of friendship, and the concept of *nobilitas*.[13]

Salzman's work should caution us against accepting the self-representation of Christian authors as predominantly the heirs of a biblical tradition, since most of them acquired that tradition only after years of liberal education.[14] Even so, there have been few attempts to study late antique Christian perceptions of wilderness in light of classical literature. The seminal work of Markus has much to say about the legacy of the classical world with regard to asceticism, community, and holy places, without considering how ancient authors conceptualized the desert itself.[15] Maria-Elisabeth Brunert, in her study of the literary reception of desert asceticism in late antique Gaul, starts with the foundational text of western monastic literature, the Latin *Vita Antonii*, and her semantic discussion of the term *solitudo* in classical literature is brief.[16]

Scholars who have paid more attention to the topic have tended to underestimate the complexity of the classical tradition,[17] or have treated it only superficially as part of a much broader investigation.[18] Jacques Fontaine, who has thoroughly examined the negotiation of classical and Christian values in the writings of Ausonius, Paulinus, and Prudentius,

incorporates some discussion of the authors' views of nature,[19] and his insights on geographical wilderness have been developed by Catherine Chin in her study of late antique literature.[20] Less directly relevant to the present topic, though still informative, are Mark Edwards's study of the motifs of the *locus amoenus* and the *locus horridus* in late antique Christian and pagan philosophical writings,[21] A. H. Merrills's exploration of changing Christian perceptions of the late Roman African periphery,[22] and Robin Lane Fox's convincing contrast of the classical and biblical traditions in his study of early Christian gardens.[23] Despite these compelling studies, we have much to learn about attitudes towards the natural world in late antiquity.

WILDERNESS IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN AND CLASSICAL TRADITIONS

By the late fourth century, the Christian monastic literature of the east was already winning an audience in the western empire. Foremost was Evagrius of Antioch's Latin translation of Athanasius's *Life of Antony*, which made a profound impact on figures such as Augustine and Jerome, young men of the elite well advanced in their secular careers.[24] This monastic literature also presented a particular relationship of holy men to the natural landscapes of Egypt and the Holy Land that proceeded directly from biblical tradition. As Claudia Rapp has discussed, in the Old Testament the desert is a place in which figures such as Abraham, Moses, and Elijah encounter God, as well as being a liminal place of personal and national transformation for the Israelites. In the New Testament, for John the Baptist and Christ the desert continues to provide an arena for spiritual trials where the body and mind might be disciplined in order to perform God's work, but it is also place of withdrawal, solitude, and peace, somewhere to escape crowds for religious contemplation.[25]

From the third century onwards Egyptian monks followed in the footsteps of these biblical figures. The monastic movement may have originated in chronic socioeconomic

crises that drove smallholders to flee the burden of taxation and the suffocating web of village obligations,[26] but it quickly evolved a theological agenda. The aim of the first monks, claims Rapp, was "to actualize in the present day the history of Salvation,"[27] realizing God's promise to make the desert a garden, and defeating the demonic forces of the wilderness by replacing it with its antithesis: a city of the holy.[28] The desert was also a crucible for more personal narratives of salvation through physical torment, such as Jerome cultivated of himself while resident in Rome in the 380s.[29]

Jerome, as has been much discussed, was especially sensitive to the problematic relationship between his Christian faith and his classical education.[30] For him this problem was never more acute than with Virgil, the writer whom he most admired,[31] and whose *Aeneid* formed the basis of grammatical education in the fourth century. Medievalists, however, have not fully appreciated the subtlety of classical views of the natural world and the degree to which they influenced post-Roman mentalities. Jacques Le Goff asserts that the dichotomy of civilization and wilderness was essentially a medieval phenomenon, distinct from the classical dichotomy of the city (*urbs*) and the countryside (*rus*).[32] Rapp, in her discussion of early monastic literature, states that the antithesis of wilderness in the classical tradition was the *locus amoenus*,[33] a literary trope that later informed Christian representations of paradise, as we shall see below.

In fact, for classical authors the essential dichotomy was between civilization and wilderness, with *rus* and the *locus amoenus* occupying ambiguous spaces between them. This dichotomy, furthermore, represented a deeper cosmic tension between order and chaos. Eugene Vance has argued that "Virgil's whole poetic career may be described as a sustained meditation upon the problem of order,"[34] and Hardie has argued a similar point at greater length with respect to the *Aeneid*.[35] Virgil treats the Augustan *imperium*, heavily foreshadowed throughout his epic, as the terrestrial manifestation of divine order. Forces

which resist that order are aligned with malignant chaos, and it is the destiny of heroes such as Hercules and Aeneas, and by extension Augustus himself, to overcome them.[36] In pursuit of this destiny, Aeneas and his Trojans must violate and destroy parts of nature, which retains a menacing quality throughout the narrative.[37]

Cicero likewise saw little to admire in "wild" nature, regarding nature as beautiful only once human purpose had been applied to it, and its more dangerous or disorderly features structured, tamed, and exploited.[38] This did not constitute human aggression *against* nature, as such; both humans and the natural world were prone to chaos, and it was the duty of the civilized to bring them to order whenever necessary.[39] Similarly, neither Ovid nor Pliny the Younger ever expressed a longing to do without the comforts of civilization, and when an author such as Martial did profess a taste for the simple, rustic life, this was nothing to do with the wilderness.[40] For these authors, rural life was an antidote to the stresses and vices of urban life, but not its true antithesis. They appreciated the comfort of their country villas, surrounded by well-ordered and productive farmland, while their bailiffs and tenants keep the outlying fringe of woodland pasture and scrub under control.[41] On these terms, educated Romans from Cicero to Pliny the Younger were quite happy to indulge in aesthetic appreciation of the "natural" world.[42]

The *locus amoenus* was distinct from such rustic idylls, although in the world of art and literature it could easily intrude upon them. The motif was established within Greek and Latin nature poetry as early as Horace, who criticized its vacuous use,[43] and by the first century C.E. it was a popular theme in painting and garden design.[44] In its basic form the *locus amoenus* is a stream-fed pool in a forest, where shade and running water offer respite from the heat of the midday sun, and the surrounding trees act as a shield against the troubles of the outside world.[45] The grammarian Servius, in his ca.400 commentary on the *Aeneid*, defined *amoenus* as denoting a shadowy place surrounded by forest (*umbroso, siluis*

circumdato),[46] and claimed that the word was derived from *amunia*, "fruitless," because such locations, while being full of easy pleasure, were unproductive.[47] Rapp is therefore incorrect to treat the *locus amoenus* as the antithesis of wilderness.[48] On the contrary, the two lie dangerously close to one another, which is why poets from Ovid onwards invested the motif with dark ambiguity and treacherous violence.[49]

Meanwhile, barren mountains and plains, pathless forests, and storm-wracked islands consistently appear in classical literature as suitable settings for figures tormented by exile or grief. An archetypal example is the Attis of Catullus, driven by madness to remote climes far from the comforts of civilized life.[50] Cicero, in his *Tusculan Disputations*, cited the case of the hero Bellerophon, who, having been struck down in his hubristic attempt to reach Mount Olympus, spent his final days wandering the plain of Cilicia in maddened grief, devoid of human company.[51] For Virgil and Propertius, too, the wilderness was a place of uncontrolled passions, deprivation, and emotional disorder,[52] and it appears as such several times during the trials of Apuleius's luckless protagonist in his *Metamorphoses*.[53] Writers who personally suffered the misfortune of political exile, such as Ovid under Augustus and Seneca under Claudius, could therefore describe their emotional state in metaphorical terms by drawing on well-established *topoi* of savage and hostile landscapes.[54]

