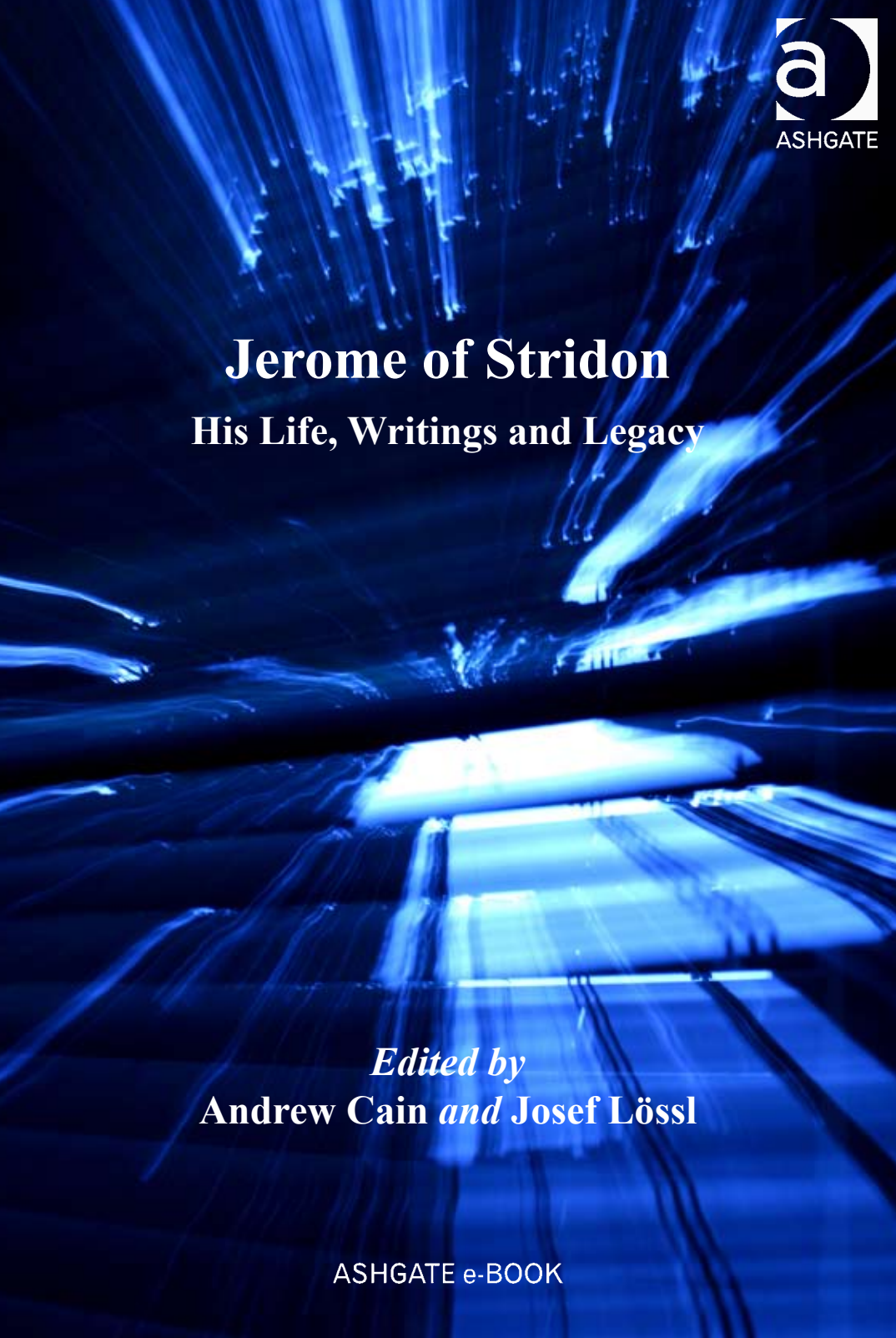

Jerome of Stridon

His Life, Writings and Legacy

Edited by

Andrew Cain *and* Josef Lössl

ASHGATE e-BOOK

JEROME OF STRIDON

In Memoriam

Yves-Marie Duval

Jerome of Stridon

His Life, Writings and Legacy

Edited by
ANDREW CAIN AND JOSEF LÖSSL
University of Colorado, USA and Cardiff University, UK

ASHGATE

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Published by
Ashgate Publishing Limited
Wey Court East
Union Road
Farnham
Surrey, GU9 7PT
England

Ashgate Publishing Company
Suite 420
101 Cherry Street
Burlington
VT 05401-4405
USA

www.ashgate.com

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Jerome of Stridon : his life, writings and legacy
1. Jerome, Saint, d. 419 or 20
I. Cain, Andrew J. II. Lössl, Josef
270.2’092

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Jerome of Stridon : his life, writings, and legacy / [edited by]
Andrew Cain and Josef Lössl.
p. cm.
English and French.
Papers presented at a conference held July 13–16, 2006 at Cardiff University.
Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.
ISBN 978-0-7546-6407-9 (alk. paper)
1. Jerome, Saint, d. 419 or 20. I. Cain, Andrew. II. Lössl, Josef.

BR65.J476J47 2009
270.2092—dc22

2008036048

ISBN 978-0-7546-6407-9 (hbk)
ISBN 978-0-7546-9329-1 (ebk.V)

Mixed Sources
Product group from well-managed forests and other controlled sources
www.fsc.org Cert no. SA-COC-1565
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
MPG Books Ltd, Bodmin, Cornwall.

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Acknowledgements

We the editors conceived the idea for the conference from which this book has emerged during our extensive conversations in May of 2003 at the 38th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan. After three years of preparation, the conference *Jerome of Stridon: Religion, Culture, Society and Literature in Late Antiquity* took place at Cardiff University in Wales from 13 to 16 July 2006. Over seventy scholars from around the world attended, making it the largest and most diverse gathering of its kind ever assembled for the sole purpose of discussing the latest research on Jerome. Nearly three dozen papers were delivered by internationally renowned scholars from eleven different countries. This volume contains the best of these papers.

The conference was the major outcome of a close and many-faceted collaborative relationship between the Cardiff University Centre for Late Antique Religion and Culture and the Department of Classics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. For their support in varying capacities we would like to express our gratitude to a number of colleagues at our home institutions and elsewhere: Nicholas Baker-Brian, Gillian Clark, Ken Donovan, Andrew Edgar, Noel Lenski, John North, David Scourfield, Richard Thomas, Shaun Tougher and John Watt. The conference and its corresponding volume have been made possible by generous financial support from the following foundations and institutions: the Loeb Classical Library Foundation at Harvard University; the Cardiff University School of Religious and Theological Studies and the School of History and Archaeology; the Department of Classics at the University of Colorado; the Graduate Committee on the Arts and Humanities at the University of Colorado; and the British Academy.

This book, like the conference itself, has been a group effort. The contributors deserve recognition for being agreeable to the (sometimes substantial) revisions they were asked to make to their papers. Special thanks are due to John Smedley, our editor at Ashgate, for supporting this project so enthusiastically from its inception. We also wish to thank Nick Wain and his production team at the press for guiding the manuscript expertly to completion

We end now on a sad note. Yves-Marie Duval, who had commandeered his own conference on Jerome (Chantilly, 1986) and who had been a featured speaker at our 2006 conference, passed away on 12 March 2007. The impact he had on the study of Jerome over the course of four decades is incalculable. He died before completing the revisions for his paper, and Benoît Jeanjean kindly stepped in to finish the work so that the paper could be included here. This volume is dedicated to Yves-Marie in loving memory.

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Abbreviations

AAAD	Antichità altoadriatiche
AB	Analecta Bollandiana
ABR	American Benedictine Review
AC	L'Antiquité classique
AClass.	Acta Classica: Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa
ACO	Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum (ed. E. Schwartz)
AEHE V	Annuaire de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études, Ve sec., sciences religieuses
AnnNap	Annali della facoltà di lettere e filosofia dell'Università di Napoli
AnnSE	Annali di storia dell'esegesi
ASR	Annali di scienze religiose
AugStud	Augustinian Studies
AWA	Archiv zur Weimarer Ausgabe der Werke Martin Luthers
BAGB	Bulletin de l'association Guillaume Budé
BALAC	Bulletin d'ancienne littérature et d'archéologie chrétiennes
BeO	Bibbia e Oriente
BKR	Bedi kartlisa
BLE	Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique
BN	Biblische Notizen
BSAF	Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France
ByzZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
CE	Chronique d'Égypte
ChHist	Church History
COCR	Collectanea Cisterciensia
CPh	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CRAI	Comptes rendus de l'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CTh	Codex Theodosianus
DACL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chretienne et de liturgie
EME	Early Medieval Europe
EphL	Ephemerides liturgicae
ERSY	Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook
EstEcl	Estudios eclesiásticos
FMS	Frühmittelalterliche Studien
FZPhTh	Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie

G&H	Gender & History
GB	Grazer Beiträge
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
ICS	Illinois Classical Studies
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
JbAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JLARC	Journal of Late Antique Religion and Culture
JMEMS	Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies
JQR	Jewish Quarterly Review
JR	Journal of Religion
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies
LCI	Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie
LJ	Luther-Jahrbuch
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche
MEFRA	Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école française de Rome, antiquité
MGH AA	Monumenta Germaniae historica, Auctores antiquissimi
MHE	Miscellanea historiae ecclesiasticae
MP	Medieval Prosopography
NAH	Narbonne archéologie et histoire
NRTh	Nouvelle revue théologique
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PIBA	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
POC	Proche-orient chrétien
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RAM	Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique
Rbén	Revue bénédictine
Rbi	Revue biblique
REA	Revue des études anciennes
REAug	Revue des études augustiniennes
RecAug	Recherches augustiniennes
RecTh	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale
REL	Revue des Études Latines
RFHL	Revue Française d'Histoire du Livre
RFIC	Rivista di filologia e di istruzione classica

RHE	Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique
RHR	Revue de l'histoire des religions
RicSRel	Ricerche di storia religiosa
RMab	Revue Mabillon
ROC	Revue de l'Orient chrétien
RPh	Revue de philologie de littérature et d'histoire anciennes
RPL	Res publica litterarum
RQ	Römische Quartalsschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte
RSLR	Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa
RSR	Revue des sciences religieuses
RThPh	Revue de théologie et de philosophie
SC	Sources chrétiennes
ScC	Scuola cattolica
SCent	Second Century
ScrTh	Scrinium theologicum
SEJG	Sacris erudiri: jaarboek voor Godsdienstwetenschappen
SicGymn	Siculorum gymnasium
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
SO	Symbolae osloenses
StudMon	Studia monastica
StudPatr	Studia patristica
StudTard	Studi tardoantichi
TAPhA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
Th&Ph	Theologie und Philosophie
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
ThS	Theological Studies
ThZ	Theologische Zeitschrift
TQ	Theologische Quartalschrift
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur (Berlin)
TZ	Trierer Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst des Trierer Landes und seiner Nachbargebiete
VChr	Vigiliae christianae
VetChr	Vetera christianorum
WA	Weimarer Ausgabe der Werke Martin Luthers
WHB	Wiener Humanistische Blätter
WS	Wiener Studien
YFS	Yale French Studies
ZAC	Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
ZNTW	Zeitschrit für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZPalV	Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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Introduction

Andrew Cain, Josef Lössl

Scholarship on Jerome is thriving like never before. Critical editions now exist for nearly all of the works in his mammoth literary corpus, and monographs, translations, commentaries, and articles in several languages continue to proliferate, taking aim at every conceiveable aspect of his life and writings.[1] This unprecedented flurry of research activity, especially in the past two decades, has produced scores of dramatic new insights that have revolutionized the way in which we approach Jerome in his late antique milieu.

This volume, which belongs to a rich tradition of conference proceedings on Jerome,[2] contains papers presented at an international conference organized by the editors and held at Cardiff University from 13 to 16 July 2006. These papers epitomize some of the latest and best advances in research on one of the most prolific literary figures in Greco-Roman antiquity. Although all but four of the eighteen studies presented herein are in English, scholars from eleven different countries are represented. The volume does not pretend to be comprehensive, though many of the major facets of Jerome's life, literary output and legacy do in fact receive due coverage. Familiar debates are re-opened, hitherto uncharted terrain is explored, and problems old and new are posed and solved with the use of innovative methodologies.

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[1] For a comprehensive recent bibliography of scholarly works on Jerome written down to 2003, see A. Fürst, *Hieronymus. Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg, 2003) 283–323. The general bibliography at the end of the present volume, while intentionally not as exhaustive as Fürst's, nevertheless contains many of the same titles, not to mention a number of important studies which have appeared since 2003.

[2] Cf. *Miscellanea Geronimiana. Scritti varii pubblicati nel XV centenario dalla morte di San Girolamo* (Rome, 1920), with a foreword by Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli; F.X. Murphy ed., *A Monument to St. Jerome: Essays on Some Aspects of His Life, Works and Influence* (New York, 1952); Y.-M. Duval ed., *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient: XVIe centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly, septembre 1986* (Paris, 1988); C. Moreschini, G. Menestrina eds., *Motivi letterari ed esegetici in Gerolamo. Atti del convegno tenuto a Trento il 5-7 dicembre 1995* (Brescia, 1997).

I. Hagiography, Letters, Heresy and the Man

The six papers arranged under the first thematic heading draw attention to crucial aspects of Jerome's work as a hagiographer, letter-writer and theological controversialist. Research in these three areas has flourished in the past several years.[3] The contributions included in this volume draw from recent developments and suggest new lines of enquiry, in particular by uncovering the underlying motivations that drove Jerome's literary production and by then reflecting anew on Jerome the man in all of his complexities.

Stefan Rebenich examines one of Jerome's very first writings, the *Life of Paul the First Hermit*, which portrays the obscure Paul, rather than St Antony, as the real founder of Egyptian anchoritism. Notwithstanding scepticism from contemporary critics about whether Paul had even existed, this work was wildly popular in its own time and in posterity, to the degree that it was translated into several languages and spawned a saint's cult in honour of Paul. Rather than linger over the (by now) stale debate about Paul's historicity, Rebenich focuses on the reasons why Jerome might have penned the *Life* and suggests some factors that contributed to its success. He argues that Jerome wrote this picturesque little work in order to provide both entertainment and edification to Western Christians whom he invited to look to Paul as a model of ascetic perfection. Furthermore, Jerome ambitiously aimed to replace Athanasius' Greek *Life of St. Antony*, which until then had been the only work of its kind on Eastern asceticism available to Latin readers, and in the process to cement his reputation among Latin Christians as an authentic conduit for Eastern monastic teaching.

Next follows a triptych of papers on the correspondence, perhaps the best known and certainly the most widely accessible[4] portion of Jerome's *oeuvre*. Yves-Marie Duval takes a closer look at three lesser known letters that open a window onto their author's eventful second stay in Rome from 382 to 385. In *Ep*. 27*, written c.392 to bishop Aurelius of Carthage, Jerome reminisces about his brief service as the sometime-secretary to Pope Damasus. Taking this letter

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[3] The hagiographer: e.g., S. Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints. Hagiography and Geography in Jerome* (Leiden, 2005); P. Leclerc, E. Morales, *Jérôme: Trois Vies de moines (Paul, Malchus, Hilarion)* (Paris, 2007) (the first modern critical edition, with introduction and notes, of Jerome's three hagiographic *Lives*). The epistolographer: e.g., A. Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Münster, 1999); B. Conring, *Hieronymus als Briefschreiber: Ein Beitrag zur spätantiken Epistolographie* (Tübingen, 2001); but especially A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009). The theological controversialist: e.g., B. Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris, 1999).

[4] E.g., the letters have been translated into several modern languages. For a bibliography of the various editions and translations, see G. Asdrubali Pentiti, M. Spadoni Cerroni eds, *Epistolari cristiani (secc. I-V). Repertorio bibliografico II. Epistolari Latini (secc. IV-V)* (Rome, 1990) 31–5.

as his point of departure, Duval provides insight into the particulars of Jerome's official duties. The remaining two letters, one to the deacon Praesidius (*Ep*. 18*) praising the desert monastic life and the other to Marcella (*Ep*. 43) exhorting her to leave the city for the solitude of the countryside, were written in Rome (a slightly revised dating is proposed for the former). Duval detects in these letters signs of Jerome's growing disenchantment with his life in the urban metropolis, and he ties this interpretation into a discussion of the circumstances of Jerome's untimely departure from Rome in the summer of 385.

Neil Adkin provides a microtextual examination of a passage in Jerome's consolation to Heliodorus for the death of his nephew Nepotian (*Ep*. 60).[5] The passage appears at first glance to be a conflation of two different parables from the Gospel of Luke. But after subjecting it to a rigorous analysis, Adkin concludes that it is more immediately a fusion of phraseological echoes from two different writings by Tertullian. He then goes on to make two points about Hieronymian *Quellenforschung*. The first is that Jerome need not have read the Tertullianic treatises soon before writing *Ep*. 60. Aided by an astonishing memory, he could plausibly have recalled flashy phrases from a much earlier reading. The second point is that Jerome did not necessarily expect his subtle re-workings of others' prose to be recognized by any but those most attuned to such delightful stylistic play.

In his own time Jerome was a marginalized figure in Western Christianity who suffered from an extremely problematic personal, ecclesiastical, theological, and scholarly profile. How then did he seek to secure a favourable reception of himself and his body of work? Andrew Cain answers this central question by looking at two letters in which Jerome commemorates women ascetics in Rome with whom he had enjoyed some or other association: the fifty-something virgin Asella (*Ep*. 24) and the widow Marcella (*Ep*. 127). Scholars have accessed these letters primarily for the biographical information they purport to provide about the women sketched therein. Cain outlines a new approach to these documents by highlighting their fundamentally propagandistic-apologetic nature. He shows that Jerome portrays Asella and Marcella as iconic symbols for his ascetic, scholarly, and theological special interests. Jerome offers them as reputable public faces for his controversial ascetic teachings and Biblical scholarship in an effort to defend his embattled spiritual and intellectual authority to the wider Latin Christian world that remained wary of his cause.

The final two papers in this section examine from two different angles Jerome's involvement in the theological controversy with Pelagius in the early fifth century. Benoît Jeanjean dissects the anti-Pelagian *Dialogue between Atticus and Critobulus*, one of Jerome's last writings. It is an imaginary conversation between two fictional characters, Atticus, an orthodox Catholic, and Critobulus, an advocate for Pelagius' controversial doctrines on free-will and grace. Jeanjean pinpoints the sources that inform Jerome's negative portrayal of the Pelagian

[5] For an excellent commentary on this letter, see J.H.D. Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus: A Commentary on Jerome, Letter 60* (Oxford, 1993).

position (several works by Pelagius and Augustine) and he shows how cleverly Jerome adapts, and distorts, certain elements of the teachings of Pelagius so as to cast him as an archetypal heretic. What results from this careful analysis of Jerome's polemical strategies is a cautious reappraisal of Pelagius' actual doctrines as well as a newfound appreciation for Jerome's self-presentation as a champion of orthodox Christianity.

Philip Rousseau takes a fresh look at the fragmentary *Commentary on Jeremiah*, which originated during the same period (between 414 and 416). Rather than mine this work for evidence for Jerome's controversy with Pelagius and his supporters, he investigates how the commentary might reflect Jerome's attempts to cope, in literary terms, with the sack of Rome in 410. Jerome is often seen in contrast to Augustine as a Roman conservative, who, shaken to the core by this tumultuous event, was unable to look beyond the historical confines of the Roman empire and to distinguish his religious hopes and expectations from it. Rousseau argues on the contrary that the *Commentary on Jeremiah* indicates that Jerome recovered well from his initial shock and that he developed a universal historical and eschatological perspective comparable to the one developed by Augustine in the *City of God*. This is not to say that the eschatology in Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah* can in any sense rival the relevant parts in Augustine's writing (e.g., *City of God*, Book 22). Nevertheless, on the evidence of the *Commentary on Jeremiah*, Jerome should be credited with more historical and eschatological perspective than is allowed for by a still widespread stereotype.

II. The Science of Scripture: Philology, Exegesis and Translation

Jerome's Biblical scholarship has become such a vast area of research that comprehensive treatment of it is impossible in the limited space available in a single volume. This is due not only to the sheer size of his *oeuvre* but also to the nature of the subject matter—the Bible in its literary and cultural-historical context. Nevertheless, the papers in this section cover many of the major and some of the minor aspects of Jerome's profile as a Biblical translator and exegete: his linguistic and philological competence;[6] his reasons for composing a new translation of the Bible and commentaries on many of its books;[7] Origen's influence on him;[8] and

[6] Cf. e.g., A. Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford, 1993); S. Rebenich, "Jerome. The 'vir trilinguis', and the 'Hebraica veritas'," *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77; H. Newman, *Jerome and the Jews* (diss.: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997) (in Hebrew); M. Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology* (Leiden, 2007).

[7] See M.H. Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago, 2006).

[8] See, e.g., R. Heine, *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (Oxford, 2002).

his relations to contemporary Jews and Judaism.[9] The findings presented herein enable us to paint a more composite picture than ever of the greatest Biblical scholar of the ancient Latin Church.

Danuta Shanzer examines an arresting feature of Jerome's exegesis of the book of Tobit as it relates to his advocacy of alms-giving. As is clear from a reading of his letters alongside his commentaries and other works, Jerome pursued not only scholarly but also political and even financial goals, for example in connection with inheritances bequeathed to the Church by affluent ascetic women as well as with the slowly emerging idea that alms or other donations could benefit the deceased in the afterlife. Shanzer shows how these circumstances influenced Jerome's interpretation of Tobit and how his exegesis in turn was instrumental to the formation of the doctrine of purgatory. In order to underscore this point, she cites Jerome's *Ep*. 66 as an early and hitherto unnoticed example of alms as suffrages for the dead.

Another aspect of Jerome's exegetical work which has received little attention is taken up by Régis Courtray: the story of the two bandits (*latrones*) executed alongside Jesus, found in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 27:38, 44; Mark 15:27–8; Luke 23:33, 39–43). Courtray shows that although this story is only of limited significance in the grander scheme of the Gospel narratives, it attracted much attention from early Christian exegetes. Jerome, Courtray argues, followed previous exegetes, especially Origen, by focusing on the significance and symbolism of the good bandit (mentioned only in Luke 23:40–1). It appears that this motif of a last-minute conversion experienced by a criminal who shared his death as a proto-martyr with Christ was a particularly popular model of early Christian life that was reminiscent of the heroic age of the persecutions. Hence Jerome cited the good bandit as an *exemplum* of faith on many occasions across a wide spectrum of his work.

In a slightly provocatively entitled paper, John Cameron asks whether Jerome, by translating the Psalms from Hebrew, created what might be termed a "rabbinic Vulgate." He anchors his discussion in the current discourse on the emergence of Judaism and Christianity as two distinct religions. He also considers an older discussion in scholarship which culminated in the verdict of Dominique Barthélemy that Jerome's translation amounted to a replacement of the "Old Testament of the Church" with the "Bible of the rabbis."[10] Cameron observes that although Jerome consciously drew on Jewish philological expertise to ascertain the meaning of Hebrew phrases in the Psalter, his translations do not reflect Jewish *exegetical* expertise. Jerome does routinely cite Jewish exegesis in his commentaries, but his recourse to it seems not to have affected his translation in the sense that one could call it "rabbinical" in character.

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[9] See, e.g., R. Gonzales-Salinero, *Biblia y Polémica Antijudía en Jerónimo* (Madrid, 2003).

[10] D. Barthélemey, "L'Ancien Testament a mûri à Alexandrie," *ThZ* 21 (1965) 358.

Hillel Newman approaches an old problem in a new way. The extent of Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew has been a matter of heated debate among modern scholars. In Newman's view, this debate may never definitively be closed. Jerome's Hebrew skills, he estimates, were probably better than his detractors would allow, though probably not as good as his admirers would like them to have been. Before trying to measure Jerome's Hebrew competence, we must first come to terms with certain problems, such as how to distinguish his descriptions of his translation activities and the evidence from the translated texts themselves, and how to account for the fact that there is no evidence that Jerome knew vernacular Hebrew (no written Jewish traditions seem to have existed at the time). Jerome relied on Jewish informants who would have spoken with him in Greek or Latin. However, he clearly seems to have had a passive knowledge of Biblical Hebrew. He could translate from Hebrew and had some grasp of the fundamentals of its grammar. It may also be assumed that any knowledge Jerome had would have improved over time. At any rate, Newman concludes, the question about how well Jerome knew Hebrew when he was alive is secondary to his role as cultural mediator which is manifest in his literary estate.

While scholars today are generally aware of Jerome's irrepressible tendency to advocate himself and his work, Alfons Fürst brings up an intriguing counter-example: Jerome's translation of nine homilies by Origen of Alexandria on Isaiah. The translation of them is mentioned by Rufinus and is transmitted anonymously in the manuscript tradition, but there is no evidence that Jerome ever claimed authorship. This could have been accidental. It was an early work (380/1) with a number of stylistic flaws, from which Jerome later may have wanted to distance himself. However, Fürst puts forward a more striking reason for Jerome's silence. He suggests that Jerome altered Origen's identification of the seraphim of Isaiah 6:2–3 with the Son and the Spirit, in order to avoid contributing to the spread of an heretical teaching on the Trinity. In a later work, *De seraphim* (*Ep*. 18A), Jerome entirely rejected this view, and Fürst holds that it is possible that he did not want to be identified as the translator of a work that countenanced heresy. He concludes that if Jerome did indeed suppress the work, resisting his impulse for self-promotion, it was to safeguard his reputation as an orthodox writer; and for that purpose it may have been at times more expedient for him not to write or to publish, but to remain silent.

Aline Canellis provides further evidence for the influence of the Alexandrian school of Biblical exegesis, not only by Origen but also by Didymus the Blind. In 406, more than a decade after he had translated the Minor Prophet Zechariah from the Hebrew, Jerome dedicated a commentary on this Biblical book to Exsuperius the bishop of Toulouse. He worked from the commentaries on Zechariah by Origen, Hippolytus of Rome, and Didymus the Blind. Didymus had explained the Prophet in five books at Jerome's request when the latter was sitting as a pupil under the Greek exegete in Alexandria in 386. The commentaries by Origen and Hippolytus are lost, but the one by Didymus has been preserved almost in its entirety. Previous scholars have tended to characterize Jerome's commentary as

something of a slavish copy of that of Didymus. Canellis debunks this notion by pointing out the ways in which Jerome departed from his primary Greek model and added his own original touches to his commentary, specifically with respect to its general structure and organization and the personalized manner in which Jerome deployed theological and exegetical material found in Didymus' commentary.

The boost in recent decades in the study of Pauline exegesis in the fourth and fifth centuries has also had its effects on the study of Jerome's role in this interesting and highly significant historical phenomenon.[11] Among the outcomes of recent research are two new critical editions of Jerome's commentaries on Titus and Philemon by Federica Bucchi[12] and on Galatians by Giacomo Raspanti.[13] In the present volume, Raspanti explores Jerome's motivation for writing the *Commentary on Galatians*, the wider literary and historical context in which he did so, and the overall significance of the project. Paul's use of the text of the Old Testament in Galatians, textual questions arising from this use, and Paul's own theological reflections on using these texts, his way of relativizing them, all posed a challenge to late antique exegetes. The twofold question arose: what was the authentic text of the Old Testament and how should that text, once identified, be used for Christian teaching? With his dual project of translating and commenting on the whole Biblical corpus Jerome had a vital part in trying to tackle this question, and his *Commentary on Galatians* is to some extent a programmatic document in that regard.

III. Reception: Fifth through Sixteenth Centuries

It is traditional in proceedings of this kind to devote some attention to Jerome's multi-dimensional legacy. This volume stands out from its distinguished predecessors in terms of the diversity and originality of the contributions to this substantial segment of Hieronymian studies.[14] The papers which appear in this final section isolate some key moments in the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* of Jerome from late

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[11] For a recent critical analysis of this phenomenon, which one could label "the western reception of Paul," see J. Lössl, "Augustine, 'Pelagianism', Julian of Aeclanum, and Modern Scholarship," *ZAC* 10 (2007) 129–50, especially 129–33.

[12] *S. Hieronymi commentarii in epistulas Pauli apostoli ad Titum et ad Philemonem*, *CCSL* 77C (Turnhout, 2003).

[13] *S. Hieronymi commentarii in epistulam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas*, *CCSL* 77A (Turnhout, 2006).

[14] The cornerstone study is E.F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985). For the medieval and Renaissance iconography of Jerome, see H. Friedmann, *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome. Animal Symbolism in European Religious Art* (Washington, DC, 1980); H.N.B. Ridderbos, *Saint and Symbol. Images of Saint Jerome in Early Italian Art* (Groningen, 1984); D. Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie. Étude d'iconographie et de spiritualité (XIII^e–XV^e siècle)* (Paris, 1987).

antiquity to the Protestant Reformation. The chronological range covered by these case studies is broad but so is their geographical spread, with intermittent stops being made in Syria in the East and in Italy, Gaul, Spain, England and Germany in the West.

David Hunter cites an instance of how Jerome was received in his own lifetime by a fellow Latin-speaking Christian, in this case one of the most prominent Western bishops of the day. Jerome's disdain for Ambrose of Milan as a Biblical exegete and ascetic theologian, manifested as numerous direct and indirect insults scattered throughout his writings, is well documented. Scholars have always assumed that Ambrose refrained from answering in kind. Hunter decisively challenges this widely held view. He persuasively argues that Ambrose, in a letter to the church at Vercelli (*Ep.ex.coll*. 14) from late 396 or early 397, allusively responds to the criticisms levelled by Jerome at his character and theological ideas in *Ep*. 69 to Oceanus, which has been variously dated to between 395 and 401. This study not only furnishes proof that Jerome's rivalry with Ambrose was not one-sided after all, but it also enables us to fix the dating of *Ep*. 69 to late 395 or early 396.

During his years in Bethlehem, Jerome poured a considerable amount of energy into cultivating a social network in the Gallic provinces in the hope of making a lasting mark on the Christianity there.[15] But how well did these efforts pay off in the long run? Scholars have yet systematically to assess Jerome's reputation in late antique Gaul from the contemporary sources. Ralph Mathisen's paper fills this gap. Jerome had surprisingly little impact in the fifth and sixth centuries. He is conspicuously absent from many Gallic lists of illustrious ecclesiastical writers, and he also is not named in the *Gallic Chronicle of 452*. His works were rarely directly quoted by Gallic authors; he was cited only once as an authority in a Gallic theological controversy, in the debate over the nature of the soul in the 460s between the bishops Faustus of Riez and Mamertus Claudianus. Jerome's primary legacy in Gaul, it seems, consisted in pseudonymous works passing under his name far more frequently than under the names of other Latin patristic writers, notably Augustine. Mathisen attributes this phenomenon to the fact that Jerome was viewed by Gauls as a respected figure and his name did not arouse nearly as much scrutiny as that of Augustine, whose name was connected in the minds of Gauls with the heated debate about free will and predestination.

In light of Hillel Newman's paper, the title of Daniel King's paper ("*Vir quadrilinguis?* Syriac in Jerome and Jerome in Syriac") might appear somewhat misleading. But King is quick to point out that Jerome was not fluent in Hebrew or Aramaic. However, he does argue that with all due caution we should take Jerome seriously when he insisted that he invested much time and effort into learning these languages later on in his life. Jerome himself admits that he did so mainly in view

[15] See especially S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992). See also A. Cain, "*Jerome's Epistula* 117 on the *subintroductae*: Satire, apology, and ascetic propaganda in Gaul," *Augustinianum* 49 (2009) 119–43.

of reading and writing them rather than of speaking them. But King also considers the issue from a wider angle. He observes that no matter how well Jerome knew Aramaic, he picked up considerable practical and theoretical knowledge of early Syrian Church traditions. This, in turn, had a decisive influence on the translation of some of Jerome's works (from Greek) into Syriac and their Syrian reception. In Syriac Jerome was known, by name or otherwise, mainly as the author of lives of desert fathers, especially the *Life of Paul of Thebes* and the *Life of Malchus*. Even in the Latin original these lives were set in a Syrian context, and this context, King concludes, citing some significant examples, came across in Syriac in such an authentic manner that the Syrian monks and scribes who transmitted the texts seem to have had no problem constructing Jerome as "one of them," a process which Jerome himself might have found quite flattering.

Mark Vessey makes a similar observation regarding the Western reception of Jerome. Jerome may have tried to create and to promote a number of images of himself. But an influential medieval image of him which developed in the centuries after his death was that of Jerome as a representation of Rome as a light to the world. Intriguingly, Vessey argues, Jerome assumed this role precisely because he had been forced to leave Rome. According to one prominent medieval legend, Jerome, the light of the world owing to his exemplarity as a monk and Biblical scholar, was driven out of Rome because of the City's contempt for his virtues. "Romanesque" is what became of Rome, when Latin culture left Rome and assumed universal meaning all over the West. Jerome came to embody this meaning in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and this has remained a constant in the Western tradition from Jerome's lifetime down to the present day.

Josef Lössl picks up from this latter point. He looks at Martin Luther's "Jerome" and presents new evidence for a changing attitude. One might assume that the notion of Rome as light of the world was considerably undermined as the Reformation took hold in north-west Europe. Traditionally, Martin Luther has not been known as an admirer or ardent student of Jerome. However, as Lössl sets out, such a general view is based to a certain extent on historical and cultural stereotypes, "cultural memories" which transmit one phenomenon as procrastinated and backward-looking and another as progressive and dynamic. If looked at more closely, such generalizations might turn out to be slightly off the mark, and in the case of Martin Luther's attitude to Jerome this has been recognized for some time. As the recent discovery of Luther's annotations to the Jerome edition which he had used in Wittenberg in 1516/17 and then again later in his life shows, Luther was a very close reader and much indebted student of Jerome. Jerome confirmed many of his theological ideas and underpinned them, in fact much more effectively than Augustine, with substantive Biblical knowledge. Jerome was someone who could motivate Luther to study Hebrew, translate the Bible, and read the Old Testament closely and theologically. Thus rather than representing a break with the tradition with which Jerome is usually identified, Luther actually stands, among many others, for a continuity of reading and studying Jerome which continues until today.

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PART I

Hagiography, Letters, Heresy, and the Man

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Chapter 1
Inventing an Ascetic Hero: Jerome's *Life of Paul the First Hermit*

Stefan Rebenich

Jerome was upset. Although he had tried very hard to portray the life of Paul of Thebes, the first hermit, there were, nevertheless, malicious people who did not cease to criticize his writing and be suspicious of the solitary existence of Paul.[1] However, the *voces maledicorum* about which Jerome complains bitterly in his *Vita Hilarionis* could not lessen the success of his *Vita Pauli primi eremitae*.[2] The Latin *vita* was even so popular that it was translated into Greek, Coptic, Syriac and Ethiopic, as well as into various vernacular languages at a later stage.[3] Countless manuscripts proclaimed the fame of Paul of Thebes.[4] Generations of devout readers of the monk's life did not have any doubts regarding his existence. At the end of

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[1] The saints' lives of Jerome are cited according to the new edition in *Sources Chrétiennes* (508): P. Leclerc, E.M. Morales, *Jérôme. Trois vies de moines (Paul, Malchus, Hilarion)* (Paris, 2007). The text of the *Vita Pauli* is based upon the edition of B. Degórski, *Edizione critica della Vita Sancti Pauli primi eremitae di Girolamo* (Rome, 1987), which however is not "una presentazione completa nonché definitiva del testo critico" (ibid., 58c). For further references see S. Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints. Hagiography and geography in Jerome* (Leiden, 2005) 293–4 and the bibliography in Leclerc-Morales, *Jérôme. Trois vies de moines*, 125–34.

[2] Cf. *Vit.Hilar.* 1.6: *Maledicorum voces contemnimus, qui olim detrahentes Paulo meo nunc fortisam detrahent et Hilarioni, illum solitudinis calumniati, huic obicentes frequentiam, ut qui semper latuit, non fuisse, qui a multis visus est, vilis extimetur*.

[3] For discussion of the authenticity of the Latin version, see J. Bidez, *Deux versions grecques inédites de la Vie de Paul de Thèbes* (Gand, 1900); M.A. Kugener, "Saint Jérôme et la Vie de Paul de Thèbes," *ByzZ* 11 (1902) 513–17 and J. de Decker, *Contribution à l'étude des Vies de Paul de Thèbes* (Gand, 1905). All of these scholars unequivocally confirm that the translations depend on the Latin version. For an overview of research, see P. Hoelle, *Commentary on the Vita Pauli of St. Jerome* (diss. Ohio State University, 1957) 21–2; Degórski, *Edizione critica*, 28–33. Cf. also Daniel King's observations on the Syriac translations of the *Vita Pauli* in Chapter 16 of this volume ("*Vir quadrilinguis?* Syriac in Jerome and Jerome in Syriac").