However, while classical attitudes to the wilderness were generally negative,[55] they allowed room for its potential uses. Pliny the Elder, for example, conceded that otherwise barren landscapes could produce certain medicines.[56] Furthermore, it was a commonplace of ancient ethnography that tough landscapes bred tough people.[57] Propagandists often exploited this last idea when seeking to present a secular leader as strong and virile. Pliny, in his panegyric of Trajan, made much of the emperor's hunting expeditions in wild forests and rocky mountains,[58] and Genethliacus, a Gallo-Roman rhetor writing ca.291, used Emperor Maximian's upbringing on the rough Pannonian frontier to illustrate his suitability for the

role of soldier-emperor.[59] Around 400 the court propagandist Claudian made similar cases for the generalissimo Stilicho and Emperor Honorius,[60] while Merobaudes used the same trope for Aëtius in 446,[61] and Sidonius Apollinaris for the homeland of Emperor Anthemius in a panegyric of 468.[62] In the view of panegyrists, a touch of barbarism countered the dangers of soft living, and ensured that Rome's leaders possessed the physical prowess needed to protect the empire. Yet this was small consolation for the existential menace that wilderness otherwise presented to civilized society. Pliny, we should note, reassured his audience that Trajan's powerful body was held in sway by a civilized mind,[63] while Sidonius's romanticized depiction of barbaric Thrace, with its icy mountains and beast-filled lairs, is enfolded in his praise of Constantinople: "queen of the east," "seat of the empire," and the actual birthplace of Anthemius.[64]

Hence the Christian and classical traditions of late antiquity shared a basic aversion to wilderness and its "persistent opposition to civilization."[65] They differed, however, in their underlying cosmology. The "cosmic order" of the classical world-view had no direct counterpart in early Christian thought, which was instead founded on a starker dichotomy of "good" and "evil," on the concept of salvation history, and on a more insistent orientation towards the divine as opposed to the material world,[66] all of which produced what Le Goff has called a "bittersweet" attitude towards the wilderness in biblical literature.[67] These contrasting traditions were among the many brought into dialogue in the late empire. As we shall now see, they stimulated particular debate among the educated Christians of Gaul.

AVOIDING THE WILDERNESS, ca.380 TO ca.410

Pontius Meropius Anicius Paulinus (ca.354-431) and Sulpicius Severus (ca.363-425) were typical of their generation in that, as members of the Gallo-Roman elite who came of age in the late fourth century, they inherited both the classical and the Christian literary traditions.

They were untypical in that, like Jerome, they came to regard these two traditions as incompatible, and declared themselves for a dramatically ascetic form of the latter.[68] In the writings of Paulinus, Severus, and their peers, scholars have detected the literary influence of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Catullus, Statius, Persius, Silius Italicus, Lucilius, Apuleius, Lucretius, Cicero, Juvenal, Terence, and others.[69] Familiarity with this canon was the basis of *paideia*, the educated culture through which male members of the elite negotiated their relationships.[70] It created a common sense of inheritance in an ancestral culture (*mos ueterum*) that was mediated to the present through expert literacy and what Chin calls the "valorization of an idealized past."[71] Fontaine has stressed the importance of studying the elite within their broader social context, for it was within such groups of self-consciously literary friends that the common classical inheritance and the Christian tradition were negotiated and evolved into a new, distinct culture.[72]

One moment in this evolution is represented by the correspondence between Paulinus and his former tutor Ausonius, a professor of Bordeaux and the most successful literary man of his day.[73] Paulinus, after a career in imperial government, in about 389 retired from his native Aquitaine to Spain for a life of religious seclusion with his wife Therasia. Ausonius was disturbed by his friend's sudden withdrawal, especially when several of his letters went unanswered.[74] Being Christian himself, Ausonius could hardly blame Christianity *per se* for Paulinus's behavior. Rather, as Chin observes, he accuses his erstwhile friend of forsaking civilized norms by lapsing into barbarism.[75] He portrays Spain as a deserted and barren landscape, and implies that Paulinus, like Bellerophon, is roaming the wilderness "broken in the mind" (*mentis inops*).[76]

Hurt by his friend's hostility, in his reply Paulinus defends himself on two fronts. First, he challenges the classical devaluation of the wilderness by replacing Bellerophon with Christian holy men who are "not broken in the mind, nor choose to inhabit empty places out

of savagery."[77] Under the distant but potent influence of the eastern monastic tradition,[78] he presents the wilderness as a convenient place in which to turn one's attention heavenward to God, free from the troubles and distractions of the world.[79] To a degree Chin is right to say that Paulinus is here exploiting a void in classical space by inserting a new, Christian form of piety.[80] The void, however, is not so clear-cut, since Paulinus asserts that the wilderness also has value within the classical tradition: many ancient philosophers, he says, were "moved by the divine" (*numine agente*) to live in remote places for the sake of communing with the muses. The Christian monks of the present, he implies, are merely following their example.[81]

With his allusion to ancient "sophists" who spent time in the wilderness, Paulinus was attempting to make the anchoretic tradition palatable to someone who, in accordance with his classical instincts, found it repulsive.[82] Possibly he still felt some of this revulsion himself, and his argument was as much about his own insecurities as about the suspicions of Ausonius. This much is suggested by his second front of defense, which is to dissociate himself personally from the anchoretic tradition. After reminding Ausonius of admirable Christian hermits, he professes that he is not one of them. In fact, he is writing from a "pleasant" (*amoena*) resort on the coast,[83] and spends his time in "civilized places" (*humanisque agitare locis*) that are "close to splendid cities and most abounding in the prosperous cultivation of men" (*iuncta superbis urbibus et laetis hominum celeberrima cultis*).[84] Even if he were to dwell among uncivilized rustics, he declares with confidence, he would not suffer from it. On the contrary, they would benefit from his presence.[85]

By this argument Paulinus realigns himself with the conventional classical ideal of barbaric nature subjugated by human effort. Conversely, his defense of the wilderness is less enthusiastic than is sometimes assumed. While he is an enthusiastic advocate of asceticism,[86] and can admire Christian anchorites from afar, he is no Jerome; for Paulinus the pathless places of the world hold no attraction. Indeed, the retreat of some contemporary Christian

aristocrats into lives of private asceticism sufficiently resembled traditional aristocratic *otium* that Paulinus once had to reassure his friend Aper that leisure was not their true purpose.[87] When he evokes *solitudo* or *desertus* in his writings (he never uses *eremus*), it is often as a metaphor for the ascetic life,[88] or for the perishable world as a whole.[89]

The literal wilderness, when it appears in the works of Paulinus, is something to challenge and subdue, and is directly associated with barbarism. Thus he presents the missionary success of Bishop Victricius in the Rouen region as a civilizing process through which the wilderness itself is brought to order.[90] Similar imagery appears in his poetic depiction of the mission of Nicetas in Dacia,[91] where he goes on to praise how Nicetas, through his cultivated speech, has tamed the savage minds of the barbarians and taught them to praise Christ and live in peace "with Roman heart" (*corde Romano*).[92] Christianity, in effect, replaces the Roman empire as the great civilizing force in the world, and the conversion of barbarian peoples becomes inseparable from the taming of the wilderness.[93]

Sulpicius Severus, the compatriot and correspondent of Paulinus, shows less suspicion of wilderness *per se*. This is not surprising, since the customs of the desert monks of the east were of considerable interest to Sulpicius, and he was the chief promoter of the cult of Saint Martin, who spent some time as an island hermit.[94] The contrast between Paulinus and Sulpicius is illustrated by the latter's frequent use of *eremus* to describe desert (from the Greek *ἐρῆμος* "desolate, lonely, solitary"), a term heavy with Christian connotations, but one that Paulinus never deploys.[95] Despite his enthusiasm for the deserts of the east, however, in neither the *Dialogues* nor *The Life of Martin* does Sulpicius make much effort to associate his hero with the wilderness. He claims that Martin's monastic foundation at Marmoutier is so secluded that it is equivalent to the "solitude of the desert," but he also reveals that it lies only two miles up the Loire from Tours.[96] Elsewhere he makes the argument that Martin's holiness is all the more impressive in that he maintained it amidst the

troubles of the world.[97] Ultimately the Martin promoted by Sulpicius is admirable for his wonder-working and asceticism, but not as a rough-hewn man of the wilderness.[98]

By the early fifth century, then, Christian authors from the Gallo-Roman elite demonstrate an ambivalent attitude to wilderness. Sulpicius, however much he admires the holy men of the eastern deserts, shows no interest in seeking out equivalent landscapes in the west. Paulinus of Nola, meanwhile, despite his devotion to asceticism, when it comes to "barbaric" landscapes writes almost like an educated Roman of the early empire, and in this he is not so very different from his former tutor Ausonius.[99]

CLAIMING THE WILDERNESS I, ca.410 TO ca.450

From 406 the western empire suffered a decade of invasions and civil wars that resulted in the loss of Britain and much reduced imperial control over Gaul and Spain.[100] A secular response to the crisis can be found in the work of Rutilius Namatianus, a Gallic aristocrat who returned home upon completing his tenure as prefect of Rome in 416, and wrote a verse travelogue of his voyage. Even while he was painfully aware that Roman control of nature hung in the balance, Rutilius remained true to classical models in his confident assertion of ultimate recovery.[101] Some of his Christian compatriots, however, were less optimistic. Bishop Orientius of Auch, writing ca.420, recalled invasions of such ferocity that not even the remotest hiding-places had offered protection, whether in forests, mountains, islands, caves, or "the mournful wilderness" (*tristia* [. . .] *eremo*).[102] The flight of civilians into the wilderness in a time of emergency is a conventional motif of late Roman panegyrists, but it tends to be contrasted with their grateful return home upon the restoration of order.[103] For Orientus, however, there is no return to order. There is merely a moral lesson to be learned.

The crisis and its aftermath may also have influenced the evolution of the monastic tradition in Gaul.[104] About this time a number of ascetics established themselves on the Îles

d'Hyéres off the southern Gallic coast, but little is known about them and their community appears to have been ephemeral.[105] Better attested is the colonization of the Lérins archipelago by a small group of aristocrats-turned-ascetics ca.410, under the sponsorship of Bishop Leontius of Fréjus.[106] The two principal figures involved, Honoratus and Eucherius, were both of northern extraction, coming from the Langres-Dijon region of the upper Saône.[107] Friedrich Prinz described Lérins as a *Flüchtlingskloster* for well-heeled northern Gauls displaced by the barbarian invasions;[108] while this was true for some, Ralph Mathisen argues that the influx of high-status, closely connected arrivals on the archipelago in the 420s likely had more to do with the civil unrest of the time.[109]

Whatever the motivations of its members, for the first few years of its existence the Lérins community lies in historical obscurity. When Rutilius sailed up the coast of Italy in 416 he noted the monks inhabiting the islands of Capraia and Gorgona, and in his travelogue he does not hide his disapproval of them.[110] Indeed, he expresses himself with such outspoken disgust that some have seen the passage, with too much confidence, as proof of his pagan belief.[111] To the classical mind such islands represented places of exile and death,[112] and it may be that Rutilius's attitude was more typical of conventional Christianity than the surviving sources lead us to think.[113] His travelogue survives intact only as far as northern Italy, however, and we can but wonder what, if anything, he thought about the Lerinese monks when he passed by them.[114] The earliest surviving reference to the community is a letter of Paulinus to Eucherius and his wife Galla, who were living together on the larger of the two islands, Lero (modern Île Sainte-Marguerite). Writing in the mid-420s, Paulinus, true to form, praises the couple's piety, chastity, and decision to withdraw from the world, while saying nothing about the remoteness of their physical location.[115]

There remained significant suspicion of the wilderness, even among those who had experienced the real deserts of the east. John Cassian, the chief promoter of the eastern

monastic tradition in Gaul,[116] having spent years travelling around the monastic communities of Egypt before eventually settling in Marseilles, was well aware of the perils of the desert. In his *Institutes*, written in the early 420s, he offers a sober view of the physical and psychological dangers of such desolate landscapes.[117] He warns against entering the wilderness alone before attaining perfection in communal life,[118] and is critical of those who risk mockery by roaming populated areas of Gaul clad in a sheepskin cloak as though fresh from the Egyptian desert.[119]

At about this point the well-connected Lerinese monks were starting to make their mark on the mainland church. In 426 one of their number, Helladius (or Euladius), was appointed bishop of Arles.[120] Upon his untimely death a few months later he was succeeded by the founding abbot of Lérins, Honoratus.[121] In the meantime Cassian had established ties of friendship on the archipelago. Assuming the role of expert adviser, he dedicated parts of his second major work, the *Conferences*, to a number of Lerinese inmates.[122] In the final book of the *Conferences*, completed in 427, he describes how, during his time in Egypt, he had considered returning to his family's estate and adopting a comfortable ascetic life on the edge of a nearby forest.[123] A certain Abbot Abraham, however, poured scorn on his plan:

> We are well aware that even in our regions there are pleasant (*amoena*) secluded places where an abundance of fruit trees and charming and fertile gardens would furnish whatever food we need with minimal physical effort. [. . .] But despising all these things, and holding them in contempt along with all the luxury of this world, we delight only in this squalor, preferring the horrid wasteland of this desert to all pleasures; nor do we compare the wealth of any fertile soil to the barrenness of these sands, pursuing not the temporary benefit of the body, but the eternal advantage of the spirit.[124]

This statement, written by Cassian for his Gallo-Roman audience, is a direct challenge to the classical valuation of landscape.[125] One of the Lerinese brothers, the abovementioned Eucherius, was particularly gripped by the idea of the desert, and longed to travel to Egypt himself. Yet Cassian tried to dissuade him, arguing that his own first-hand accounts of the desert fathers made such a perilous journey unnecessary.[126]

Eucherius never did travel to the east, but he expressed his abiding fascination with the desert through his *De laude eremi* ("In praise of the wilderness"), written about the same time as Cassian completed his *Conferences*.[127] The work was prompted in part by the involvement of Lerinese brethren in the episcopal politics of the mainland. When Abbot Honoratus left to become bishop of Arles in 426/7, among the monks who accompanied him was his young relative Hilary, who after a short time decided to return to Lerina (modern Île Saint-Honorat), the smaller island and site of the monastery proper. Eucherius, delighted at Hilary's decision, wrote *De laude eremi* in his honor, and perhaps to encourage him to remain on the island.[128] The very title of the text encapsulates a dramatic new desire to appropriate a form of landscape that educated Romans had always regarded with suspicion. Eucherius deploys the tools of the panegyrist to praise the desert in terms normally reserved for settled, bucolic landscapes.[129] He proceeds from the premise that God made every part of the world for a definite purpose. Therefore if a place is not fruitful in the literal sense, it is because God reserved it to be fruitful in the spiritual sense.[130] He supports this argument with historical precedent, citing the examples of Moses and the Exodus, David, Elijah, Elisha, John the Baptist, Macarius, and Christ himself.[131] There follows an analysis of the merits of the desert and a final chapter of praise directed at the desert itself,[132] followed by praise of Lerina and its most famous brethren.[133]

A remarkable fusion of prose panegyric, pastoral imagery, and biblical symbolism, it is hard to imagine that Paulinus or Sulpicius, with their deep-rooted hostility to wilderness,

would have written a text like *De laude eremi*.[134] Around 400 the poet Endelechius, a friend of Paulinus, had adapted the bucolic genre to the Christian message in his *De mortibus bouum*,[135] and their Iberian contemporary Prudentius had drawn on the motif of the *locus amoenus* to create allegorical descriptions of paradise and conversion, and literal descriptions of the baptistry of Saint Paul's basilica in Rome.[136] Eucherius, however, writing a generation later and enthused by the example of Cassian, is more original and more ambitious. He challenges the conventional preference for reading biblical accounts of the desert as allegory by stating that such episodes, while they do have symbolic meaning, are also to be taken literally.[137] The desert, he argues, provides a refuge from the world. Paradoxically, its very isolation and inhospitality makes it attractive: "O how agreeable to those who thirst for God is the pathless wilderness in those mountain-valleys! How pleasant (*amoena*) to those who seek Christ are those hidden places, which stretch far and wide under the protection of Nature!"[138] The barren and uncultivated nature of the wilderness, so abhorrent to the conventionally minded, is in fact a defensive wall that preserves it from corruption by the world at large. Satan, unable to enter, howls outside like a wolf,[139] while the perfect community of monks lives within, free from any need of human law,[140] the rock of their virtue compensating for the shifting sands,[141] their direct access to heaven assured by Jacob's Ladder.[142] Thus the physical sterility of the desert, so often held against it, is actually a sign of its spiritual fecundity.[143]

Despite being a harmonious marriage of biblical content and classical form,[144] *De laude eremi* betrays an anxiety about human engagement with the wilderness. Eucherius calms this with his climactic image of Lerina, which, it turns out, is no barren desert at all. On the contrary, it is the very image of paradise: "Gushing with water, verdant with grass, shining with flowers, pleasant in sights and scents, to those who possess this paradise it reveals the paradise that they shall possess [i.e., in heaven]."[145] This bucolic imagery is, at

least in part, to be taken literally: how else could the sights and scents of Lerina themselves represent the spiritual paradise of heaven?[146] Yet by deploying it Eucherius diminishes the force of his own argument, which up to this point has been to assert the value of the desert in spite of, even because of, its barrenness. The inspirations for his abrupt change in tone are probably the desert refuges settled by Antony and Paul of Thebes,[147] while Dessì and Lauwers see it as a logical depiction of the desert as a place special to God.[148] Its ultimate roots lie in Isaiah 35: "The land that was desolate and impassable shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice, and shall flourish like the lily." Seen through the lens of classical literature, however, it is another example of the *locus amoenus* put to Christian use, and a subtle departure from the message of John Cassian.