[4] For the handwritten records, see W.A. Oldfather et al. eds., *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum* (Urbana, 1943) *passim*; B. Lambert, *Bibliotheca Hieronymiana Manuscripta* (Steenbrugge, 1969) 2.459ff, Nr. 261–3; Hoelle, *Commentary*, 24ff and H. Leclercq, "Paul de Thèbes," in *DACL* 13.2 (1938) 2700–6.

the sixth century Gallic pilgrims set out on the arduous journey into the Egyptian desert in order to explore the *spelunca Pauli* situated about 25 miles west of the Red Sea.[5] In the meantime, an impressive monastery had been built at that location, the monks of which venerated the cave and grave of the saint.[6] Communities of hermits regarded him as their *caput*; he was the acclaimed founder (*fundator*) of the order of the *Fratres S. Pauli Primi Eremitae* (*OSPPE*).[7] *Individual passages of the Vita* inspired artists to create masterpieces. It suffices to refer to the Isenheim Altar by Matthias Grünewald, who contrasts the conversation between Antony and Paul with the temptation of Antony, and to the famous painting by Diego Velázquez, which depicts the encounter of the two elderly hermits Antony and Paul in a wide and rough landscape. Painted around 1634 for a hermitage in the park of Buen Retiro, it can be viewed now at the Prado in Madrid.[8]

But the naïve veneration of the proto-anchorite Paul came to an end when the Protestant ecclesiastical historian Hermann Weingarten wrote an article on the origins of monasticism in the post-Constantinian era. His work was published in the first volume of the *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* in 1877, and thus in the middle of the *Kulturkampf*.[9] Weingarten not only stated that Paul of Thebes had never lived, but he also described Hilarion of Gaza and the Syrian Malchus as products of Jerome's imagination. In addition, he disputed that Athanasius had been the author of the *Vita Antonii* and asserted that Christian monasticism had been established only after the death of Constantine the Great, as a reaction to the secularization and institutionalization of the Church. In the end he traced the origins of monasticism back to the pagan Egyptian Serapis cult. Barely one of his provocative theses stood up to closer scrutiny, and soon afterwards individual

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[5] See the *Itin.Ant.Plac.* 43.1 (*CSEL* 39:189); C. Milani, *Itinerarium Antonini Piacentini. Un viaggio in Terra Santa del 560–570 d.C.* (Milan, 1977) 222–3; P. Maraval, *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d'Orient. Histoire et géographie des origines à la conquête arabe* (Paris, 1985) 324.

[6] See P. du Bourguet, "Pauluskloster," in *LThK* 8 (1963) 214–15; C.C. Walters, *Monastic Archeology in Egypt* (Warminster, 1974) 239. For the modern history of the Coptic monastery, see also S. Swidzinski, "Der Hl. Paulus von Theben. Protagonist des Hl. Antonius von Keman. Vorbild für klösterliches Leben (in Ägypten und Europa)," in P. Frieß ed., *Auf den Spuren des heiligen Antonius. Festschrift für Adalbert Mischlewski zum 75. Geburtstag* (Memmingen, 1994) 201–15.

[7] Cf. K. Elm, "Elias, Paulus von Theben und Augustinus als Ordensgründer. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung der Eremiten- und Bettelorden des 13. Jahrhunderts," in H. Patze ed., *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im späten Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1987) 371–97; V. Davis, "The rule of St. Paul, the first hermit, in medieval England," in W.J. Sheils ed., *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition* (Oxford, 1985) 203–14.

[8] See C. Weigert, "Paulus von Theben," *LCI* 8 (1974) 149–51, with further reading.

[9] H. Weingarten, "Der Ursprung des Mönchtums im nachconstantinischen Zeitalter," *ZKG* 1 (1877) 11–35, 545–74 (then separate, augmented and improved Gotha, 1877).

voices were heard arguing for the historicity of Paul.[10] In the middle 1920s Hippolyte Delehaye expressed the ingenious hypothesis[11] that Paul is mentioned in a letter by the Luciferians Marcellinus and Faustinus addressed to the emperors Valentinian, Theodosius and Arcadius, which is dated to the year 383 or 384.[12] But the famous Bollandist was immediately refuted by Ferdinand Cavallera.[13]

As it was not possible to prove that the hero of Jerome's *vita* really had lived in the upper Egyptian Thebaïs, the apologists of his historicity contented themselves with the supposition that Jerome merely had been told about the first hermit and, while living in the desert of Chalcis, where the sun burnt on his head, had decided to write an elaborate account about him.[14] Susan Weingarten has most recently argued that Jerome in his *Vita Pauli* carefully portrays the Christian holy man in contradistinction to the existing traditions about a Jewish rabbi about whom he may have heard from a converted Jew.[15] Consequently, the *primus eremita* would be the product of late antique oral history. This is a truly fascinating idea that is of added appeal as even the great collections such as the *Historia Monachorum*, the *Historia Lausiaca* and the *Apophthegmata Patrum* are primarily based on oral reports about hermits and monks living in Egypt, Palestine and Syria.[16]

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[10] See, e.g., P. de Labriolle, *St. Jérôme. Vie de Paul de Thèbes et Vie d'Hilarion. Traduction, introduction et notes* (Paris, 1907) and the studies specified by Hoelle, *Commentary*, 18–19.

[11] H. Delehaye, "La personnalité historique de saint Paul de Thèbes," *AB* 44 (1926) 64–9.

[12] See *CSEL* 35.1:33–4.

[13] F. Cavallera, "Paul de Thèbes et Paul d'Oxyrhynque," *RAM* 7 (1926) 302–5.

[14] See, e.g., P. Antin, *Essai sur saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1951) 124–5; E. Coleiro, "St. Jerome's lives of the hermits," *VChr* 11 (1957) 161–78, at 178; Hoelle, *Commentary*, 21; J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London, 1975) 61; S. Schiwietz, *Das morgenländische Mönchtum* (Mainz, 1904) 1.50 and Y.-M. Duval and J. Fontaine commenting on Fuhrmann, "Mönchsgeschichten," 91–2. For a discussion of the historicity of Paul and Jerome's other monastic characters, see also A.A.R. Bastiaensen, "Jérôme hagiographe," in G. Philippart ed., *Hagiographies*. *Histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550* (Turnhout, 1994) 1.97–123, 109–10 (with a brief overview of research). Bastiaensen does not, however, answer the question: see ibid., 112, 114; I. Opelt, "Des Hieronymus Heiligenbiographien als Quellen der historischen Topographie des östlichen Mittelmeerraumes," *RQ* 74 (1979) 145–77.

[15] Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 42–75. Cf. the review of Weingarten's book by S. Rebenich in *JEH* 58 (2007) 304–5.

[16] According to Rufinus (*Hist.mon*. 5), there were just as many monks living in the Egyptian desert as there were people living in towns. In his translation of the *Rule of Pachomius* Jerome mentions some 50,000 Egyptian monks (*PL* 23:68A); the *Vitae patrum* refer to a monastery of Macarius with some 15,000 monks (*PL* 73:433). Palladius (*Hist. laus*. 7) testifies to 2,000 hermits living in the area surrounding Alexandria, more than 5,000 monks having settled in the Nitrian desert and over 3,000 monks inhabiting the monastery

But we have to be aware that we possess no independent testimony concerning the existence of Paul of Thebes.[17] In view of this extremely difficult predicament it does indeed seem, to cite Richard Reitzenstein, as if the diligence and astuteness was wasted with which some theologians and historians at least defended the possibility that monks of this name could have lived.[18] In any case, the critical assessment of the sources undermined the veneration of Paul of Thebes by the Catholic Church, which had lasted for many centuries. During the second Vatican Council it was decided to remove his feast day (15 January) from the calendar of saints.

It may be concluded that a renewed discussion of the historicity of Paul of Thebes is not very rewarding. Therefore, I shall focus on the factors that made Jerome's *Vita Pauli* so successful, despite contemporary criticism, that Paul became a model of anchoritic perfection.

The *Vita Pauli*

Let us first recall the plot of the story. Supposedly, thus Jerome informs the reader right at the beginning, the *persona* and the life of the first hermit were surrounded by legends already in his day. It was reported that Paul had lived in a subterranean cave and that his hair had reached down to his heels. Jerome wanted to describe the life of his hermit based on the accounts of two pupils of Antony. He could report that at the time of the persecution of Christians by Decius (c.250) Paul, aged about sixteen, had fled first to the remote country estate (*villa*) of his brother-in-law in the lower Thebaïs. Fearful of being denounced by his relative, he retreated to the seclusion of the mountains to await the end of the persecution. Gradually he made a virtue of necessity and penetrated even more deeply into the karstified mountain range until he found a large cave in the interior of which he came across a spacious chamber, which he chose for his abode. An old palm with widely spread branches offered protection and provided him with food and clothing, and fresh water bubbled out of a clear spring. At this place he eked out the rest of his existence in solitude and prayer.

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of Pachomius at Tabennisi. According to *Hist.laus*. 58, 1,200 monks are supposed to have dwelled in the area surrounding Asinoë, the capital of the Thebaïs. See R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993) esp. 293–6; C.W. Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity from its Origins to 451 C.E.* (Leiden, 1990) 148; P. Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian* (Oxford, 1978) 21–2.

[17] The references to Paul in Sulp.Sev. *Dial*. 1.17.1, Paul.Mil. *Vit.Ambr*. 1.1, and Cassian. *Coll*. 18.5.4 can definitely be traced back to Jerome and validate the veneration of the *primus eremita* on the basis of Jerome's *Vita Pauli*.

[18] R. Reitzenstein, *Historia Monachorum und Historia Lausiaca. Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Mönchtums und der frühchristlichen Begriffe Gnostiker und Pneumatiker* (Göttingen, 1916) 70.

Without ever setting eyes on a living soul, Paul spent more than ninety years in his hermitage. Humanity would not have heard anything about this instance of renunciation of the world, though, if the younger Antony, who lived two days' march away from Paul in the same desert, had not followed an inner voice and set out at the age of at least ninety to meet his older associate. On his trek through the desert he encountered a centaur, which showed him the way, received dates from a satyr as provisions for the journey and finally found the *spelunca* of Paul with the help of a she-wolf that had almost died of thirst. When Antony had at last been able to persuade the shy cave-dweller to grant him admission they fell into each other's arms, greeted each other with their respective names and sat down to talk. For the meal a raven, which for sixty years had daily presented the hermit with half a loaf of bread, now brought a whole loaf (*militibus suis Christus duplicavit annonam*).[19] They were nearly unable to enjoy the double ration, as at first they could not decide who should break the bread. Paul referred to the etiquette of hospitality, Antony refused citing the privilege of age. In the end both of them took hold of the loaf of bread at opposite ends and pulled on it to the best of their ability until it broke apart.

The next day Paul revealed to his visitor that the time of his death had arrived and he asked him to bury his mortal remains in the coat, which Athanasius had given to Antony. Antony obeyed, fetched the *pallium* from his monastery and rushed back to Paul, driven by the fear of finding him to be no longer alive. Shortly before reaching his destination he caught sight of Paul, who was ascending to heaven surrounded by bright light and in the midst of choirs of angels and apostles. Shortly afterwards Antony found only the lifeless body in the cave. He carried the mortal remains outside and paid his last respects to Paul. The required pickaxe was replaced by two lions with fluttering manes, which dug the grave with their paws and afterwards, with Antony's blessing, retreated back into the desert. Antony laid the *sanctum corpus* to rest and on the following day picked up the tunic of the deceased, which was woven out of palm leaves. Thereupon he returned to his monastery, told his pupils everything in turn and always wore the robe of Paul over Easter and Pentecost.

We do not know when exactly Jerome wrote this work. It is certain only that he composed it during his stay in Syria around the mid-seventies of the fourth century. In those days he either resided in the metropolis of Antioch for the second time or he lived a secluded life on the country estate Maronia,[20] which belonged

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[19] *Vit.Paul.* 10.3.

[20] The *Vita Pauli* is frequently dated to the time of Jerome's seclusion. See, e.g., P. Hamblenne, "Traces de biographies grecques 'paiennes' dans la Vita Pauli de Jérôme?," in *Cristianesimo Latino e cultura Greca sino al sec. IV. XXI Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana* (Rome, 1993) 209–34, 210 n. 5; A. de Vogüé, "La *Vita Pauli* de saint Jérôme et sa datation. Examen d'un passage-clé (ch. 6)," in *Eulogia. Mélanges offerts à Antoon A.R. Bastiaensen à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire* (Steenbrugge, 1991) 395–406; Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 18–19; R. Wiśniewski, "*Bestiae Christum loquuntur*

to his rich patron Evagrius of Antioch.[21] However, the exact place and the precise point in time of the writing are irrelevant. Only its success matters.

In the past, as in the present, the *Vita* cast its spell over readers because Jerome had given a fine literary form to the work. In his pioneering work on *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* Richard Reitzenstein correctly speaks of a "Kleinod der erzählenden Literatur" ("gem of narrative literature").[22] Following Reitzenstein, a multitude of studies has revealed motives and elements which Jerome borrowed from Greek and Latin literature of both pagan and Christian provenance whilst composing his *Vita Pauli.*[23] When resorting to earlier methods and forms Jerome proved to be exceptionally flexible. Collections of examples and apophthegms as well as miraculous stories served him as a framework for individual episodes; the predominant literary structures are modelled on the archetype of the classical novel and the classical biography. Terms such as "romance of monastic life"[24] or rather "Mönchsromanze,"[25] "Enkomion,"[26] "Reise-Aretalogie" ("travel-aretalogy"),"[27] "saint's Life"[28] or "Mönchsbiographie,"[29] therefore describe only one particular aspect of this work. Jerome mastered all varieties of the classical literary practice

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ou des habitants du désert et de la ville dans la Vita Pauli de saint Jérôme," *Augustinianum* 40 (2000) 105–44, at 143.

[21] I have shown elsewhere that Jerome did not retreat to a domicile in the desert or even a cave but rather to Maronia in order to gain ascetic experience in a coenobitic community. See *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992) 86–98; *Jerome* (London and New York, 2002) 12–14.

[22] R. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (Leipzig, 1906) 63; cf. Idem, *Historia Monachorum*, 179ff.

[23] I refer especially to the studies by Bastiaensen, "Jérôme hagiographe"; J.B. Bauer, "Novellistisches bei Hieronymus Vita Pauli 3," *WS* 74 (1961) 130–7 (=Idem, *Scholia biblica et patristica* [Graz, 1972] 215–23); Coleiro, "St. Jerome's Lives"; Fuhrmann, "Mönchsgeschichten"; Hamblenne, "Traces"; H. Kech, *Hagiographie als christliche Unterhaltungsliteratur. Studien zum Phänomen des Erbaulichen anhand der Mönchsviten des hl. Hieronymus* (Göppingen, 1977); J. Plesch, *Die Originalität und literarische Form der Mönchsbiographien des hl. Hieronymus* (Munich, 1910); Wiśniewski, "*Bestiae*." Cf. also P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1983) 45ff.; S. Sbordone, "Caratteristiche strutturali di alcune vite di santi dei sec. III–IV," *Koinonia* 2 (1978) 57-67; P. Winter, *Der literarische Charakter der Vita beati Hilarionis des Hieronymus*. *Programm zur Gedächtnisfeier für P.F.A. Just* (Zittau, 1904).

[24] H. Hagendahl, *Latin Fathers and the Classics. A Study of the Apologists, Jerome and Other Christian Writers* (Göteborg, 1958) 105.

[25] Kech, *Hagiographie*, 175.

[26] Plesch, *Originalität*, 35.

[27] Reitzenstein, *Wundererzählungen*, 63.

[28] Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, *passim.*

[29] M. Schanz, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* (Munich, 1914) 4.435, 437; B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, *Patrologie. Leben, Schriften und Lehre der Kirchenväter* (Freiburg, 1978) 401.

and integrated stylistic devices and narrative structures of pagan, especially of Greek origin, into his writings, which proclaimed the new Christian message of the superiority of an ascetic lifestyle. His eclectic reception of classical examples in particular guaranteed his contemporaries an entertaining reading experience.[30]

One example should suffice. In Chapter 3 Jerome describes the fate of two Christian martyrs to illustrate the malice of the pagan persecutors. One of them was covered in honey and exposed to mosquito bites under the burning sun. The other, however, who was in his prime, was led to a magnificent garden described as a *locus amoenus* and tied to a bed of feathers with delightful interlaced flower garlands.[31] Thereupon a *meretrix* approached and applied all her arts of seduction—as described in detail by Jerome—to awaken her victim's desires of the flesh. When the lust threatened to overcome the *miles Christi* he bit off his tongue and spat it into the face of the temptress. Through the pain he mortified his *libido*. Many a scholar has become outraged about this more than lascivious story. There was talk about "raffinierte Lüsternheit" ("cunning lewdness")[32] and "schamloser Sinnlichkeit ("shameless sensuality").[33] Some thought it advisable to pass over this episode in silence. Not only school editions of the nineteenth century[34] but also an edition of the *Vita Pauli* published in the middle of the twentieth century[35] have omitted this passage.

Moral indignation, however, is out of place. Both evidently invented episodes[36] served the purpose of brightening up the pious story[37] and additionally providing the reader with voyeuristic pleasure. Moreover, when devising both *exempla*, Jerome referred back to literary patterns that were familiar to the educated reader. Research has noted various examples such as the Hellenistic novel, the imperial Latin authors Petronius and Apuleius, Greek anthologies from the pen of Diogenes Laërtius, of Aelian and of Heraclides Lembus, pagan stories about martyrs but also the Song of Songs[38] and, to follow Susan Weingarten,[39] Jewish sources. These disparate results can by no means be attributed to the inadequate precision of literary criticism but they rather clarify that Jerome, like other authors of his time,

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30 Cf. Berschin, *Biographie*, 144; Winter, *Der literarische Charakter*, 10–11.

31 The reader can find not a bucolic but an ascetic *locus amoenus* in the description of Paul's dwelling in *Vit.Paul.* 5; see Bastiaensen, "Jérôme hagiographe," 116 n. 77.

32 H. Weingarten, "Ursprung," 5.

33 G. Grützmacher, *Hieronymus. Eine biographische Studie zur alten Kirchengeschichte* (Leipzig 1901–8) 1.163.

34 Cf. Berschin, *Biographie*, 136.

35 Cf. I.S. Kozik, *The First Desert Hero: St. Jerome's Vita Pauli* (New York, 1968).

36 The attempt by Coleiro, "St. Jerome's Lives," 178, to reveal a historical foundation has already been rejected convincingly by Bauer, "Novellistisches," 221.

37 Cf. Reitzenstein, *Wundererzählungen*, 32 n. 2.

38 Cf. especially Bauer, "Novellistisches," *passim*; Hamblenne, "Traces."

39 *The Saint's Saints*, 42–75.

drew on the rich repertoire of pagan as well as Christian and Jewish tradition when choosing his narratives.

Digressions[40] such as those on the centaurs and satyrs[41] and classical reminiscences were a part of Jerome's mastery of traditional forms and motives as well. Consequently, quotations and borrowings from authors read at school, such as Virgil and Cicero, are not missing from the *vita*.[42] Conversely, Jerome did not slavishly follow the theoretical guidelines that regulated the composition of biographical literature in classical antiquity. Already a cursory reading shows that the characterization of the work as a *vita* is not appropriate. Admittedly, neither preface nor epilogue is absent, and the external frame follows the convention of biographies and the long *syncrisis* between Paul and Antony is reminiscent of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. However, as the author himself acknowledges at the end of the preface,[43] only *principium et finis*, beginning and end of the hermit Paul of Thebes, is described. The first part, which outlines the reasons for Paul's life in the desert in the Thebaïs (Chapters 2–6), is followed by a detailed account of the meeting between Paul and Antony (Chapters 7–16). The disproportion in the hero's life story, which is justified at the beginning with reference to the fact that nobody knows anything about the intervening period,[44] reveals the limited applicability of the biographical pattern to the story.

The *Vita Antonii*

Jerome expressed clearly his aim for his work in a letter to the aged Paul of Concordia, to whom he gave a copy of the *Vita Pauli* as a gift for his one hundredth birthday. He affirmed that when composing the narrative he had tried to do justice to common readers by employing unsophisticated descriptions. But he did not know how it came to be that the wine jug still kept its original smell even when it was filled with water.[45] And he added: "If my little gift should please you, I have others also in store which, if the Holy Spirit shall breathe favourably, shall sail

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[40] See, e.g., *Vit.Paul.* 7.1: *Sed ut ad id redeam unde digressus sum.*

[41] P. Harvey, "Saints and Sartyrs: Jerome the Scholar at Work," *Athenaeum* 86 (1998) 35–56; P. Cox Miller, "Jerome's Centaur. A Hyper-Icon of the Desert," *JECS* 4 (1996) 209–33; Wiśniewski, "*Bestiae*."

[42] See, e.g., *Vit.Paul.* 4.2: Virg. *Aen*. 3.57; *Vit.Paul.* 9.6: Virg. *Aen*. 2.650, 672; Bastiaensen, "Jérôme hagiographe," 116; Hamblenne, "Traces," 233–4 n. 52; Hoelle, *Commentary*, ad loc.; Leclerc-Morales, *Jérôme*, comm. ad loc.

[43] *Vit.Paul.* 1.4.

[44] Cf. *Vit.Paul.* 1.4: *Quomodo autem in media aetate vixerit aut quas Satanae pertulerit insidias, nulli hominum compertum habetur*.

[45] *Ep*. 10.3 (*CSEL* 54:38): *Sed nescio quomodo, etiam si aqua plena sit, tamen eundem odorem lagoena servat, quo, dum rudis esset, inbuta est;* cf. Hor. *Ep*. 1.2.69–70.

across the sea to you with all kinds of eastern merchandise."[46] The rich Italian, whose extensive library Jerome held in high esteem and with whom he exchanged manuscripts,[47] was definitely the ideal reader for the *vita*. He had the appropriate education to appreciate the author's literary artistry and he possessed the necessary means to have the work copied and distributed.[48]

Considering the case of Paul of Concordia, we may conclude that the audience of the *Vita Pauli* consisted of the educated Christian upper classes of the Western part of the empire, the intensely pious among which were eagerly seeking ascetic *exempla*.[49] Someone from this very section of society, Jerome's rich friend and patron, Evagrius of Antioch,[50] previously had translated into Latin the Greek *Vita Antonii* by Athanasius,[51] which quickly spread throughout the West and possibly played an important role in the conversion of Augustine in Milan during the eighties of the fourth century.[52] In his famous letter *De optimo genere interpretandi* (396), in which he addressed issues relating to the theory of translation, Jerome quoted from the preface of the text by Evagrius. There Evagrius distanced himself from *verbatim* translation from one language into the other, as such a process would obscure the meaning. Consequently, he had translated the *Vita Antonii* in such a way "that the sense is preserved although it does not invariably keep the words of the original. Leave others to catch at syllables and letters, do you for your part look for the meaning."[53] Evagrius proceeded in such a way as to expand the Greek version by adding dramatic and illustrative elements and inserting numerous

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[46] *Ep*. 10.3 (*CSEL* 54:38): *Si hoc munusculum placuerit, habemus etiam alia condita, quae cum plurimis orientalibus mercibus ad te, si spiritus sanctus adflaverit, navigabunt*. On Paul of Concordia, see Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 48.

[47] Cf. *Ep*. 10.3.

[48] For the publication and distribution of Jerome's writings by *amici*, see Rebenich *Hieronymus*, *passim* and esp. 201–8.

[49] Cf. J. Fontaine, "Valeurs antiques et valeurs chrétiennes dans la spiritualité des grands propriétaires terriens à la fin du IVème siècle occidental," in *Epektasis. Festschrift J. Daniélou* (Paris, 1972) 571–94.

[50] On him, see Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 52–75.

[51] For the literary character of the *Vita Antonii* and the question of the authorship, see T.D. Barnes, "Angel of Light or Mystic Initiate? The Problem of the *Life of Antony*," *JThS* n.s. 37 (1986) 353–68; S. Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony* (Lund, 1990) 126ff.

[52] Cf. Aug. *Conf*. 8.6.15 with P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1968) 181–2; Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 36. However, an early Latin version of the *Vita Antonii* by Athanasius circulated in the West even before the translation by Evagrius; see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 2101a; *Handbuch der Lateinischen Literatur*, 5.599.2 (J. Fontaine); Berschin, *Biographie*, 123–4; H. Hoppenbrouwers, *La plus ancienne version latine de la vie de saint Antoine par saint Athanase* (Nijmegen, 1960).

[53] *Ep*. 57.6 (*CSEL* 54:511): *Vt nihil desit ex sensu, cum aliquid desit ex verbo. alii syllabas aucupentur et litteras, tu quaere sententias*. See G.J.M. Bartelink, *Hieronymus. Liber de optimo genere interpretandi* (Leiden, 1980) 64ff.

rhetorical details.[54] In contrast to the oldest Latin translation of the *Vita Antonii*, which is very close to the Greek original and also contains colloquial expressions, Evagrius wanted to reach educated, Latin-speaking Christians with his exquisite version.

It is quite likely that the example of Evagrius impelled Jerome to write the *Vita Pauli*. At least this instance showed him that there was no lack of an interested audience for such edifying *Lives* on a high literary level. It is not surprising, therefore, that numerous borrowings from Evagrius' translation could be detected in Jerome's text.[55] With his "masterpiece of story-telling,"[56] Jerome did not enter into competition with a "famous Jewish ascetic rabbi, showing the Christian ascetic surpassing his Jewish counterpart," as Susan Weingarten has suggested.[57] Rather, he entered into competition with Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* and its Latin translations. For he wanted to prove, as is programmatically set forth in the introduction, that contrary to popular belief Paul, not Antony, deserved the accolades for having been the first desert hermit.[58] With his polemic against the Athanasian model Jerome even went so far as to let Antony admit his ascetic inferiority to Paul in Chapter 13. Upon seeing Paul he utters: "Woe to me a sinner! I do not deserve the name of monk."[59] Finally, Antony buries the revered Paul in the coat which had been a present from Athanasius.[60] This is an exceptionally symbolical act because by handing over the *pallium* to Paul, Antony acknowledges Paul's precedence and legitimizes Jerome's *Life* of the first hermit.[61]

That the *Vita Pauli* was a response to the *Vita Antonii* is also evident from the fact that it assumes knowledge of the latter everywhere. For only with it in mind do the corrections Jerome made to the ideal image of a monk as propagated by Athanasius attain their original meaning. Take one characteristic detail: Antony rejects all forms of pagan education,[62] whereas Paul shows he is familiar with

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[54] For an analysis of the language and style of the Latin translation by Evagrius, see esp. G.J.M. Bartelink, "Einige Bemerkungen über Evagrius' Übersetzung der *Vita Antonii*," *RBén* 82 (1972) 98-105; Berschin, *Biographie*, 124ff.; *Handbuch der Lateinischen Literatur*, 5.599.3 (J. Fontaine).

[55] Cf. already Kugener, "Saint Jérôme"; F. Nau, "Le chapître ΠΕΡΙ ΑΝΑΧΩΡΗΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ et les sources de la Vie de S. Paul de Thèbes," *ROC* 10 (1905) 387–417.

[56] Kelly, *Jerome*, 61.

[57] Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints*, 267.

[58] *Vit.Paul.* 1.2.

[59] *Vit.Paul.* 13.1: *Vae mihi peccatori, qui falsum monachi nomen fero*. See Fuhrmann, "Mönchsgeschichten," 75; P. Leclerc, "Antoine et Paul: métamorphose d'un héros," in Y.-M. Duval ed., *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient: XVIe centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly*, septembre 1986 (Paris, 1988) 257–65.

[60] *Vit.Paul.* 12.2–4 and 16.1.

[61] Cf. Kech, *Hagiographie*, 45.

[62] Athan. *Vit.Ant*. 1; cf. ibid., 72–3.

the cultural heritage of his surroundings.[63] While individual characteristics of Antony and Paul coincide—both are sons of affluent parents,[64] the parents of both died when they were still young, and both have a sister[65]— there is one revealing difference: Paul is familiar with the classical tradition. In his *vita* Jerome did not only want to present the *archegetes*, the founder of monasticism, but propagate the concept of an educated Christian holy man.

Audience of the *Vita Pauli*

The earlier classification of the text as a testimony to *Volksfrömmigkeit*[66] is therefore obsolete.[67] The *monachus eruditus* was written for a readership Jerome himself impressively characterized at the end of the composition:

> I may be permitted at the end of this little treatise to ask those who do not know the extent of their possessions, who adorn their homes with marble, who wear necklaces to the value of many estates: what did this old man in his nakedness ever lack? Your drinking vessels are of precious stones; he satisfied his thirst with the hollow of his hand. Your tunics are of wrought gold; he had not the clothes of the meanest of your slaves. But on the other hand, poor though he was, paradise is open to him; you with all your gold will be received into Gehenna. He though naked yet kept the robe of Christ; you, clad in your silks, have lost the vesture of Christ. Paul lies covered with worthless dust, but will rise again to glory; over you are raised costly tombs, but both you and your wealth are doomed to the burning. Have a care, I pray you, at least have a care for the riches you love. Why are even the grave-clothes of your dead made of gold? Why does not your vaunting cease even amid mourning and tears? Cannot the carcases of rich men decay except in silk?[68]

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[63] *Vit.Paul.* 4.1: *Paulus..litteris tam Graecis quam Aegyptiacis apprime eruditus*.

[64] For the social standing of Paul, see *Vit.Paul.* 4.1, where it is explained that Paul had come into a *haereditas locuples* after the death of his parents. Moreover, he fled from his persecutors to the *villa*, i.e. the country estate, of his relatives (ibid., 4.2).

[65] Cf. Athan. *Vit.Ant*. 1–2.

[66] Reitzenstein, *Wundererzählungen*, 63, 82–3; Antin, *Essai*, 125.

[67] See in general P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago, 1981); S. Wilson ed., *Saints and Their Cults* (Cambridge, 1983), particularly the contribution by E. Patlagean, "Ancient Byzantine Hagiography and Social History"; Philippart, *Hagiographies*, vol. 1; A. de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1991), with further reading.

[68] *Vit.Paul.* 17.1–3: *Libet in fine opusculi eos interrogare, qui sua patrimonia ignorant, qui domos marmoribus vestiunt, qui uno lino villarum insuunt pretia: huic seni nudo quid umquam defuit? vos gemma bibitis, ille naturae concavis manibus satisfecit. vos in tunicis aurum texitis, ille ne vilissimi quidem indumentum habuit mancipii vestri. sed e contrario*

It would not go far enough to consider this antithetical excursus as an accusation against the foolishness of the rich.[69] They are rather the admonishing words of the author to his readers whose salvation only lies in the *imitatio* of the blessed Paul. Jerome showed his Christian contemporaries that Paul's phenomenal striving for the *vita angelica* was based on *solitudo*, *humilitas*, *abstinentia* and *paupertas*. His example of ascetic perfection was setting a standard. But it was not sufficient apodictically to assert Paul's "copyright" on this type of Christian lifestyle. Circumstantial evidence had to be supplied that seemed to make Jerome's version credible to the reader. That is why already the prologue appears as an overture to a scientific treatise on an academic topic: "It has been a subject of wide-spread and frequent discussion what monk was the first to give a signal example of the hermit life."[70] With a breathtaking chutzpah Jerome raises a question that had been answered definitively already by Athanasius' *Vita Antonii*. Consequently, it seemed advisable to not rely only on the biography of Paul as evidence for his deviating version. Jerome rather called upon two pupils of Antony as authorities, namely Amatas and Macarius,[71] the former of which had even buried the body of his teacher; according to Jerome they affirmed that a certain Paul of Thebes had been the founder of the *vita monastica.*[72] Thereupon, he refutes abstruse rumours that were circulating about Paul. The negation of false reports serves as positive proof here for the existence of Paul.

The second chapter is meant to historicize the fake hero by naming secular and ecclesiastical dignitaries right at the beginning: "During the persecutions of Decius and Valerian, when Cornelius at Rome and Cyprian at Carthage were glad to be condemned to shed their blood, many churches in Egypt and the Thebaid were devastated by the fury of the storm."[73] The actual narrative begins like a *passio*[74] and postulates the authenticity of early Christian documents. The reference to a

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illi pauperculo paradisus patet, vos auratos gehenna suscipiet. ille vestem Christi, nudus licet, tamen servavit; vos vestiti sericis indumentum Christi perdidistis. Paulus vilissimo pulvere coopertus iacet resurrecturus in gloriam; vos operosa saxis sepulcra premunt cum vestris opibus arsuros. parcite, quaeso vos, parcite saltem divitiis quas amatis. cur et mortuos vestros auratis obvolvitis vestibus? cur ambitio inter luctus lacrymasque non cessat? an cadavera divitum nisi in serico putrescere nesciunt?

[69] As, for example, Fuhrmann, "Mönchsgeschichten," 70; Kech, *Hagiographie*, 151–2.

[70] *Vit.Paul.* 1.1: *Inter multos saepe dubitatum est a quo potissimum monachorum eremus habitari coepta sit*.

[71] For both of these, see *Chron*. a. 356 (*GCS* Eus. 7:240).

[72] Cf. *Vit.Paul* 1.2: *Adfirmant Paulum quendam Thebaeum principem istius rei fuisse, non nominis*; cf. Hoelle, *Commentary*, 58: "Thus St. Jerome tells us that Paul gave the impetus to the monastic life, though he did not give it the name."

[73] *Vit.Paul.* 2.1: *Sub Decio et Valeriano persecutoribus, quo tempore Cornelius Romae, Cyprianus Carthagine felici cruore damnati sunt, multas apud Aegyptum et Thebaidem ecclesias tempestas saeva populata est*.

[74] See Berschin, *Biographie*, 143.

Coptic source, according to which the cave Paul used as a dwelling had contained a coiner's den at the time of Antony and Cleopatra,[75] is meant to strengthen the reader's faith in the story just as the reference to two Syrian monks, one of whom lived as a hermit on barley bread and murky water for thirty years, while the other contented himself with a daily ration of five figs and lived in an old cistern, that, as Jerome adds, is called *gubba* in Syriac.[76] Who, after these *exempla*, would still have entertained doubt that Paul had obtained all his food and clothing from only one palm? Jerome also does not fail to mention that the monastery of Antony was later captured by the Saracens.[77] By means of historical facts such as these Jerome wanted to persuade the sceptics to believe his answer to the question about who had been the first hermit. In brief: Jerome intended the *Vita Pauli* to be considered history.[78]

But we are well advised not to project our understanding of history onto the *Vita Pauli*[79]—a text fashioned so as to conform to the laws of rhetoric. In his rhetorical writings Cicero drew up a literary theory of historiography, according to which historiography is an *opus oratorium.*[80] The establishment of historical truth was regarded as a basic requirement, although its primary task was not research but the artistic shaping of the material.[81] It was intended to entertain the reader and to teach by examples. Consequently, the author could take certain liberties when describing a historical topic—in the words of Cicero: "It is the privilege of rhetoricians to distort history in order to give more point to their narrative."[82] According to his own account, at the time of writing the *Vita Pauli* Jerome presented the merits of monastic life corresponding to the *studia atque doctrinae rhetorum.*[83] His *Vita* was meant to provide both religious-ascetic edification (*aedificatio*) and sophisticated entertainment (*delectatio*). On that occasion the question of the historicity of Paul of Thebes, which has fascinated so many modern scholars, was less important. Jerome wanted only to portray a convincing *exemplum* of a monastic lifestyle, if necessary with the help of rhetorical *inventio*. In other words, Jerome stylized

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75 *Vit.Paul.* 5.2.

76 *Vit.Paul.* 6.2; cf. Opelt, "Heiligenbiographien," 148 n. 10.

77 *Vit.Paul.* 12.4; cf. *Chron.* a. 357 (*GCS* Eus. 7:240).

78 See Coleiro, "St. Jerome's Lives," 177; Fuhrmann, "Mönchsgeschichten," 81–2; Kech, *Hagiographie*, 25, 149.

79 See F. Paschoud, "Verità storica e convenzioni letterarie negli storici del tardo impero," in B. Amata ed., *Cultura e lingue classiche* (Rome, 1993) 3.427–41.

80 Cic. *Leg*. 1.5.

81 Cf. esp. Cic. *De orat*. 2.62–4. For Cicero's definition of historiography, see S. Rebenich, "Historical Prose," in S.E. Porter ed., *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period. 330 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Leiden, 1997) 265–337, here 319–20, with further reading.

82 Cic. *Brut.* 42: *Concessum est rhetoribus ementiri in historiis, ut aliquid dicere possint argutius*.

83 *Ep*. 52.1 (with reference to *Ep*. 14 to Heliodorus).

the life of the "proto-hermit" Paul of Thebes according to the rules of classical rhetoric in order to produce a piece of Christian devotional literature.

Lecture à la Mode

It was not just literary brilliance and rhetorical skill that made the *Vita Pauli* so successful.[84] There was an additional ingredient. Hans von Campenhausen's statement that Jerome was indeed the most assiduous but also the most inadequate theologian of asceticism the ancient Church had produced is certainly convincing.[85] With the *Vita Pauli* Jerome nevertheless managed to emphasize the ascetic virtues and achievements of his protagonist as exemplary and to encourage readers to *imitatio*. Moreover, he elucidated through his *vita* that the radical renunciation of the world and the uncompromising poverty of Paul had to be considered as enjoying equal rights alongside the martyrdom of the persecuted Christians. Jerome made a virtue of necessity here. For by fleeing Paul of course evaded the authorities and consequently a probable martyr's death and in doing so placed himself in opposition not only to the steadfast Christian, who was covered in honey and left to the insects, but also to the one who was to be tempted by a harlot. In his *Vita Pauli*, by means of the literary representation of the life of Paul of Thebes, Jerome transformed the bloody martyrdom of persecution into a bloodless martyrdom of asceticism.[86] Paul and Antony were just as much *milites Christi* as the persecuted youth who had to fend off the temptress.[87] "You are mistaken, my brother, you are mistaken, if you suppose that there is ever a time when the Christian does not suffer persecution. Then are you most hardly beset when you know not that you are beset at all,"[88] he wrote in a letter from the seventies of the fourth century addressed to the monk Heliodorus. Antony and Paul were the *praepositi nostri principes*,[89] as Jerome remarked in a letter to Paulinus of Nola. But Paul was simply earlier, as Jerome does not tire to emphasize. When Antony wanted to die together with Paul, Paul countered that he would indeed benefit from relinquishing the burden of the flesh, "but it is expedient for the rest of the brethren to be trained by your example."[90] Thus an inner-monastic succession was established beginning

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[84] So Kech, *Hagiographie*, 157, 174.

[85] H. von Campenhausen, *Lateinische Kirchenväter* (Stuttgart, 1960) 126.

[86] Cf. Rousseau, *Ascetics*, 136; M.H. Williams, *The Monk and the Book. Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago, 2006) 38–9.

[87] Cf. *Vit.Paul.* 3.4, 10.3.

[88] *Ep*. 14.4 (*CSEL* 54:49): *Erras, frater, erras, si putas umquam Christianum persecutionem non pati; et nunc cum maxime oppugnaris, si te oppugnari nescis*.

[89] *Ep*. 58.5. Cf. *Epp*. 22.36 (*CSEL* 54:200): *Huius vitae auctor Paulus, inlustrator Antonius*; 108.6 (*CSEL* 55:311): [*Paula*] *sola—si dici potest—et incomitata ad heremum Antoniorum atque Paulorum pergere gestiebat*.

[90] *Vit.Paul.* 12.2: *Sed et ceteris expedit fratribus, ut tuo adhuc instituantur exemplo*.

with Paul and continuing via Antony in which every monastic novice had to prove himself.

The *vita* of the world-renouncing anchorite was extremely effective, as it was able to replace the earlier versions of the Athanasian biography, which until then had been the only available work on Eastern asceticism among Latin readers. So the *Vita Pauli* established Jerome's reputation as an author of the ascetic movement, which was reinforced by the two later *vitae* he wrote and other relevant writings such as his epistle *De virginitate servanda* addressed to Eustochium, his book *Adversus Helvidium de Mariae perpetua virginitate* and his *Libri adversus Iovinianum*. Jerome's literary success can be understood only in light of the emerging Occidental monasticism. It was he who was the first to respond to the lack of an original Latin biography of a monk. Athanasius' *Vita Antonii* served Jerome as a literary model for his first *vita* but he also tried to imitate its success. He countered this "*lecture à la mode*"[91] of Christian intellectuals with a work of his own which moreover claimed to describe the life of the first desert hermit. We have seen that Jerome sent his first *Life* to Paul of Concordia. Despite his declaration of wanting to address unsophisticated souls it was, like Jerome's first literary work, the story of the miraculous rescue of the Christian woman of Vercelli,[92] meant for an educated readership. We can be certain that the Western members of the Theodosian court at Constantinople, who showed themselves to be responsive to the ascetic ideal, took delight in this *opusculum*. But this is another story.[93]

[91] J. Fontaine, "L'ascétisme chrétien dans la littérature gallo-romaine d'Hilaire à Cassien," in *Atti del Colloquio sul thema La Gallia Romana* (Rome, 1973) 87–115, at 100.

[92] Rebenich, *Jerome*, 63–9.

[93] S. Rebenich, "Asceticism, Orthodoxy and Patronage: Jerome in Constantinople," *StudPatr* 33 (1997) 358–77.

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Chapter 2
Sur Trois Lettres Méconnues de Jérôme Concernant Son Séjour à Rome (382–385)[1]

Yves-Marie Duval

Dans la mesure même où la vie de Jérôme est l'une de celles pour laquelle, dans l'Antiquité chrétienne, nous disposons du plus grand nombre de renseignements, nous aimons le suivre dans tout son parcours et nous souhaiterions pouvoir comprendre chacun de ses brusques changements de direction, volontaires ou involontaires, au moins jusqu'à son installation définitive à Bethléem en 385–386. J'aurais aimé attirer l'attention sur un certain nombre de zones d'ombre dans la première partie de sa vie. Vu le temps très court dont je dispose ici, je ne m'arrêterai qu'à un ou deux moments du second séjour à Rome, en portant mon attention sur trois textes, peu ou pas exploités, pour les indications qu'ils fournissent sur divers temps ou étapes de cette seconde expérience romaine.

Nous connaissons les dates extrêmes de ce séjour. Nous savons que Jérôme est arrivé à Rome à l'occasion du Concile qui, à la demande des évêques occidentaux, et tout d'abord d'Ambroise de Milan, devait, en 382, sceller la victoire de la foi de Nicée et régler, après la mort de Mélèce et le démission de Grégoire de Nazianze, la question des sièges épiscopaux d'Antioche et de Constantinople. Nous savons, par la lettre officielle qui les excusait, que les évêques orientaux refusèrent de se déplacer en masse et, par une allusion très postérieure de Jérôme, que lui-même accompagnait Epiphane de Salamine de Chypre et Paulin d'Antioche,[2] les seuls évêques orientaux à avoir fait le voyage, en dehors de la délégation des trois

[1] Yves-Marie Duval n'avait pas encore achevé la révision de sa communication lorsqu'il est décédé, le 12 mars 2007. Ses amis et disciples ont eu à cœur de mener à leur terme les travaux qu'il avait assez avancés pour envisager une publication. C'est ainsi que m'est revenue la tâche de terminer la révision de cette communication dont le texte était, à peu de choses près, au point, mais auquel il manquait encore l'appareil des notes pour lesquelles Prof. Duval n'avait jeté que quelques indications manuscrites en marge de son texte. Soucieux de ne rien ajouter à ses intentions, je m'en suis tenu à ces brèves indications, que je n'ai développées que lorsque la clarté de l'exposé l'exigeait. Les lecteurs habitués à ses longues notes ne s'étonneront donc pas de la relative brièveté de celles qui suivent [B. Jeanjean].

[2] Cf. *Ep.* 127.7.

évêques porteurs vraisemblablement de la synodale orientale.[3] Je laisse ici de côté la ou les raisons qui expliquent ou éclairent la venue de Jérôme, ou, si l'on veut son retour en Occident.[4] Nous connaissons d'autre part la date approximative du départ définitif de Jérôme en 385: la présentation qu'il en fait en 401 dans son *Contre Rufin* évoque le souffle des vents étésiens.[5] On s'accorde donc pour fixer ce départ dans le courant du mois d'août 385, c'est à dire dix mois après la mort de Damase, auprès duquel, dans une lettre tardive et parfois suspectée, il déclare avoir rempli une charge épistolaire.

Parmi les dates sûres et bien établies dont nous disposons, il faut en effet placer celle de la mort de Damase le 11 décembre 384, mais aussi deux ou trois mois plus tôt, celle de Praetextatus, le chef moral du paganisme romain de l'époque. Ces deux décès, et en particulier celui du consul désigné pour 385, permettent de dater, de façon au moins relative, quelques lettres de la correspondance romaine de Jérôme. Cette abondante "correspondance" qui, en plus de quelques œuvres extérieures, nous a été conservée pour cette période, ne contient en effet que de rares indices chronologiques. Une des premières précautions méthodologiques à prendre est de ne pas considérer comme fermement établi, malgré ses mérites, le classement, qui se veut chronologique, de Vallarsi au XVIII[e] siècle. Les datations proposées depuis lors montrent au moins que les données ne sont pas aussi claires qu'on l'aimerait. Il convient d'autre part de tenir compte du fait que Jérôme peut, au même moment ou presque, avoir écrit à deux ou plusieurs personnes, comme il a manifestement plusieurs travaux en cours au même moment.[6]

La première lettre que j'avancerai est le dernier texte de Jérôme qui ait été découvert. C'est la raison pour laquelle il a été peu pris en considération jusqu'ici. Il devrait cependant, à mon sens, non seulement confirmer certaines affirmations de Jérôme, mais aussi nous induire à la prudence. Contrairement à la majeure partie des autres lettres "romaines," il n'a jamais dû faire partie d'un "livre" ou d'un recueil de lettres quelconque, même si cette lettre est antérieure au *De viris illustribus* qui, en 393, évoque les différents "livres" déjà

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[3] Selon Théodoret (*Hist.Eccl*. 5.9.1–18), il s'agissait de Cyriakos, Eusebios et Priscianos.

[4] On a, en particulier, proposé de lier le départ de Jérôme pour Rome à des ambitions cléricales qui méritent, pour le moins, d'être nuancées. Cf. S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgesichtliche Untersuchung* (Stuttgart, 1992) 142: "Hier eröffneten sich zahlreiche Wirkungsmöglichkeiten für den ambitionierten Priester, zumal er über traditionelle Bindungen in den Westen und selbst nach Rom verfügte," et 144: "Hieronymus liess diese Chance nicht ungenutzt. Seine Hoffnungen auf eine kirchliche Karriere, die ihn nach Rom geführt hatten, schienen sich zu erfüllen."

[5] Cf. *C.Ruf*. 3.22.

[6] J'attire l'attention sur la difficulté d'établir une chronologie, même relative, de beaucoup des lettres présentées par l'édition de Vallarsi et ce tout particulièrement pour la période romaine. Comment classer, pour elles-mêmes et entre elles, par exemple, les lettres à Damase, à Marcella et à Paula?

publiés de la "correspondance" de Jérôme. Il s'agit de la lettre par laquelle, en 392 vraisemblablement, Jérôme répond à l'annonce que lui a faite Aurelius de Carthage de son élévation à l'épiscopat.[7] Le caractère erratique de cette lettre, autant que son contenu, en garantit l'authenticité; mais il doit aussi nous faire réfléchir sur les lacunes insoupçonnées de notre information. Divjak a retrouvé cette lettre au milieu d'un dossier de lettres inconnues d'Augustin. Lorsque j'ai eu la charge et l'honneur de commenter ce nouveau texte, j'ai fait valoir, contre l'avis de l'éditeur, que la présence de cette lettre s'expliquait plutôt par le fait qu'Aurelius n'avait pu manquer de faire parvenir à Augustin une copie de cette lettre, à cause de l'offre qui s'y trouvait faite par Jérôme de laisser copier ses œuvres si on lui envoyait des copistes à Bethléem.[8] Je préciserais aujourd'hui que la demande présenté auparavant par Aurelius dans sa propre lettre d'obtenir les œuvres de Jérôme s'explique très bien par le souci qu'ont alors les jeunes Africains de se former à l'étude de l'Ecriture. Augustin, devenu prêtre de façon inopinée, ne commence-t-il pas par demander à son évêque un "congé sabbatique" d'une année pour étudier plus à fond l'Ecriture? Si Aurelius et Alypius ne nous ont laissé aucun écrit d'importance en ce domaine, je ne peux pas ne pas évoquer le jugement élogieux du prêtre Gerontios, l'auteur de la *Vie de Mélanie la Jeune*, sur la science scripturaire d'Alypius, au temps où, entre 410 et 418, Mélanie résidait à Thagaste.[9] Je me demande aujourd'hui si ce n'est pas dans ce contexte qu'Alypius, toute sa vie un grand voyageur vers l'Italie, a entrepris le voyage à Bethléem, voyage qu'il a en tout cas fait avant 394. J'ai en effet émis il y a quelques années l'hypothèse que l'entrée en relations d'Aurelius et d'Alypius avec Paulin de Nole, et celle de Paulin avec Augustin, puis d'Augustin avec Jérôme s'expliquaient par ce voyage préalable à Bethléem.[10]

Mais, laissant l'objet principal de cette lettre d'Aurelius tel qu'il apparaît dans la réponse de Jérôme, c'est ici à la familiarité de Jérôme avec Damase que je voudrais m'arrêter, telle que le nouvel évêque de Carthage rappelait en avoir été le témoin, et telle qu'elle se reflète dans la réponse de Jérôme à son évocation.[11] Avant de formuler ses demandes d'ouvrages, Aurelius rappelait en effet à Jérôme qu'il l'avait déjà aperçu lors de sa venue à Rome en compagnie de son évêque Cyrus, une dizaine d'années plus tôt. A son tour, Jérôme rappelle un détail de l'entrevue qui

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[7] *Ep.* 27* (dans J. Divjak ed., *Augustin. Lettres 1*–29** [Paris, 1987]). La lettre de Jérôme occupe les 394–401 et mon commentaire 560–8.

[8] Ibid., 560–61.

[9] Gerontios, *Vie de Mélanie la Jeune*, 21.2 (Vie grecque, *SC* 90:170–71; Vie latine, P. Laurence ed., *Studium biblicum franciscanum*, *collectio minor 41*, 194).

[10] Cf. Y.-M. Duval, "L'entrée en relations épistolaires d'Augustin d'Hippone et de Paulin de Nole," dans É. Gavoille, L. Nadjo eds., *Epistulae Antiquae III – Actes du III^e^ Colloque international "L'épistolaire antique et ses prolongements européens" (Université François-Rabelais, Tours, 25–27 septembre 2002)* (Leuven and Paris, 2004) 397–419, notamment 403–5.

[11] Cf. *Ep.* 27*.1.

lui permet d'abord de répondre au souvenir d'Aurelius et d'entériner ce souvenir d'une entrevue quelque peu protocolaire: lui aussi se souvient! S'il vivait dans l'entourage immédiat de l'évêque de Rome, il avait dû voir, dans l'exercice de sa fonction, défiler un certain nombre de clercs—évêques, prêtres ou diacres—sans porter à tous une bien grande attention. En rappelant à Aurelius qu'il se souvenait lui aussi—*bene admones et recordor*—avoir demandé en privé à son évêque qui était le clerc silencieux qui accompagnait l'évêque de Carthage, il attestait qu'il avait bien remarqué Aurelius, autant que celui-ci l'avait remarqué.

Je passe sur la suite de la réponse de Jérôme, qui est surtout de sa part une excuse pour l'indifférence, sinon la froideur, qu'il a lui-même conservée alors pour le visiteur dont il avait pourtant appris de la bouche de Damase le rang et l'importance. Ce qui m'importe ici, c'est ce témoignage même d'Aurelius et la liberté avec laquelle Jérôme questionne l'évêque de Rome sur l'identité du personnage qui se tient en retrait et qu'il ne connaît pas. A elle seule, cette lettre non seulement confirme les autres renseignements que nous avons sur le rôle de Jérôme auprès de Damase, mais elle réduit à néant beaucoup des doutes qu'on a pu émettre sur la réalité et l'importance de ce rôle de Jérôme.

Le premier qui ait évoqué pour nous ce rôle de Jérôme auprès de Damase n'est autre que Rufin d'Aquilée.[12] Mais il en parle dans un contexte quelque peu ambigu, voire polémique, de sorte qu'on a pu se poser des questions sur la valeur de son propos, au mieux se demander s'il n'avait pas été la victime des exagérations de Jérôme, puisque lui-même ne se trouvait pas alors à Rome. Ne s'était-il pas laissé gruger à Jérusalem par les "fanfaronnades" de Jérôme chassé de Rome? Les propres déclarations de Jérôme[13] n'allaient pas sans éveiller des soupçons. Il avait d'abord ironisé sur les propos de Rufin. Il était resté assez vague dans la définition de ses attributions lorsque, en 409, il avait, en passant, évoqué un cas "canonique" survenu à Rome lorsqu'il "aidait Damase pour les lettres concernant l'Eglise et répondait aux consultations des synodes d'Orient et d'Occident."[14] Comme on ne trouvait aucun exemple ni document qui vienne confirmer une telle affirmation, il était facile de dénoncer les "vantardises" de Jérôme et de refuser son témoignage.

Je crois avoir apporté à la discussion ces dernières années un document dont l'attribution était discutée depuis trois siècles sans que jamais on y ait décelé la main de Jérôme. La décrétale anonyme *Ad Gallos episcopos*[15] correspond bien à ce que Jérôme décrit de son activité: "dicter des lettres concernant des églises,"[16]

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[12] Cf. Ruf. *De adult.* 13.

[13] Cf. *C.Ruf.* 2.20.

[14] *Ep.* 123.9 (*CSEL* 56:82): *Ante annos plurimos, cum in chartis ecclesiasticis iuvarem Damasum, Romanae urbis episcopum, et orientis atque occidentis synodicis consultationibus responderem*.

[15] Y.-M. Duval, *La décrétale Ad Gallos episcopos*: *son texte et son auteur* (Leiden, 2005).

[16] *C.Ruf.* 2.20 (*SC* 303:158):…*et sub nomine cuiusdam amici Damasi, Romanae urbis episcopi, ego petar, cui ille ecclesiasticas epistulas dictandas credidit*…

"répondre aux consultations des synodes d'Orient et d'Occident."[17] Puisque la réponse à la consultation des évêques de Gaule—une série de points précis, avec demande et réponse—concerne l'Occident, gageons sans crainte d'erreur qu'il a dû répondre également, en grec ou en latin, à des consultations orientales. La lettre à Aurelius et l'attestation de la présence de Jérôme dans l'entourage immédiat de l'évêque de Rome vient authentifier la charge de Jérôme. Celui-ci n'était ni archiviste, ni *chartophylax*, mais *rédacteur* des réponses papales, sur les indications de l'autorité épiscopale et après avoir assisté au moins, comme ici, aux délibérations.

Je ne veux pas m'étendre ici sur la lumière que cette lettre projette sur les rapports de Jérôme avec Damase qu'attestent d'autres textes, bien connus, mais souvent discutés et pas forcément bien compris, en particulier la préface à la révision des Evangiles et les différentes lettres romaines au moins, dont le statut est divers dans la transmission manuscrite. Je quitterai cette réponse à Aurelius par les trois remarques suivantes. Le nouvel évêque a déclaré posséder de Jérôme les *Homélies sur le Cantique.* Jérôme répond qu'il les a traduites "à l'invitation de Damase,"[18] ce qui va un peu plus loin que la *Préface* même de Jérôme à Damase. Je ferai la conjecture qu'Aurelius a acquis cette traduction à l'occasion de son séjour à Rome, ce qui plaiderait pour un voyage à Rome en 383–4, plutôt qu'en 382. Ma deuxième remarque concerne l'indication donnée—non sans fierté—par Jérôme selon laquelle "des évêques de Gaule et d'Italie (du Nord)" envoient à Bethléem des copistes pour transcrire les écrits de Jérôme,[19] ce qui suppose toute une série d'échanges, dont nous n'avons *aucune* trace. Voilà qui introduit ma dernière remarque: chronologiquement, cette réponse à Aurelius est, mise à part l'actuelle *Ep.* 46, écrite au nom de Paula et Eustochium à Marcella, la première lettre que nous ayons de Jérôme installé définitivement en Palestine. J'ai dit que cette réponse à Aurelius pouvait être datée de 392. Si nous pouvons situer nombre d'*ouvrages* de Jérôme entre 386 et 392, nous n'avons aucune lettre.[20] Prenons donc conscience de la profondeur du silence *épistolaire* qui plane sur ces six années. Pour nous au moins. Car il est bien peu vraisemblable que, malgré sa déconvenue, Jérôme ne soit pas, durant ces années, demeuré en relations avec ses amis, ceux, par exemple, qui l'avaient accompagné au port en 385, ou la fidèle Marcella.

Espérons donc que d'autres lettres traînent encore dans les bibliothèques d'Europe sinon d'Amérique; soyons prudents dans nos affirmations et examinons plus attentivement aussi les lettres que nous possédons!

La deuxième lettre sur laquelle je voudrais attirer l'attention est connue depuis longtemps, mais son attribution à Jérôme n'est reconnue que depuis le début du XX^{e} siècle. Il s'agit de la lettre au diacre Praesidius de Plaisance, dans laquelle Jérôme

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17 *Ep.* 123.9; cf. n. 14.

18 Cf. *Ep.* 27*.2 (396).

19 Ibid., 3 (398).

20 Cf. P. Nautin, "L'activité littéraire de Jérôme de 387 à 392," *RThPh* 115 (1983) 247–59.

répond pour commencer à la demande qui lui a été faite d'écrire un éloge du cierge pascal. L'authenticité de cette lettre a été défendue par dom Morin.[21] Si Cavallera laissait encore planer un doute sur ce qu'il considérait comme un "centon,"[22] c'est sans doute qu'il n'avait pas vu qu'il est, et sera, dans les habitudes de Jérôme, non pas peut-être de se citer lui-même, mais de reprendre, en les infléchissant suivant les destinataires, les circonstances, le temps dont il dispose pour écrire, nombre des thèmes qui lui sont chers. Dom de Vogüé a montré que cette *Lettre à Praesidius* était une reprise et adaptation, par Jérôme lui-même, de l'invitation à Héliodore de le rejoindre au désert écrite une dizaine d'années auparavant.[23] Il s'agit bien d'une seconde "suasoire," dont on peut seulement s'étonner qu'elle ne soit pas mentionnée comme telle, comme *l'Exhortatoria ad Heliodorum* (*Ep*. 14) qui figure dans l'énumération du *De viris illustribus*. Beaucoup plus courte, peut-être entrait-elle dans le *liber ad diversos* mentionné dans ce même *De viris*?

L'invitation à Héliodore était écrite au désert. Celle-ci est écrite durant le séjour en Italie. C'est ce qui est indubitable d'après l'allusion faite à la fin de la lettre à la mort récente de l'empereur Gratien.[24] C'est ce qui m'importe ici. Tel qu'il est édité par dom Morin, le texte contient une allusion obscure à ce qui pourrait être un voyage de Jérôme en bateau (*phaselus*).[25] Ce type de navire pouvant avoir des tailles très diverses, Morin le juge capable de longer les rives de la mer Tyrrhénienne le long desquelles Jérôme serait remonté jusqu'en Ligurie. Dom de Vogüé, qui accepte la correction de son prédécesseur,[26] penche plutôt pour un parcours fluvial. Celui-ci est, de fait, tout à fait possible sur le haut Tibre. Mais cela ne me paraît pas devoir entraîner pour autant que Jérôme serait allé à quelque distance de Rome pour une "retraite quadragésimale."[27] Il pourrait aussi bien revenir de plus loin par l'intérieur de la péninsule et sa rencontre avec Praesidius

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[21] G. Morin, "Un écrit méconnu de S. Jérôme: la *Lettre à Présidius* sur le cierge pascal," *RBén* 8 (1891) 20–27; Idem, "La lettre de S. Jérôme sur le cierge pascal. Réponse à quelques difficultés de M. l'abbé Duchesne," *RBén* 9 (1892) 392–7; Idem, "Pour l'authenticité de la lettre de saint Jérôme à Présidius," *BALAC* 5 (1913) 52–60. Outre l'argumentation en faveur de l'attribution hiéronymienne, l'article présente une édition du texte de la lettre. On trouvera également ce texte, sans les corrections de Morin parmi les lettres apocryphes de Jérôme éditées par Migne (*PL* 30, *Ep.* 18*, col. 182–8).

[22] F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1922) 1.101, n. 3.

[23] A. de Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1991) 1.216, 223–6.

[24] *Ep. ad Praesid*. (Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 58) *Necdum annus completus est quo principem Gratianum, prodente exercitu suo, ante feda captivitas, dehinc miserabilior obpressit interitus*.

[25] Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 58, adopte la variante *faselos esse conductas* à la place d'*asellos esse conductos* pour le texte et page 60 pour le commentaire qu'en donne l'éditeur.

[26] Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire*, 220, n. 96.

[27] Ibid., 222.

de Plaisance intervenir au cours d'un déplacement beaucoup plus lointain…dont nous ne savons rien. Faute d'avoir consulté les manuscrits de cette lettre, je ne m'arrêterai pas à ce point, sauf pour souligner encore notre ignorance.

Un point plus important mérite discussion, celui de la date de cette lettre à l'intérieur même de l'année 384. Celle-ci est écrite, je l'ai rappelé, durant l'année qui suit la mort de Gratien, assassiné le 25 août 383. En parlant de "retraite quadragésimale," de Vogüé s'appuie d'abord sur l'idée que le diacre de Plaisance a plutôt demandé à Jérôme d'écrire une *laus cerei* pour la nuit pascale de 384 (à la fin mars), que pour celle, plus lointaine de 385.[28] Il veut voir d'autre part un progrès entre cette *Lettre à Praesidius*, qui évoque le voyage que le diacre vient de faire dans les monastères cénobitiques d'Egypte,[29] et la *Lettre à Eustochium* (*Ep*. 22), qui consacre à ces monastères une longue digression.[30] Autant, pour ma part, je suis persuadé depuis longtemps que le développement de l'*Ep.* 22 a pour source d'information, non seulement le récit oral de Praesidius, mais aussi le texte qu'il a dû rapporter ou composer sur les diverses sortes de moines, autant je m'abstiendrai de dire que la *Lettre à Praesidius* est antérieure à l'actuelle *Ep.* 22. N'ayant pas, en effet, les mêmes destinataires, les deux lettres peuvent être parallèles. Plus même, la *Lettre à Praesidius* (*intelligenti pauca*) peut être postérieure à l'*Ep.* 22, c'est à dire du début de l'été 384—moins d'un an, de toute façon, après la mort de Gratien.

Cette différence éventuelle de quelques mois n'est cependant pas ce qui est le plus important pour moi. Au contraire, pour ce que j'aimerais montrer, une date hâtive serait encore plus intéressante. Je me contenterai pour l'instant de parler au moins de concomitance approximative, ce qui me suffit ici. Ce qui est clair, en revanche, c'est que ces deux lettres expriment la même expérience de la vie vécue à Rome par Jérôme, et que Praesidius pourra faire de la même façon de son côté dans n'importe quelle ville. Morin déjà a mis en lumière, tant au sujet du vêtement, de la démarche, de la nourriture, que des obligations mondaines, les parentés de cette *Lettre à Praesidius* avec les indications de l'*Ep.* 22 et les mises en garde formulées à Eustochium.[31] Contre ces dangers de la ville, le moine que se veut être Praesidius, doit gagner le désert. Morin terminait sa dernière contribution sur cette lettre par ces lignes que je ne peux que reprendre pour l'essentiel: "Ce qui est certain, et que notre lettre seule nous apprend, c'est que Jérôme avait, dès les premiers mois de 384—et donc avant la mort de son ami et protecteur, le pape Damase—pris son parti de quitter 'Babylone' et la 'courtisane vêtue de

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[28] Ibid., 222–3, pour Pâques 384, de Vogüé donne la date du 24 mars.

[29] *Ep. ad Praesid*. (Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 57): *Nuper Aegypti deserta vidisti, intuitus es angelicam familiam. quanti ibi flores sunt! quam spiritalibus gemmis prata vernantia! vidisti serta quibus Dominus coronatur*.

[30] Cf. *Ep.* 22.34–6. De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire*, 222–3, propose une chronologie relative de ces deux lettres.

[31] Sept rapprochements entre les deux lettres sont signalés par Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 59.

pourpre,' pour aller se fixer définitivement près de la grotte de Bethléhem (*sic*) et de la crèche du Sauveur. C'est là qu'il donne rendez-vous à Praesidius…"[32] De Vogüé, se référant à Morin, écrit de son côté: "…l'épître à Praesidius suppose chez Jérôme une résolution bien arrêtée d'abandonner assez prochainement la vie urbaine, dont il dit tant de mal, et de gagner la solitude, dont il fait un tel éloge. Cette décision, qu'on aperçoit à peine par ailleurs, éclaire singulièrement l'ensemble de la correspondance hiéronymienne au cours de son séjour romain. Si Jérôme a quitté Rome en août 385, ce n'est pas seulement ni même principalement en raison des conflits aigus dont il fait état dans sa lettre d'adieu à Asella. A en juger par la lettre à Praesidius, ce parti était pris depuis longtemps et tenait à des causes plus profondes."[33]

Avec quelques nuances que je passe ici, je suis d'accord avec l'essentiel de ces deux jugements concernant la volonté de Jérôme de quitter Rome. J'en retirerai cependant plusieurs éléments. Tout d'abord, je ne vois pas que Jérôme aille déjà jusqu'à considérer Rome, ou toute autre ville, comme une nouvelle Babylone ou comme la prostituée vêtue de pourpre. Il ne faut pas anticiper; il convient au contraire de laisser le temps à la maturation du projet. Je ne vois pas non plus qu'il soit déjà question de la "grotte de Bethléhem," ni même d'un retour en Orient que de Vogüé évoque de façon dubitative. Je ne sais même pas s'il faut déjà parler, chez Jérôme, de "résolution bien arrêtée de quitter la vie urbaine." Je crois plus judicieuse la remarque, faite en note par de Vogüé à propos d'un passage de la lettre: "le malaise du moine (je dirais: de Jérôme) vivant en ville tient autant à sa propre conscience qu'à l'hostilité des mondains, qui reste contenue."[34] Contenue? Beaucoup moins après la publication de l'*Ep.* 22, comme le rappellera Rufin!

Ce qui reste sûr est que le départ de Jérôme, en août 385, ne sera pas déclenché essentiellement par la mort de Damase, fin 384, et surtout par les tracasseries administratives et judiciaires qui surgiront dans les mois suivants. L'évolution de Jérôme est commencée plus d'un an avant ce départ d'août 385, à un moment où la mort de Damase ne semble pas s'annoncer comme imminente, même s'il est âgé. Il s'agit d'abord d'une évolution intérieure. Qu'elle ait pu commencer au moment même où Jérôme remplissait occasionnellement auprès du vieil évêque une tâche de confiance, mais rencontrait aussi l'hostilité de son entourage clérical, n'a rien qui doive surprendre. Une telle crise ne plaide pas, en tout cas, en faveur d'un Jérôme soucieux d'une "carrière" ecclésiastique, comme on le dit trop facilement.

Avant de m'intéresser à un autre indice de cette volonté de quitter Rome, j'attirerai l'attention sur un autre apport important de cette *Lettre à Praesidius* pour la connaissance de l'activité littéraire de Jérôme en ces années 383–4, ainsi que pour celle de ses relations. Si Cavallera ne se montrait pas pleinement convaincu de l'authenticité de cette lettre, il notait néanmoins ceci: "Jérôme ne plaide pas seulement auprès des femmes la cause de l'ascétisme. Les hommes, les clercs ne

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[32] Ibid., 60.

[33] De Vogüe, *Histoire littéraire*, 221.

[34] Ibid., 221, n. 101.

sont pas oubliés. Les occasions les plus inattendues lui servent de prétexte pour entretenir ou allumer la flamme sacrée."[35] Le prétexte serait ici cette demande de *laus cerei*. Oubliant pour sa part les longues pages de son analyse de cette même lettre, Vogüé affirme un peu plus tard que Damase est le seul homme auquel Jérôme ait alors écrit et que toute sa correspondance romaine est féminine.[36] Je ne relève ce lapsus que parce qu'il représente une opinion répandue. Je veux au moins tempérer l'impression que l'on veut voir se dégager de la vie de Jérôme dans la capitale: entourage de femmes, travail au service de femmes. Certes, d'après sa correspondance, Jérôme est en relations écrites avec une dizaine de femmes; qu'il rencontre et même fréquente; mais, dans l'*hospitiolum*[37] où viennent lui commander du travail aussi bien les courriers de Damase que de Marcella, il reçoit des amis et ne s'entretient pas seulement des défauts des absents. C'est à la demande de frères qu'il a entrepris de réfuter Helvidius et si tous ne le suivront pas à Bethléem, il sera accompagné à Porto par un certain nombre de ces frères.[38] Il n'est pas étonnant, en définitive, que la *Lettre à Praesidius* s'adresse à un homme qui n'habite pas Rome et avec lequel il faut poursuivre un échange. L'originalité de cette lettre réside plutôt dans le fait qu'à la différence de la plupart des lettres romaines—aux femmes et à Damase—elle ne traite pas de l'Ecriture, mais du *propositum* monastique masculin et de la conciliation entre cléricat et vie monastique. En quoi elle rejoint en partie l'*Ep.* 22 à Eustochium, qui est alors adressée à une jeune fille—mais qui ne parle pas d'un départ au désert, ni ailleurs.

Il me reste, pour l'objet qui est ici le mien, à essayer de préciser quel est le "désert" que Jérôme conseille à Praesidius de gagner, quel est le départ auquel Jérôme songerait pour lui-même. Bien que Praesidius soit déjà allé en Egypte, rien ne dit que Jérôme désire qu'il y retourne pour s'y fixer. De Plaisance où Jérôme le renvoie, Praesidius pourra gagner une île de la côte ligurienne ou tyrrhénienne comme une île de la côte dalmate. Ou encore, puisque nous sommes en une décennie où les *monasteria* ne manquent pas non plus en dehors des villes, songeons à Trèves, à Ligugé, à Marmoutier; songeons à Milan ou même au *monasterium* d'Aquilée où Rufin résidait au moment de son baptême vers 370. Praesidius pourra, seul ou en rejoignant un groupe quelconque, se retirer dans une campagne quelconque, à plus ou moins grande distance de Plaisance même. Quant à Jérôme lui-même, rien ne montre qu'il envisage déjà de quitter l'Italie pour l'Egypte, dont il rêvait depuis longtemps, ou Jérusalem, vers laquelle il désirait marcher dix ans plus tôt. Ni l'une ni l'autre cependant ne lui avaient paru indispensables pour valider sa vocation monastique.

Je crois plutôt que, dans la seconde moitié de 384, la maladie, la mort bientôt de Blésilla, et les accusations dont Jérôme sera l'objet, vont faire peu à peu germer ou renaître ce projet. On notera qu'à la fin de sa lettre à Praesidius, Jérôme pique

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35 Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 1.101.

36 De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire*, 333.

37 Cf. *Ep.* 42, 3.

38 Cf. *C.Ruf.* 3.22.

l'amour propre de son correspondant en lui faisant remarquer que des femmes ont réalisé, en quittant leurs biens et leurs enfants, ce que lui-même estime difficile à entreprendre: tout quitter.[39] Jérôme n'indique pas ici où sont parties ces femmes nobles et riches et préfère taire leurs noms pour ne pas être taxé de flatterie. Nous en connaissons au moins une, que Jérôme a déjà célébrée dans sa *Chronique*, et qu'il nommera quelques mois plus tard. De fait peu après la mort de Blésilla, Jérôme, après avoir indiqué que Paula désire, à l'exemple d'Abraham, "sortir de son pays et de sa parenté, laisser les Chaldéens, pour entrer dans la Terre promise,"[40] il donne à la mère meurtrie l'exemple de Mélanie (l'Ancienne) qui, en des circonstances aussi dramatiques que celles que Paula connaît avec la mort de sa fille, s'est embarquée pour Jérusalem.[41]

Nous sommes alors en octobre 384, c'est à dire plusieurs semaines encore avant la mort de Damase (11 décembre). Dix mois plus tard environ, dans ses adieux à Asella, Jérôme dira que sa réputation a commencé à faire l'objet de critiques à partir du moment où Paula "a parlé de partir à Jérusalem."[42] Dans cette même *Ep.* 45, il évoquera à nouveau un peu plus loin Mélanie et Paula, pour opposer leur conduite à celle de "chrétiennes de nom" qui tiennent à conserver, avec leur "nom" de chrétiennes, tous les avantages du luxe et de la vie mondaine.[43] C'est donc à l'automne 384 qu'est apparue la perspective de quitter Rome pour "revenir à Jérusalem." Mais les choses n'ont pas dû se préciser d'un coup.

J'en viens à ma troisième et dernière lettre: l'actuelle *Ep.* 43 à Marcella. Sans mépriser le moins du monde le travail de nos prédécesseurs, méfions-nous, *a priori*, de l'ordre des lettres dans nos éditions: cette lettre qui, en commençant, fait allusion à l'œuvre innombrable d'Origène, est, depuis Vallarsi, placée loin de l'*Ep.* 33 qui transcrit pour Paula le catalogue des œuvres d'Origène dressé par Pamphile. Cavallera, pour sa part, veut placer cette *Ep.* 33 après la mort de Damase, à cause de sa pointe finale contre les Epicures et les Aristippes de l'époque, en qui il reconnaît le clergé romain.[44] Et de rapprocher de cette *Ep.* 33 une série de lettres à Marcella (37, 41, 42, 44), et notre *Ep.* 43. Il me semble pourtant qu'aucune de ces lettres ne contient le moindre indice qui permette de les dater *après* la mort de Damase. Quant à la *Ep.* 33, l'attaque que cite Cavallera ne me semble pas la plus virulente de cette lettre, qui n'est pas, d'autre part, la première à dénoncer la paresse intellectuelle des clercs romains. Malgré l'autorité de Cavallera*, non liquet*.

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[39] *Ep. ad Praesid*. (Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 58): *Sectemur saltim mulierculas, sexus nos doceat infirmior. quantae diuitiis pariter et nobilitate pollentes – nolo enim vocabula dicere, ne adulari videar—relictis facultatibus, pignoribusque contemptis, id factu facile iudicarunt, quod tu proprio putas timore difficile?*

[40] *Ep.* 39.5.