Even as Eucherius was "civilizing" Lérins, some of its inmates were absorbing the ideal of the desert with enthusiasm. By 428, with Honoratus established as bishop of Arles, other monks were spreading through southern Gaul and causing friction within the wider church. The appearance on the mainland of strangely dressed clerics who claimed to follow the ascetic traditions of the east, and who arrogated to themselves spiritual superiority, led a group of more conventional-minded Gallic bishops to send an official complaint to Pope Celestine. In his response, dated 26 July 428, Celestine criticized Gallic monks who pretentiously adopted the costume of the desert, and warned that such novelties would "trample underfoot the order given to us by our fathers, and make room for pointless superstitions."[149] Such ascetic affectations, it seems, could be safely ignored when confined to "very remote places" (*remotioribus* [. . .] *locis*); but, as Cassian had warned a few years earlier, they were liable to offend the conservative, ordered structures of urbane Gallic society.

As already noted, Eucherius himself never experienced the wilderness of Egypt or the Holy Land. This disappointment he shared with the founder Honoratus, who abandoned his

one attempt to reach the east.[150] The community of Lérins, in other words, was founded on a romanticized ideal of the desert.[151] As Markus and others have pointed out, this ideal was potent enough that other fifth-century Lerinese authors, ignoring Eucherius's evocation of paradise, freely presented Lerina as a wilderness.[152] Hilary, recounting its original settlement by Honoratus in a sermon to the people of Arles in 431, describes the island as "uninhabited due to its excessive filthiness and unvisited for fear of poisonous creatures,"[153] and feared by locals as "a terrible wilderness."[154] Even after Honoratus provokes water to gush forth from the rocks, banishes the serpents, and fills the island with light and sanctity, it remains "squalid."[155] The severity of the landscape, however, gives Lerina its value, since its purpose is to provide not a permanent home for Honoratus, but a testing ground in preparation for his ultimate destiny as bishop of Arles.[156] Faustus, the third abbot of Lérins, presents much the same image in a sermon written for the monks of Lérins themselves ca.434,[157] and in a later sermon he reminds the community that they have come to the archipelago not for rest or security, but to fight spiritual warfare.[158] Upon his appointment as bishop of Riez ca.460, Faustus similarly presented Lerina to his new congregation as secluded and wild, an austere training-ground for holy men who might then bring the spiritual gifts of the desert back to the world.[159]

There are two exceptions to this tendency. First, Vincent of Lérins, writing ca.434 under the pseudonym Peregrinus ("Foreigner"), describes himself inhabiting "a remote little farm, and within it the secluded dwelling-place of a monastery," somewhere suited for quiet study and prayer.[160] Second, Hilary's biographer Honoratus of Marseilles, writing ca.480 and much influenced by *De laude eremi*, describes Lérins as an "earthly paradise."[161] In fact Honoratus and Vincent probably had it right: notwithstanding their relative isolation and exposure to Mediterranean storms, the islands of Lerina and Lero were neither barren nor especially hostile to human habitation.[162] It is true that Lerina had corners set aside for monks

who wished to live a more anchoretic existence; according to Faustus, the co-founder Caprasius dwelt apart from the main community "as though on a remote mountain,"[163] and Eucherius refers to aged Egyptian anchorites who came to Lerina as refugees following the dissolution of their cells.[164] Indeed, Yann Codou has recently excavated a probable fifth-century cell at the west end of the island.[165] On so small an island, however, no monk could have been more than a few minutes' walk from another, and the contrast with Cassian's accounts of monks who lived many miles across unforgiving desert must have been clear to all who read them.[166] Hence the claim of Faustus that he and Maximus once spent three days and three nights on Lerina in the open air, enduring constant rain as they hid from the priests of Fréjus who had come to make Maximus their bishop, has more than a hint of melodrama to it.[167] No doubt Faustus believed that the dramatic image would appeal to his lay congregation in Riez.

Yet even this was not a straightforward literary transplantation of the Egyptian wilderness to the coast of Gaul. Of particular note is the absence of demons, despite their prominence in eastern desert hagiography.[168] Serpents aside, the only demons Honoratus banished, Faustus is careful to point out, were in his own heart.[169] The natural effect is to tame the "wilderness" of Lerina, and to avoid the danger of the excessive, unstable spiritual charisma that a demon-infested desert might produce.[170] It is also important to observe that Cassian, for all his emphasis on the remarkable feats of desert anchorites, consistently points his Lerinese readers towards the benefits of settled, structured communities.[171] In this respect, at least, they appear to have heeded him. After all, true engagement with the wilderness was unlikely to come from such urbane Gallo-Roman aristocrats, at least some of whom came to Lérins not entirely out of choice.[172]

However much they respected Cassian, his apolitical monastic vision proved too narrow for the ambitions of the most prominent Lerinese monks.[173] A few years on the

archipelago provided sufficient taste of the wilderness, and from the late 420s onwards, once the political situation had stabilized, many returned to the mainland.[174] Even Eucherius, the ultimate advocate of the desert, forsook Lero in order to pursue an episcopal career, along with his two sons and numerous other brethren.[175] Leyser has argued that few were as surprised by their remarkable success as the Lerinians themselves.[176] During their sea-change these men had stumbled across a new way of articulating the aristocratic Roman impulse towards public service, transfigured into an episcopal form that was reinforced by claims of ascetic excellence acquired in the half-imagined "desert" of Lérins.[177]

CLAIMING THE WILDERNESS II, ca.450 TO ca.480

Cassian died ca.435, Eucherius in 448, and Hilary in 449. By 470 the last living connections with the eastern ascetic tradition had been lost, and southern Gallic monasticism had, for the most part, settled into the episcopal model.[178] As Roman Gaul disintegrated and the last imperial provinces fell under Gothic and Burgundian control in the mid-470s, local bishops were forced to deal with the realities of a post-imperial world. Sporadic warfare and political tensions made communication difficult, and certain areas suffered the repeated depredations of invading armies.[179] The Gallic episcopate found itself under severe pressure, with several bishops, including Sidonius of Clermont and Faustus of Riez, suffering exile at the hands of the Goths.[180] Despite this disruption, or perhaps even because of it, these educated churchmen fought to maintain their bonds of culture, literacy, and heritage.[181] The fruits of their efforts included the letters of Sidonius Apollinaris, who in 477 dedicated his first seven books to Constantius, a priest of Lyon.[182] Around the same time Bishop Honoratus of Marseilles wrote a biography of Hilary,[183] while ca.480 the priest Constantius himself wrote a biography of Bishop Germanus of Auxerre (d. 448).[184] By this time Sidonius had also started

work on a biography of Bishop Anianus of Orléans (d. 453), which he may or may not have completed.[185]