[41] Cf. *Chron*. a. 374 et *Ep.* 39.5.

[42] Cf. *Ep.* 45.2; mais les critiques ont commencé avant la mort de Blésilla comme en atteste l'*Ep.* 38.5.

[43] Ibid., 4.

[44] Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme*, 2.26.

Damase serait-il mort cependant que cette *Ep.* 43 resterait importante pour mon propos. Adressée à Marcella, mais exprimant également les propres souhaits ou aspirations de Jérôme, cette lettre est une invitation, après les "tempêtes de la vie," à gagner "au plus vite," comme un port, les "solitudes de la campagne."[45] L'éloge funèbre de Marcella trente ans plus tard nous apprend que la matrone possédait un domaine aux alentours de Rome. Cette campagne, désirée par Jérôme et à laquelle il convie Marcella, peut se situer dans ces mêmes parages. Je ne sais s'il faut prendre très au sérieux le tableau bucolique que Jérôme trace des quatre saisons en cet endroit. En tout cas, celui-ci s'oppose au "tumulte de la ville, au déchaînement des combats de gladiateurs, à la folie du cirque, à la licence des théâtres," mais aussi aux obligations sociales, comme les "visites au sénat des matrones."[46] Le début de la lettre énonçait quant à lui un certain nombre des dangers auxquels s'exposaient ceux qui restaient dans la ville tout en prétendant mener une vie ascétique.[47] Morin, pour établir l'authenticité de la *Lettre à Praesidius* invoquait déjà les similitudes des deux textes[48] et de Vogüé a poursuivi les rapprochements dans la perspective qui est la sienne. Je ne puis que souscrire à leurs observations. Mais je tire aussi une conclusion en partie différente: au moment où il s'adresse à Marcella en se mettant lui-même en question, Jérôme ne songe pas encore ou pas seulement à un départ pour la Palestine.

Il sera contraint de quitter Rome à cause de sa situation canonique, comme Pierre Nautin l'a bien mis en lumière.[49] Le fait qu'il gagne Antioche de Syrie, et non Joppé ou Alexandrie, montre à l'évidence qu'il doit d'abord se mettre en règle avec les règles ecclésiastiques et celui qui l'a naguère fait entrer dans son clergé. Jérôme n'appartenait pas au *presbyterium* romain et on le lui fit sentir, une fois Damase disparu. Peut-être pas, cependant, aussi vite qu'on le dit souvent en un raccourci trop rapide. Comme il le dira, l'aristocratie romaine, et particulièrement les femmes, furent les plus acharnées à le mettre en accusation, et à susciter des mesures canoniques, pour chasser de la Ville, comme les étrangers en 384, un homme qui les avait fustigées et qui les avait, sans bien le vouloir, déconsidérées aux yeux de l'aristocratie païenne. Cette alliance de l'aristocratie (chrétienne) et du clergé local dut cependant prendre quelque temps pour parvenir à ses fins, si l'on pense que l'élection de Sirice date de janvier 385 et que la navigation maritime reprenait à la mi mars. Jérôme ne partira qu'en août.

Bien avant donc la mort de Damase, Jérôme s'était rendu compte qu'il ne pouvait, même en continuant de par lui ses travaux antérieurs, même en profitant de l'appui de Damase pour élever le niveau intellectuel et littéraire du clergé et du peuple de Rome, maintenir pour lui-même sans difficulté l'idéal monastique qu'il

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[45] *Ep.* 43.3.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid., 2.

[48] Morin, "Pour l'authenticité," 59, propose quatre rapprochements.

[49] P. Nautin, "L'excommunication de saint Jérôme," *AEHE V* 80/81 (1972–73) 7–37, notamment 7–9.

avait cherché à pratiquer au désert de Chalcis et à propager à Rome, en même temps que l'étude de l'Ecriture. Parmi les hommes comme parmi les femmes, ces nouveautés et ces exigences entraînaient trop de résistances et de sacrifices. Comme Jérôme n'était pas homme de souplesse ni capable de transiger, il lui restait à partir. Tout le reste était secondaire et il semble s'y être résolu sans trop de difficulté, une fois son honneur défendu devant la justice, mais encore plus devant un juge aussi intègre qu'Asella. Au fond, qu'il ait admis de signer un engagement, comme il le reconnaîtra devant Rufin,[50] était pour lui sans grande importance. Cet éloignement de Rome était une éventualité à laquelle il songeait depuis plus d'un an.

D'autres essaieront après lui, en usant de méthodes plus douces. Jérôme n'était pas un François de Sales! Pélage lui-même prendra le relais, avec un discours qui, en bien des domaines n'était pas moins exigeant que celui de Jérôme. La vraie victoire, quasi posthume, de Jérôme ne fut pas Paula ni Eustochium, ni même la petite Paula, pas même Mélanie la Jeune, puisqu'elle quitta elle aussi Rome, fût-ce en des circonstances particulières, pour finalement gagner la Palestine, mais Démétriade, qui revint dans la capitale et y vécut jusqu'à l'époque de Léon le Grand.

[50] Cf. *C.Ruf.* 3.21–2.

Chapter 3
Tertullian in Jerome's Consolation to Heliodorus (*Ep*. 60)

Neil Adkin

Jerome wrote his celebrated *Ep*. 60 to console Heliodorus for the death of his nephew, the young priest Nepotian. In the middle of the work Jerome evokes the insistence with which the undeceased Nepotian had demanded from him *Ep*. 52 on the clerical life. The terms in which Jerome describes this pertinacity are the following: *Quotiens nocturnum de evangelio petitorem et interpellatricem duri iudicis mihi viduam exhibuit!*[1] *Ep*. 60 has recently been the object of a very distinguished commentary by David Scourfield.[2] In the aforecited passage Scourfield duly notes that Jerome is referring to a pair of Lucan parables: while the first is about the man who went to his friend at midnight to ask for three loaves (Luke 11:5–8), the second concerns the widow who kept pestering a judge until he agreed to deal with her case (Luke 18:1–8). With regard to the latter Scourfield then goes on to make the following comment: "The fact that Jerome uses the expression *interpellatricem duri iudicis* in referring to this parable…is especially interesting in that in neither Vulgate nor V[etus] L[atina] does the account in Luke include *interpellatrix* or any cognate word, and the judge is not described as *durus*…This freedom from dependence on the language of the Biblical account stands in contrast to other passages in which Jerome clearly reveals his indebtedness to it." The aim of this paper is to offer an explanation of this puzzling departure from the Biblical text.

Jerome's verbal debts to Tertullian have been subjected to careful examination by both Micaelli and Petitmengin;[3] neither of these scholars has however been able to identify the influence of the *De praescriptione haereticorum*. It would

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[1] *Ep*. 60.11 (*CSEL* 54:562).

[2] J.H.D. Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus: A Commentary on Jerome, Letter 60* (Oxford, 1993). For its excellence, see Michael Winterbottom's review of the present writer's *Jerome on Virginity: A Commentary on the Libellus de virginitate servanda (Letter 22)* (Cambridge, 2003), in *JThS* n.s. 55 (2004) 722, where Scourfield's commentary is characterized as "the best of its predecessors."

[3] C. Micaelli, "L'influsso di Tertulliano su Girolamo: le opere sul matrimonio e le seconde nozze," *Augustinianum* 19 (1979) 415–29; Idem, "Ricerche sulla fortuna di Tertulliano," *Orpheus* n.s. 6 (1985) 118–35; P. Petitmengin, "S. Jérôme et Tertullien," in Y.-M. Duval ed., *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient: XVIe centenaire du départ de*

nonetheless appear possible to show that Jerome had already read this treatise by the time he produced his *Libellus de virginitate servanda* (*Ep*. 22) in 384.[4] The *De praescriptione haereticorum* contains the following sentence: *Etiam anus illa intra tectum suum dragmam requirebat, etiam pulsator ille vicini ianuam tundebat, etiam vidua illa non inimicum licet durum iudicem interpellabat*.[5] Jerome's eye and ear will have been caught by the rhetorical finesse of this tricolon, which is marked by parison, polyptoton, asyndetic anaphora, and epiphoric homoeoteleuton with hypozeuxis.[6] It is therefore unsurprising that Jerome should have thought this Tertullianic phraseology to be worthy of memorization.[7]

When Jerome redeploys this borrowing from Tertullian in *Ep*. 60, he follows his usual practice in streamlining it. The first leg of the tricolon is accordingly omitted altogether. The remainder undergoes a stylistic enhancement which again corresponds to Jerome's normal *modus operandi*. The language of the second element is accordingly replaced by an even more striking phrase from a quite different work of Tertullian, which this time is embarrassingly heretical. In connection with the same parable of the friend at midnight the *Adversus Marcionem* had employed the syntagm *nocturnum panis petitorem*.[8] Typically even this succinct locution has been condensed to binary *nocturnum...petitorem*.[9] It may be felt that the resulting concision is dangerously close to obscurity. Translators agree.[10]

At this point two general issues of Hieronymian *Quellenforschung* may be addressed. In the first place many commentators regard such echoes as evidence

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saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly, septembre 1986 (Paris, 1988) 43–59.

[4] For his debt to it in this work see N. Adkin, "Tertullian's *De praescriptione haereticorum* and Jerome's *Libellus de virginitate servanda* (*Ep*. 22)," *Eirene* 30 (1994) 103–7. Jerome's *Ep.* 60 was written twelve years after *Ep*. 22 in 396.

[5] *De praescr.haer*. 12.3 (*CCSL* 1:197).

[6] On the last, see Ps.-Iul.Rufin. *De schem.lex.* 4: *Hypozeuxis est, cum singulis rebus sententiisque singula debita verba iunguntur*.

[7] Quintilian remarks that reading beats listening because: *repetere saepius licet*…[*si*] *memoriae penitus adfigere velis* (*Inst*. 10.1.19). On Jerome's partiality for committing such rhetorically striking formulations to memory, see N. Adkin, "Some Features of Jerome's Compositional Technique in the *Libellus de virginitate servanda* (*Ep*. 22)," *Philologus* 136 (1992) 234–55.

[8] *Adv.Marc*. 4.26.8 (*CCSL* 1:616). For evidence that Jerome had read the *Adv.Marc.* by 384, see N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 77, 183.

[9] No further instance of the collocation is supplied by the CETEDOC or *Patrologia Latina* Database. Jerome's insertion of *de evangelio* between adjective and noun has no place in this section of the *Adv.Marc.*, which is simply a commentary on Luke.

[10] See, for example, the rendering by B. Matougues, *Oeuvres de S. Jérôme* (Paris, 1838) 522: "Cet homme dont parle l'Évangile, qui, par sa persévérance, contraignit son ami de se lever au milieu de la nuit pour lui prêter trois pains."

that Jerome "had recently been rereading" the works that inspire them.[11] It may however be observed that neither the *De praescriptione haereticorum* nor the *Adversus Marcionem* has anything whatsoever to do with consolation, which is the theme of *Ep*. 60. Since moreover the five-book *Adversus Marcionem* is by far the longest of all Tertullian's treatises, its perusal would be a tall order. There is accordingly not the slightest reason why Jerome should have read either it or the *De praescriptione haereticorum* before composing his *Ep*. 60. These echoes from the two works are due simply to his magpie mind and mammoth memory.

The second issue is the question of whether Jerome expected anyone else to recognize such phrases as reminiscences.[12] It might be thought that the best person to identify these particular echoes in the obituary of Nepotian would be a reviviscent Nepotian himself, since in the immediately preceding paragraph he has been depicted as deeply into *Quellenforschung*: *Illud, aiebat, Tertulliani, istud Cypriani.*[13] Here however *illud Tertulliani* is translated by Fremantle as "This is Tertullian's opinion";[14] unlike Jerome, Nepotian was not interested in flashy frippery. Moreover, verbal debts such as those documented above would simply appear to be too brief to be recognizable: their elusiveness is increased by the modifications to which they are subjected. What Jerome says is evidently meant to look like his own smart and snappy formulation.

Such is particularly the case with the third and last leg of the tricolon from the *De praescriptione haereticorum*. Here Jerome turns the Tertullianic *durum iudicem interpellabat* into *interpellatricem duri iudicis*. He thereby converts Tertullian's finite verb *interpellabat* into the striking neologism *interpellatricem.* The result (*petitorem et interpellatricem*) is an impressive pair of polysyllabic *nomina agentis* ending in *-tor* and matching *-trix* back-to-back in the middle of an equally impressive chiasmus that is also marked by homoeoptoton, homoeoteleuton, twofold hyperbaton, and Behaghel's Law.[15] In stylistic terms Jerome's formulation has accordingly outdone even its Tertullianic model.

This enhanced stylishness does however entail two slight but significant inconcinnities that betray the imitator.[16] In the first place the *Thesaurus Linguae*

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[11] So Scourfield, *Consoling Heliodorus*, 226 (on 19.1).

[12] For the view that they are meant to be recognized, see S. Deléani, "Présence de Cyprien dans les oeuvres de Jérôme sur la virginité," in Duval, *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient*, 66: "Telle une signature authentifiant le contenu d'une page."

[13] *Ep*. 60.10 (*CSEL* 54:561).

[14] W.H. Fremantle et al., *The Principal Works of St. Jerome* (Oxford, 1893; repr. Grand Rapids, 2003) 127.

[15] Reference may also be made to the arresting identification of the *laudandus* with a Biblical personage (*nocturnum...exhibuit*; for the phenomenon see N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 226); the verb *exhibuit* is accordingly mistranslated as "a-t-il allégué" by J. Labourt, *S. Jérôme: Lettres* (Paris, 1953) 3.100.

[16] For the tell-tale signs, see B. Axelson, *Das Prioritätsproblem Tertullian-Minucius Felix* (Lund, 1941) 70: "...besondere Anstösse, nämlich teils das Auftreten von

Latinae points out that *iudicem interpello* is a technical term of the law: it simply means "I appeal to a judge."[17] Every schoolboy knows that the imperfect denotes repeated action in the past: hence Tertullian's *interpellabat* means "she kept appealing"—she was a pain. However Jerome's *interpellatrix* simply means "an appealer." It has no connotation of repeated importunity whatsoever: hence Scourfield is wrong to translate it as "who kept interrupting." Accordingly Jerome's neologism, impressive though it be, actually prevents him from making the very point he wants to make: that this woman, like Nepotian, was a pain. It may therefore be observed that Jerome not only does not use this parable to make the point made either by the Bible ("pray always") or by Tertullian ("seek from your own, not heretics"); he does not even use it to say what he himself means. What he does say, however, he says with peerless stylistic finesse.

The second inconcinnity involves the syntagm *duri iudicis*. Tertullian says: *non inimicum, licet durum, iudicem*. By the figure of *paradiastole*[18] Tertullian is here using *durus* merely as a mitigative gloss on *non inimicus*.[19] This judge is "not hostile"; since he would not listen to the widow, he is merely "unsympathetic."[20] However Jerome's detachment of *durus* from its Tertullianic context as merely a contrastive gloss on *non inimicus* invests the word with an absolute quality that gives it a slightly different nuance: a *durus iudex* without qualification is simply a "cruel" judge.[21] However this particular judge is not "cruel," since he does not do anything at all: he merely ignores the woman. The inconcinnity confirms the borrowing.

Three concluding remarks may be made. In the first place it might be thought surprising that such linguistic impropriety should be found in someone who had

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Gedankenelementen, die durch logische Störung irgendeiner Art (wie Mangel an organischem Zusammenhang mit der Umgebung, Widerspruch usw.) dem Text des einen Autors entschieden schlechter als dem des anderen entsprechen, teils gezwungene, unbeholfene oder eigentümlich übertriebene Ausdrucksweise, wie sie sich erfahrungsgemäss namentlich aus ungeschickter Variation bzw. 'Übertrumpfung' einer Vorlage leicht ergbit.

[17] *TLL s.v. interpello*, 2.B.1a (*notione adeundi...usu iuridico...appellandi causa*), esp. 2242.34–6.

[18] See *Carm. de fig.* 115: *Paradiastole...fit, cum rem distinguimus ab re*.

[19] Each leg of Tertullian's tricolon accordingly establishes a rapport between subject and immediately succeeding phrase; in the first two this purpose is served by *suum* and *vicini* (*anus illa intra tectum suum...pulsator ille vicini ianuam...vidua illa non inimicum licet durum iudicem*).

[20] For this sense of *durus* see *OLD s.v.*, 4.a. One might also compare Tertullian's own gloss on *durus* in the immediately preceding paragraph (11.6): *Vidua a iudice petebat audiri quia non admittebatur*.

[21] So Fremantle, *Principal Works*, 127. Cf. also Jerome's own use of *durus* at the start of this very letter (*crudelis ac dura*; *Ep*. 60.2.2) as well as Servius' contemporary gloss on *Aen*. 2.7 (*duri...crudelis*). *OLD s.v.*, 5.a, gives "harsh, pitiless." The difference in semantic nuance between Jerome and Tertullian is conveniently illustrated by rendering the latter's phrase as "not hostile, though pitiless," which is clearly absurd.

been Donatus' star pupil and was himself a "*grammaticus eximius*."[22] Secondly Jerome repeats his "improved" formulation (*interpellatricem duri iudicis*) in works written four and thirteen years after *Ep*. 60:[23] such *Selbstzitate* are typical.[24] Finally, it may be observed that Jerome is alone in his appropriation of Tertullian's pair of flashy phrases: again the phenomenon is characteristic.[25] In connection with the *Libellus de virginitate servanda* it has been suggested that the reason for such pilferage is Jerome's peculiar *Geltungssucht*, which made him anxious to shine at any cost.[26] In extenuation of this shortcoming it might be urged that the *Libellus* had been written by someone who was still relatively young. The author of *Ep*. 60, however, was well into middle-age: hence the *furta* detected in the present paper would appear to be all the more significant.

[22] So F. Lammert, *De Hieronymo Donati discipulo* (Leipzig, 1912) 3.

[23] I.e., *Ep*. 79.1 and *In Es*. 62.6–7.

[24] See N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 456 (General Index, *s.v.* "self-imitation... involving language which comes in the first instance from another author"). There is accordingly no reason to posit a "rereading" (cf. n. 11 above) of *Ep*. 60.

[25] See N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 4.

[26] See N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity*, 3–4.

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Chapter 4
Rethinking Jerome's Portraits of Holy Women

Andrew Cain

In the centuries following his death in c.420, Jerome's sainthood and pre-eminence as a Biblical scholar and ascetic theologian generally were taken for granted by Christians.[1] As history gradually gave way to legend, he became an object of pious devotion, and an enormously popular cult in his honour proliferated starting in the early medieval period.[2] But before there was a cult of Saint Jerome, before there even was a "Saint" Jerome, there was Eusebius Hieronymus Stridonensis, a provincial of obscure lineage from the virtually unknown town of Stridon on the border of Pannonia and Dalmatia.[3]

In his own lifetime, Jerome never came close to enjoying the widespread acclaim that accrued to him posthumously.[4] There are many plausible reasons for this. For one thing, he championed a brand of asceticism that appealed to only a tiny minority of Christians. This fact alone pushed him to the periphery of "mainstream" Christian piety, but at times his theological and rhetorical excesses catapulted him even to the fringes of the extreme ascetic movement in the West.[5] His Hebrew scholarship was criticized for its novelty by the leading Biblical authorities of his day and by other Christians in locales as disparate as Rome

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[1] His authoritative status was formally recognized on 20 September 1295, when Pope Boniface VIII pronounced him one of the four Doctors of the Latin Church.

[2] E.F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985).

[3] Stridon's precise location has long been debated. See F. Bulic, "Stridone luogo natale di S. Girolamo," in *Miscellanea Geronimiana. Scritti varii pubblicati nel XV centenario dalla morte di San Girolamo* (Rome, 1920) 253–330; I. Fodor, "Le lieu d'origine de S. Jérôme. Reconsidération d'une vieille controverse," *RHE* 81 (1986) 498–500.

[4] For a discussion of Jerome's (perhaps surprisingly) less than illustrious reception in late antique Gaul, see Ralph Mathisen's essay "The Use and Abuse of Jerome in Gaul during Late Antiquity" in this volume.

[5] His ill-fated involvement in the controversy with Jovinian is a prime illustration of his marginal status in the debate about asceticism in the late fourth century. See Y.-M. Duval, *L'affaire Jovinien. D'une crise de la société romaine a une crise de la pensée chrétienne à la fin du IVe et au début du Ve siècle* (Rome, 2003); D. G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: The Jovinianist Controversy* (Oxford, 2007).

and the backwoods of North Africa.[6] As a result, Jerome's Vulgate translation of most of the Bible into Latin, his crowning scholarly achievement, was with few exceptions rejected by contemporaries, lay and clerical alike.[7] When the so-called Origenist controversy erupted in the 390s,[8] the unqualified praise he had heaped upon the heterodox third-century Biblical exegete Origen of Alexandria in his earlier writings raised fundamental questions about his orthodoxy.[9] Jerome's quest for respectability was further frustrated by the fact that his ecclesiastical status was ambiguous at best and scandalous at worst. He was not a bishop but a non-practising priest (ordained by the schismatic bishop Paulinus of Antioch, no less) who was officially pronounced a miscreant *twice* in one decade by the high-profile sees at Rome (385) and Jerusalem (394).[10]

Jerome, then, faced many dire challenges—most, alas, of his own creation—which seriously impaired his efforts to establish himself in the eyes of contemporary Christians as a credible authority figure. In view of these complicating factors, an intriguing question arises: how did Jerome seek to secure a favourable reception of himself and his body of work?[11] In this paper I shall offer a preliminary answer to this very big question by considering a relatively small but representative slice of his vast and varied literary *oeuvre*. Under investigation will be two letters that Jerome wrote over a period of three decades commemorating Roman Christian women with whom he had had some or other association. The first chronologically is a short *vita* of the virgin Asella, who was alive at the time of its composition, while the other takes the form of an *epitaphium* eulogizing the deceased widow

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[6] For examples, see S. Rebenich, "Jerome: the *vir trilinguis* and the *Hebraica veritas*," *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77. For Jerome's knowledge of Hebrew, see Hillel Newman's essay in this volume.

[7] His translation was not used widely until the ninth century, though many clerics and monks still continued up through the thirteenth century to read from and copy Old Latin versions of the Bible. See R. Loewe, "The Medieval History of the Latin Vulgate," in G.W.H. Lampe ed., *The Cambridge History of the Bible, 2. The West from the Fathers to the Reformation* (Cambridge, 1975) 102–54.

[8] A narrative of this controversy is provided by E. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992).

[9] On Jerome's self-presentation as a *vir orthodoxus*, see B. Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris, 1999).

[10] In the summer of 385 he was forced to leave Rome by the local church hierarchy after being convicted of clerical misconduct stemming from charges of opportunism and sexual impropriety; see A. Cain, "Origen, Jerome, and the *Senatus Pharisaeorum*," *Latomus* 65 (2006) 727–34. A decade later in Bethlehem he was excommunicated by Bishop John of Jerusalem; see P. Nautin, "L'excommunication de saint Jérôme," *AEHE V* 80/81 (1972–73) 7–37.

[11] I explore this question and its ramifications in my book, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009).

Marcella. Both letters, furthermore, were composed not just for private consumption by Jerome's literary circle but for an indefinitely broad Christian readership.

These two writings have been appreciated by scholars primarily for the biographical information they purport to provide about the women sketched therein as well as for the light they shed on the inner-workings of Jerome's social network.[12] An altogether new approach will be taken to these letters here. Drawing attention to their underlying propagandistic-apologetic nature, I shall argue that Jerome penned them in part to justify his spiritual, scholarly, and theological authority to his followers but mainly to the wider Latin Christian world that remained wary of him.[13]

On Asella (*EP*. 24)

By the time Jerome composed his *vita* of Asella in 384, she was a lifelong virgin in her fifties.[14] Like the religious women with whom he associated in Rome during his three-year stay there (382–385), Asella was of aristocratic stock. She evidently belonged to the monastic circle of Marcella,[15] as we infer from the fact that her *vita* was cast as a letter to the latter. Just prior to leaving Rome for good in August of 385, Jerome addressed a letter to her (*Ep*. 45) in which he rebutted charges of opportunism and sexual immorality brought against him by Roman church officials.[16] This suggests that she was a person of some influence among his friends there and thus was in a position to help mobilize within his support base now that he no longer would be there to do so himself. After settling into Bethlehem, Jerome kept ties with Asella. In the early 390s he dedicated to her his *Vita Hilarionis*.[17] The date of her death is unknown. It is possible that she is the

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[12] E.g., J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975); S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992); C. Krumeich, *Hieronymus und die christlichen feminae clarissimae* (Bonn, 1993); B. Feichtinger, *Apostolae apostolorum. Frauenaskese als Befreiung und Zwang bei Hieronymus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1995).

[13] See A. Cain, "Jerome's *Epitaphium Paulae*: Hagiography, Pilgrimage, and the Cult of Saint Paula," *JECS* 18 (2010), forthcoming. In this article I argue that Jerome conceived his epitaph on Paula (*Ep*. 108) to be the textual underpinning of a cult (localized in Bethlehem) of Paula as an ascetic martyr-saint; at the same time, he transformed her into a distinctly Hieronymian model of ascetic piety, pilgrimage, Scriptural study, and euergetism. See also Idem, "Jerome's *Epistula* 117 on the *Subintroductae*: Satire, Apology, and Ascetic Propaganda in Gaul," *Augustinianum* 49 (2009) 119–43, forthcoming, for Jerome's efforts to defend and to justify his spiritual authority to early fifth-century Gallic Christians.

[14] *PCBE* 2.199-200, "Asella 1."

[15] On this circle, see below.

[16] I discuss the substance of these charges in *The Letters of Jerome*, chapter 4.

[17] P. Harvey, "Jerome Dedicates his *Vita Hilarionis*," *VChr* 59 (2005) 286–97. For the dating of this work, see P. Leclerc, E. Morales, *Jérôme: Trois Vies de moines (Paul,*

wealthy cloistered virgin by the same name whom Palladius met during a visit to Rome around 404.[18]

After recounting in the first part of *Ep*. 24 how Asella came to embrace the virginal life, Jerome describes her present lifestyle in stylized language. He transforms her into the idealized embodiment of his own precepts for ascetic living as we find them articulated most notably in his *Libellus de servanda virginitate* to Eustochium (*Ep*. 22), which he had released in Rome not long before writing *Ep.* 24. In fact, many echoes, phraseological and otherwise, from *Ep*. 22 have been woven into the textual fabric of *Ep*. 24 (these are documented below in the footnotes).[19] Asella lived an angelic life shut up in a small room in the family mansion; this *cellula* was her paradise.[20] She worked with her hands, mindful of the apostle's decree that anyone who does not work should not eat.[21] She cared nothing for the refinements of fashion or for gaudy dress.[22] In prayer and psalmody she constantly spoke to Christ her Bridegroom.[23] She restricted herself to an anchorite's meagre diet of bread, salt, and cold water.[24] Throughout the year she continually carried out two- or three-day fasts but during Lent she would fast for a week at a time, all the while keeping a cheerful countenance.[25] Her face was pale, but not in an

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Malchus, Hilarion) (Paris, 2007) 20.

[18] *Hist.laus*. 41.4.

[19] For evocations of this seminal manual on virginity in Jerome's later correspondence, see A. Cain, "*Liber manet*: Pliny, *Epist*. 9.27.2 and Jerome, *Epist*. 130.19.5," *CQ* 58 (2008) 708–10.

[20] *Ep*. 24.3 (*CSEL* 54:215): *Vnius cellulae clausa angustiis latitudine* paradis*i fruebatur*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.41 (*CSEL* 54:210): *Ad* paradisum *mente transgredere*.

[21] *Ep*. 24.4 (*CSEL* 54:216): *Operabatur manibus suis sciens scriptum esse: qui non operatur, nec manducet*. Cf. *Ep.* 17.2 (*CSEL* 54:72): *Nihil alicui praeripui, nihil otiosus accipio. manu cotidie et proprio sudore quaerimus cibum scientes ab apostolo scriptum esse: qui autem non operatur, nec manducet*. On the work ethic of self-sufficiency in desert Christianity, see D. Caner, *Wandering, Begging Monks. Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 2002) 200–3.

[22] *Ep*. 24.5 (*CSEL* 54:217): *Idem semper habitus,* neglecta mundities *et* inculta veste *cultus ipse sine cultu.* Cf. *Ep*. 22.27 (*CSEL* 54:183): Vestis nec satis munda *nec sordida*.

[23] *Ep*. 24.4 (*CSEL* 54:216): *Intra* cubiculi sui secreta custodiit, *ut numquam pedem proferret in publicum…*sponso *aut orans* loquebatur *aut psallens*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.25 (*CSEL* 54:178): *Semper* te cubiculi tui secreta custodiant, *semper tecum sponsus ludat intrinsecus. oras:* loqueris ad sponsum.

[24] *Ep*. 24.3 (*CSEL* 54:215): *Pane et sale et* aqua frigida *concitabat magis esuriem, quam restinguebat*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.7 (*CSEL* 54:153): *De cibis vero et potu taceo, cum etiam languentes* aqua frigida *utantur et coctum aliquid accepisse luxuriae sit*.

[25] *Ep*. 24.4 (*CSEL* 54:216): *Cumque per omnem annum iugi* ieiunio *pasceretur, biduo triduoque sic permanens, tum vero in quadragesima navigii sui vela tendebat omnes paene ebdomadas* vultu laetante *coniungens*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.27 (*CSEL* 54:183): *Cum* ieiunas*,* laeta sit facies tua.

ostentatious way.[26] She rarely stepped into public, and when she did, it was to visit the shrines of the martyrs.[27] This incorrigible lover of solitude became an urban anchorite, finding the desert amidst the bustle of Rome.[28] Her reputation for sanctity was unassailable: the good praised her and the wicked dared not to slander her.[29] Moreover, even though Asella had been living as a consecrated virgin for over forty years before coming into contact with him, Jerome, by running her virtues through the subtextual filter of *Ep*. 22, subtly assumes responsibility for her monastic successes and gives the misleading impression that her accomplishments are directly attributable to her adherence to his counsel.

To what end did Jerome pen this registry of Asella's virtues? At the outset of *Ep*. 24 he instructs Marcella to read the letter to young women so that they may take her as the model of the perfect life.[30] This point is reiterated and expanded upon at the end of the letter: "Let widows and virgins imitate her, let wedded wives make much of her, let sinful women fear her, and let bishops look up to her."[31] The *imitatio* that Jerome advocates has far-reaching ramifications not only for Asella but also for himself. Christian widows and virgins, in patterning themselves after her, would be partaking in an expression of the spiritual life recommended by Jerome. As for bishops and other church authorities, in showing Asella reverence they would be acknowledging that his spiritual teachings were salutary. The *vita*, then, served to affirm Jerome's interpretation of ascetic Christianity to his circle of female disciples and to prospective (female) followers by furnishing them with a Hieronymized model of piety (*exemplum pudicitiae et virginitatis insigne*[32]) around which they could rally. It had an apologetic dimension as well. By pinning his controversial teachings on a woman evidently already distinguished for her holiness—and made more distinguished by his praise of her—Jerome might have hoped to vindicate these teachings in the face of mounting criticism from the wider Roman Christian community and especially its clergy.[33]

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[26] *Ep*. 24.5 (*CSEL* 54:217): *Ita* pallor in facie est*, ut, cum continentiam indicet, non redoleat ostentationem*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.17 (*CSEL* 54:164): *Sint tibi sociae, quas videris quod ieiunia tenuant, quibus* pallor in facie est.

[27] *Ep*. 24.4 (*CSEL* 54:216): *Ad* martyrum *limina paena invisa properabat*. Cf. *Ep*. 22.17 (*CSEL* 54:165): Martyres *tibi quaerantur in cubiculo tuo*.

[28] *Ep*. 24.4 (*CSEL* 54:216): *Solitudinem putaret esse delicias et in urbe turbida inveniret heremum monachorum*.

[29] *Ep*. 24.5 (*CSEL* 54:217): *Sola vitae suae qualitate promeruit, ut in urbe pompae, lasciviae, deliciarum, in qua humilem esse miseria est, et boni eam praedicent et mali detrahere non audeant*.

[30] *Ep*. 24.1 (*CSEL* 54:214): *His potius, quae adulescentulae sunt, legere dignare, ut ad exemplum eius se instituentes conversationem illius perfectae vitae normam arbitrentur*.

[31] *Ep*. 24.5 (*CSEL* 54:217): *Viduae imitentur et virgines, maritae colant, noxiae timeant, suspiciant sacerdotes*.

[32] *Ep*. 45.7 (*CSEL* 54:328).

[33] On this criticism, see Cain, *The Letters of Jerome*, 100–5.

On Marcella (*EP.* 127)

Marcella was born in the 330s into an extraordinarily wealthy household in Rome.[34] Her ancestral pedigree was prestigious. Consuls and praetorian prefects are said to have numbered among her forefathers[35] and her mother Albina[36] came from the Ceionii, one of the most distinguished families in the late Roman West.[37] Marcella wed at a young age but she lost her husband after only seven months of childless marriage. Albina tried to contract a marriage between her daughter and the elderly ex-consul Naeratius Cerealis,[38] but the headstrong Marcella refused, maintaining that if she wanted to marry rather than to devote herself to perpetual chastity, she would look for a husband, not an inheritance.[39] She made the (for that period) quite unconventional decision to remain an ascetic widow, converting the family mansion in an upscale neighbourhood on the Aventine, the southernmost of Rome's seven hills, into a makeshift domestic nunnery. By the 370s, she had gathered around herself a number of aristocratic Christian widows and virgins who shared her dedication to the monastic life and to study of the Bible.[40]

It was in the autumn of 382, shortly after Jerome had arrived as an interpreter for the ecclesiastical delegation of bishops Epiphanius of Salamis and Paulinus of Antioch, that Marcella first met the precocious thirty-something provincial *parvenu*. She evidently was impressed with his monastic and scholarly résumé, which included past experience as a "hermit" in the Syrian "desert"[41] and expertise in the original languages and exegesis of the Bible, for she retained him as a

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[34] *PCBE* 2.1357–62, "Marcella 1"; K. Sugano, "Marcella von Rom. Ein Lebensbild," in M. Wissemann ed., *Roma renascens. Beiträge zur Spätantike und Rezeptionsgeschichte. Festschrift Ilona Opelt* (Frankfurt, 1988) 355–70; S. Letsch-Brunner, *Marcella—Discipula et Magistra. Auf den Spuren einer römischen Christin des 4. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1998).

[35] *Ep*. 127.1.

[36] *PCBE* 2.74–5, "Albina 1."

[37] M.T.W. Arnheim, *The Senatorial Aristocracy in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1972) 104.

[38] *PLRE* 1.197–9, "Naeratius Cerealis 2."

[39] *Ep*. 127.2 (*CSEL* 56:146): *Si vellem nubere et non aeternae me cuperem pudicitiae dedicare, utique maritum quaererem, non hereditatem*.

[40] Kelly, *Jerome*, 91–103; Krumeich, *Hieronymus*, 70–9; M. Testard, "Les dames de l'Aventin, disciples de saint Jérôme," *BSAF* (1996) 39–63; E.G. Hinson, "Women biblical scholars in the late fourth century: The Aventine circle," *StudPatr* 23 (1997) 319–24. On their domestic monasticism, see D. Gordini, "Origine e sviluppo del monachesimo a Roma," *Gregorianum* 37 (1956) 220–60, at 238–40, 244–5, 256–7; A. Yarbrough, "Christianization in the Fourth Century: The Example of Roman Women," *ChHist* 45 (1976) 149–65.

[41] Elsewhere I have argued that Jerome used one of his two known letter collections—the *Epistularum ad diversos liber*, which contained selected letters he had written in Syria during the middle 370s—as the textual mechanism by which to introduce himself to prospective Christian patrons in Rome as a veteran of spiritual warfare and therefore as an exceptional would-be spiritual director. See "*Vox clamantis in deserto:* Rhetoric, reproach,

spiritual director and Scriptural tutor for the duration of his stay in Rome.[42] Writing from Bethlehem in the spring of 386, several months following his expulsion from Rome, he invited her to join Paula, Eustochium, and himself in the Holy Land,[43] but she declined the offer for reasons that remain unclear. She lived out the rest of her days in her native Italy and died in 410, not long after the invasion of Rome by Alaric's forces. Jerome was informed about her death by a letter from his and Marcella's mutual friend Principia, who requested that he compose an epitaph memorializing her virtues so that she might inspire others by her holy example.[44] In 412 he complied and dedicated the piece to Principia (*Ep*. 127), though there are indications that he intended it to reach an audience that extended well beyond his inner circle in Rome.[45]

In the epitaph Marcella assumes several identities: student of Scripture; ascetic Christian *par excellence*; monastic revolutionary; and champion of orthodoxy. Let us begin with the first of these roles assigned to her. Jerome notes that her passion for the Bible was beyond belief (*divinarum scripturarum ardor incredibilis*[46]). To illustrate this zeal, and to show that it followed from a deep sense of piety, he cites an appropriate passage from the Psalms (118.11) that she always had on her lips: "I have hidden your words in my heart so that I might not sin against you."[47] Later in the epitaph, at the very point in fact where he injects himself into the narrative with a brief explanation of the circumstances of his coming to Rome, Jerome again praises her passion for Biblical study. But this time it is the secondary focus,

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and the forging of ascetic authority in Jerome's letters from the Syrian desert," *JThS* n.s. 57 (2006) 500–25. See also Cain, *The Letters of Jerome*, 13–42.

[42] The textual remains of their patron-client relationship are preserved in the sixteen letters from him to her that survive from this period (*Epp.* 23–9, 32, 34, 37, 38, 40–4). For a thematic reading of these letters, see Cain, *The Letters of Jerome*, chapter 3; see also M. Vessey, "Jerome's Origen: The making of a Christian literary *persona*," *StudPatr* 28 (1993) 135–45.

[43] This letter, though sent in the names of Paula and Eustochium, was drafted by Jerome. See N. Adkin, "The letter of Paula and Eustochium to Marcella: some notes," *Maia* 51 (1999) 97–110. For the dating of the letter, see P. Nautin, "La lettre de Paule et Eustochium à Marcelle (Jérôme, Ep. 46)," *Augustinianum* 24 (1984) 441–8.

[44] *Ep*. 127.1 (*CSEL* 56:145): *Saepe et multum flagitas, virgo Christi Principia, ut memoriam sanctae feminae Marcellae litteris recolam et bonum, quo diu fruiti sumus, etiam ceteris noscendum imitandumque describam*.

[45] Cf. *Ep*. 127.10 (*CSEL* 56:153), where he anticipates that his audience will include hostile readers: *Ne legenti fastidium faciat odiosa replicatio et videar apud malivolos sub occasione laudis alterius stomachum meum digerere*. For a catalogue of Jerome's references to the general reader in his works, see P. Antin, "Saint Jérôme et son lecteur," *RSR* 34 (1947) 82–99.

[46] *Ep*. 127.4 (*CSEL* 56:148).

[47] *Ep*. 127.4 (*CSEL* 56:148): *Semperque cantabat: in corde meo abscondi eloquia tua, ut non peccem tibi*.

while his (as we are led to believe) singular guidance of her becomes the matter of primary emphasis:

> And because in those days I had a reputation for being a student of the Scriptures, she never came to me without asking some question about Scripture…whatever in me had been attained by long study and had become second nature by constant meditation, this she tasted, this she learned and made her own.[48]

Further on Jerome reminds his readers that no matter how far Marcella advanced in her studies, she was still the apprentice and he the master: "Whenever she was asked a question, she would give her opinion not as being her own but as being mine or someone else's so as to admit that she was a student in that in which she was a teacher."[49]

Marcella's total immersion in Scripture translated into action, as we discover in Jerome's conventional sketch of her *mode de vie*.[50] She fasted but always in moderation. She abstained from eating meat and never let wine touch her lips. She avoided the company of fellow aristocratic ladies and spent her time instead at the basilicas of the apostles and martyrs. Moreover, Marcella, like Asella, is presented as the consummate embodiment of the Hieronymian ascetic program.[51] Even more noteworthy is how Marcella came to be an ascetic in the first place. The Oriental-style monasticism she adopted had been inspired, we are told, by tales about the austerities of Antony and other Eastern monks related to her by the Alexandrian bishops Athanasius and later Peter, both of whom spent time in Rome in exile, Athanasius from 339 to c.343 and Peter from 373 to 378. Peter she may indeed have met, but it is highly improbable that she ever met Athanasius, since at the time she would have been around ten years old.[52] Nevertheless, to linger over this anachronism is to miss the point. For Jerome's concern apparently is to link Marcella directly to the reputed author of the *Life of St. Antony*, and thus ultimately to Antony himself, so as to show that her monastic pedigree was

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[48] *Ep*. 127.7 (*CSEL* 56:151): *Et quia alicuius tunc nominis aestimabar super studio scripturarum, numquam convenit, quin de scripturis aliquid interrogaret...quicquid in nobis longo fuit studio congregatum et meditatione diuturna quasi in naturam versum, hoc illa libavit, hoc didicit atque possedit*. Cf. similar comments by Jerome about Marcella in the preface to the first book of his *Commentary on Galatians* (386) (*CCSL* 77A:5): *Certe, cum Romae essem, numquam tam festina me vidit ut non de Scripturis aliquid interrogaret*. On Marcella's role in the genesis of this *Commentary*, see the general introduction to A. Cain, *St. Jerome, Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, FOTC 120 Washington DC, 2010).

[49] *Ep*. 127.7 (*CSEL* 56:151): *Sic interrogata respondebat, ut etiam sua non sua diceret, sed vel mea vel cuiuslibet alterius, ut et in ipso, quod docebat, se discipulam fateretur*.

[50] *Ep*. 127.4.

[51] For this program, see P. Laurence, *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminin. La conversion à la vie parfaite* (Paris, 1997).

[52] E.g., Kelly, *Jerome*, 92 n. 9.

as illustrious as possible for a Latin Christian who had never stepped foot in the legendary Egyptian desert.

Jerome claims that Marcella was the first *nobilis femina* in Rome to adopt the monastic life.[53] This claim is far-fetched, to say the least. Jerome, as one with an attentive finger on the pulse of Roman ascetic Christianity, was bound to be fully aware that Marcella was not the first of her kind. We know, for instance, that a community of virgins dedicated to the teenage martyr St. Agnes was present in Rome already in the early decades of the fourth century.[54] In addition, in the middle 350s, a few years before Marcella made her profession, the older sister of his arch-rival Ambrose,[55] Marcellina, famously had taken the virgin's veil in a ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica presided over by Pope Liberius.[56]

With even greater daring Jerome credits Marcella with almost single-handedly transforming Rome from a pagan into a Christian capital in the years following his departure thence. He wrote thus to Principia:

> You lived together for such a long time that, thanks to your example and the upright conduct of many women, I rejoiced that Rome had turned into Jerusalem. Monasteries for virgins were so numerous and the crowd of monks was so great that, with all those servants of God there, what beforehand had been something to be ashamed of, later became a badge of honor.[57]

Immediately prior to this comment Jerome noted that as soon as he had left Rome, Principia took his place with Marcella and became her constant companion, such

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[53] *Ep*. 127.5 (*CSEL* 56:149): *Nulla eo tempore nobilium feminarum noverat Romae propositum monachorum*.

[54] P. Schmitz, "La première communauté de vierges à Rome," *RBén* 38 (1926) 189–95; R. Lorenz, "Die Anfänge des abendländischen Mönchtums im 4. Jahrhundert," *ZKG* 77 (1966) 1–61.

[55] On Jerome's contempt for Ambrose, see David Hunter's essay "The Raven Replies: Ambrose's *Letter to the Church at Vercelli (Ep. extra collectionem 14)* and the Criticisms of Jerome" in this volume.

[56] Ambr. *Virg*. 3.1; Paul.Mil. *Vit.Ambr*. 4. Jerome would presumably have known this fact about Marcellina from word of mouth during his time in Rome, not to mention from Ambrose's *De virginibus*, which he had read in Rome and accessed when composing *Ep*. 22. On his knowledge of this treatise, see Y.-M. Duval, "L'originalité du *De virginibus* dans le mouvement ascétique occidental. Ambroise, Cyprien, Athanase," in Y.-M. Duval ed., *Ambroise de Milan. XVIe centenaire de son élection épiscopale* (Paris, 1974) 9–66, at 64–6.

[57] *Ep*. 127.8 (*CSEL* 56:151–2): *Multoque ita vixistis tempore, ut imitatione vestri et conversatione multarum gauderemus Romam factam Hierosolymam. crebra virginum monasteria, monachorum innumerabilis multitudo, ut pro frequentia servientium deo, quod prius ignominiae fuerat, esset postea gloriae.*

that not even a finger's-breadth came between them.[58] The implications are firstly, that he and Marcella had been inseparable monastic companions up until then, and secondly, that her spirituality had profoundly been influenced by him. This means in effect that the monastic revolution she allegedly sparked owed something (or everything?) to the training in Scripture and spirituality she had received from him. Hence, Jerome greatly overstates Marcella's importance in the women's monastic movement in fourth-century Rome and in the process situates himself, her spiritual guide and the official narrator of her *acta*, as the grand architect of this watershed socio-religious phenomenon.[59]

The Marcella heroicized in *Ep*. 127 was instrumental in shaping not only the monastic landscape of Roman Christianity but also the theological one.[60] She had been serving the Lord in holy tranquillity when all of a sudden the tornado of heresy that was sweeping through Palestine made its way to Rome in the form of Rufinus and his controversial translation from Greek of Origen's *On First Principles*. As is well known, Jerome had by this point (late 390s) anathematized Origen, along with his old friend Rufinus, and therefore he was eager to see the defeat of the influential pro-Rufinian party in Rome. This would be no easy battle, for according to Jerome all of Rome was thrown into confusion. Many laypeople, priests, monks, and even the pope himself (Siricius) were led astray by Origen's errors and by the wiles of his apologist Rufinus. At first, Marcella stood on the sidelines so as not to appear carried away by partisan sentiment. But when she realized that the historic faith of Rome was in serious jeopardy, she publicly stood against the heretical teachers, preferring to please God rather than men. In the meantime, Siricius had died and was succeeded by Anastasius I, who in 400 convoked a council at Rome formally condemning Origen and his followers. Jerome attributes this "victory" to Marcella (*huius tam gloriosae victoriae origo Marcella est*) and her tireless campaigning against the heretics.[61] He undoubtedly exaggerates, perhaps quite significantly, the importance of Marcella's role in the chain of events leading up to Anastasius' decision, but does so in order to tout her as the once-saviour of Roman Christianity and in the process to vindicate his own orthodoxy.

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[58] *Ep*. 127.8 (*CSEL* 56:151): *In nostrum locum statim audivimus te illius adhaesisse consortio et numquam ab illa ne transversum quidem unguis, ut dicitur, recessisse.*

[59] This is by no means the only instance in which Jerome situated himself and his friends at the centre of the action. For instance, he made Eustochium the *prima virgo nobilis* at Rome (*Ep*. 22.15) and Pammachius the first senator to become a monk (*Ep*. 66.13). This is true also of the heroes of his hagiographic romances: in the *Vita Pauli,* Paul bests Antony to become the true though intentionally secret founder of the eremitical life, while in the *Vita Hilarionis* Hilarion is celebrated as the first monk of Palestine.

[60] For what follows see *Ep*. 127.9–10.

[61] Kelly, *Jerome*, 246–9; P. Laurence, "Marcella, Jérôme et Origène," *REAug* 42 (1996) 267–93.

Conclusion

Jerome wrote his epistolary tributes to Asella and Marcella at two very different junctures in his literary career. While he was motivated undoubtedly in part by a sentimental desire to commemorate women whom he admired deeply for their religiosity, I have suggested that another perhaps even more fundamental concern lies at the heart of these two remarkable compositions. Jerome brilliantly transformed the historical Asella and Marcella into iconic symbols for his ascetic, scholarly, and theological special interests[62] as part of a sophisticated effort to buttress his claims to spiritual and intellectual authority, internally within his own community of followers and externally to the wider Christian world. How could Christians conscientious about their faith reasonably find fault with him when devout women so magnificently favoured by God embraced his cause? A grand premise is implicit in Jerome's rhetoric. According to the narrative he constructed of the women's ascetic movement in the West, presented serially in writings such as the two letters examined in this paper, the women he personally mentored, from contemplative monastic recluses (Asella) to women of action (Marcella), shaped the Christianity of their day in profound ways. By heralding them not only as *exempla* of piety that all believers should emulate but also as the reputable public faces of his teachings, he was positioning himself with marvellous subtlety as a figure of virtually apostolic proportions, as the pre-eminent advocate of the true Christian faith in all of its ethical and doctrinal dimensions.

[62] How close a resemblance the women portrayed in the letters may bear to the Asella and Marcella of history is impossible to gauge, inasmuch as they are unattested in the ancient sources outside the writings of Jerome (the possible exception is Asella, who may be referred to in passing by Palladius: see above, n. 18). On the difficulty of recovering historical "holy women" from ancient hagiographic texts written by men, see E. Clark, "Holy women, holy words: Early Christian women, social history, and the 'linguistic turn'," *JECS* 6 (1998) 413–30.

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Chapter 5
Le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli* de Jérôme et la Prédication Pélagienne en Palestine entre 411 et 415

Benoît Jeanjean

La découverte récente de plusieurs textes et les nombreux travaux qu'ils ont suscités depuis vingt ans ont donné un nouvel élan aux recherches sur les premiers temps de la crise pélagienne. On connaît mieux à présent l'état d'esprit d'Augustin à l'égard de Pélage, ainsi que le rôle joué par Orose en Palestine en 415.[1] On sait également que le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*[2] que Jérôme, rédige pendant l'été 415, est parvenu à Ravenne avant la fin de cette même année et qu'il y a été lu avec intérêt.[3] Toutefois, si ces découvertes récentes jettent une lumière nouvelle

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[1] Les deux textes qui ont le plus renouvelé la question sont respectivement l'*Ep*. 19* d'Augustin à Jérôme (*BA* 46B:286–91) et le *Sermon* 348B d'Augustin (pour le texte voir F. Dolbeau, "Le Sermon 348B d'Augustin contre Pélage, Edition du texte intégral," *RecAug* 28 (1995) 37–63. Y.-M. Duval, qui a traduit et commenté la première a présenté, dans une série d'articles et de communications, les avancées permises grâce à ces textes: "La correspondance entre Augustin et Pélage," *REAug* 45 (1999) 363–84; "Pélage en son temps," *StudPatr* 38 (2001) 95–118; l'article "Pélage" du *HLL*, en attente de parution, intègre également ces nouveaux éléments.

[2] Ce dialogue est communément appelé *Dialogus adversus Pelagianos*, parce qu'il cherche à réfuter, comme hérétiques, les opinions pélagiennes. Mais ce titre n'est pas de Jérôme qui ne mentionne jamais le nom de Pélage. Nous y reviendrons plus loin.

[3] Cf. Aug. *Ep.* 19*.2. Cette lettre d'Augustin à Jérôme date de l'été 416. Elle signale qu'on sait déjà, à cette date, à Hippone, que le *Dialogus* de Jérôme est parvenu à la cour impériale, en Italie. Or, l'ouvrage était en cours de rédaction en juillet 415, lors de la confrontation de Pélage avec Orose à Jérusalem. Le fait que le troisième et dernier livre de ce *Dialogus* présente des éléments qui témoignent de la connaissance récente, par Jérôme, des premiers écrits antipélagiens d'Augustin (cf. *Dial*. 3.19), donne à penser que la rédaction en était alors presque achevée. Comme Jérôme n'avait aucune raison de retarder l'envoi de son ouvrage à ses différents correspondants, on peut affirmer, sans trop de risques, que celui-ci a été adressé en Italie dès la fin de l'été 415 ou, au plus tard, à l'automne, avant la fermeture de la navigation (c'est également l'avis exprimé par Duval dans "La correspondance," 364, n. 8). Augustin peut ainsi, au milieu de 416, avoir déjà eu des échos de la lecture du *Dialogus* de Jérôme à la cour de Ravenne, alors que lui-même n'a reçu ce même *Dialogus* qu'au printemps 416, par l'intermédiaire d'Orose qui revenait de Palestine.

sur les années 415–416, elles n'apportent aucun éclairage nouveau sur le contenu de la prédication de Pélage. Or, comme celui-ci a refusé d'assumer la paternité des écrits pour lesquels il a été incriminé, sa prédication est particulièrement délicate à cerner et les débats sont nombreux, aujourd'hui, pour savoir s'il était hérétique ou non.[4] Aborder la question en ces termes me paraît illusoire, car si le doute est, dans une certaine mesure, possible sur la personne même de Pélage, il n'en va pas de même pour les opinions qui lui sont prêtées sur les rôles respectifs de la volonté humaine et de la grâce divine. Le fait de vouloir le réhabiliter en le présentant comme une victime de l'acharnement d'un Jérôme ou d'un Augustin ne fait que renverser le procès et il ne nous appartient pas de distribuer les bons et les mauvais points. En revanche, il me semble beaucoup plus constructif d'analyser le processus qui a conduit Jérôme et Augustin, et à leur suite l'Eglise catholique, à réagir à la prédication pélagienne, à la condamner et à l'identifier à la personne de Pélage.[5] C'est dans cette perspective que je me propose de revenir sur le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli* de Jérôme et d'exposer à la fois pourquoi il a souvent été négligé par la critique moderne et en quoi il constitue un témoignage essentiel pour connaître la nature de la prédication pélagienne en Palestine entre 411 et 415.

Une des raisons pour lesquelles le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli* est parfois négligé par les chercheurs qui s'intéressent au pélagianisme tient à son auteur. En effet, la contribution de Jérôme à la lutte antipélagienne est souvent considérée comme négligeable en comparaison de celle d'Augustin et l'on constate que bien

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[4] Cf. notamment M. Lamberigts, "Le mal et le péché. Pélage: la réhabilitation d'un hérétique," *RHE* 95 (2000) 97–111, et B. Rees, *Pelagius. A Reluctant Heretic* (Woodbridge, 1988).

[5] Il convient de rappeler que la condamnation de Pélage comme hérétique est l'aboutissement d'un processus complexe qu'il ne faudrait pas limiter aux seules interventions d'Augustin et de Jérôme. La première condamnation des idées pélagiennes intervient fin 411, à Carthage, lors d'un synode qui, sous la présidence de l'évêque Aurélius, dénonce les positions de Célestius sur le baptême des *parvuli* (les tout petits). Pélage, mis en cause en 415 en Palestine, d'abord en juillet à Jérusalem, puis en décembre à Diospolis, défend son orthodoxie en se désolidarisant de Célestius. La condamnation de ce dernier est renouvelée au printemps et à l'été de 416 par deux synodes africains, respectivement à Carthage et à Milev, qui, cette fois, associent le nom de Pélage à celui de Célestius. Le pape Innocent Ier, sollicité sur la question par les évêques africains, leur adresse, le 27 janvier 417, différentes lettres qui excommunient Pélage et Célestius. Mais ceux-ci sont réhabilités, sur la base de leur *Libellus fidei*, par un synode romain convoqué au cours de l'été 417 par le nouveau pape Zosime. Leur orthodoxie continue d'être contestée par les évêques africains qui demandent à Zosime de reconsidérer la question. L'empereur Honorius intervient dans le débat le 30 avril 418 par un rescrit qui condamne les thèses pélagiennes et envoie Célestius en exil. Dans le même temps, le synode de Carthage du 1er mai 418 condamne à nouveau les thèses des deux hommes en rappelant l'excommunication prononcée par Innocent Ier l'année précédente. Suite au concile romain de juin 418, Zosime condamne à son tour Pélage et Célestius. Le siège romain ne reviendra plus désormais sur cette condamnation.

des critiques ne l'évoquent qu'en passant, affirmant que son seul véritable intérêt réside dans les citations originales qu'il donne des *Testimonia* de Pélage.[6] Pour le reste, on reproche au *Dialogus* de Jérôme son ton excessif, son identification abusive, voire "injuste" de la doctrine pélagienne à l'*impeccantia*,[7] elle-même assimilée à la doctrine stoïcienne de l'*apatheia.*[8] On remarque également qu'il n'aborde qu'*in extremis*, dans son dernier livre, la question du baptême des tout petits, et encore est-ce sous l'influence des premiers traités d'Augustin contre Pélage et Célestius qu'Orose vient de lui apporter.

Mais de telles critiques dispensent leurs auteurs de considérer le *Dialogus* de Jérôme pour lui-même. Ils oublient que ce dialogue répond aux lois du genre hérésiologique et que tout auteur d'un écrit de combat revendique le droit de ne pas ménager son adversaire. L'amalgame, dans le prologue, entre Pélage et les hérétiques qui l'ont précédé est certes contestable du point de vue de l'histoire des idées et des doctrines, il l'est beaucoup moins d'un point de vue hérésiologique. Il importe de ne pas l'oublier et de rechercher davantage sur quelles bases il s'opère et dans quelle mesure ces bases sont recevables pour le lecteur du cinquième siècle.[9] Jérôme n'avait aucune raison personnelle d'en vouloir à Pélage[10] et si, dans le *Dialogus*, il lui taille un costume d'hérétique "sur mesure," c'est d'abord parce qu'il a acquis la certitude que la prédication pélagienne, telle qu'il l'a perçue, est contraire à sa propre conception du libre arbitre et de la grâce. Or c'est précisément cette perception hiéronymienne de la doctrine pélagienne qui est mise en cause par les tenants d'une réhabilitation de Pélage. Certes, Jérôme retourne contre Pélage l'accusation de verser dans le manichéisme.[11] Certes, il pousse la mauvaise foi jusqu'à laisser entendre que la moralité du moine breton n'est pas aussi irréprochable qu'on le prétend.[12] Certes, il transforme la défense pélagienne de la nature humaine en une mise en cause du Créateur digne des positions dualistes

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[6] Cf. G. de Plinval, *Pélage. Ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme* (Lausanne, 1943) 279.

[7] Cf. Lamberigts, "Le mal et le péché," 103: "L'idée de l'*impeccantia*, si fréquemment allouée à Pélage et perçue comme une preuve de son arrogance doctrinale, se fonde sur la critique injuste émise par Jérôme."

[8] Cf. de Plinval, *Pélage*, 273–4.

[9] Voir mon analyse de cet amalgame, déjà présent dans l'*Ep*. 133 à Ctésiphon et repris dans le *Dialogus*: *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris, 1999) 387–402.

[10] Contrairement à l'idée soutenue par de Plinval, *Pélage,* 50–6, et reprise par R.F. Evans, *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals* (London, 1968) 26–38, qui croyait reconnaître Pélage dans le moine romain brocardé par Jérôme dans l'*Ep*. 50. Cette identification a depuis été écartée avec raison par Y.-M. Duval, "Pélage est-il le censeur inconnu de l'*Adversus Iovinianum* à Rome en 393? ou: Du portrait-robot de l'hérétique chez S. Jérôme," *RHE* 65 (1970) 525–57.

[11] Cf. *Dial*. 1.32; 2.1; 3.5. Voir mon analyse de ce retournement de l'accusation de manichéisme: *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie*, 420–4.

[12] Cf. *Dial*. 1.26. Voir mon analyse: *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie*, 404–6.

d'un Marcion.[13] Mais tout cela n'est que passes d'armes et procédés de rétorsion, bien prévisibles dans un écrit polémique, et ne doit pas être confondu avec la véritable prédication pélagienne.

Jérôme, il est vrai, pousse la position de son adversaire jusqu'à ses conséquences extrêmes, afin d'en faire apparaître les dangers, mais il a parfaitement conscience qu'il va au-delà du discours de Pélage et de ses partisans. Cela apparaît à plusieurs reprises dans le *Dialogus* où l'on surprend Atticus, le porte-parole des catholiques, à reconnaître qu'il force le discours de son adversaire Critobule. Ainsi, au chapitre 14 du livre I, alors que ce dernier vient de rappeler les appels à la perfection de l'Ancien et du Nouveau testaments, Atticus reformule l'adage pélagien, selon lequel l'homme peut être sans péché s'il le veut, en des termes inacceptables pour Critobule qui proteste vivement. Atticus lui répond alors ainsi:

> Tu as beau ne pas le dire, pourtant tes propos, les conséquences mêmes qui en découlent et l'ordre de tes arguments te le font dire malgré toi. Car si l'homme peut être sans péché alors que manifestement les apôtres n'ont pu être tels, l'homme peut être supérieur aux apôtres, sans parler des patriarches et des prophètes dont la justice n'a pas été parfaite sous la Loi.[14]

Il y a là une déformation indéniable du discours pélagien contre laquelle s'élève Critobule, mais elle est revendiquée comme telle par le catholique. On retrouve le même cas de figure, toujours dans le livre I, au chapitre 20 où Atticus écarte la revendication pélagienne à la perfection en ayant recours à l'argument de la diversité de la création:

> Votre dogme aboutira à ce que, à force de chicaner, chaque créature lève la main contre Dieu en lui demandant pourquoi il est le seul à être Dieu, pourquoi il a pris en haine les créatures au point de ne pas accorder à toutes la puissance d'une même majesté. Cela, bien sûr, vous ne le dites pas (car vous n'êtes pas insensés au point de combattre Dieu ouvertement), mais vous l'exprimez en d'autres termes, lorsque vous attachez un attribut de Dieu à l'homme en prétendant que celui-ci est sans péché, ce qui est le propre de Dieu.[15]

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[13] Cf. *Dial*. 1, 20. Voir mon analyse: *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie,* 416–17.

[14] *Dial*. 1.14: *Licet non loquaris, tamen ex propositione tua, ipsa consequentia et rerum ordine invitus hoc loqueris? Si enim potest esse homo sine peccato, quod apostolos non potuisse perspicuum est, potest homo esse super apostolos, ut taceam de patriarchis et prophetis, quorum in Lege non fuit perfecta iustitia*.

[15] Ibid., 20: *Vestrum decretum hucusque perueniet ut, dum singula calumniantur, manum iniciant Deo cur solus Deus sit, cur inviderit creaturis ut non omnes eadem polleant maiestate. Quod licet non dicatis (neque enim tam insani estis, ut aperte repugnetis Deo), tamen aliis verbis loquimini, rem Dei homini copulantes, ut sit absque peccato, quod et Deus est.*

Encore une fois, Atticus prend bien soin de souligner qu'il va au-delà des affirmations de son adversaire et celui-ci ne manque pas de le lui faire remarquer, puisqu'il réplique immédiatement: "Tu dépasses la mesure pour une seule et même question à force de chercher à démontrer que l'homme ne peut avoir en même temps toutes les vertus, comme si Dieu s'était montré jaloux ou incapable d'accorder à son image et à sa ressemblance d'être en tous points l'égale de son Créateur."[16] Ainsi, si Atticus "dépasse" par moments "la mesure," il faut bien reconnaître que Jérôme en a parfaitement conscience et qu'il connaît parfaitement la teneur réelle de la prédication pélagienne dont il vise à dévoiler la portée et les conséquences implicites.

Si la volonté de conciliation et de dialogue affichée par Jérôme au début du *Dialogus* semble mal s'accorder avec la vigueur, voire l'outrance de ses attaques, il faut reconnaître qu'en faisant le choix de réfuter les pélagiens sous la forme d'un dialogue, il s'engage à placer dans la bouche de leur porte-parole des propos qu'ils ne contesteront pas. Ses intentions sont on ne peut plus claires si l'on relit les déclarations de son prologue: "Ainsi donc, quoique la lettre susdite ait ébauché rapidement quelques arguments contre les erreurs de ces gens-là, je mets aujourd'hui en chantier un livre qui suivra la méthode des Socratiques de façon à présenter les positions respectives des deux partis et à rendre plus manifeste la vérité une fois que chacun aura exposé son opinion."[17] Et un peu plus loin, toujours dans le prologue, il revient avec insistance sur cette protestation d'objectivité en affirmant son désir de ménager les personnes dont il combat les opinions:

> En conséquence de quoi, pour prouver à tous que je n'ai pas pris en haine les individus, mais leurs erreurs, que je ne cherche à diffamer personne et que j'éprouve avant tout de l'affliction pour ceux qui se laissent abuser par la connaissance au nom trompeur (1 Timothée 6:20), j'ai choisi les noms d'Atticus et de Critobule afin d'exposer respectivement notre opinion et celle de nos adversaires. Bien plus, nous tous qui suivons la foi catholique, nous souhaitons et nous désirons que l'hérésie soit condamnée, mais que les hommes soient corrigés.[18]

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[16] Ibid., 21: *Nimius es in una atque eadem quaestione, ut persuadere coneris hominem universa simul habere non posse, quasi aut inviderit aut non potuerit Deus praestare imagini et similitudini suae ut in omnibus suo respondeat Creatori.*

[17] Ibid., prol. 1: *Et quamquam superior epistula contra errores eorum pro angustia temporis pauca perstrinxerit, hic liber, quem nunc cudere nitimur, Socraticorum consuetudinem conservabit, ut ex utraque parte quid dici possit exponat et magis perspicua fiat, cum posuerit unusquisque quod senserit*.

[18] Ibid., prol. 2: *Vnde ut omnibus approbarem me non odisse homines, sed errores, nec aliquorum infamiam quaerere, magisque dolore vicem eorum qui falsi nominis scientia supplantantur, Attici et Critobuli nomina posui, per quos et nostra pars et adversariorum quid sentiret expromerem. Quin potius omnes qui catholicam sectamur fidem, optamus et cupimus damnari haeresim, homines emendari*.

Bien sûr, il est possible de soupçonner que de telles déclarations ne sont qu'une concession purement rhétorique aux lois du prologue et qu'elles cachent en réalité la mauvaise foi de Jérôme qui fait semblant de mettre les formes dans un débat où les jeux sont déjà faits. Mais on peut aussi inverser ce jugement à charge par un jugement à décharge et voir dans ces intentions initiales une porte ouverte pour le retour de Pélage et de ses partisans à des positions plus mesurées.

Le titre même du *Dialogus* qui prend bien soin de ne pas mentionner le nom de l'adversaire en est un signe fort.[19] De fait, dans ses autres traités polémiques, Jérôme ne se prive pas de désigner nominativement son adversaire dans le titre et de l'interpeller ensuite directement par son nom ou par celui du parti auquel il se rattache tout au long de l'ouvrage.[20]

Dans ces conditions et conformément à ce que nous avons eu l'occasion de constater plus haut, il est possible de penser que dans le *Dialogus*, les répliques de Critobule sont bien conformes à la teneur du discours pélagien tel qu'il a pu parvenir jusqu'aux oreilles de Jérôme. J'ai d'ailleurs déjà confronté, par le passé, le témoignage de Jérôme avec celui d'Augustin et avec les réactions qu'il a suscité chez Pélage, et montré qu'on pouvait tenir le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli* pour "un pastiche tout à fait convaincant et révélateur de la prédication pélagienne en

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[19] La question du titre fait aujourd'hui l'objet d'un débat technique concernant le genre du traité: s'agit-il d'un *dialogus* ou d'une *altercatio*? Jérôme le qualifie de *dialogus* dans l'*Ep*. 134 qu'il adresse à Augustin (*Ep*. 134.1: *Certe et in* Dialogo *quem nuper edidi tuae beatitudinis ut dignum fuerat recordatus sum*); Orose, qui le mentionne dans son *Apologie* parle à la fois de l'un et de l'autre (*Apol*. 4.6 [*CSEL* 5:608–9]: *Hoc et beatus Hieronymus* […] *in epistula sua quam nuper ad Ctesiphontem edidit condemnavit; similiter et in libro quem nunc scribit* collata in modum dialogi altercatione *confutat*). Dans l'étude qu'elle a consacrée à la comparaison entre l'*Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi* et le *Dialogus adversus pelagianos*, A. Canellis a mis en évidence l'appartenance des deux traités au genre littéraire de l'*altercatio* ("La composition du *Dialogue contre les Lucifériens* et du *Dialogue contre les pélagiens* de saint Jérôme, à la recherche d'un canon de l'*altercatio*," *REAug* 43 (1997) 247–88), genre issu de la procédure judiciaire et décrit par Quintilien dans son *Institution oratoire* (6.4). Elle trouve dans le témoignage d'Orose une incitation à intituler le traité *Altercatio Attici et Critobuli*. On ne peut toutefois opposer strictement le genre de l'*altercatio* et celui du dialogue, car le premier constitue une des formes possibles du second. Rien n'empêche donc Jérôme d'avoir donné à son *altercatio* le titre de *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*. C'est ce titre que je retiens, parce qu'il est de loin le plus souvent attesté par les diverses traditions et qu'il s'accorde tant avec le témoignage d'Orose qu'avec celui de Jérôme lui-même. Quoi qu'il en soit, Jérôme ne mentionne jamais le nom de Pélage, et le fait qu'il propose des noms fictifs pour les porte-parole de chacun des partis en présence prouve que le titre actuel, *Dialogus adversus pelagianos*, ne peut être de lui.

[20] Ainsi de l'*Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi*, de l'*Adversus Helvidium* de l'*Adversus Iovinianum*, du *Contra Iohannem Hierosolymitanum*, du *Contra Vigilantium* et, dans une moindre mesure, de l'*Apologia adversus libros Rufini*.

Palestine" dans les années 411–415.[21] Il est, de ce point de vue, intéressant de relever que ni Pélage, ni après lui Julien d'Eclane, n'ont contredit les propos prêtés par Jérôme à Critobule, mais uniquement des développements qui se trouvent dans des répliques d'Atticus. Ils n'auraient pas manqué de s'insurger si le *Dialogus* leur avait fait tenir des positions qui n'étaient pas les leurs!

Avant de proposer une reconstitution de la prédication pélagienne à partir des répliques de Critobule dans le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*, il convient de s'interroger sur les éléments d'information dont Jérôme a pu disposer lorsqu'il composa ce dernier. On sait que Pélage quitta l'Afrique en 411 en laissant derrière lui Célestius, condamné par un concile carthaginois en raison de ses positions sur la grâce et le baptême des tout petits. Il gagna alors la Palestine où il semble avoir trouvé de nombreux appuis, notamment à Jérusalem. Il était inévitable que sa prédication s'y poursuive et qu'elle nourrisse nombre de conversations parmi les chrétiens. Jérôme ne semble pas s'être préoccupé de ces débats sur la grâce et le libre arbitre avant l'année 414, mais son *Ep.* 133, à Ctésiphon, datée de cette même année, montre qu'il est tout à fait au courant des grandes lignes de la nouvelle doctrine. Il est difficile de dire s'il tire son information de la seule lettre de Ctésiphon—qui ne nous est malheureusement pas parvenue—ou s'il a déjà eu vent, par d'autres canaux de la teneur de la prédication pélagienne. Toujours est-il que lorsqu'il se décide, avec le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*, à réfuter la position pélagienne comme hérétique, il dispose de plusieurs sources écrites qu'il attribue, sans le nommer explicitement, à Pélage.[22] En 415, Jérôme est donc en mesure de rendre compte de la prédication pélagienne qui se développe en Palestine depuis près de quatre ans. Dans la reconstitution que nous en proposons maintenant, nous suivrons le déroulement même du *Dialogus* de Jérôme, tout en gardant à l'esprit que l'ordre de présentation est le choix de l'hérésiologue et non celui des pélagiens. Cela a une incidence évidente sur le traitement de la question de l'*impeccantia*, puisque Atticus refuse de considérer d'un seul tenant les deux éléments qui constituent l'adage pélagien: "L'homme peut être sans péché s'il le veut et les préceptes de Dieu sont faciles," et qu'il exige, pour la clarté du débat, d'aborder séparément ces deux points: la définition de la grâce divine dans son rapport avec la volonté humaine et le caractère relatif de l'*impeccantia*.

Le premier point abordé au livre I du *Dialogus* porte sur la définition de la grâce divine qui constitue un préalable à toute discussion sur la possibilité pour l'homme de parvenir à la perfection. Si Critobule ne rejette pas l'aide de Dieu—ce qui constitue déjà une évolution de la position pélagienne telle qu'elle avait été soutenue à Carthage—il en donne une définition très restrictive. En effet, à Atticus qui lui demande si celui qui enlève la grâce de Dieu fait erreur, il répond:

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[21] Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie*, 245–52. J'avais déjà, à la suite de cette confrontation, proposé une première reconstitution de la prédication pélagienne (252–69) à laquelle j'apporte ici plusieurs éléments nouveaux.

[22] Outre le *Liber Testimoniorum*, il a également entre les mains le traité *De vita christiana* dont il cite un extrait au livre III (3.14).