This cluster of works, produced in the wake of imperial collapse, are revealing for several reasons. First, they demonstrate the persistence of connections between widely separated individuals and communities; note, for instance, that none of the hagiographers was based in the same city as his subject. Second, they reveal how, in a time of considerable insecurity, Gallic ecclesiastical leaders looked back to the great bishops of the previous generation and cultivated them as models of civic and moral leadership. Finally, in doing this they placed particular emphasis on the quality of ascetic heroism. Thus Constantius notes that Germanus, having founded a monastery across the river from Auxerre, achieved "what is extremely difficult: he preserved a life of solitude amidst crowds of people, and preserved the desert while living in the world."[186] Honoratus likewise makes much of Hilary's early years in the monastic community of Lérins, claiming that his heart and soul were nourished by his love of the desert, and noting his abiding affection for the hermits of the archipelago.[187]

Sidonius, meanwhile, a man of cultivated habits, long secular experience, and no more than conventional religious sensibility before his middle age, often reveals his admiration for ascetic heroes and the monastic way of life.[188] There is, perhaps, a hint of envy in his letter to his old friend Domnulus, who, after his own religious conversion, took to visiting the monasteries of the Jura Mountains to "rehearse for the celestial dwellings on high."[189] We can trace Sidonius's admiration for asceticism back to his spiritual father, the aged Lerinese alumnus Bishop Faustus of Riez (d. ca.490). Sidonius was well trained in the techniques of secular panegyric, having delivered compositions in the presence of no fewer than three emperors. He drew on this training for his panegyric to Faustus, in which he pictures the monk-bishop in a range of dramatically rugged and isolated retreats, from sun-baked African sandbanks to filthy northern marshes, gloomy caves, and Alpine crags. This is,

of course, poetic imagination; Faustus never lived in any such places. In the end Sidonius places his ascetic hero where he belongs, in the more plausible setting of Lérins.[190]

But Lérins was no less impressive in its own way. Sidonius regarded Faustus as an ascetic champion, schooled in the "wrestling-ground of the desert congregation," who had brought the discipline of a monk from the archipelago to the city over which he presided.[191] Faustus had said much the same about his own predecessor, Maximus.[192] The monastery of Lérins was, in the end, an old-fashioned "Roman" wilderness, a quasi-military training camp that reinforced the credentials of those who spent time there. As we saw above, late Roman panegyrists, including Sidonius himself, had often made similar claims about secular leaders tested by experience of wild and mountainous regions. And just as Pliny had reassured the world that Trajan, even in the wilderness, retained the mental discipline of a civilized man,[193] Sidonius proclaims that Faustus, even when "tormented in hidden solitudes," is forever accompanied by his beloved companion, Philosophy—stripped, naturally, of her blasphemous pagan raiment.[194]

CONCLUSION

The Christian elite of southern Gaul, from the late fourth century to the end of Roman rule, resisted the challenge of the eastern desert to the cultural value system of the classical tradition. Paulinus of Nola and Sulpicius Severus were ascetics, not anchorites, and their writings betray an understanding of the wilderness as first and foremost a place of barbarism. In the next generation a small group of nobles went a step closer to the wilderness by founding a monastic community on the Lérins archipelago. As we have seen, however, their enthusiasm for the wilderness was largely rhetorical and symbolic, and their community more a temporary retreat for pious literati than a barren desert hiding-place. The final generation to

live under imperial rule in Gaul reinforced and consolidated this attitude in their remembrance of their forebears.

The aim of this article has not been to deny the profound impact of biblical and monastic literature on late antique perceptions of wilderness. Gallo-Roman Christian authors were themselves enthusiastically aware of this impact. But the same authors were also heirs to a classical tradition that helped structure their world-view at the most fundamental level, and this legacy provided the medium through which they absorbed new ideas about the world. It was, of course, possible for a contemporary Gallo-Roman to adopt wholesale the anchoretic ideal, embrace the wilderness, and remove himself altogether from "civilized" society. Such a figure, however, would by definition be invisible to us. Instead we have the testimonies of those men who clung on to enough of their classical inheritance that their attraction to the wilderness was never more than conditional. They also maintained the secular notion that it was no bad thing for a leader to be toughened up in the wilderness, provided that he remained a "civilized" man. In this respect the Christian authors of late Roman Gaul reveal how, during a period of social, political, and cultural turbulence, a particular perception of the natural world was absorbed, reinvented, and deployed for very human ends.

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[2] Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 530.

[3] Alan Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 801.

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[5] For discussion see Robert A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 66–69.

[6] Cf. Marie-Elisabeth Brunert, *Das Ideal der Wüstenaskese und seine Rezeption in Gallien bis zum Ende des 6. Jahrhunderts* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1994), 34–36.

[7] Markus, *End*, 214.

[8] Conrad Leyser, "The Uses of the Desert in the Sixth-Century West," *Church History and Religious Cult* 86 (2006): 113–34, at 118–22.

[9] Conrad Leyser, "'Divine Power Flowed from this Book': Ascetic Language and Episcopal Authority in Gregory of Tours' *Life of the Fathers*," in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. Kathleen Mitchel and Ian N. Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 281–94, at 284.

[10] See, for instance, Brunert, *Ideal*; Leyser, "'Divine Power'"; Claudia Rapp, "Desert, City, and Countryside in the Early Christian imagination," *Church History and Religious Culture* 86 (2006): 93–112; Leyser, "Uses"; Lynda L. Coon, "Collecting the Desert in the Carolingian West," *Church History and Religious Culture* 86 (2006): 135–62, at 135–39. Jacques le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 47–59, discusses the use of the desert motif across the entire medieval period.

[11] Markus, *End*, 72–75, 140.

[12] Robert A. Markus, "Paganism, Christianity and the Latin Classics in the Fourth Century," in *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century*, ed. J. W. Binns (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), 1–21, at 1–2. Cf. Nora Chadwick, *Poetry and Letters in Early Christian Gaul* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1955), 240–41.

[13] Michele Renee Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy: Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire* (London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 200–218.

[14] Charles Witke, *Numen litterarum: The Old and the New in Latin Poetry from Constantine to Gregory the Great* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 43; Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 88–91; Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 59–61.

[15] Markus, *End*, 63–83, 139–55.

[16] Brunert, *Ideal*, 34–36.

[17] E.g., Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 58, 168–19; Rapp, "Desert," at 93–94; Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 67–68.

[18] E.g., Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 150–63; Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 47–59; Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 53–55; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 5th ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 9–22.

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[25] Rapp, "Desert," 94–97. See also Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 47–49.

[26] Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 81–86.

[27] Rapp, "Desert," 102.

[28] Rapp, "Desert," 97–102; Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 50. For the Old Testament archetype of the wilderness tamed by God, see Isaiah 35.

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[66] Neil Forsyth, "'Paradise Lost' and the Origin of Evil: Classical or Judeo-Christian?" *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 6.4 (2000): 516–48, at 523–25; Glacken, *Traces*, 150–68; Antoine Guillaumont, *Aux origins du monachisme chrétien: Pour une phénoménologie du monachisme* (Bégrolles en Mauges: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1979), 69–80; Oelschlaeger, *Idea*, 43–72; Clark, "Cosmic Sympathies," 318–19; Nash, *Wilderness*, 9–22.

[67] Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 48.

[68] W. H. C. Frend, "Paulinus of Nola and the Last Century of the Western Empire," *JRS* 59.1/2 (1969): 1–11, at 3–4.

[69] Witke, *Numen*, 102; Fontaine "Valeurs," 592–53; Michael Roberts, *Poetry and the Cult of the Martyrs: The "Liber Peristephanon" of Prudentius* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 174–77; Dennis Trout, *Paulinus of Nola: Life, Letters, and Poems* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 83; Chin, *Grammar*, 152; Jacqueline Clarke, "The Struggle for Control of the Landscape in Book 1 of Rutilius Namatianus," *Arethusa* 47 (2014): 89–107, at 91; Cillian O'Hogan, *Prudentius and the Landscapes of Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 41–48, 55–70, 99–106.

[70] Markus, "Paganism," 2–3.

[71] Chin, *Grammar*, 7.

[72] Fontaine, "Valeurs," 592–93. See also Ian. N. Wood, "Continuity or Calamity? The Constraints of Literary Models," in *Fifth-Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?*, ed. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9–18.

[73] The correspondence has been extensively discussed. See especially Chadwick, *Poetry*, 65–69; Fontaine, "Valeurs," 1972; W. H. C. Frend, "The Two Worlds of Paulinus of Nola," in *Latin Literature of the Fourth Century*, ed. J. W. Binns (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 100–33, at 108–11; Markus, *End*, 34–37; Trout, *Paulinus*, 55–77; Chin, *Grammar*, 148–55.