> CRIT. Il fait erreur. Bien plus, il faut le considérer comme un impie, puisque toutes choses sont gouvernées par la volonté de Dieu et que c'est par la faveur du Dieu créateur que nous existons et avons la faculté d'exercer notre volonté propre. Nous possédons le libre arbitre et nous nous tournons soit du côté du bien, soit du côté du mal en exerçant notre volonté propre: voilà la grâce de celui qui nous a créés tels que nous sommes, à son image et à sa ressemblance.[23]

Une telle définition laisse entendre que la grâce divine peut se réduire au don que Dieu a fait à l'homme du libre arbitre au moment de la création et qu'elle n'intervient plus, par la suite, que dans l'exercice de ce libre arbitre. Critobule, questionné à ce sujet par Atticus, confirme que c'est bien là sa conception de la grâce:

> Non l'aide de Dieu n'est pas enlevée, puisque demeure la grâce de nous avoir créés et de nous avoir donné le libre arbitre une fois pour toutes. En effet, si je ne peux rien accomplir sans Dieu et sans qu'il m'aide dans chaque action particulière, il ne saurait me couronner pour les bonnes actions, ni s'affliger pour les mauvaises, mais dans les deux cas, c'est son propre secours qu'il approuvera ou condamnera.[24]

La raison pour laquelle le pélagien réduit ainsi la grâce, qui n'est plus que "la grâce de nous avoir créés et de nous donner le libre arbitre une fois pour toutes," apparaît clairement dans ce passage qui insiste sur la nécessité de laisser à l'homme l'entière responsabilité de ses actes. Pour lui, une fois l'impulsion initiale donnée par Dieu au moment de la Création, c'est à la seule volonté de l'homme qu'il appartient ensuite de faire le choix de la perfection: "D'ailleurs personne ne pourra me retirer le pouvoir d'exercer mon libre arbitre, sans quoi, si Dieu se présente toujours en auxiliaire de mes actions, ce n'est pas à moi qu'est due la récompense, mais à lui qui a agi en moi."[25]

Une fois définies les limites de la grâce, Critobule aborde le point central de la position pélagienne, à savoir la revendication de l'*impeccantia*, formulée sous

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[23] *Dial*. 1.1: CRIT. *Errat. Quin potius arbitrandus est impius, cum Dei nutu omnia gubernentur, et hoc quod sumus et habemus appetitum propriae voluntatis Dei conditoris sit beneficium. Vt enim liberum possideamus arbitrium et vel ad bonam, vel ad malam partem declinemus propria voluntate, eius est gratiae qui nos ad imaginem et similitudinem sui tales condidit.*

[24] Ibid., 1.4: *Non tollitur Dei adiutorium, cum creaturae et semel dati liberi arbitrii gratia conservetur. Si enim absque Deo et nisi per singula ille me iuverit, nihil possum agere, nec pro bonis me iuste operibus coronabit, nec affliget pro malis, sed in utroque suum vel recipiet vel damnabit auxilium.*

[25] Ibid., 1.6: *Mihi autem nullus auferre poterit liberi arbitrii potestatem, ne, si in operibus meis Deus semper adiutor exstiterit, non mihi debeatur merces, sed ei qui in me operatus est.*

la forme de l'adage *posse hominem sine peccato esse si velit*. Cette revendication insiste sur le pouvoir de la volonté humaine qui permet à l'homme de s'affranchir du péché. Cependant, il ne s'agit pas—contrairement à ce que peut laisser entendre l'Atticus du *Dialogus*—de prétendre à la réalisation totale et absolue de la perfection en l'homme, mais de la seule possibilité théorique de parvenir à une telle perfection. Les pélagiens insistent sur la différence entre la réalité (*esse*) et la possibilité (*esse posse*). Nous en trouvons l'illustration au chapitre 8 du livre I, dans la bouche de Critobule auquel Atticus vient de demander de citer "l'exemple d'hommes qui ont fait preuve d'une volonté entière et qui ont pu être sans péché":

> La chose n'est certes pas facile à montrer. Quand je dis en effet que l'homme peut être sans péché, s'il le veut, je ne prétends pas que certains aient été tels, mais simplement qu'un homme peut être tel s'il le veut. Car 'pouvoir être' est une chose, les grecs parlent de *dynamis*, 'être' en est une autre; ils appellent cela *énergéia*. Je pourrais être médecin et pour l'instant je ne le suis pas. Je pourrais être artisan, mais je n'ai pas encore appris le métier. Donc ce que je pourrais être, sans pour autant l'être déjà, je le serai pourtant, si je le veux.[26]

Cette distinction est essentielle pour comprendre la position pélagienne et il n'est pas surprenant de voir Critobule y revenir à la fin du grand développement que le livre I consacre à l'*impeccantia*: "Je ne dis pas que l'homme est sans péché, ce qui te paraît sans doute impossible, mais qu'il peut l'être, s'il le veut. Car 'être' est une chose, 'pouvoir être' en est une autre. Le fait d'être réclame un précédent; celui de pouvoir indique la justesse du commandement."[27]

La revendication pélagienne s'appuie également sur le témoignage de l'Ecriture qui présente comme justes un certain nombre d'hommes et de femmes, parmi lesquels se trouvent les figures de Job, de Zacharie et d'Elisabeth. Critobule les cite,[28] mais il élargit et renforce son argumentation en étendant leur exemple à tous les justes: "Si les justes sont innombrables et que ce point est incontestable, quel mal y a-t-il pour moi à avoir dit que l'homme peut être sans péché s'il le veut? Cela revient à dire, en d'autres termes, qu'un juste peut être sans péché,

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[26] Ibid., 1.8: *Hoc quidem non facile est ostendere. Neque enim quando dico posse hominem sine peccato esse, si velit, aliquos fuisse contendo; sed simpliciter posse esse, si velit. Aliud est namque esse posse, quod graece dicitur* te dunamei *aliud esse, quod illi appellant* te énérgéia*. Possum esse medicus; sed interim non sum. Possum faber; sed necdum didici. Quidquid igitur possum, licet necdum sim, tamen ero, si voluero.*

[27] Ibid., 1.25: *Non dico hominem esse sine peccato, quod tibi forsitan impossibile videatur, sed posse esse, si velit: aliud est enim esse, aliud posse. Esse quaerit exemplum; posse ostendit imperii veritatem.*

[28] Cf. ibid., 1.12.

dans la mesure où il est juste."[29] Il importe de remarquer ici que la justice ou l'*impeccantia* évoquées ne sont pas présentées comme absolues, mais comme relatives, puisque Critobule prend soin de préciser que l'absence de péché est "à la mesure" de la justice de chaque juste. Le caractère relatif de la perfection est d'ailleurs revendiqué par Critobule en des termes tout à fait explicites au chapitre 17 du livre I: "Je ne compare pas l'homme à Dieu, mais aux autres hommes en comparaison desquels celui qui s'y applique peut être parfait; de ce fait, lorsqu'on dit: 'l'homme peut être sans péché, s'il le veut,' cela s'entend selon la mesure de l'homme et non selon la majesté de Dieu en comparaison de qui aucune créature ne peut être parfaite."[30]

Si la question de la facilité des préceptes divins est bien différée au début du *Dialogus*, cela n'empêche pas Critobule de l'aborder indirectement dès le chapitre 15 du livre I, où il utilise un raisonnement par l'absurde pour démontrer la possibilité de les accomplir: "Ou bien le Seigneur a énoncé de préceptes réalisables, en sorte que ceux qui ne les accomplissent pas sont fautifs, ou bien, si ces préceptes sont impossibles, ce ne sont pas ceux qui ne les accomplissent pas, mais celui qui a énoncé des préceptes impossibles qui est convaincu (et le dire serait sacrilège) d'injustice!"[31] Cette possibilité doit s'entendre d'une manière elle aussi très relative et aboutit à une conception réductrice de la notion de péché. Celui-ci, en effet, n'existe plus, dès lors que la possibilité d'accomplir les commandements échappe au champ de la volonté:

> De deux choses l'une: ou les commandements que Dieu a donnés sont possibles, ou ils sont impossibles. S'ils sont possibles, nous avons le pouvoir de les observer, si nous le voulons; s'ils sont impossibles, nous ne sommes pas coupables de ne pas observer ce que nous ne pouvons pas accomplir. En conséquence de quoi, que les commandements donnés par Dieu soient possibles ou impossibles, l'homme peut être sans péché, s'il le veut.[32]

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[29] Ibid., 2.4: *Si innuberabiles iusti sunt et hoc negari non potest, quid mali locutus sum posse hominem sine peccato esse, si velit ? Hoc est aliis verbis dicere posse iustum sine peccato esse in eo quod iustus est.*

[30] Ibid., 1.17: *Neque enim ego hominem Deo comparo, sed aliis hominibus, quorum collatione, qui studium dederit potest esse perfectus, ac per hoc, quando dicitur homo potest esse sine peccato, si voluerit, iuxta mensuram hominis, non iuxta Dei dicitur maiestatem, cuius comparatione nulla creatura potest esse perfecta.*

[31] Ibid., 1.15: *Aut Dominus possibilia praecepisse, ut sint in culpa qui possibilia non fecerunt, aut, si non possunt fieri, non eos qui impossibilia non faciunt, sed illum qui impossibilia praecepit (quod nefas dictu sit) convinci iniustitiae.*

[32] Ibid., 1.22: *Aut possibilia Deus mandata dedit, aut impossibilia. Si possibilia, in nostra est potestate ea facere, si velimus; si impossibilia, nec in hoc rei sumus, si non facimus quod implere non possumus. Ac per hoc, sive possibilia dedit Deus mandata, siue impossibilia, potest homo sine peccato esse, si velit.*

Le raisonnement est habile et permet de soutenir en toutes circonstances la possibilité de ne pas pécher. On est loin, avec une telle limitation de l'*impeccantia*, de l'orgueil démesuré qu'Atticus reproche à Critobule. La position pélagienne n'est donc ni absolue, ni outrancière, mais elle repose sur une limitation du péché qui peut aller jusqu'à sa négation, comme on peut encore le constater au chapitre 34 du livre I, lorsque Critobule déclare: "Et de fait, ou nous pouvons éviter la pensée mauvaise et, par voie de conséquence, être exempts de péché; ou nous ne le pouvons pas, auquel cas on ne tient pas pour péché ce contre quoi on ne peut se prémunir."[33]

A ces éléments du discours pélagien tirés des répliques de Critobule, il faut encore ajouter un point qui figure dans les sentences des *Testimonia* de Pélage citées par Atticus et qui touche à la connaissance de la Loi. Celle-ci concerne autant les hommes que les femmes et constitue une condition nécessaire pour s'affranchir du péché.[34] Cette condition n'a pas lieu de surprendre, puisque c'est la Loi qui présente les commandements de Dieu et que seule l'observation de ces derniers permet à l'homme de s'affranchir du péché.

La question du baptême, et en particulier du baptême des tout petits, est abordée tardivement, au livre III du *Dialogus* et l'on est en droit de considérer que Jérôme l'a ajoutée au tout dernier moment, après avoir reçu les premiers traités antipélagiens d'Augustin.[35] J'incline à penser que, dans le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*, Jérôme ne s'intéresse au baptême que dans la mesure où les pélagiens voient en lui le point de départ possible pour l'accomplissement de l'*impeccantia*. En revanche, je crois la mise en cause du baptême des tout petits totalement étrangère à la prédication pélagienne en Palestine. Pélage, en effet, savait que c'était là un point sur lequel Célestius avait été condamné à Carthage en 411.

Il me semble utile de terminer en relevant un point qui n'a pas retenu l'attention jusqu'à présent et qui mérite pourtant qu'on s'y arrête. Jérôme sait pertinemment que Pélage n'est pas seul à parler et qu'il laisse d'autres s'exprimer à sa place, quitte à se désolidariser d'eux à l'occasion, comme ce fut le cas lors du synode de Diospolis où il condamna les positions de Célestius. Or le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli*, outre qu'il n'incrimine personne nommément, laisse entrevoir par moments, que le courant pélagien n'est pas uniforme et qu'on peut y rencontrer, sur certains points, des avis divergents. C'est ainsi qu'Atticus fait état, au livre I, de la diversité des positions pélagiennes sur la grâce: "Car je sais que beaucoup d'entre vous rapportent tout à la grâce de Dieu, mais ne reconnaissent celle-ci que d'une manière générale et non dans les cas particuliers, c'est-à-dire dans le

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[33] Ibid., 1.34: *Aut enim vitare possumus malam cogitationem et consequenter possumus carere peccato; aut si vitare non possumus, non reputatur in peccatum quod caveri non potest*.

[34] Cf. ibid., 1.28.

[35] Cf. ibid., 3.19, où Jérôme fait état des œuvres d'Augustin qui lui ont été apportées par Orose. Il s'agit des trois livres du *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*, dédiés à Marcellinus en 412 et de l'*Ep.* 157 à Hilaire de Syracuse.

pouvoir de notre condition et de notre libre arbitre et absolument pas dans chaque situation particulière."[36]

D'une façon analogue, au livre III, c'est Critobule qui signale que les partisans de l'*impeccantia* ne rejettent pas tous l'aide de Dieu dans chacune des actions humaines:

> CRIT. Pour ma part, j'avais dit simplement que le secours de Dieu se fait sentir non pas dans chacun de nos actes, mais dans la grâce de notre condition et de la loi, pour ne pas détruire le libre arbitre. Mais il en est beaucoup, parmi nous qui disent que toutes nos actions s'accomplissent avec le secours de Dieu.
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> ATT. Celui qui dit cela n'est plus de votre côté. Dis donc cela, toi aussi, pour t'engager dans notre voie, à défaut de quoi, tu seras étranger comme ceux qui ne disent pas la même chose que nous.[37]

Les divergences pélagiennes ou, pour mieux dire, la polyphonie de la prédication pélagienne, se présentent une troisième fois dans le *Dialogus*, sous la forme d'une charge d'Atticus dirigée contre l'un des ténors du mouvement, qualifié de "Démosthène" au vu de ses talents supposés d'orateur:

> Je passe sur l'explication ridicule de votre Démosthène qui veut que Job n'ait pas dit: 'Qui sera pur de tout péché?', mais: *Qui le sera de toute souillure?* (Job 14:4–5), et qui cherche à prouver par là qu'il s'agit des souillures des langes de l'enfance et non des vices des pécheurs! A moins qu'il ne comprenne autrement. Dans ce cas, dites-nous, vous, quelle est son opinion, car c'est un parleur si obscur et si habitué à se couvrir de mots excessivement sales que son lecteur est davantage porté à le soupçonner qu'à le comprendre.[38]

Quelle que soit la personne visée, Pélage lui-même ou un autre, il n'en demeure pas moins que le front pélagien n'est pas uniforme et que Jérôme compte sur

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[36] Ibid., 1.2: *Novi enim plerosque vestrum ita ad Dei cuncta referre gratiam, ut non in partibus, sed in genere, hoc est nequaquam in singulis rebus, sed in condicionis et arbitrii intellegant potestatem.*

[37] Ibid., 3.11: CRIT. *Ego simpliciter dixeram non in singulis operibus nostris, sed in gratia condicionis et legis sentiri auxilium Dei, ne liberum frangeretur arbitrium. Ceterum sunt plerique nostrorum qui omnia quae agimus dicant fieri praesidio Dei.* ATT. *Qui hoc dicit, vester esse cessavit. Aut igitur et tu ista dicito ut noster esse incipias, aut si non dicis, alienus erit cum his qui nostra non dicunt.*

[38] Ibid., 2.4: *Ridiculamque illam expositionem Demosthenis vestri, non dixisse Iob: Quis erit mundus a peccato?, sed Quis mundus a sorde?, praetereo, qua probare conatur sordes pannorum significari in infantia, non vitia peccatorum. Aut certe si non sic intellegit, dicite vos quid sentiat. Tam enim involutus dictor est et nimio verborum squalore coopertus, ut suspicionem magis quam intellegentiam lectori praebeat.*

ces divergences pour ramener dans son camp une partie des dissidents. S'il y a bien des outrances dans les propos d'Atticus qui pousse parfois jusqu'à l'absurde les positions de Critobule, il faut reconnaître que, derrière les concessions attendues aux lois du genre hérésiologiques, le *Dialogus Attici et Critobuli* offre une présentation assez vraisemblable de la prédication pélagienne en Palestine entre 411 et 415. Il n'est pas interdit de penser également qu'en la rédigeant sous la forme d'un dialogue "à la façon des socratiques," Jérôme entendait encore ménager un Pélage qui ne s'était pas totalement discrédité par les atermoiements et les revirements qu'Augustin dénoncera peu de temps après, dans son *De gestis Pelagii*. Je suis d'autant plus enclin à le penser que le même Augustin, après avoir reçu le *Dialogus* et après avoir appris l'accueil favorable de l'ouvrage à la cour de Ravenne, déclare à Jérôme que c'est dans le même esprit de conciliation qu'il vient d'adresser à Jacques et Timase son *De natura et gratia*, dans lequel il répond à Pélage, sans pour autant le nommer explicitement: "C'est à eux que j'ai écrit, non à Pélage, tout en répondant à son ouvrage et à ses paroles, mais en taisant son nom; car je désirais le corriger comme un ami, chose que, je l'avoue, je désire encore et dont je ne doute pas que ta sainteté ne le souhaite également."[39]

Un tel désir de conciliation, qui se rencontre aussi bien chez Augustin que chez Jérôme, tranche avec l'attitude qu'on leur prête souvent dans le cours de la polémique anti-pélagienne. De fait, il faut nettement distinguer le premier temps de la controverse qui voit Jérôme et Augustin dénoncer l'erreur de Pélage et de ses partisans sans incriminer personnellement Pélage lui-même. Jusqu'au milieu de 416, au moins, tout donne à penser qu'ils espèrent encore le convaincre de revenir à des positions plus nuancées sur la grâce divine et les possibilités du libre arbitre. Comme l'a rappelé Yves-Marie Duval,[40] le durcissement de leur position et la mise en cause personnelle de Pélage n'interviennent qu'ensuite, après la lecture par Augustin des *Gesta* du concile de Diospolis et après l'attaque armée des monastères de Bethléem par une troupe de moines que les contemporains identifièrent avec les pélagiens comme le confirme l'écho qu'en donnent les toutes dernières lignes du *De gestis Pelagii.*[41]

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[39] Aug. *Ep.* 19*.3 (*BA* 46B:290):…*ad eos sane scripsi, non ad Pelagium, illius tamen operi verbisque respondens, eius adhuc tacito nomine, quoniam sicut amicum corrigi cupiebam, quod fateor adhuc cupio, quod nec tuam sanctitatem ambigo optare.*

[40] Cf. les notes complémentaires à l'*Ep.* 19* d'Augustin à Jérôme (*BA* 46B:515): "Cette nouvelle lettre […] est un précieux document sur le changement qui ne s'est pas encore opéré dans la polémique entre Augustin et Pélage à la mi-416 ou peu après."

[41] Aug. *De gest. Pel.* 35.66: *De his autem quae post hoc iudicium ibi nescio quo cuneo perditorum, qui valde in perversum perhibentur Pelagio suffragari, incredibili audacia perpetrata dicuntur, ut dei servi et ancillae ad curam sancti Hieronymi presbyteri pertinentes sceleratissima caede afficerentur, diaconus occideretur, aedificia monasteriorum incenderentur, vix ipsum ab hoc impetu atque incursu impiorum in dei misericordia turris munitior tueretur, tacendum nobis potius video et expectandum quid illic fratres nostri episcopi de his tantis malis agendum existiment, quibus eos dissimulare posse quis credit?*

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Chapter 6
Jerome on Jeremiah: Exegesis and Recovery

Philip Rousseau

We have learned to take the sack of Rome in our stride: not to shrug it off, exactly, but to see it less as a significant disaster and more as a stage in the laborious negotiations between the displaced Gothic people and the western government of the emperor Honorius. That is not to say that we share the exceptional objectivity of Augustine. "History tells us," he remarked, "that this is the third time Rome has burned…What satisfaction does it give you," he asked his congregation, "to shriek in God's face on behalf of a city that is used to burning?"[1] A response of that sort had nothing to do with Romano-Gothic politics: Augustine, in this sermon, was already aligning the event with relations between the pagan past and the Christian present, with the tenor of God's providence, and with the Christian's proper focus on *felicitas caelestis* rather than *felicitas terrena*. The themes of the *City of God*, in other words, were already taking further shape in his mind. Jerome's response was, famously, rather different. "I almost forgot, as the saying goes, my own name, and long kept silent, knowing that this was a time for tears."[2]

I want to think here about Jerome's difference (from Augustine), and about the length of time he thought appropriate for weeping. In what guise, in other words, did he "recover" from the shock of the event? We have long been accustomed to Augustine's adjustment. Can we detect anything comparable in Jerome's *œuvre*? In particular—and here is a second theme—can we use his exegetical work as a clue to some transition from alarm to understanding? That commentaries on scripture might contribute to biographical insight is a suspicion worth developing, if it can be justified. Now, in 410 and the years immediately following, we have some choice. It is tempting to turn first to the *Commentary on Ezechiel* (*In Hiez.*), begun before, interrupted during, and extending beyond the sack. I am not suggesting that this commentary is oblivious to current dangers; but, to make a comparison with Augustine more just, I want to allow Jerome more time for reflection. I shall focus instead, therefore, on the later *Commentary on Jeremiah* (*In Hier.*), begun

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[1] Aug. *Serm*. 296.6 (7): *Modo te quid delectat contra Deum stridere, pro ea quae consuevit ardere?*

[2] *Ep*. 126.2: *Diuque tacui, sciens tempus esse lacrymarum*. For other reactions see *Epp*. 122.1; 127.12; 128.5. Citations from Jerome's letters in this chapter are taken from I. Hilberg ed., *CSEL* 56 (Vienna, 1910; repr. 1996).

in 414.[3] And I should make it clear that this chapter is not part of some revisionist biography: rather, I simply suggest that we scout in the text to see what kind of information might reflect upon Jerome himself.

It has to be admitted at once that the *Commentary on Jeremiah* has more on its mind, so to speak, than barbarian threats. It is noteworthy, first, for its "historical" preferences—not surprising, given the work's dedication to Eusebius of Cremona, who shared that predilection. The stance is explicitly adopted against Origen; and Eusebius was a loyal although mischievous supporter of Jerome against Rufinus in the 390s, and continued to serve Jerome's polemical interests for some time after his work on this prophet.[4] The *Commentary* is marked also by Jerome's growing preoccupation with Pelagius, displaying what Cavallera called "unyielding vigour in [its] opposition to the new heresy."[5] What I shall try to show, however, is that the attack here on Pelagius is coloured by reflections—above all, on Jerusalem now lost (at the hands of Babylon) but destined to be regained—that can be linked with Jerome's understanding of the Christian *civitas,* and can be compared, therefore, with Augustine's new expectations. We shall observe in particular Jerome's recipe for a *civitas* (or *ecclesia*) precisely purged of heresy and faction.

Against Pelagius, therefore, we find evoked a tradition of error stretching from Pythagoras and Zeno to Evagrius, Rufinus, and even Jovinian—all (like Pelagius) supporters of *anamartêsía.*[6] Jerome was thinking, in other words, in terms of

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[3] Date: F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son œuvre* (Louvain, 1922) 2.55–6; a dating accepted by J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975) 316.

[4] On Eusebius's exegetical tastes, see Kelly, *Jerome*, 222–3; on Eusebius and the *Commentary*, ibid. 316–17; on involvement in the Origenist controversy, ibid. 203, 235, and Chapter XXI *passim*, 243–58; later support, ibid. 329. See also S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992) 205–6, 238, 241, with caveats about identity, 231–2. The antagonism towards Origen is ironic (as usual), since as recently as *In Hiez*. (praef.) Jerome had reported his interest in Origen's homilies on Jeremiah.

[5] Prol. 2; mounting persistence, 1.34.2; 1.49.2; 1.52.1; culmination, 5.1.1. Text: S. Reiter ed., *S. Hieronymi presbyteri in Hieremiam prophetam libri sex*, in *CCSL* 74 (Turnhout, 1960). Cavallera, *Jérôme*, 1.326, echoed by Kelly's phrase, "remorseless polemic," Jerome, 317. See the relevant extracts usefully collected by R.F. Evans, *Pelagius: Inquiries and Reappraisals* (London, 1968) 126. Extensive bibliographical references on this precise point are provided by Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 207, n. 416. *In Hiez*. explicitly avoids such attention.

[6] *In Hier*. 4.1.2, repeated at 4.41.4. Jovinian reappears in 4.41.6. See Cavallera, *Jérôme*, 2.135; B. Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris, 1999) 388–9. The same genealogy of error is paraded in the contemporary *Ep*. 133.1, with Origen at 133.3. See Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 208, n. 417; 218, n. 59. It would be interesting to compare Jerome's earlier writings against Jovinian with what he says here about Pelagians—the Christianized city is contested in each case, but in very different circumstances: see now D.G. Hunter, *Marriage, Celibacy, and Heresy in Ancient Christianity: the Jovinianist Controversy* (Oxford, 2007).

an error "revived"; but it was also an error that might persist, not least because heretics were a domestic menace, "born in the church."[7] The indignation of the exegete takes on at once a social tone. Was it too late to reverse this internecine threat? Perhaps. Heretics *appeared* to abandon error, but only to deceive: "they pretend that they have returned to the ancient truths—not in order to expel the poison from their breasts, but to inject it into others."[8] So, the chance of conversion on a heretic's part might be slim. One should not doubt God's power—should pray, rather, that conversion might take place; but self-awareness was required, and Jerome was pessimistic. He saw no point in praying for a benefit that the intended recipient did not deserve.[9] Elsewhere, he is even more forceful: deceivers of the people have no chance of repentance.[10] What we discover, therefore, is that heretics—within the *Commentary*—are taken to reincarnate the Biblical enemies of Jerusalem. This is how Jerome elides his attack on Pelagius with his understanding of the Christian community, with "city" in that sense. Bereft of *ecclesiastici viri*, he writes, Jerusalem "is thrust into exile or among the sandy dunes. The *haereticus sermo* prevails within her…her cities are reduced to a state of desolation, and the language of God finds in her no home."[11]

This "civic" or ecclesiological context colours the whole of Jerome's approach; even his arguments defining, for example, his theory of freedom. Pelagians say that a human being can remain without sin. They make false promises about "power" and "knowledge of the law," "which [they say] enables you to achieve whatever you wish for". Jerome opposes in particular the view that *legis scientia*, once bestowed, guarantees that one will choose well thereafter. No: God has to intervene continually—indeed, his intervention marks the true continuity of human experience: history is a history of gift (and here, again, we move beyond the

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Arius is also a forebear, because of the hope he placed in Jesus seen as "a mere man," 3.73.2; cf. 4.26.1.

[7] Revival: *In Hier*. 4.1.2; 6.6.4; 3.15.3; see Cavallera, *Jérôme*, 2.125–6. Persistence: 3.2.3. Domestic (*nascitur in ecclesia, and in eadem ecclesiae...urbe generati*): 4.38.11; 5.67.7. Proximity to truth made for greater credibility: 4.61.2, repeated at 5.59.3.

[8] *In Hier*. 1.49.2; cf. 4.1.2; 4.1.5.

[9] Praying for conversion: *In Hier*. 4.3.3; cf. 5.63.12. Self-awareness: 1.66.1. Pessimism: 2.107.2; cf. 3.33.2.

[10] *In Hier*. 3.13.1–2. In personal conversation during the conference, Yves-Marie Duval stressed the extent to which Jerome was freshly informed about the trend of the Pelagian dispute, well before he broke off this *Commentary on Jeremiah* to concentrate on the issues more directly (a focus that consumed the rest of his life). To the well-known exchanges with Augustine and dependence on their common emissaries and informants (*Epp*. 131–2, 134, 141–4), add Aug. *Ep*. 19* (ed. Divjak); see Y.-M. Duval, "La Correspondance entre Augustin et Pélage," *REAug* 45 (1999) 363–84; Idem, "Pélage en son temps: données chronologiques nouvelles pour une présentation nouvelle," *StudPatr* 38 (2001) 95–118.

[11] *In Hier.* 2.76.1.

individual).[12] One might like to think that "even without a commandment [*absque praecepto*], we can understand what is right by some natural perception [*naturali sensu*]"; but the interweaving of *natura* and *voluntas* is complex. We learn, says Jerome, "not as a result of nature but rather by application and personal choice [*studii et propriae voluntatis*]." It is only by prolonged habit [*nimia consuetudine*] (habits of sin as much as of virtue) that our disposition "changes into something natural [*quodammodo in naturam vertitur*]." So, "nature" has a double edge. One can will to either good or bad effect, and is rewarded or punished accordingly; but one does not simply switch the will on, and achieve instant mastery: the purpose of *liberum arbitrium* is to allow grace to take its course.[13] And the point is to be applied to communities as much as to individuals. To Jerusalem before the exile, God held out the *possibility* of salvation; but the city would still be taken and the people would perish—not because they were unaware of what was going to happen, but *voluntate propria.*[14] Free will is necessary, therefore, but limited in scope. Both groups and individuals can choose their path, but only the helpful company of God can guarantee achievement. "By our own will we turn back to the Lord; but, unless he…strengthens our desire with his protection, we cannot be saved." Left to itself, the will undermines the effect of God's generosity.[15]

What lay behind this theory? The notion of repentance—and Jerome presents this as the repentance of a *people*, and of a people extended through time. Pelagius poses a specific threat to repentance, largely because he places false confidence in human nature, robbing people of any need for remorse, and making their fall inevitable. They are habitually incapable of responding to signs of God's severe encouragement, always ready to misinterpret misfortune, to blame the *iudicium dei* rather than their *propria culpa.* They might even doubt that God's providence was involved at all; but, says Jerome, sword and famine afflict the church (like Jeremiah's Jerusalem) precisely because she is *neglegens et providentiam dei refutans.*[16] Pelagius plays upon a willingness to ignore the point. His *nova haeresis* misunderstands the nature of *peccatum*, which easily awakens God's mercy "if error is admitted." He subscribes rather to *impietas*, an open denial of God and a blindness to sinfulness.[17] Jerome sees no harm, therefore, in "the killing of a few," especially heretics, if it leads to more general amendment: "the slaying of heretics is the saving of those deceived."[18] Pelagians also have no sense of God's mercy. God *wants* converts: "the salvation of the creature is the Creator's gain." So, he

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[12] Power and knowledge: *In Hier*. 2.51.2; 4.60.3. God's intervention: 5.5.3; 5.37.2; cf. 6.37.3.

[13] Nature: *In Hier*. 2.2.2; 3.22.2; 4.2.6; cf. 3.23.1. Opening to grace: *In Hier*. 4.2.7.

[14] *In Hier*. 4.33.4.

[15] God's protection: *In Hier*. 1.4.1; 1.63.3. Undermining: 2.15.2; 2.83.3.

[16] Blaming God: *In Hier*. 1.39.1; cf. 1.46.1. Doubting providence: 1.98.2; cf. 5.10.2. Augustine had made these same points (without thinking of Pelagius) in *Serm*. 296.

[17] Admission: *In Hier*. 2.5.2; cf. 5.7.2. Blindness: 2.20.1; cf. 2.33.2.

[18] *In Hier*. 1.42.1; 3.3.3.

tolerates *minora peccata* for a time—indeed, "the greater the sinners' faults," Jerome writes, "the more abundant the mercy of the Creator towards them."[19] Christians have a right to expect that God will treat them as a father treats his sons: those punished are still, as it were, within the providential loop.[20] Jerome describes, in other words, a religious society in which the door to improvement remains open: "I am not looking for the love of the perfect but for the fear of the half-hearted." Repentance implies for him a view of past and future that is both flexible and optimistic.[21]

In that vein, therefore, the misfortunes of the Jews in Jeremiah's time were a necessary prelude to their restoration. Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah* is a treatise on *collective* repentance. The fate of Jerusalem resulted from a failure to repent; the ensuing exile demonstrated the *admirabilis clementia domini*, as he sought for that sorrow. "We cannot build well," writes Jerome, "unless we dismantle what is bad; we cannot plant the best unless we root out the worst." Jerusalem's joy at its restoration will be all the greater for the harshness of its testing; and we should not expect "Yahweh's burning anger" to cease, "as long as he [the Babylonian 'destroyer') lays waste the church."[22] Destruction before restoration, therefore, is virtually inevitable; but God can relent: there will be (thanks to his *clementia* rather than our *merita*) no final cataclysm. God can say, in the end, "No one has wanted to receive as much as I have desired to give."[23]

What we have detected so far has been an anti-Pelagian preoccupation, yes, but a response to Pelagius' errors that is set against the fall of Jerusalem (in Jeremiah) and a sense of providential history that lays out both a narrative of delusion and weakness and a promise of—indeed, a means to—collective restoration. Central to that presentation is Jerome's readiness to equate the Biblical Jerusalem with the church of his own day. It is time now to ask more directly what this does to his notion of "city," and how we might relate it to Augustine's *civitas dei.* Jerome strikes an Augustinian note in Book 5 of the *Commentary:* "We also seek peace for the city of the church and of our land [*ecclesiae civitati et terrae nostrae*]. May we

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[19] Even though, by piling up our sins, we may run the risk of shameful exposure, 3.21.3; cf. 3.24.2; 5.6.1. The theme is present from the outset of the Commentary: 1.7.4–1.8.2; 1.11.2.

[20] Creator's gain: *In Hier*. 3.53.2. Abundant mercy: 6.40.3. Fatherly punishment: 2.97.2; cf. 6.6.3; 6.7.5.

[21] *In Hier*. 2.3.3; cf. 2.41.2; 3.50.1.

[22] Seeking sorrow: *In Hier*. 1.1.5; cf. 6.37.8. Rooting out: 1.6.1. Burning anger: 6.3.2. The second allusion—*quamdiu enim ille vastat ecclesiam* (1.73.1)—is to Jeremiah 4:7-8; and we think here heretic rather than Goth! For broader debate about the role of the human will: 1.82.1; 3.4.2; 4.33.5; 5.8.1.

[23] Relenting: *In Hier*. 1.97.3; cf. 2.39.2; 2.105.3. God's desire: 3.53.1. God's patience could in theory run out—"the time allowed for repentance passes"—but, even at that point, the punishment would be imposed for the sake of others rather than as an act of retaliation: 4.10.3.

deserve to return to it, having been carried from it by the judgement of the Lord, to live in the error of 'confusion' [a confusion he later describes as the *confusio saeculi huius*]." And it is indeed the church that we return to: "if she receives us, we shall have peace."[24] But it is not a simple matter of exile and return. Our present *civitas* has unrelenting denizens—the heretics who, once again, unleash war against it. We may think ourselves enclosed within the *Christi munimenta* (the allusion is to the "fortified towns" of Jeremiah 4:5); but our *civitates* are laid waste nevertheless, while the *conciliabula* of the heretics flourish. Jerome's judgement is curt: "those who do not place their hope in God will quickly find their walls and defences crumble"; and he obviously thinks that the line between those who do not and those who do is dangerously vague.[25] Everything that is said *iuxta litteram*, in other words, must be referred to "the church of God [*ad ecclesiam dei*]," to "the assembly of believers [*ad congregationem credentium*]."[26]

The question is, what kind of church and assembly? Jerome could certainly acknowledge the applicability of Jeremiah's warnings to fifth-century circumstance. The *prophetalis sermo* describes things (tears of mourning, scattered bones) that had, as he wrote, "happened in our time, not in the one city of Jerusalem…but in the whole world."[27] One might expect him, in that case, to take easy advantage of Jeremiah's text: "I shall bring on you a nation from afar…They will devour your harvest and your food, your sons and daughters, your flocks and herds, your vines and fig trees; they will demolish the fortified towns in which you trust (Jeremiah 5:15–17)." A role fit for Goths, surely (even in 409), as well as Babylonians. But that is not the bait that Jerome rises to. True, after reminding Geruchia how desolate the barbarian incursions had rendered her own province of Gaul, he had readily posed the telling question, "Is it in *these* circumstances that you intend to *marry*?"[28] And that was to remind her of the prophet's prohibition, "You are not to marry or have sons in this place (Jeremiah 16:2)," issued amidst a scene equally replete with siege, pestilence, sword, and famine ("such is the number of the dead that the tombs can no longer serve their purpose").[29] But Jerome was more

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[24] Confusion: *In Hier*. 5.65.4. Peace: 5.63.12. The one who acknowledges God *habitabitur ecclesia dei in aeternum*, with allusion to Salem in Psalm 76:2-3, interpreted as a place of "peace," *In Hier*. 3.81.7. Jerome is explicit, after alluding to the destruction portended in Psalm 1:1-2: *Aedificatur atque plantatur ecclesia dei*, 1.6.5; cf. building and planting vocabulary at 1.6.1.

[25] *In Hier*. 1.97.3. Compare his handling of Lamentations 2:18 in *Ep*. 122.1—indeed, this whole letter, well informed about current misfortunes in Gaul, is filled with the themes of the *Commentary*: see Rebenich, *Hieronymus,* 209. Flourishing heretics: 1.71.2; 1.72.3.

[26] *In Hier*. 1.86.3–4; 4.49.2; cf. 1.88.2; 2.17.2.

[27] *In Hier*. 2.48.2.

[28] *Ep*. 123.17: *Inter ista nuptura es?* Description: 15–16 *passim*. On date and tenor, see Rebenich, *Hieronymus,* 276, n. 481; 285ff.

[29] *In Hier*. 3.60.4. These were not his first allusions to Gallic chaos: see *Ep*. 118 to Julian, *Ep*. 60.17, and *In Es*. 7.22, as interpreted by Kelly, *Jerome,* 298.

interested in another threat and another restoration—the restoration of orthodoxy and the rooting out of "every sacrilegious and perverse doctrine."). The *rabies barbarorum et inminens captivitas* (deplored in a letter of 407 and still a factor in the *Commentary on Ezechiel*) is now replaced by the *haereticorum rabies*. These are the new *principes*, "who follow a teaching foreign to the church."[30]

Reference to *principes* encourages us to consider briefly at this point Jerome's favourite sport: the criticism of the clergy. For, it is within the *civitas ecclesiae* that he singles out his victims—and we must keep in mind his two governing beliefs: that heretics are homegrown, and that they hold out false promises.[31] A "spiritual understanding" of Jeremiah should be applied to "teachers of distorted doctrine, who have sullied the purity of the church"; to heretics incapable of watering the earth with their teaching, even though they pride themselves on being "in the heavens." *Auctores impietatis*, they consistently mislead the people.[32] Indeed, they (like the leaders in Jeremiah) are rendered helpless in the face of disaster—of *contritio*, *vastitas*, *fugae*, and *bucinae*—a helplessness due, again, not to nature but to the will.[33] And the *doctores ecclesiae* more generally are complacent about the resulting damage. They "acquiesce" in heretical errors, and thus embroil themselves in the crimes of others.[34] Jeremiah's criticism of "priests," "shepherds," "prophets," and "those skilled in the Law" (Jeremiah 2:8) applies, in Jerome's view, "to the teachers of our own order, who devour the people of God."[35] Jeremiah 2:26, with its catalogue of "kings," "chief men," "priests," and "prophets," refers to "our own *principes* and those who are thought of as leaders in the church"—"bishops and priests and the whole ecclesiastical order," men "weighed down with honours," of whom he then asks, "What good will you gain from the title 'bishop' or 'priest' or any other rank in the *ordo ecclesiasticus,* when...the more you have received,

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[30] Restoration and eradication: *In Hier*. 1.6.2. *Rabies barbarorum*: *Ep*. 122.4 (but note also the treatment of *paenitentia* in section 1, with allusion to Ezechiel 18.30); *In Hiez*. 7, praef. Date of the letter: Cavallera, *Jérôme*, 2.163, but add the discussion by Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 284–5. Compare also *In Hier*. 3.1.2 (with Cavallera, *Jérôme*, 2.115). *Principes*: 1.33.3; cf. 2.75.3.