[74] Auson. *Ep.* 21 (Green, *Ausonius*, 222–24). Citations from R. P. H. Green (ed.), *The Works of Ausonius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

[75] Chin, *Grammar*, 151; Trout, *Paulinus*, 69–72.

[76] Auson. *Ep.* 21.62–72 (Green, *Ausonius*, 224). For discussion see Trout, *Paulinus*, 69–72.

[77] P.-Nol. *Carm.* 10.162–63 (CSEL 30:31): . . . *non inopes animi neque de feritate legentes desertis habitare locis*. Citation from Wilhelm von Hartel, *Sancti Pontii Meropii Paulini Nolani carmina*, CSEL 30 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1999).

[78] Rousseau, *Ascetics*, 79–91; Rapp, "Desert," 110.

[79] P.-Nol. *Carm*. 10.163–80 (CSEL 30:31–32).

[80] Chin, *Grammar*, 154–55.

[81] P.-Nol. *Carm*. 10.158–61 (CSEL 30:31).

[82] While there was a strain of eremeticism in ancient philosophy, and Neoplatonists were known to seek occasional retreats, "the late antique Hellene remained as hostile to the true wilderness as his classical forebear had been." Garth Fowden, "The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society," *JHS* 102 (1982): 33–59, at 58. Cf. Markus, *End*, 35.

[83] P.-Nol. *Carm.* 10.182–84 (CSEL 30:32).

[84] P.-Nol. *Carm.* 10.197, 216–17 (CSEL 30:33, 33–34).

[85] P.-Nol. *Carm.* 10.208–220 (CSEL 30:333–34).

[86] Markus, *End*, 37.

[87] P.-Nol. *Ep.* 38.10 (CSEL 29:332–33). Citation from Wilhelm von Hartel, *Sancti Pontii Meropii Paulini Nolani epistolae*, CSEL 29 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1999). Cf. Fowden, "Pagan Holy Man," 58; Markus, *End*, 37; Salzman, *Making*, 203; Richard J. Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian: Aristocrats, Asceticism, and Reformation in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 151–54. Frend, "Paulinus," 10.

[88] P.-Nol. *Ep.* 26.1 (CSEL 29:234).

[89] P.-Nol. *Ep*. 40.7 (CSEL 29:347); *Carm*. 16.21 (CSEL 30:68). Frend, "Paulinus," 8.

[90] P.-Nol. *Ep*. 18.4 (CSEL 29:131).

[91] P.-Nol. *Carm*. 17.241–44 (CSEL 30:92).

[92] P.-Nol. *Carm.*, 17.257–64 (CSEL 30:93).

[93] Frend, "Paulinus," 8. Cf. Witke, *Numen*, 57.

[94] Sulp.-Sev. *Mart.* 6.5–7 (SC 133:266). Citation from Jacques Fontaine, ed., *Sulpice Sévère, Vie de Saint Martin*, 3 vols, SC 133–35 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1967–69).

[95] This is despite his frequent opportunities to do so, for example in his dramatic account of Bishop Maximus's exile in the mountains in *Carm.* 15.198-229 (CSEL 30:60-61).

[96] Sulp.-Sev. *Mart.* 10.4 (SC 133:274): *Qui locus tam secretus et remotus erat, ut eremi solitudinem non desideraret.* Brunert, *Ideal*, 166.

[97] Sulp.-Sev. *Dial.* 1.24.2-3 (SC 510:198-200). Citation from Jacques Fontaine, ed., *Sulpice Sévère, Gallus: Dialogues sur les "vertus" de Saint Martin*, SC 510 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2006).

[98] Rousseau, *Ascetics*, 150–51; Clare Stancliffe, *St Martin and his Hagiographer: History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 289–13; Markus, *End*, 38, 75; Brunert, *Ideal*, 162.

[99] On Ausonius, see E. J. Kenney, "The *Mosella* of Ausonius," *Greece & Rome* 31.2 (1984): 190–202, at 196; Pavlovskis, *Man*, 418.

[100] For historical overviews, see John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364–425* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 284–328; Peter J. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians* (London: Macmillan, 2005), 192–250; Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations*, 210–33.

[101] Jaqueline Clarke, "The Struggle for Control of the Landscape in Book 1 of Rutilius Namatianus," *Arethusa* 47 (2014): 89–107.

[102] Orient. *Commonitorium* 2.165–72 (CSEL 16:234). Citation from Robinson Ellis, ed., *Orientii carmina*, CSEL 16 (Vienna: Tempsky, 1888), 191–261.

[103] See, for example, *Pan. Lat.* 2(12).25.1 (Mynors, *XII Panegyrici*, 102); 5(8).14.3 (Mynors, *XII Panegyrici*, 185).

[104] Leyser, *Authority*, 42–43.

[105] Laurent Ripart, "De Lérins à Agaune: Le Monachisme rhodanien reconsidéré," in *Monachesimi d'Oriente e d'Occidente nell'alto Medioevo*, ed. Fondazione Centro italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2017), 123–86, at 125–27.

[106] On Lérins, see Friedrich Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich: Kultur und Gesellschaft in Gallien, den Rheinlanden und Bayern am Beispiel der monastischen Entwicklung (4. bis 8. Jahrhundert)* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1965), 47–87; Salvatore Pricoco, *L'isola dei santi: Il cenobio di Lerino e le origini del monachesimo gallico* (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo & Bizzarri, 1978); Ralph W. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 69–140; Brunert, *Ideal*, 176–222; Conrad Leyser, "This Sainted Isle: Panegyric, Nostalgia, and the Invention of Lerinian Monasticism," in *The Limits of Ancient Christianity: Essays on Late Antique Thought and Culture in Honor of R. A. Markus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 188–206; Mireille Labrousse, ed. *Histoire de l'abbaye de Lérins* (Bégrolles-en-Mauges: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 2005); Yann Codou and Michel Lauwers, eds. *Lérins, une île sainte: De l'Antiquite au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009).

[107] Ralph W. Mathisen, "Hilarius, Germanus and Lupus: The Aristocratic Background to the Chelidonius Affair," *Phoenix* 33 (1979): 160–69, at 167–68.

[108] Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, 47–58.

[109] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 81–83. See also Klemens M. Kasper, *Theologie und Askese: die Spiritualität des Inselmönchtums von Lérins im 5. Jahrhundert* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1991), 149–52; Marc Heijmans and Lice Pietri, "Le 'lobby' Lérinien: Le

rayonnement du monastère insulaire du Ve siècle au début du VIIe siècle," in Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins*, 35–61, at 36–38.

[110] Rut. Namat. 1.439–52, 511–26 (Keene and Savage-Armstrong, *Rutilii*, 144–46, 15–52). Citation from Charles Haines Keene (ed.) and George F. Savage-Armstrong (trans.), *Rutilii Claudii Namatiani De reditu suo libri duo/The Home-Coming of Rutilius Claudius Namatianus from Rome to Gaul in the Year 416 A.D.* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1907).

[111] See Cameron, *Last Pagans*, 207–18, for detailed criticism of such views.

[112] Rosa Maria Dessì and Michel Lauwers, "Désert, église, île sainte: Lérins et la sanctification des îles monastiques de l'Antiquité à la fin du Moyen Âge," in Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins*, 231–300, at 231–32.

[113] On aristocratic resistance to monasticism in the fourth and fifth centuries, see Gian Domenico Gordini, 'L'opposizione al monachesimo a Roma nel IV secolo', in *Dalla Chiesa antica alla Chiesa moderna: Miscellanea per il cinquantesimo della Facoltà di storia ecclesiastica della Pontificia Università gregoriana*, ed. Mario Fois, Vincenzo Monachino, and F. Litvia (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1968), 18–35; Fontaine, "Valeurs"; Markus, *End*, 37–40; Fowden, "Pagan Holy Man," 40; Cameron, *Last Pagans*, 211–12.

[114] Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 231–32.

[115] P.-Nol. *Ep.* 51 (CSEL 29:423-25).

[116] Leyser, "Uses," 121; Goodrich, *Contextualizing*, 37–40 and 59–64. On Cassian generally, see also Chadwick, *Poetry*, 212–39; Rousseau, *Ascetics*, 169–234; Brunert, *Ideal*, 129–40; Leyser, *Authority*, 33–61.

[117] Cassian. *Inst. coen.* 4.21, 25; 5.36, 40; 10.1, 24; 11.6 (SC 109:150, 156–58, 246–48, 254–56, 384, 422–24, 432). Cf. Cassian. *Coll.* 1.2; 2.5, 2.6; 5.8–9; 9.5; 13.6; 18.16 (SC 42:79–80, 116–17, 196–97; SC 54: 43–45, 153–55; SC 64: 31–36). Citations from Jean-Claude Guy, ed., *Jean Cassien, Institutions cénobitiques*, SC 109 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1965); E.

Pichery, ed., *Jean Cassien, Conférences*, 3 vols, SC 42, 54, 64 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1955–59).

[118] Cassian. *Inst. coen.* 8.18; 12.30 (SC 109: 358–60, 496). Cf. Cassian. *Coll.* 14.4; 18.4–6; 19.2–15 (SC 54:185–86; SC 64: 13–18, 39–53). Rousseau *Ascetics*, 185; Markus, *End*, 165.

[119] Cassian. *Inst. coen.* 1.10 (SC 109:50–52). On his broader criticisms of Gallo-Roman monasticism, see Brunert, *Ideal*, 138–39; Goodrich, *Contextualizing*, passim.

[120] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 86–89 and 279–81.

[121] For discussion of the political context, see Georg Langgärtner, *Die Gallienpolitik der Päpste im 5. und 6. Jahrhundert. Eine Studie über den apostoliche Vikariat von Arles* (Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1964), 24–61; Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 69–85 and 279–81; Martin Heinzelmann, "The 'Affair' of Hilary of Arles (445) and Gallo-Roman Identity in the Fifth Century," in *Fifth-Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?*, ed. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 239–51, at 244–48.

[122] Books 1–10 are dedicated to Helladius and Bishop Leontius of Fréjus, in whose jurisdiction the islands of Lérins lay, and books 11–17 to Honoratus and Eucherius. Books 18–24 are dedicated to four otherwise unknown monks on the Îles d'Hyéres.

[123] Cassian. *Coll.* 24.1 (SC 64:170–72).

[124] Cassian. *Coll.* 24.2 (SC 64:173–74): *Nec ignoramus esse nonnulla etiam in regionibus nostris amoena secreta, in quibus pomorum copia et hortorum gratia uel ubertas necessitatem uictus nostri minimo labore corporis expedirent [. . .]. Sed despectis illis omnibus et cum uniuersa mundi huius uoluptate contemptis his tantum squaloribus delectamur uniuersisque deliciis horrendam solitudinis istius praeferimus uastitatem neque huic harenarum amaritudini quantasuis uberis glaebae diuitias conparamus, non temporalia huius corporis lucra, sed aeterna spiritus emolumenta sectantes.*

[125] A similar challenge is made by Salvian of Marseilles, another monk of Lérins, who in *Gub*. 7.2.8–9 (SC 220:434–36), describes south-west Gaul in conventionally bucolic terms as "the image of paradise" (*paradisi imaginem*), only then to assert the moral corruption of its people. Citation from Georges Lagarrigue, ed., *Salvien de Marseille, Œvres, tome II: Du gouvernement de Dieu*, SC 220 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1975).

[126] Cassian. *Coll.* 9–17 *praef.* (SC 54:98–99). See Richard J. Goodrich, "Underpinning the Text: Self-Justification in John Cassian's Ascetic Prefaces," *JECS* 13.4 (2005): 411–36, at 426–28.

[127] For general discussion of *De laude eremi*, see Chadwick, *Poetry*, 158–60; Markus, *End*, 160–63; Brunert, *Ideal*, 180–87; Leyser, "This Sainted Isle," 195–97; Leyser, "Uses," 119–20; Heijmans and Pietri, "Le 'lobby'," 53–54; Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 234–37; Mantė Lenkaitytė, "Eucher interprète de la Bible dans l''Éloge du Désert'," in Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins*, 83–104.

[128] Leyser, "This Sainted Isle," 196.

[129] Ilona Opelt, "Zur literarischen Eigenart von Eucherius' Schrift *De laude eremi*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 22 (1968): 198–208, at 198–99. The *XII Panegyrici Latini* provide examples of this technique used to praise Britain (VI(7).9.1–2) and Spain (II(12).4.1–5), while Sidonius Apollinaris, *Ep.* 4.21.5 (Anderson, 142), does the same for his native Auvergne. Citations of Sidonius *Ep.* books 3–9 from W. B. Anderson, ed., *Sidonius: Letters III–IX* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965).

[130] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 5 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 140). Citation from Salvatore Pricoco, ed. and trans., *Elogio dell'eremo: Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2014).

[131] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 6–14, 17–27 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 140–50, 152–62). On the depiction of wilderness in the Bible, see Guillaumont, *Aux Origins*, 77–78; Oelschlaeger, *Idea*, 45–53; Le

Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 47–48; Rapp, "Desert"; Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 67–68; Nash, *Wilderness*, 15–17.

[132] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 28–41 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 162–80).

[133] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 42–43 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 180–84).

[134] See Markus, *End*, 160–63, with special reference to Augustine.

[135] Matthias Skeb, "Endelechius," in *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, ed. S. Döpp and W. Geerlings (Freiburg: Herder, 1998), 189; O'Hogan, *Prudentius*, 106–7.

[136] Witke, *Numen*, 103–4; Roberts, *Poetry*, 174–77; O'Hogan, *Prudentius*, 115–26. On the Christian adoption of the *locus amoenus* motif to describe paradise, see Curtius, *European Literature*, 197–200; Rapp, "Desert," 107–9.

[137] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 15.2 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 150–52).

[138] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 37.1 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 174): *O quam iocunda sunt sitientibus Deum etiam deuiae illis saltibus solitudines! Quam amoena sunt quarentibus Christum illa secreta, quae longe lateque natura excubante porrecta sunt!*

[139] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 38.1 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 174).

[140] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 35 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 170–72).

[141] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 34.2 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 168).

[142] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 38.3 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 176).

[143] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 39–41 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 176–80).

[144] Brunert, *Ideal*, 182.

[145] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 42.2 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 180–82): *Aquis scatens, herbis uirens, floribus renitens, uisibus odoribusque iocunda, paradisum possidentibus se exhibet quem possidebunt.*

[146] Cf. Heijmans and Pietri, "Le 'lobby'," 54.

[147] Evagr. *Anton.* 50 (CCL 170:55-56); Hier. *Vit. Paul.* 5–6 (SC 508:152-56). Evagr. *Anton.* cited from H. E. Bertrand, ed., *Vita beati Antonii abbatis Evagrio interprete*, CCL 170 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 1-103; Hier. *Vit. Paul*. cited from Edgardo M. Morales, ed., *Jérôme, Trois vie de moines (Paul, Malchus, Hilarion)*, SC 508 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2007), 144-82.

[148] Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 237.

[149] Cael. *Ep*. 4 (PL 50:0431A–0431B): *Nam si studere incipiamus novitati, traditum nobis a patribus ordinem calcabimus, ut locum supervacuis superstitionibus faciamus.* Citation from Jacques-Paul Migné, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus series Latina* (Paris: 1844-65).

[150] Hilar.-Arel. *Vit. Hon*. 14 (SC 235:104–6). Citation from Marie-Denise Valentin, ed., *Hilaire d'Arles, Vie de Saint Honorat*, SC 235 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1977).

[151] Brunert, *Ideal*, 216–17. Cf. Leyser, "Uses"; Rapp, "Desert".

[152] Pricoco, *L'isola*, 166–68; Markus, *End*, 161–62; Leyser, "Uses"; Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 234–42.

[153] Hilar.-Arel. *Vit. Hon.* 15.2 (SC 235:108): *Vacantem itaque insulam ob nimietatem squaloris, et inaccessam uenenatorum animalium metu.* This is a cliché of hagiographical literature: see Jean-Pierre Weiss, "Lérins et la 'Régle des Quatre Pères'," in Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins*, 121–40, at 138–39.