[31] The *dramatis personae* of Jeremiah's Jerusalem is made to include secular leaders—*nostrae urbis domus regia et principes eius*, *In Hier*. 4.35.7. Jerome contrasts this *domus regia* with the *domus domini*, the first being the setting for the *principes civitatis*, 5.39.3, repeated at 5.40.2; 5.41.3; but he insists for the most part on analysing worthy leadership within an ecclesial context.

[32] Distortion: *In Hier*. 1.25.2, alluding to Jeremiah 2:17. Pride: 3.41.3; cf. 4.36.7. Deception: 1.51.1.

[33] *In Hier*. 1.85.1; cf. 2.2.2; 3.22.2; 4.33.4.

[34] *In Hier.* 4.52.2; cf. 5.69.3.

[35] *His autem verbis utendum est adversum nostri ordinis magistros, qui devorant populum dei velut cibum panis*, *In Hier*. 1.19.1; an image recurring at 1.57.4. Jerome later takes *prophetae* as referring to those *qui videntur habere scientiam scripturarum*, 3.15.4; compare the precise definition in 5.64.3, and the same line-up of *sacerdotes*, *sapientes* and *prophetae* in 4.8.2.

the more will be required of you?"[36] What worries Jerome most, however, is the helplessness, the *stupor*. In Jeremiah's Jerusalem (Jeremiah 4:9), "the priests will stand aghast" (a freezing of initiative that can afflict the whole people). But in Jerome's church, the *stupor* takes the form of blithe denial. The clergy assure the wealthy and the eminent that the clemency of God and their own prosperity remain secure, even as God prepares to vent his anger upon them. They deceitfully avoid any mention of *tristia*, and promise *prospera* instead.[37] Hence the poignancy of Jeremiah 8:11—"saying 'Peace! Peace!' whereas there is no peace." "Peace" here, of course, stands for the delusion of sinlessness. Jerome quickly turns the irony against the heretics: "they promise others peace but secretly plot against them," whereas "the Lord will give you the truest form of peace, here in the church."[38]

The thrust of the argument so far has been that Jerome's anti-Pelagian preoccupations were part of a history of repentance—or rather, the absence of repentance. The people have been lulled into false self-assurance; the *civitas ecclesiae* is threatened with dissolution; but God's restorative indulgence can still be gained. And we have seen that the analogue here is not the Rome humiliated by the Goths but the Jerusalem that prefigures the church. The sweep of Jerome's history (his "history of gift") seems often broad: nothing much lies between the victory of Babylon and the end of time. One can either take the account in Jeremiah literally or, *iuxta prophetiam*, think of the events as occurring *longo post tempore in consummatione mundi*.[39] But Jerome is careful to reserve to Christians an intermediate restoration, achieved by the coming of Jesus. Looking back, believers can glimpse what we might call a "history between," inaugurated by the *apostoli et apostolici viri*, and purified by persecution. It is to that past that loyalty is demanded: Christians should walk in "the ancient and everlasting paths" bequeathed to them, worn by the footsteps "of all the holy ones who worship God."[40] This the heretics fail to do: they are the new idolators.[41] Within this dispensation, notice, little is expected of Constantine or of the "Christian empire." Persecution, a feature of early centuries, was not brought to a close at the Milvian Bridge: heresy, the spread of falsehood, and the misuse of ecclesiastical office represent continued

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[36] *Principes nostri*: *In Hier*. 1.34.2; cf. 1.85.3; 2.95.3; 3.37.2; 5.34.2. Titles: 2.21.6; 4.35.7. Answerability: 3.9.2; 3.11.2. Honours: compare the image of corrupt self-indulgence in 3.15.3, and the reference to *superbia*, *divitia* and *lascivia* in 4.34.5.

[37] Jeremiah's priests: *In Hier*. 1.74.1–2; 1.85.1. Current clerical denial: 2.18.4; cf. 2.94.1; 3.34.4; 3.35.2; 5.10.2. *Tristia* and *prospera*: 4.21.4; cf. 4.22.3; 4.60.3; 5.56.2.

[38] "Peace! Peace!": *In Hier*. 2.55.3; cf. 4.55.2. False promise: 2.74.2. Truest peace: 3.34.4, reiterated in 5.59.3. See 6.32.3 for the relation between *pax* and *gratia*.

[39] When, as in Jeremiah 25:32, disaster will spread "from nation to nation," *In Hier*. 5.32.3; cf. 6.2.2–3; 6.36.2.

[40] Time of Jesus: *In Hier*. 6.51.3. Ancient paths: 4.5.1.

[41] *Libat* [*haereticus*] *dis alienis, quos nec ipse noverat nec patres eius*, *In Hier*. 4.12.4, ed. 184.

attacks on the church's true believers and *doctores*, and threaten to reduce it (like Jerusalem in Jeremiah) to a wasteland.[42]

By the beginning of Book 6, the story is even clearer. "I am going to show," Jerome writes, "that whatever was promised to Israel *carnaliter* [that is, the promise of a "return"] has been fulfilled in us *spiritaliter*." Jews think that the Messiah has yet to come; Christians believe that he has already arrived. And when Jerome makes this *carnaliter*/*spiritaliter* distinction, it is Psalm 87:3 he is thinking of: "glorious things are said of you, O City of God."[43] The remainder of the *Commentary*, therefore, is less a study of repentance than of *repromissio*.[44] But the Christian fulfilment is always incomplete, confined to the "history between": "fulfilled *spiritaliter* in the first coming of Christ," but "fulfilled in part, not totally." "It will be fulfilled totally, we believe, at his second coming."[45] Jerome is brilliant in transforming the definitive restoration of Jerusalem in the post-exilic period into this more tentative restoration in the Christian period. "Look, the days are coming, Yahweh declares, when the City will be rebuilt for Yahweh, from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. Then once again the measuring line will stretch straight to the Hill of Gareb (Jeremiah 31:38–9)." Jerome interprets Hananel to mean (referring to the church) a tower of "obedience" or "grace" or "the gifts of God" (a dig at Pelagians, of course); and the Corner Gate implies that, "as long as we remain in this flesh," we cannot travel "the straight path of truth": "we stand *at* a corner", which means, first, that we fall for dogmatic novelties, and second that we are *advenae* and *peregrini*. "Although we may seem to be on the hill's top, we should always fear a fall." So, Jerome keeps fulfilment precarious, not least because the power of the human will is insecure.[46]

What about those tantalizingly Augustinian *advenae* and *peregrini*? The *sancti,* declares Jerome, are distinguished from the *habitatores terrae*, who are "steeped in vice." The "princes, priests, and people of the country" in the "fortified city" of Jeremiah 1:18 were not, he believes, of any particular place "but of the earth, with a taste for earthly things, and ignorant of the heavenly [*terrena* and *caelestia*]." "A man of God," on the other hand, "can never dwell on the earth, but always hurries forward to greater things."[47] But we should not see those statements in *too* Augustinian a light. In Jeremiah 14:8, it is *Yahweh* who is asked, "Why are you like a stranger in this country, like a traveller staying only for one night?" Jerome refers this to the *futura Christi dispensatio:* "he [Christ] shall be a *peregrinus in terra*, for a

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[42] *Doctores*: *In Hier*. 4.23.5; 4.25.2; 4.50.2. Wasteland: 4.19.3.

[43] *In Hier*. 6.1.2; 6.9.3. The jump from Jewish misfortune to Christian restoration makes one the cause of the other: *Repulsio Iudaeorum nostrae salutis occasio*, 6.10.2.

[44] Although, when the theme of repentance is taken up again, criticism of Pelagius is immediately marked: *In Hier*. 6.20.3f.

[45] *In Hier*. 6.25.3; cf. 6.26.4.

[46] *In Hier*. 6.29.7.

[47] Those of the earth: *In Hier*. Those of God: 1.12.4. 1.17.2, commenting on Jeremiah 2:6.

short time making use [*usurus*] of the earth's hospitability." ("Israel, meanwhile, will wander, though still vigorous, moving among the multitude of the peoples [*gentium*], passing from place to place, from people to people [*de populo ad populum*], from the temple to the church [*de templo ad ecclesiam*]."). Christ himself, therefore, is the model pilgrim, the *advena futurus,* a *viator,* a *vir vagus:* "abandoning your old *mansio,* you live in us…so that we might be called Christians."[48]

Jerome does not develop, in other words, a pilgrim *mentality*, charged with the psychological insight that we associate with Augustine. The tale discernible in Jeremiah does have its inner side: *pax et promissio* can only follow where the sword has purged the soul of vice. The Babylonian inroad, taken in a "spiritual" sense, can be readily applied within: "deathly sin enters the depths of the soul through all the senses." Jerome even has his understanding of *libido:* "no one could, by his warnings, turn [Israel] from its onrush—not because the force of prophecy made that impossible, but because of evil and twisted desire [*malitia perversa cupientis*]."[49] But these arguments were clearly directed against Pelagius. Commenting on Jeremiah 32:40, "I shall put respect for me in their hearts," Jerome makes that "respect" (that *timor*, as he has it) both a caveat to free will and a gesture of God's grace. The "heart" here is chiefly the site of a battle against the new idolatry. "Even today," writes Jerome, "in the house of God, which we take to mean the church, idols are set up within the hearts and souls of the faithful—namely, where some new teaching [*novum dogma*] is conceived and, as Deuteronomy has it, adored in secret."[50]

What demands attention in the context of our particular inquiry, however, is the way in which Jerome's sentiments are so often cast in plural and corporate terms. Tablets of the heart will replace tablets of stone, he writes, "when the covenant of the Lord is written in the minds of believers [*in mente credentium*]: he shall be their God and they shall be his people…provided they prove worthy to hear those words, 'You are God's temple, and God's spirit dwells in you'." They should remember the misplaced trust that the Jews had placed in "Yahweh's sanctuary" (Jeremiah 7:4). Christians might "seem to be set firmly in the church [*videmur in ecclesia constituti*]"; but the true temple of God does not reside in impressive buildings with richly decorated walls: it is rather home to "genuine belief, a holy way of life [*vera fides*, *sancta conversatio*]." Even inner vision is predominantly a characteristic of the church, of "the people of God."[51]

One passage seems to hold out a more explicitly Augustinian promise. When Jerome comments on "the throne of Yahweh" in Jeremiah 3:17, he says, "All those who believe *perfecta mente* are the throne of God," and continues, "It is perhaps better to apply this to the church, when all the peoples [*omnes gentes*] are gathered in

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48 *In Hier*. 3.30.2; 3.31.1; cf. 6.12.3.

49 Purged soul: *In Hier*. 1.75.3. Babylonian inroad: 2.82.2. *Libido*: 1.32.2.

50 *Timor*: 6.50.7. *Novum dogma*: 6.46.1.

51 Tablets of the heart: *In Hier*. 6.26.6. Way of life: 2.32.2; cf. 1.86.3-4. People of God: 6.11.2; 6.13.4.

the Lord's name in 'Jerusalem,' wherein is 'the vision of peace [*visio pacis*]'." In the end, however, Jerome's phrasing betrays once more his anti-Pelagian preoccupation. "We should think of 'the seat of God's glory'," he writes, "as referring not only to the Jewish temple, destroyed often enough, but to every holy person who conforms to that text [Psalm 89:45], 'You have... toppled his throne to the ground.' It is toppled and destroyed when he offends God with his many sins; but, though he perished through his own fault, he is raised up by God's clemency."[52]

The end of Book 6 is nevertheless worth savouring in full. Jerome strikes an exalted, transcendent note. All will be brought to fruition, he writes, "in the land of Benjamin," (which signifies the "strength" of the Lord), and "round about Jerusalem" (wherein resides the *visio pacis*), and "in the cities of Juda" (where we find the true acknowledgement of Christ), and "in the mountain cities" (hard to hide), and "in the cities of the plains" (from which we "rise...to the heights"), and "in the cities of the south" (where we find "the fullness of the midday light"). "When all this has been achieved," Jerome concludes, "then shall be fulfilled what is written: 'I shall transform their captivity, says the Lord'—that Lord of whom it is said, 'He has led captivity captive; he has received,' or, as the Apostle says, 'he has given his gifts to men'."[53]

It seems a splendid peroration; but this was not, of course, the "real" end of the commentary, which Jerome simply interrupted, never to resume—a "regrettable" loss, in J.N.D. Kelly's judgement, since it "promised to be...one of Jerome's most satisfying exegetical achievements."[54] Although the conflict with Pelagius was undoubtedly claiming Jerome's more direct attention, a violent attack on his monastery may have been the immediate cause of disruption, leaving him perhaps seriously shaken and devoid of scholarly resources.[55] There is something grand, nevertheless, about the conclusion we are left with. It allows room, in particular, for a comparison with Augustine: we can detect how Jerome, so very different a man, was driven to imagine the future that God planned for Christians—that is, for orthodox and penitent Christians (and perhaps for them alone). Pelagius by himself could never have prompted Jerome to this resolution: some analogue to the destructive Babylonians was demanded by the temporal crises of his own age. A restoration of the imperial *status quo* would never have satisfied him; but nor did it satisfy Augustine. Both were forced by events to envisage alternatives. It would be foolish to suggest that Jerome could rival Book 22 of the *City of God;* but he did have his *visio pacis*, and he restored *his* city eternally to its destined heights.

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[52] *Visio pacis*: *In Hier*. 1.59.1–2. Toppled throne: 3.40.1.

[53] *In Hier*. 6.51.4–5.

[54] Kelly, *Jerome*. 327. The drama of the prophetic text remained in Jerome's mind: see his cryptic note to Aug. *Ep*. 142, with Kelly, *Jerome*, 325–6.

[55] The event is described briefly by Kelly, *Jerome*, 322–3, our chief source being Aug. *Gest.Pelag*. 66, and is examined in detail by Josef Lössl (exonerating Pelagius of direct involvement), "Who Attacked the Monastery of Jerome and Paula in 416 AD?," *Augustinianum* 44 (2004) 91–112.

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PART II

The Science of Scripture: Philology, Exegesis, and Translation

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Chapter 7
Jerome, Tobit, Alms, and the *Vita Aeterna*[1]

Danuta Shanzer

This paper develops an Hieronymian area of a broader project about marriage, inheritance, virginity, and the Church.[2] In it I aim to test "on the ground" Jack Goody's controversial thesis about the Church's alleged financial manoeuvres—to deprive people of heirs and divert funds into its own coffers. Goody's work has often been dismissed on the grounds that there was no "Church" in the 4th C. to have such an agenda. Refusing to be deterred, I have been working on church*men* who were perceived as pursuing such goals: Jerome being, naturally, a prime exhibit. There is considerable evidence in his letters and also in contemporary laws: one must examine his advocacy of virginity, the practice of *subintroductio*,[3] and his own activities that border on *captatio*.[4]

Means of Control: Hell and Purgatory

One key ecclesiastical means of exercising control over wills and finances lay in doctrines about penitence, and alms. To whom should one will? How late can one will? Can alms redeem the sinner? Are *post mortem* donations and suffrages effective? A later medievalist sees the intersection-point: Hell, *refrigerium*, and the evolving doctrine of Purgatory. The tenuousness of the Biblical support for

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[1] My thanks, as always, to Karen Dudas and Bruce Swann of the Classics Library of the University of Illinois. Jerome would have envied me their help. He would likewise have envied me my Bar Hanina, Howard Jacobson—*sine quo non*. This paper was completed during an idyllic *Séjour de Recherches* at the Fondation Hardt at Vandoeuvres, an institution about which Jerome might have had more complicated feelings: mixed company and the *consuetudo lautioris cibi*.

[2] The discussion of Tobit here is re-used in my plenary lecture "Bible, Exegesis, Literature, and Society," *JMLat* 18 (2008) 120–57

[3] D. Shanzer, "Latin Literature, Christianity, and Obscenity in the Later Roman West," in N. MacDonald ed., *Medieval Obscenities* (Woodbridge, 2006) 194–6.

[4] See, for example, D.S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist. A Study in Christian Latin Thought and Letters* (Ithaca, NY, 1964) 76–7. See also A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009), Chapter 4.

purgatory has often been remarked.[5] And the paucity of other evidence has been noted too. An irrepressible young Protestant antiquarian, Jacob Spon, threw the cat among the pigeons by writing to Père Lachaise in 1680. Apparently he had failed to find support for the doctrine of purgatory in his original study of Christian funerary epigraphy.[6]

Luke, the Old Testament, and Tobit

When one works with exegesis and with historical or doctrinal processes, the old chicken-and-egg question arises: Are developments driven by exegesis? Are they organic and natural? Or do they exploit exegesis? As it is with many such doctrines, *refrigerium* and purgatory are, as it were, an exegetical house of cards, where the cards are a series of widely separated Biblical passages.[7] Luke 16:19–31 is an obvious pillar with a hard tale to tell: Dives burned in Hell, and no messenger was sent to warn his relatives.[8] Its theology serves as the starting point. Here death is the great cut-off, and nothing could be done by, or for, the individual after it. But subsequently the situation changed. By the ninth century, as is well known, *post mortem* alms given to the church could pay for masses for the souls of the dead.[9]

Less familiar, however, is the role played by the Old Testament in the evolution of the doctrine that alms given *post mortem* could assuage or shorten time in purgatory.[10] It is several of these texts that will be discussed in this paper, because Jerome played a crucial and heretofore unnoticed role in their promulgation.

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[5] J. le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago, 1984) 1.

[6] Jacob Spon, "Lettre au P. La Cheze [1680]," in Pierre Jurien, *La politique du clergé de France* (La Haye, 1681); see also Jacob Spon, *Lettre de R. P. de la Cheze au Sr. Jacob Spon et la réponse...* (Paris, 1681); and François d'Aix de La Chaise, *Lettre du feu pere La Chaise jesuite, confesseur de sa Majesté très-chrétienne. A Monsieur Jacob Spon, docteur en medecine,...Avec la réponse de ce fameux antiquaire,...Ou il bat en ruine le jesuite, & prouve invinciblement, que la religion romaine est plus nouvelle que la protestante* (London, 1713).

[7] For other important passages see J. Ntedika, *L'évolution de la doctrine du purgatoire chez saint Augustin* (Paris, 1966) 60, citing Malachi 3:3, Isaiah 4:4, and 1 Corinthians 3:10–15. Also 2 Maccabees 12:41–6.

[8] Luke 16:30–1.

[9] For a fine treatment, see A. Angenendt, "Missa Specialis: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Entstehung der Privat-Messen," *FMS* 17 (1983) 153–221.

[10] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory,* and Ntedika, *L'évolution de la doctrine du purgatoire chez saint Augustin*, do not mention Tobit. R. Garrison, *Redemptive Almsgiving in Early Christian Society* (Sheffield, 1993) 53–4 merely mentions it.

Tobit, extra-canonical in Hebrew Scripture, will be the starting point.[11] It was included in the Christian canon in 397 at the Council of Carthage,[12] but Jerome failed to list it in *Ep*. 53.8. Nonetheless he noted in the prologue to his commentary on Jonah that although Tobit was not part of the canon, it was used by men of the Church.[13] He translated Tobit at an uncertain date,[14] apparently not of his own will, but at the urging of Chromatius and Heliodorus. He allegedly completed the task in one day from the Aramaic with the help of a Jew who produced an intermediate translation into Hebrew.[15] The claim is clearly—at least in part—disingenuous, for his Latin shows clear dependence on *Vetus Latina* versions of the text.[16]

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[11] See V.T.M. Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with other Ancient Witnesses* (Atlanta, 2000) 17.

[12] E.J. Jonkers, *Acta et Symbola Conciliorum quae saeculo quarto habita sunt* (Leiden, 1954). *Concilium Carthaginense Anno* 397 *habitum*, no. 47: *Item placuit ut praeter scripturas canonicas nihil legatur sub nomine Divinarum Scripturarum*. It includes Daniel, Tobias, Judith, Esther.

[13] *In Ion.,* Prol. 48–50: *Licet non habeatur in canone, tamen...usurpatur ab ecclesiasticis viri*s. For its listings, see J. Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung des Buches Tobias in der griechisch-lateinischen Kirche und der Christenheit des Westens bis um 1600* (München, 1969) 40–44.

[14] Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with Other Ancient Witnesses*, 16, notes that the *terminus ad quem* of 407 is provided by the death of Heliodorus, and the window is really c.391/405, the period he spent translating the canonical Hebrew Old Testament. One probably could do a bit better. For example in his commentary on Job (2:9) he quotes a passage imitated in Tobit 2:22: *Dicentes illud, quod postea Tobias audivit: Vbi sunt nunc iustitiae tuae*? (*PL* 23:1429C). This passage is a direct translation of the LXX Tobit 2:14. But here Jerome is not using his own translation of Tobit.

[15] Hier. *Vulg.Tob*., prol.: *Sed melius esse iudicans Pharisaeorum displicere iudicio et episcoporum iussionibus deservire, institi ut potui, et quia vicina est Chaldeorum lingua sermoni hebraico, utriusque linguae peritissimum loquacem repperiens, unius diei laborem arripui et quidquid ille mihi hebraicis verbis expressit, haec ego accito notario, sermonibus latinis exposui*.

[16] J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975) 285; V.T.M. Skemp, "Jerome's Tobit: a reluctant contribution to the genre rewritten Bible," *Rbén* 112 (2002) 18; S. Weeks, S. Gathercole, and L. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions*, *Fontes et Subsidia ad Bibliam pertinentes* (Berlin and New York, 2004) 2, n. 3.

Alms in Tobit

The Greek Text

Tobit emphasizes the virtue of almsgiving *passim*. And two passages in particular were destined to be influential. The first, which I shall cite according to the LXX, is Tobit 4:10:

> Ὡς σοὶ ὑπάρχει κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος ποίησον ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐλεημοσύνην· ἐὰν ὀλίγον ὑπάρχῃ κατὰ τὸ ὀλίγον μὴ φοβοῦ ποιεῖν ἐλεημοσύνην. θέμα γὰρ ἀγαθὸν θησαυρίζεις σεαυτῷ εἰς ἡμέραν ἀνάγκης διότι ἐλεημοσύνη ἐκ θανάτου ῥύεται καὶ οὐκ ἐάσει ἐλθεῖν εἰς τὸ σκότος.
>
> According to how much you possess give alms from it. If you possess little, do not be afraid to give <little> according to your limited means. For you are storing up for yourself a fine deposit against a day of need, for almsgiving saves from death, and will not allow <one> to come into the darkness.

Tobit is speaking to his son Tobit. Later in the book Tobit's sentiments are reiterated for special literary emphasis by the (now revealed) angel Raphael:

> Tob. 12:8–9: Καλὸν ποιῆσαι ἐλεημοσύνην ἢ θησαυρίσαι χρυσίον. ἐλεημοσύνη γὰρ ἐκ θανάτου ῥύεται, καὶ αὐτὴ ἀποκαθαριεῖ πᾶσαν ἁμαρτίαν. οἱ ποιοῦντες ἐλεημοσύνας καὶ δικαιοσύνας πληθήσονται ζωῆς.[17]
>
> It is better to give alms than to hoard gold, for alms-giving saves <one> from death, and itself cleanses all wrong-doing. Those who give alms and perform acts of righteousness will be filled with life.

So the passage reads in a literal translation. The word uniformly translated as ἐλεημοσύνη in Greek[18] is צדקה, which meant "righteousness" in Biblical Hebrew, but "alms" in the post-Biblical period.[19] Here the context demands the translation

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[17] See R. Hanhart, *Tobit*, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum,* vol. 8.5 (Göttingen, 1983) 159, for the Greek texts.

[18] See E. Hatch and H.A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the other Greek Versions of the Bible* (Oxford, 1892–1906) 1.450, for ἐλεημοσύνη translating "truth," "kindness," and "righteousness": see H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford, 1968) 531; R. Bultmann, "ἔλεος, ἐλεέω κτλ.," in G. Kittel ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, 1964) 477–87, 485–7.

[19] For the translation "almsgiving," see B. Johnson, "צדק," in G.J. Botterweck et al. eds, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, 2003) 239–64, 262–3. See for example Sirach 3:33: *Sicut aqua extinguit ignem, sic eleemosyna peccatum*. LXX Sirach 3:30: Πῦρ φλογιζόμενον ἀποσβέσει ὕδωρ καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη ἐξιλασεται ἁμαρτίας.

"alms," and clear parallels from Sirach and Proverbs can be adduced.[20] The words around which the exegetic problem would crystallize, namely πληθήσονται ζωῆς, in their original Hebrew context clearly meant either "enjoy life to the full" or else "will live long lives."[21] A close parallel is Daniel 4:24 (LXX 4:27), where πολυήμερος can help elucidate the meaning of "being filled with life."[22]

Alms thus free from death by gaining one God's favour *in this life*. There are several allusions in Tobit to what follows death, and two clearly intend the reduced conditions of Sheol.[23] The third, however, is trickier:

> LXX Tobit 3:6: Διότι λυσιτελεῖ μοι ἀποθανεῖν ἢ ζῆν, ὅτι ὀνειδισμοὺς ψευδεῖς ἤκουσα, καὶ λύπη ἐστὶν πολλὴ ἐν ἐμοί· ἐπίταξον ἀπολυθῆναί με τῆς ἀνάγκης ἤδη εἰς τὸν αἰώνιον τόπον, μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.

But even the αἰώνιος τόπος of Tobit 3:6 was no more than the grave.[24] The reward to the giver of alms is in this life[25] and can include temporarily escaping

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"Water will put out burning fire and alms make atonement for sin." P.W. Skehan and A. di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira* (New York, 1987) 165, notes the striking formulation, but does not say much about it. At 156: "At least since the time of the author of the book of Tobit (the third or second century BC) almsgiving was considered to be righteousness par excellence."

[20] E.g. Sirach 29:11–12: Θὲς τὸν θησαυρόν σου κατ' ἐντολὰς ὑψίστου, καὶ λυσιτελήσει σοι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ χρυσίον. σύγκλεισον ἐλημοσύνην ἐν τοῖς ταμείοις σου, καὶ αὕτη ἐξελεῖταί σε ἐκ πάσης κακώσεως. Also LXX Proverbs 10:2: Οὐκ ὠφελήσουσιν θησαυροὶ ἀνόμους, δικαιοσύνη δὲ ῥύσεται ἐκ θανάτου. Vulgate Proverbs 10:2: *Non proderunt thesauri impietatis; iustitia vero liberabit a morte.*

[21] See F. Zimmermann, *The Book of Tobit: An English Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York, 1958) 111: "They that do charity shall enjoy life to the full." Also at 110: "The Gk expresses perhaps the Hebraic yisbe'u hayyim." He compares "enemies to their own life" to Proverbs 8:36: *Qui autem in me peccaverit laedet animam suam. omnes qui me oderunt diligent mortem*.

[22] Κύριος ζῇ ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἡ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ γῇ· αὐτοῦ δεήθητι περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν σου καὶ πάσας τὰς ἀδικίας σου ἐν ἐλεημοσύνης λύτρωσαι, ἵνα ἐπιείκεια δοθῇ σοι καὶ πολυήμερος γένῃ ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου τῆς βασιλείας σου, καὶ μὴ καταφθείρῃ σε. See Gamberoni, *Die Auslegung des Buches Tobias*, 19–20.

[23] Sarah's allusion to Hades in LXX Tobit 3:10: εἰς ᾅδου(ς). Also Tobit at Tobit 13:1: ἕως ᾅδου.

[24] See P. Deselaers, *Das Buch Tobit: Studien zu seiner Entstehung, Komposition, und Theologie* (Göttingen, 1982) 82 who adduces LXX Psalm 48(49):12 and (even better) Ecclesiastes 12:5: Ὅτι ἐπορεύθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς οἶκον αἰῶνος αὐτοῦ. Howard Jacobson kindly translated the Hebrew text (H4) of Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions* for me: "I pray to you to gather me unto my ancestors, to the house of appointment (בית עדום)."

[25] Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit*, 106: "All of the versions of Tobit under investigation, with the exception of Vg, have an earthbound eschatology."

or postponing death, as at LXX Tobit 14:10 (Sin): "Through giving alms, Ahikar escaped from the trap of death that Nadab set for him."[26]

Earliest Latin Uses

While Tobit did not enjoy widespread popularity, perhaps because of its somewhat ambiguous canonical status, it had a few advocates. The most notable was Cyprian, the first Latin father to develop a theology of almsgiving and to assemble the relevant Biblical dossier.[27] He cited Tobit 4:10 at *De opere et eleemosynis* 5: Alms make our prayers effective, redeem our lives from peril, and free souls from death.[28] But Cyprian envisaged two deaths: one of the body, from which Tabitha (Acts 9:40) was resurrected,[29] and a *secunda mors*,[30] explainable by a parallel from the *De mortalitate* as damnation.[31] The deterrent theology was not fully or

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[26] Ἰδέ, παιδίον, ὅσα Ναδαβ ἐποίησεν Ἀχικάρῳ τῷ ἐκθρέψαντι αὐτόν· οὐχὶ ζῶν κατηνέχθη εἰς τὴν γὴν; καὶ ἀπέδωκεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν ἀτιμίαν κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸ φῶς Ἀχικαρος, καὶ Ναδαβ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸ σκότος τοῦ αἰῶνος, ὅτι ἐζήτησεν ἀποκτεῖναι Ἀχικαρον· ἐν τῷ ποιῆσαι ἐλεημοσύνην ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τῆς παγίδος τοῦ θανάτου, ἣν ἔπηξεν αὐτῷ Ναδαβ, καὶ Ναδαβ ἔπεσεν εἰς τὴν παγίδα τοῦ θανάτου, καὶ ἀπώλεσεν αὐτόν.

[27] M. Poirier, *Cyprien de Carthage: la bienfaisance et les aumônes*, *SC* 440 (Paris, 1999) 46–53.

[28] *Bona est oratio cum ieiunio et eleemosyna, quia eleemosyna a morte liberat et ipsa purgat peccata...Revelat angelus et manifestat et firmat eleemosynis petitiones nostras efficaces fieri, eleemosynis vitam de periculis redimi, eleemosynis a morte animas liberari*. Tobit is also quoted at *De lapsis* 35: *Iustis operibus incumbere quibus peccata purgantur, eleemosynis frequenter insistere, quibus a morte animae liberantur*.

[29] *De opere* 6. Resurrection of Tabitha is the example (Acts 9:40); Acts 9:36 tells of her good works and acts of charity. The rapprochement of Tobit and Acts took longer in the Greek world. See first Chrysostom *In Acta Apostolorum* (*PG* 60:166), who brings together the fulfilment of Tobit in the Resurrection of Tabitha: Οὐ παρακαλοῦσιν, ἀλλ' αὐτῷ ἐπιτρέπουσιν ἵν' ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ζωὴν αὐτῇ χαρίσηται. Οὕτως ἐνταῦθα πληροῦται τὸ, *Ἐλεημοσύνη ῥύεται ἐκ θανάτου.*

[30] *De opere* 6: *In Actis apostolorum facti fides posita est, et quod eleemosynis non tantum a secunda, sed a prima morte animae liberentur*. Explained by Poirier, *Cyprien de Carthage*, 166, as "délivrance du péché, et de ses conséquences, en vue de la vie éternelle."

[31] The only other passage in his works where the phrase appears is *De mortalitate* 14: *Mori timeat qui ad secundam mortem de hac morte transibit.* The clause is third in a sequence including the non-baptized, those not "enrolled" (*censetur*) in the cross and the passion, the man headed to hell, and the man whose death in plague time is painfully delayed. Patristic schemes for literal and figurative deaths differ. Ambrose's tripartite scheme at *Expos.Luc*. 7:36–7 includes the death consisting of sin (Ezekiel 18:4) and death of not knowing Christ. Note however that Cyprian, *Ep*. 55.22, cites Tobit 4:10 as proof of the efficacy of penance. In this passage the *alia mors* is sin: *Quod utique ei dicitur...et quem dominus hortatur per opera rursus exurgere, qua scriptum est: eleemosyna a morte*

explicitly developed. Cyprian's eschatological eye was on the prize: heaven.[32] So this Latin father changed the message of Tobit to expand the power of almsgiving to match Christian eschatology.

Jerome's Tobit

Jerome's translations of the critical passages are as follows:

> Vulg. Tobit 4:11: *Quoniam elemosyna ab omni peccato et a morte liberat et non patietur animam ire in tenebris*.
>
> Vulg. Tobit 12:9: *Quoniam elemosyna a morte liberat et ipsa est quae purgat peccata et faciet invenire* vitam aeternam.

The first is unremarkable. The second passage, however, incorporated a significant change: "Alms cause one to find *eternal* life." Jerome was clearly aware of the difference between Sheol and any Christian afterlife, for in his commentary on Qoheleth 3:18–21 (c.386/7) he noted that before the death of Christ there was little difference between perishing with one's body or being confined in the shadows of hell.[33] But he nonetheless supported an explicit Christianizing of the text that was to prove important.[34] What remains unclear is whether these updatings of the LXX are owed to Jerome or to a VL version. While two ninth- to tenth-century Vetus

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liberat, et non utique ab illa morte quam semel Christi sanguis extinxit et a qua aqua nos salutari baptismi et redemptoris nostri gratia liberavit, sed ab ea quae per delicta postmodum serpit. alio item loco paenitentiae tempus datur et paenitentiam non agenti dominus comminatur: habeo, inquit, adversus te multa. For another schema of Ambrose's, see É. Rebillard, *In hora mortis: évolution de la pastorale chrétienne de la mort au IVe et Ve siècle* (Rome, 1994) 12–13.

[32] E.g. *De opere* 14 (Revelation 3:17): *Suadeo tibi emere a me aurum ignitum de igni ut sis dives...qui ergo locuples et dives es eme tibi a Christo aurum ignitum, ut sordibus tuis tamquam igne decoctis esse aurum mundum possis, si eleemosynis et iusta operatione purgeris*. *De opere* 21: *Vbi munerario non quadriga vel consulates petitur, sed vita aeterna praestatur*. Even the *diabolus* at *De opere* 22 does not threaten hell. The most is the quotation from Matthew 25:46 at 23.

[33] *In Eccl*. 3.18 (*CCSL* 72:218): *Tamen non multum intererat perire cum corpore, vel inferni tenebris detineri*.

[34] Skemp, "Jerome's Tobit: a reluctant contribution to the genre rewritten Bible," 30, has studied Jerome's Tobit carefully, and found a number of places where there is "otherworldly eschatology" not found in other versions. But Jerome's practice can be inconsistent. E.g. he left Tobit's prayer for death and the grave in a fairly authentic form: Vulgate Tobit 3:6: *Et praecipe in pace recipi spiritum meum. expedit mihi mori magis quam vivere*.

Latina Bibles have *saturabuntur vita aeterna* or *saturabuntur in vitam aeternam*,[35] no Latin father cites the passage in this form.

Alms bring favour in this life, and alms in this life save the sinner from damnation after death. Whence the idea, though, that alms could provide relief to the dead who were already in the fires of the hereafter? Tobit was part of the equation, but it needed to be combined with another crucial and suggestive text: "Water quenches burning fire and almsgiving makes atonement for sin. The one who returns favors is remembered in the future and will find support in the hour he falls."

> LXX Sirach 3:30–31: Πῦρ φλογιζόμενον ἀποσβέσει ὕδωρ, καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη ἐξιλάσεται ἁμαρτίας. ὁ ἀνταποδιδοὺς χάριτας μέμνηται εἰς τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἐν καιρῷ πτώσεως αὐτοῦ εὑρήσει στήριγμα.
>
> Vulg. Sirach 3:33: *Ignem ardentem extinguit aqua et elemosyna resistit peccatis et deus conspector qui reddit gratiam meminit in posterum et in tempore casus tui invenies firmamentum*.

Alms thus can help one in a time of trouble. But Sirach's analogy of water quenching fire would eventually be read as more than an analogy.[36]

Exegesis snowballs. Between Cyprian and Ambrose no Latin father cited Tobit's precept that alms freed from death. But Ambrose would adduce it in his commentary on Luke 11:41 combining it with another important passage:

> *Date eleemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis* (= *Expositio in Luc*. 7.101 on Luke 11:41) *Nec hoc loco solum, sed etiam in aliis quanta gratia sit expressum tenes: "Elemosyna" enim "a morte liberat:" et "Conclude eleemosynam in corde pauperis, et haec pro te exorabit in die malo"* (Sirach 29:15).
>
> Give alms and lo! all things will be clean for you. Not in this place alone, but also in others you see with what grace it is said, for "Alms free from death," and "Store alms in the heart of a poor man, and it will atone for you on a/the evil day."