[154] Hilar.-Arel. *Vit. Hon.* 15.2 (SC 235:108): *Nam circumiecti accolae terribilem illam uastitatem ferebant.*

[155] Hilar.-Arel. *Vit. Hon.* 20.1 (SC 235:126). Cf. Dessì and Lauwers 2009, 237–38.

[156] Leyser, "This Sainted Isle," 198.

[157] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 72.5, 6, 8, 13 (CCL 101A:776–78, 780). Citation from F. Glorie, ed., *Eusebius 'Gallicanus', Collectio homiliarum*, 3 vols, CCL 101 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1970-71).

[158] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 39.3 (CCL 101A:458). Cf. *Hom.* 40.3–4 (CCL 101A:474–79), and Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 238–40.

[159] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 35.4–9, 12 (CCL 101:403–8, 410). For further discussion, see Leyser, "This Sainted Isle," 200–1.

[160] Vinc.-Lir. *Commonitorium* 1.4 (CCL 64:147): *Locus autem, quod urbium frequentiam turbasque uitantes remotioris uillulae et in ea secretum monasterii incolamus habitaculum, ubi absque magna distractione fieri possit illud quod canitur in Psalmo:* Vacate*, inquit,* et uidete quoniam ego sum Dominus*.* Citation from R. Demeulenaere, ed., *Vincentii Lerinensis commonitorium excerpta*, CCL 64 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 125-95.

[161] Honoratus, *Vit. Hilar.-Arel* 7 (SC 404:102–4): . . . *tanto duce terrestrem ingreditur Lirinensis Insulae paradisum.* Citation from Paul-André Jacob, ed., *Honorat de Marseille, La vie d'Hilaire d'Arles*, SC 404 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1995).

[162] Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 241–42; Brunert, *Ideal*, 181–82.

[163] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 72.5 (CCL 101A:776): . . . *in secreto positus uelut in monte remotus*. Cf. Hilar.-Arel. *Vit. Hon.* 12 (SC 235:100–2). Late antique authors occasionally deploy the motif of mountains as a metaphor for the spiritual excellence of Lerinese monks, deliberately contrasting it with the flat terrain of the islands: Dessì and Lauwers, "Désert," 241–42.

[164] Eucher. *Laud. her.* 42.3 (Pricoco, *Elogio*, 182).

[165] Yann Codou, "Aux origines du monachisme en Gaule (Ve–Xie s.): Les fouilles de l'église du Saint-Sauveur, Lérins, Île Saint-Honorat, Alpes-Maritimes," *Hortus Artium Medievalium* 19 (2013): 63–71; Yann Codou, "Aux origines du monachisme: Le dossier de Saint-Honorat de Lérins," in *L'empreinte chrétienne en Gaule du IVe au Ixe siècle*, ed. Michèle Gaillard (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 291–310.

[166] See, for example, Cassian. *Inst. coen.* 5.36, 40; 10.24 (SC 109:246–48, 254–56, 422–24); *Coll. praef.*; 2.6 (SC 42:76, 117–18).

[167] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 35.8 (CCL 101:406–7). For discussion see Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 90–91.

[168] Guillaumont, *Aux Origins*, 69–80; Le Goff, *Medieval Imagination*, 51; Conrad Leyser, "Angels, Monks, and Demons in the Early Medieval West," in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. Richard Gameson and Henrietta Leyser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 9–22, at 12–13; Rapp, "Desert," 97–99.

[169] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 72.11 (CCL 101A:779).

[170] See Merrills, "Monks," 217–21.

[171] Leyser, *Authority*, 46, 55; Leyser, "Uses," 121; Rapp, "Desert," 104–7.

[172] See Salv. *Ep*. 1 (SC 176:76–82), where he asks the monks of Lérins to receive one of his young kinsmen who had been held captive by the Franks at Cologne. Citation from Georges Lagarrigue, ed., *Salvien de Marseille, Œvres, tome I: Les lettres, les livres de Timothée a l'église*, SC 176 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971).

[173] With respect to Eucherius, see Martine Dulaey, "Les relations entre Lérins et Marseilles: Eucher et Cassien," in Codou and Lauwers, *Lérins*, 63–82, at 41–42.

[174] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 82–83.

[175] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 108–10.

[176] Leyser, "This Sainted Isle," 194.

[177] Karl Stroheker, *Der senatorische Adel im spätantiken Gallien* (Darmstädt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970), 74; Fontaine, "Valuers," 5–8; Brunert, *Ideal*, 177; Rapp, "Desert," 110. More generally, see Salzman, *Making*, 203–5.

[178] Ripart, "De Lérins," 150–61. A revealing offshoot of Gallo-Roman monasticism, beyond the scope of this article but deserving of further study with respect to its treatment of the natural world, is represented by the Jura monastic tradition. See Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, 68–69; Ian N. Wood, "A Prelude to Columbanus: The Monastic Achievement in the

Burgundian Territories," in *Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism*, ed. H. B. Clarke and Mary Brennan, British Archaeological Reports International Series 113 (Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1981), 3–33; Markus, *End*, 213–14; Dunn 2000, 84; Leyser, "Uses," 129–30; Albrecht Diem, "Inventing the Holy Rule: Some Observations on the History of Monastic Normative Observance in the Early Medieval West," in *Western Monasticism* ante litteram: *The Spaces of Monastic Observance in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Hendrick Dey and Elizabeth Fentress (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 53–84, at 56–57.

[179] For historical context, see C. E. Stevens, *Sidonius Apollinaris and his Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 130–80, and Jill Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome, A.D. 407–485* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 169–242.

[180] Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 268–72.

[181] Such shared literary culture had long been used by secular aristocrats to maintain group solidarity. See Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, 105–17.

[182] Harries, *Sidonius*, 6–10; Ralph W. Mathisen, "Dating the letters of Sidonius," in *New Approaches to Sidonius Apollinaris*, ed. Joop A. can Waarden (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 221–48.

[183] Honoratus, *Vit. Hilar.-Arel.* (SC 404).

[184] René Borius, ed., *Constance de Lyon, Vie de Saint Germain d'Auxerre*, SC 112 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1965).

[185] See Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 8.15 (Anderson, 492), where he refers to the unfinished biography.

[186] Constantius, *Vita Germani* 1.6 (SC 112:130): *Itaque uir beatissimus, quod est difficillimum, inter frequentias populorum solitudinis uitam et heremum in saeculi conuersatione seruauit.*

[187] Honoratus, *Vit. Hilar.-Arel.* 12, 32 (SC 404:118, 164).

[188] Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 4.9; 7.9.9; 6.1.3; 8.14.2; 9.9.13 (Anderson, *Sidonius*, 96-98, 342, 248, 484, §540–42).

[189] Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 4.25.5 (Anderson, *Sidonius*, 168): *[N]unc ergo Iurensia si te remittunt iam monasteria, in quae libenter solitus escendere iam caelestibus supernisque praeludis habitaculis*. If, as seems likely, Domnulus is to be identified with the Christian poet Rusticus Helpidius, it is interesting to note his use of the *locus amoenus* motif to depict the admission of the "Good Thief" into Paradise: Rusticus Helpidius, *In historiam testamenti ueteris et noui carmina* (PL 62:0544C–0544D).

[190] Sid. Apoll. *Carm.* 16.91–115 (Anderson, *Sidonius*, 250).

[191] Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 9.3.4 (Anderson, *Sidonius*, 512): *. . . precum peritus insulanarum, quas de palaestra congregationis heremitidis et de senatu Lirinensium cellulanorum in urbem quoque, cuius ecclesiae sacra superinspicis, transtulisti, nil ab abbate mutatus per sacerdotem, quippe cum nouae dignitatis obtentu rigorem ueteris disciplinae non relaxaueris.*

[192] Eus.-Gall. *Sermones* 35.4–9, 12 (CCL 101:403–8, 410).

[193] Plin. *Pan.* 82.6 (Mynors, *XII Panegyrici*, 70).

[194] Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 9.9.13 (Anderson, *Sidonius*, 542): *. . . in abstrusis macerare solitudinibus.*