The *SC* editor of Ambrose on Luke failed to notice an anomaly in the final quotation, from Sirach 29.[37] The LXX has "will free you from all evil,"[38] and the

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[35] See Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions*, 290, for readings of L1 and L2.

[36] Alms would quench the fires of the hereafter.

[37] There is no note in G. Tissot, *Ambroise de Milan. Traité sur l'évangile de S. Luc, v. 2, Livres VII–X*, *SC* 52 (Paris, 1958) 44.

[38] LXX Sirach 29:11–12: Θὲς τὸν θησαυρόν σου κατ' ἐντολὰς ὑψίστου, καὶ λυσιτελήσει σοι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ χρυσίον. (12.) Σύγκλεισον ἐλεημοσύνην ἐν τοῖς ταμιείοις

Vulgate "will make atonement for you for all evil."[39] But Ambrose, by reading *in die malo*,[40] invoked not just as *an* evil day, but *the* evil day. Jerome did not invariably favour the eschatological interpretation of the phrase[41] and brought it up in a different context, his commentary on Qoheleth 7:15 (*CCSL* 72:306).[42] Someone had suggested that "*in die malo vide*" meant "*vide alios torqueri*"! If *in die malo* is accepted and read in its eschatological sense, then Ambrose can argue that the storage of alms in the heart of the poor will serve as atonement on the day of judgement.[43]

σου, καὶ αὕτη ἐξελεῖταί σε ἐκ πάσης κακώσεως.

[39] Vulgate Sirach 29:15: *Pone thesaurum tuum in praeceptis Altissimi et proderit tibi magis quam aurum. Conclude eleemosynam in corde pauperis, et haec pro te exorabit ab omni malo.*

[40] Either a conscious or unconscious innovation on Ambrose's part (probably caused by contamination from Psalm 40:2: *Beatus qui intellegit super egenum et pauperem; in die mala liberabit eum dominum,* a passage often quoted by him) or else the reading of his Vetus Latina manuscript.

[41] See, for example, *Brev. in Ps*. 34 (*PL* 26:924A): *Et nos debemus arma accipere, ut possimus resistere in die malo, et in omnibus perfecti stare* (non-eschatological, influenced by Ephesians 6:13). In *In Hier*. 3 (v. 9.10) (*PL* 24:791C) he raises alternatives: *Ne fias mihi alienus, parcens mihi in die malo,* est sensus: *Ne parcas mihi in praesenti saeculo, quod malum est; sed redde mihi juxta peccata mea, ut requiem habeam sempiternam...Dies autem malus, vel omne saeculum est, vel dies iudicii, his qui propter peccata cruciantur*. Likewise at *In Eph*. 3 (v. 6:13) (*PL* 26:549B): *Ideo sumite omnia arma Dei, ut possitis resistere in die malo: et universa operati, stare. Diem malam, aut praesens tempus ostendit, de quo supra dixerat*: *Redimentes tempus, quia dies mali sunt, propter angustiam et vitae hujus labores, quia non absque sudore et certamine pervenimus ad palmam: aut certe consummationis atque judicii, quando diabolus, inimicus et vindex, in sua nos cupiet parte retinere, de qua liberabitur, qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem*: *In die enim mala liberabit eum Dominus* (Psalm 40:1).

[42] *In die bonitatis esto in bono, et in die malo vide. Et quidem istud congruum huic fecit Deus ad loquendum, ut non inveniat homo post eum quidquam. Scio me audisse in Ecclesia ab eo, qui putabatur habere scientiam Scripturarum, ita hos versiculos edissertos. "Dum in praesenti saeculo es, et boni quid operis potes facere, labora, ut postea ipse securus in die malo, id est, in die judicii, torqueri alios videas. Sicut enim praesens saeculum fecit Deus, in quo nobis fructum bonorum operum possumus praeparare; ita et futurum, in quo nulla boni operis datur facultas." Visus est quidem suadere, cum diceret audientibus: sed mihi videtur alius esse sensus, quem et Symmachus transtulit, dicens: In die bono esto in bono; diem vero malum intuere. Siquidem hoc simile huic fecit Deus, ut non inveniret homo quod contra eum quereretur. Et bona, inquit, et mala, prout tibi evenerint, sustine*.

[43] For this odd use of *exoro*, see as a (sort of) parallel *TLL* s.v. "exoro" 1587.42: *Speciatim in VT de expiatione per sacerdotem in ritu ac sollemnitate facta, ut peccata tollantur*, citing at 1587.51 a number of lax uses in Sirach. I would guess that *exorabit* is a translation of an LXX text that read ἐξιλάσεται "make atonement for" rather than reading ἐξελεῖταί "deliver out of." See, for example, Sirach 28:5.

The line from Tobit 12 had virtually no currency before Augustine. The latter, however, seems to pick up, almost immediately, in a variety of works, on Jerome's *vita aeterna*.[44]

> Aug. *In Ps*. 127:16: *Facis eleemosynas, filii tui sunt: propter eleemosynas accipis vitam aeternam, filii filiorum tuorum sunt*.

> Aug. *Serm*. 261.10: *Mementote, fratres, ad dexteram staturis quid dicturus est. Non dicet, Illa et illa magna fecistis: sed, Esurivi, et dedistis mihi manducare. Ad sinistram staturis non est dicturus, Illa et illa mala fecistis: sed, Esurivi, et non dedistis mihi manducare* (Matthew 25:35, 42). *Illi pro eleemosyna, in vitam aeternam: isti propter sterilitatem, in ignem aeternum. Modo eligite aut dextram aut sinistram. Nam rogo vos, quam habere poterit spem salutis piger in remediis, creber in morbis?*

Near the end of his life he cited the Vulgate of Tobit *verbatim* in his *Speculum de sacra scriptura* of 427.[45]

> *Quoniam eleemosyna a morte liberat, et ipsa est quae purgat peccata, et facit invenire vitam aeternam*.

The evolution of Augustine's views on suffrages for the dead is familiar.[46] Almsgiving without penitence was ineffective, and only the moderate sinner, who had showed willing in life, could have his stint in fire eased by alms, prayers, or masses. Jerome, as we have seen, in translating Tobit, probably made a significant enabling change that plays out in the alms eschatology of others, notably Augustine.

But what were Jerome's own views on the subject? His picture of almsgiving is not invariably positive: his opus reveals a telling polarity. He complains about

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[44] He is the first Latin father to use *eleemosyn** and *vit** and *aetern** within 40 or 80 characters of one another. Augustine, *In Ps*. 1:13, however has the LXX text: *Et illa uxor Tobiae, quae ait marito: Ubi sunt justitiae tuae* (Tobit 2:22)? *Ad hoc dicebat, ut displiceret illi Deus, qui illum fecerat caecum; et cum illi displiceret, committeretur anima ipsius*. He probably had recourse to the VL/LXX here because Jerome had actually cut this passage in his version of Tobit.

[45] Note however that he also cited the VL at (for example) *In Ps*. 1:13, where he has the LXX text: *Et illa uxor Tobiae, quae ait marito: Ubi sunt justitiae tuae* (Tobit 2:22)? *Ad hoc dicebat, ut displiceret illi Deus, qui illum fecerat caecum; et cum illi displiceret, committeretur anima ipsius*.

[46] See Ntedika, *L'évolution de la doctrine du purgatoire chez saint Augustin* and J. Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris, 1981) 92–118.

those who require an audience to give alms.[47] *Ep*. 22.32 provides satiric slapstick: an anonymous Roman noblewoman, dispensing alms in St. Peter's, has an old woman punched who had the temerity to go through the line twice.[48] Another passage, about clergymen who use alms as a hook to reel in matrons' riches, betrays insider knowledge and sour grapes about others' sharp practices.[49] When Jerome translated Tobit he cut allusions to alms at 1:3; 1:16, 4:8–9, and a whole extra clause in the *Vetus Latina* at 4:17.[50]

In a more positive, but far from disinterested presentation of almsgiving he execrated Vigilantius for arguing that alms should not be sent to the Holy Land.[51]

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[47] Jerome, *Tract. in Ps.* I 133.2 (*CCSL* 78:288.150–59) on the line *extollite manus vestras in sancta*: *Invenies aliquos de Christianis ideo dare elemosinam, ut laudentur a populis. Si quando pauper rogat buccellam, huc illucque circumspiciunt, et nisi testem viderint, pecuniam non dant. Si solus fuerit, manus contrahit: non dat libenter. O tu, Christiane, rogat te pauper ut des ei pecuniam: quare non das in occulto, sed das in publico? Si testem Deum quaeris: humanos oculos quid requiris? Eleemosina tua apud imperitos videtur esse eleemosina: ceterum apud Deum iniuria est. Iniuriam enim facis fratri tuo.* Likewise, *In Es. 6: Si praebeo eleemosynam, ut glorificer ab hominibus, recepi mercedem meam, et mercenarius appellandus sum.* See also *Ep.* 108.16. In the pagan world, of course, *philotimia* was a perfectly respectable motivation for charity.

[48] *Vidi nuper (nomen taceo, ne satyram putes) nobilissimam mulierum Romanarum in Basilica Beati Petri, semiviris antecedentibus, propria manu, quo religiosior putaretur, singulos nummos dispertire pauperibus. Interea anus quaedam annis pannisque obsita praecucurrit, ut alterum nummum acciperet: ad quam cum ordine pervenisset, pugnus porrigitur pro denario, et tanti criminis reus sanguis effunditur. Radix omnium malorum est avaritia, ideoque ab Apostolo idolorum servitus appellatur*.

[49] *Ep*. 52.9 (to Nepotian): *Sunt qui pauperibus paulum tribuunt, ut amplius accipiant; et sub praetextu eleemosynae quaerunt divitias, quae magis venatio appellanda est, quam eleemosynae genus. Sic bestiae, sic aves, sic capiuntur et pisces. Modica in hamo esca ponitur, ut matronarum in eo sacculi protrahantur. Sciat Episcopus, cui commissa est Ecclesia, quem dispensationi pauperum curaeque praeficiat. Melius est non habere quod tribuam, quam impudenter petere quod recondam. Sed et genus arrogantiae est, clementiorem te velle videri, quam Pontifex Christi est. Non omnia possumus omnes. Alius in Ecclesia oculus est, alius lingua, alius manus, alius pes, auris, venter, et caetera. Lege Pauli Epistolam ad Corinthios: quomodo diversa membra unum corpus efficiunt* (1 Corinthians 12).

[50] For the latter see Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with Other Ancient Witnesses*, 146.

[51] *C.Vigil.* 13-14: *Sed sanctorum locorum pauperibus dare cupiebat, qui suas pro Christo facultatulas relinquentes, ad Domini servitutem tota mente conversi sunt. Longum est nunc si de cunctis epistolis ejus omnia testimonia revolvere voluero, in quibus hoc agit, et tota mente festinat, ut Hierosolymam et ad sancta loca credentibus pecuniae dirigantur: non in avaritiam, sed in refrigerium, non ad divitias congregandas, sed ad imbecillitatem corpusculi sustentandam, et frigus atque inediam declinandam. Hac in Judaea usque hodie perseverante consuetudine, non solum apud nos, sed et apud Hebraeos, ut qui in lege Domini meditantur die ac nocte, et patrem non habent in terra, nisi solum Deum, synagogarum et*

Here it is clear what Jerome's stake[52] was in the matter: "Evidently if I responded to this, you would immediately yap out that I am pleading my own cause, you who have endowed all with such generosity, that if you had not come to Jerusalem, and poured out your, or better, your patrons', funds, we would all be in danger of starvation."[53] These were all perils of alms.

But what of alms and the eternal life? In his *Tractatus in Ps.* 133 Jerome inches closer to the relief from hell provided by alms. He discusses how the poor can launder our money,[54] he cites Sirach on water, fire, alms, and sin and ends, "the fires of Gehenna were prepared for sins, but alms extinguish them." When or how is not made clear. Now Jerome's eschatology has always been notoriously messy and difficult to pin down.[55] Does he mean that the alms quench the fires prepared

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totius orbis foveantur ministeriis (Psalm 1, Deuteronomy 18)*; ex aequalitate dumtaxat non ut aliis refrigerium, et aliis sit tribulatio: sed ut aliorum abundantia, aliorum sustentet inopiam* (2 Corinthians 8). 14. *Eleemosynae quibus potissimum faciendae. Mali pauperes.—Respondebis, hoc unumquemque posse in patria sua facere: nec pauperes defuturos, qui ecclesiae opibus sustentandi sint. Nec nos negamus cunctis pauperibus etiam Judaeis et Samaritanis, si tanta sit largitas, stipes porrigendas. Sed apostolus faciendam quidem docet ad omnes eleemosynam, sed maxime ad domesticos fidei* (Galatians 6). *De quibus et Salvator in Evangelio loquebatur: Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis*, *qui vos recipiant in aeterna tabernacula* (Luke 16:9). *Numquid isti pauperes, inter quorum pannos et illuviem corporis, flagrans libido dominatur, possunt habere aeterna tabernacula, qui nec praesentia possident, nec futura? Non enim simpliciter pauperes, sed pauperes spiritu beati appellantur: de quibus scriptum est: Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem: in die mala liberabit eum Dominus* (Psalm 40:1). *In vulgi pauperibus sustentandis nequaquam intellectu, sed eleemosyna opus est.*

[52] He limits the identification of the poor with Christ to those who are *poor in spirit* at *In Math*. 25:40 (*CCSL* 77:244)!

[53] *Videlicet si ad haec respondero, statim latrabis, meam me causam agere, qui tanta cunctos largitate donasti, ut nisi venisses Hierosolymam, et tuas vel patronorum tuorum pecunias effudisses, omnes periclitaremur fame*.

[54] Jerome, *Tract. in Ps.* I 133.2 (*CCSL* 78:289.196–290.204): *Grande nobis beneficium praestant pauperes. Peccata, quae iam aliter lavare non possumus, exstinguit eleemosina. Quid scriptum est? "Sicut aqua exstinguit ignem: sic eleemosina exstinguit peccata". Hoc praestat elemosina, quod et baptisma. Quomodo baptisma nobis peccata dimittit: ita et elemosina nobis peccata dimittit. Sicut aqua exstinguit ignem, sic elemosina exstinguit peccata. Peccatis enim gehennae ignes praeparati sunt. Hos autem exstinguit elemosina*. See also Jerome, *In Eccl*. 3.22 (Qoheleth): *Nihil est ergo bonum in vita ista, nisi quod laetatur homo in opere suo, faciens eleemosynam, et futuros sibi thesauros in regno coelorum praeparans. Hanc solam habemus portionem, quam nec fur nec latro valet, nec tyrannus auferre, et quae nos post mortem sequatur. Nec enim possumus, cum haec vita fuerit dissoluta, rursum nostris laboribus perfrui, aut scire, quae futura sint in mundo* for the reassure in heaven motif.

[55] See J.P. O'Connell, *The Eschatology of Saint Jerome* (Mundelein, IL, 1948); and the more recent note by J.H.D. Scourfield, "A Note on Jerome's Homily on the Rich Man and Lazarus," *JTS* 48 (1997) 536–9.

for us at the Last Judgement once we are in them? Or that alms quench the fires so there is no fire for the virtuous almsgiver to burn in? It is hard to tell. It would seem however that these are *pre-mortem* alms.

One treatment of alms in Jerome's work looks like an adumbration of a practice that becomes much more common and important later on. Consider the *laudes* of Pammachius in *Ep*. 66.5.3 (the letter is dated to 398). Jerome praises his friend for his response to the death of his wife Paulina:

> He steps out, accompanied by this army (viz. of the poor), in them he cherishes Christ, he is washed white by their filth. The games-patron of the poor and the candidate of the needy, thus he hastens to heaven. Other husbands sprinkle violets, roses, lilies, and shining blossoms and alleviate the pain in their hearts by these good offices. Our Pammachius waters the sacred ashes and her venerable bones with balsams of alms. With these ointments and incense he cherishes the sleeping ashes, knowing that it was written, "Just as water extinguishes fire, thus alms extinguish sin."
>
> The blessed Cyprian too explains in his major work how great the virtues of mercy are and what rewards it will receive, and approves the advice of Daniel, who knows that the wicked king, if he were willing to pay attention to him, could be saved by the support of the poor. The mother of this sort of daughter[56] rejoices in her heir. She does not mourn that her wealth has gone to another when she sees that it is being paid out to those she would have wished it to go to. Instead, she is pleased that without effort on her part her wishes are being fulfilled. This is not a diminishment of her property, but a change in benefactor.[57]

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[56] J. Labourt, *Saint Jérome: Lettres* (Paris, 1953) 3.231, takes the mother as Paula and the daughter as Paulina. However *huisce modi* (as opposed to *huius*) suggests a different interpretation to me, namely that the daughter who inherits is the *ecclesia pauperum*. *Ep*. 108.6 says that Paula disposed of all her money to her children before setting out for Palestine. It specifies that Eustochium received nothing from her mother and rejoiced to see her parents' *substantiola* paid out to the poor.

[57] *Ep*. 66.5.3: *Hoc exercitu comitatus incedit, in his Christum confovet, horum sordibus dealbatur; munerarius pauperum, egentium candidatus sic festinat ad caelum. ceteri mariti super tumulos coniugum spargunt violas, rosas, lilia, floresque purpureos: et dolorem pectoris his officiis consolantur: Pammachius noster sanctam favillam ossaque veneranda, eleemosynae balsamis rigat. his pigmentis atque odoribus fovet cineres quiescentes sciens scriptum: "Sicut aqua extinguit ignem, ita eleemosyna peccatum." quantas virtutes habeat misericordia et quibus donanda sit praemiis, et beatus Cyprianus grandi volumine exsequitur, et Danihelis consilium probat, qui regem impiissimum, si se audire voluisset, scit pauperum sustentatione salvandum. gaudet huiusce modi filiae mater herede, non dolet opes ad alium pervenisse, quas cernit isdem, quibus ipsa voluerat, erogari. quin potius gratulatur absque labore suo, sua vota compleri; non enim substantiae dimunitio, sed operarii commutatio est.*

Obviously this is a self-serving letter that sells almsgiving to the bereaved aristocrat and harps on the charitable disposal of Paulina's and Pammachius' property.[58] Jerome is in part working from Cyprian's *De opere*, and could not resist adopting the striking image of the *munerarius* from it.[59] Naturally there is a very positive evaluation of alms, including the *auctoritas* from Sirach.

Most interesting, however, is the clear funerary context. Who is to benefit from these alms? Whose sins are to be extinguished? If the alms are Pammachius' on his own behalf, then what we have here is merely a *conversio*.[60] But I would suggest a different reading of the passage. Namely that this may be the first explicitly documented example of *post mortem* alms offered by another (i.e. surrogate alms) to extinguish the sins of one deceased. This seems fairly clearly to be the intent of the analogy. Water extinguishes fire. Alms extinguish sin. Pagans pour incense on pyres. But the balsam of Christian alms quenches the burning of Paulina's ashes. The theme is developed discreetly, for the letter is a *consolatio* after all, but the hints are there. Although we do not have a precise picture of Jerome's views on the particular judgement of the soul,[61] and it may be difficult for us to work out precisely *which* fires the alms will quench for Paulina, her husband is depicting quenching her pyre/sins with the balsam of alms. The parallel description[62] in Paulinus of Nola's *consolatoria* (*Ep*. 13.11) makes the point explicitly: *Sua enim cuique parti debita persolvisti, lacrymas corpori fundens, eleemosynam animae infundens … Itaque patronos animarum nostrarum pauperes, qui tota Romae stipe meritant multi, ut dives in aula Apostoli congregasti*.[63] If one may be permitted to read between the lines, Paulina was

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[58] There are explicit hints throughout the letter. The same is distressingly true of various other ascetic consolations, e.g. Paul.Nol. *Ep*. 13, Hier. *Epp*. 77 and 108.

[59] Cyp. *De opere* 21: *Quale munus est, fratres charissimi, cuius editio Deo spectante celebratur! Si in gentilium munere grande et gloriosum videtur proconsules vel imperatores habere praesentes, et apparatus ac sumptus apud munerarios maior est ut possint placere majoribus, quanto illustrior muneris et major est gloria Deum et Christum spectatores habere! Quanto istic et apparatus uberior et sumptus largior exhibendus est ubi ad spectaculum conveniunt coelorum Virtutes, conveniunt angeli omnes, ubi munerario non quadriga vel consulatus petitur, sed vita aeterna praestatur, nec captatur inanis et temporarius favor vulgi, sed perpetuum praemium regni coelestis accipitur*!

[60] Paul.Nol. *Ep*. 13.14 develops the spiritual benefit to Pammachius.

[61] Note that in *Ep*. 22 he gave himself a salutary pre-death experience of judgement.

[62] Jerome must have worked from Paulinus or from his source. Paulinus develops the almsgiving as a New Testament feeding-miracle, the Loaves and Fishes. In *Ep*. 13.15–16 however, he likewise, shows dependence on Cyprian for the image of Pammachius as *munerarius* and *candidatus*.

[63] Also *Ep*. 13.23: *Et benedictae conjugis animam refecisti; in illam transfundente Christi manu, quae tua pauperibus erogabantur*.

a frivolous clothes-horse,[64] who died both young[65] and suddenly[66] (one would guess in childbed),[67] and did not have time for the proper spiritual preparations.[68] Paulinus implies that she was just and would be in *refrigerium* (*Ep*. 13.5) and praises her *morum sanctitas* in *Ep*. 13.6. The peroration of *Ep*. 13.28 develops the point far more fulsomely:

> *Iam honoratur tuis illa meritis, iam pascitur tuis panibus, et affluit tuis opibus, in vestitu deaurata circumamicta varietate, pretioso lumine; non eget alienae*

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[64] Kelly, *Jerome*, 215, perceptively notes the "cold and perfunctory" paragraphs on Paulina. But his analysis of the reasons is somewhat different from mine: "Christian though she was, Paulina had not been a Christian after his own heart." There is an equally perfunctory allusion in *Ep*. 108.4. Paul. Nol. *Ep*. 13.28 implies that she was fond only of fancy clothes: *Quantam enim tunc partem tuorum munerum cepit, cum eo solo, quod poterat induere, frueretur.* His vision of her in bliss focuses primarily on her fine heavenly attire.

[65] She died young (Paul.Nol. *Ep*. 13.5: *primaeva decessit*; 13.6: *immatura*).

[66] Paul.Nol. *Ep*. 13.1: *Tam inopinatum quam inoptatum tui maeroris indicium*. 13.2: the letter came late.

See also Jerome, *Ep*. 77.1: *Ante hoc ferme biennium, Pammachio meo pro subita peregrinatione Paulinae, brevem epistolam dedi*.

[67] Death in childbed or after a miscarriage may have occurred. This seems to me to be the clear implication of paragraph *Ep*. 66.3.3 with its allusion to *crebris abortiis et experta fecunditate conceptuum non desperat liberos* and the *exempla* of Rachel and Benjamin in Genesis 35:18 and of the death of the wife of Phineas, who gave birth to a posthumous son Ichabod, and the consolation that the reformed Pammachius was the offspring she had wished for.

[68] Fabiola who distributed the alms herself may provide a contrast. See *Ep*. 77.9: *Sic festinabat, sic impatiens erat morarum, ut illam crederes profecturam. Itaque dum semper paratur, mors eam invenire non potuit imparatam*. She had the time to summon monks, (the *pauperes spiritu*) it would appear, to relieve her of some of her riches. See *Ep*. 77.11: *Quodem praesagio futurorum ad multos scripserat monachos, ut venirent, et gravi onere laborantem absolverent, faceretque sibi de iniquo mammona amicos, qui eam reciperent in aeterna tabernacula* (Luke 16:19). *Venerunt, amici facti sunt: dormivit illa quo modo voluit: et deposita tandem sarcina, levior volavit ad caelum.* For special provisions for offerings for penitents who died suddenly see *Conc.Vais*. (442) c. 2: *Pro his qui paenitentia accepta in bono vitae cursu satisfactoria compunctione viventes, sine communione inopinato nonnunquam transitu in agris aut itineribus praeveniuntur, oblationem recipiendam et eorum funera ac deinceps memoriam ecclesiastico affectu prosequendam; quia nefas est eorum commemorationem excludi a salutaribus sacris, qui ad eadem sacra fideli affectu contendentes, dum se diutius reos statuunt, indignos salutiferis mysteriis indicant ac dum purgatiores restitui desiderant, absque sacramentorum viatico intercipiuntur: quibus fortasse nec absolutissimam reconciliationem sacerdos denegandam putasset* and *Stat. Eccles. Antiq*. c. 22 (79): *Paenitentes qui attente leges paenitentiae exequuntur, si casu in itinere vel in mari mortuis fuerint, ubi eis subveniri non potuit, memoria eorum et orationibus et oblationibus commendetur*. Both permit the acceptance of offerings at the altar from those who had died suddenly.

> *manus digito refrigerari, propriis ipsa digitorum suorum roribus, id est, dexterae tuae operibus, infusa. Non aeque ampla dote nubentem locupletaveras, ut nunc ditificas quiescentem. Quantam enim tunc partem tuorum munerum cepit, cum eo solo, quod poterat induere, frueretur; nunc quantumcumque contuleris, totum simul, omnium sensuum voluptate dives, animo possidebit. Beata, cui tam numerosa apud Christum suffragia sunt; et cujus caput tam multiplex ambit illustrium corona gemmarum, nec alienis intexta floribus, sed domesticis corusca luminibus. Vere illa pretiosa Domino anima, quae de tribus pretium margaritis capit. Est enim conjux fidei, soror virginitatis, filia perfectionis; cui Paula mater, soror Eustochium, tu maritus.*

But even here we see the emphasis on Pammachius' suffrages and a contrast-allusion to the plight of Dives in Luke 16:24. In the case of Jerome, Paulina's whereabouts are sinisterly unclear.[69]

Jerome insisted that Paulina herself would have wanted the money disbursed as alms. Why? Because there was some testamentary issue?[70] Or do we see here instead a pre-emptive manoeuvre? Namely, as Augustine will subsequently state,[71] in order for her to benefit after her death from the surrogate alms offered by her husband, it had to be clear first that she had given alms, and second that she would have offered them herself, had she been alive to do so.

Conclusion

This has been a long and somewhat complicated argument. Jerome had a conflicted attitude to alms. He disliked many of the rich and clearly found the diseased and unwashed poor even more repulsive.[72] He was dependent himself on handouts[73] and had a ready eye for a legacy. He was not a fan of Tobit, the most important Old Testament advocate for eleemosynary *pietas*. (One wonders whether this was because the money in Tobit *stayed in the family*.)[74] Yet his translation of Tobit, that through alms one could find eternal life, immediately took off to develop a life of its own in Augustine. And finally, as I have suggested, *Ep*. 66 provides a

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[69] Contrast O'Connell, *The Eschatology of Saint Jerome*, 89, on Jerome's normal consolatory discourse.

[70] E.g. the sort of competition discussed by J. Harries, "Treasure in Heaven: Property and Inheritance Among Senators of Late Rome," in E. Craik ed., *Marriage and Property* (Aberdeen, 1984) 54–70.

[71] *CD* 21.27.

[72] See *Ep*. 66.5 for material recast in *Ep*. 77.6. Prudentius, *Per*. 2 can be dated to after 399, and it seems to imitate *Ep*. 66 of 398.

[73] See above n. 51 for his identification of the religious with the *pauperes spiritu* who need alms.

[74] The cynical suggestion comes from John Contreni *per litteras*.

very early (398) and unnoticed example of alms as suffrages for the dead. Indeed Jerome's advocacy of Pammachius' suffrage is completely consistent with his understanding that there was no repentance in the underworld.[75]

[75] For his interpretation of Psalm 6:6 (*In inferno quis confitebitur tibi*?) see *Ep*. 22.30 with N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity. A Commentary on the Libellus de virginitate servanda* (*Letter 22*) (Liverpool, 2003) 293–4. Also Jerome's *Homily on Luke* 16:19–31 (*De Lazaro et divite*) (*CCSL* 78:507–16) 510.12: *Miserere mei. 'In inferno quis confitebitur tibi?' Frustra agis paenitentiam in loco ubi non est paenitentiae locus. Tormenta te cogunt agere paenitentiam, non mentis affectus*.

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Chapter 8
La Figure des Deux Larrons chez Jérôme

Régis Courtray

Les deux "larrons" de l'Évangile font partie du paysage familier de notre culture biblique. L'iconographie en a fait pour nous des clichés et nous les appelons volontiers "le bon et le mauvais larron," le premier des deux étant devenu une figure plutôt sympathique et populaire du Nouveau Testament. C'est oublier combien peut apparaître a priori comme un scandale la promesse du paradis que Jésus adresse sur la croix à celui qui n'est autre qu'un malfaiteur (cf. Luc 23:43). Ces deux brigands, qui ne font qu'une brève apparition dans les Évangiles, ont toutefois retenu l'attention des commentateurs dès les premiers siècles, et un exégète comme Jérôme leur consacre plus d'une page dans son œuvre. Or, loin des images d'Épinal que nous avons d'eux, le moine de Bethléem porte sur cet épisode de la Passion un regard profond qui permet aujourd'hui encore au lecteur contemporain de se laisser nourrir et toucher par le texte biblique.

Nous voudrions dans les pages qui suivent tenter de suivre Jérôme dans ses différentes approches de la scène évangélique à travers ses écrits. Après quelques réflexions proprement exégétiques sur les variantes d'un Évangile à l'autre ou sur le sens à donner au récit, l'exégète en vient à commenter avec saveur la promesse du Christ: "En vérité, je te le dis, aujourd'hui, tu seras avec moi dans le paradis."[1] Finalement, et de manière inattendue, le "bon larron" devient pour Jérôme un exemple à suivre pour les chrétiens.

Discussions Exégétiques Autour des Deux Larrons

On trouve la mention des deux larrons entourant Jésus sur la croix dans les Évangiles de Luc (23:33, 39–43), Matthieu (27:38, 44) et Marc (15:27–8). Dans le seul Évangile de Luc, on rapporte que les deux brigands crucifiés n'ont pas eu la même attitude à l'égard du Christ. Si l'un a insulté le Messie, l'autre a reconnu l'innocence de Jésus et s'est converti sur la croix, prononçant cette phrase devenue célèbre: "Souviens-toi de moi quand tu viendras dans ton royaume" (v. 42). En réponse lui est promis le paradis: "En vérité, je te le dis, aujourd'hui, tu seras avec moi dans le paradis" (v. 43). En revanche, dans l'Évangile de Matthieu, rien n'est dit de la différence d'attitude des deux "larrons": l'un et l'autre semblent

[1] Les traductions françaises de la Bible sont celles de la *Bible de Jérusalem*.

également l'injurier. Quant à Marc, il mentionne simplement que deux brigands avaient été crucifiés l'un à sa gauche, l'autre à sa droite.

Comment comprendre l'apparente contradiction entre les évangélistes Matthieu et Luc, puisque le premier affirme que les deux ont blasphémé et le second que seul l'un d'eux a insulté Jésus?[2] La question sous-jacente est celle de la vérité évangélique: l'Esprit saint ne peut inspirer une chose et son contraire, ou alors la Bible ne dit plus vrai. Pour Jérôme, la différence s'explique simplement: "Il n'y a point contradiction entre les Évangiles," écrit-il dans son *Commentaire sur Matthieu*. Le moine note d'abord que, si Matthieu semble dire que les deux avaient blasphémé—alors que Luc distingue clairement l'attitude des deux—, il faut voir là une figure appelée "syllepse": "Au lieu d'un brigand, on laisse entendre que tous deux ont blasphémé." En fait, il faut comprendre, explique Jérôme, que, dans un premier temps, les deux brigands ont également blasphémé; ce n'est que lorsque le soleil disparut, que la terre se mit à trembler, que les rochers se fendirent et que les ténèbres s'épaissirent, que l'un d'eux abandonna son incroyance et se mit à croire.[3] On trouve la même explication dans un passage de la lettre 59: d'abord tous deux ont blasphémé, puis l'un a changé son erreur en profession de foi.[4] Loin d'être troublé par cette relative incohérence des textes, Jérôme en tire même un sens spirituel fécond. Ces deux brigands sont en fait le type de deux peuples, les païens

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[2] Ce constat n'est pas propre à Jérôme. Cf. Ambr. *Expos.Luc.* 4 (*CCSL* 14:190): *Hic evangelista testatur, qui solus inducit Dominum dicentem latroni: amen dico tibi, hodie mecum eris in paradiso*; Aug. *Serm.* 232 (*SC* 116:270): *Iste enim evangelista Lucas narravit quod dico. quia duo latrones crucifixi sunt cum Christo, dixit hoc et Matthaeus? sed unus eorum latronum quia insultavit Domino, et alter eorum quia credidit in Christum, Matthaeus non dixit, Lucas dixit*.

[3] Hier. *In Math.* 4.27.44 (*CCSL* 77:272–3): *Hic per tropum qui appellatur syllepsis pro uno latrone uterque inducitur blasphemasse. Lucas vero adserit quod, altero blasphemante, alter confessus sit et e contrario increpuerit blasphemantem; non quod discrepent evangelia sed quo primum uterque blasphemaverit, dehinc sole fugiente terra commota saxisque disruptis et ingruentibus tenebris, unus crediderit in Iesum et priorem negationem sequenti confessione emendaverit*.

[4] Jérôme fait ici le parallèle entre cet épisode et celui de Marie-Madeleine qui, dans un premier temps, aurait été incrédule, puis aurait cru en la résurrection de Jésus. Cf. *Ep.* 59.4 (*CSEL* 54:545): *Quamquam, etiamsi eadem mulier in diversis evangeliis et tenuisse pedes et non tenuisse referatur, facilis solutio sit, cum potuerit primum corripi quasi incredula et postea non repelli quasi ea, quae errorem confessione mutaverat, quod et de latronibus intellegi potest, cum alius evangelista utrumque blasphemasse, alius narret alterum esse confessum*. Voir de même: Ambr. *Expos.Luc.* 10.122 (*CCSL* 14:379–80): *Vnde et illud solvi videtur, quia alii duos conviciantes inducunt latrones, iste unum conviciantem, unum rogantem. fortasse et iste prius conviciatus est, sed repente conversus est*. Ambroise ajoute une autre explication : le texte parle peut-être d'un seul brigand en recourant au pluriel; une telle habitude se rencontre effectivement ailleurs dans l'Écriture (Psaumes 2:2; Actes 4:27; Hébreux 11:33,37; 2 Rois 1:8; Daniel 6:23). De même, Aug. *Cons.evang*. 3.16.53, qui propose la même explication et fournit les mêmes exemples bibliques.

et les juifs. Si les juifs insultent le Christ, les païens ont également commencé par être des blasphémateurs. Puis, terrifiés par la grandeur des miracles, ils se sont repentis et désormais reprochent aux juifs leurs blasphèmes.[5]

L'épisode des deux larrons avait été l'objet, avant Jérôme, de nombreuses exégèses que le moine, au cours de ses œuvres, se plaît à rappeler et à discuter. La première lui vient sans doute d'Origène et semble assez répandue dans l'entourage du moine.[6] Selon cette opinion d'un *quidam*, exposée dans l'*In Matthaeum* 4, 27, 33.38, Adam aurait été enterré sur le mont Golgotha, et le Christ offrirait sa vie pour le salut du genre humain précisément là où le *crâne* du premier homme serait enseveli, d'où le nom de "Calvaire" donné au lieu. L'opinion est certes séduisante, comme Jérôme le souligne lui-même, mais elle n'est pas exacte. En effet, on ne peut admettre cette explication qui, d'une part, ne correspond pas aux données de la Bible—puisqu'il est dit qu'Adam fut enterré près d'Hébron et d'Arbé[7]—et qui, d'autre part, ne s'accorde pas avec la vérité historique—puisque "Calvaire" ne signifie pas *sepulchrum primi hominis*, mais *locum decollatorum*: le Golgotha est le lieu, situé hors de la ville, où étaient exécutés les malfaiteurs. La symbolique qu'on avait voulu donner au Golgotha était certes forte, mais elle ne tient pas d'un point de vue historique. En effet, note l'exégète, si l'on veut affirmer que le Christ a arrosé de son sang le tombeau d'Adam et a été crucifié pour ressusciter le premier homme, on aurait du mal à justifier la présence de deux brigands à ses côtés. La grandeur de la crucifixion repose en fait sur une autre symbolique, plus profonde: en étant mis à mort au milieu de brigands, Jésus dresse l'étendard du martyre sur le lieu des condamnés. Pour les hommes il s'est fait malédiction sur la croix (cf. Galates 3:13) et pour le salut de tous il est crucifié comme un coupable au milieu des coupables.[8]

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[5] Hier. *In Math*. 4.27.44 (*CCSL* 77:273): *In duobus latronibus uterque populus et gentilium et Iudaeorum primum Dominum blasphemavit, postea signorum magnitudine alter exterritus egit paenitentiam et usque hodie Iudaeos increpat blasphemantes*.

[6] Cf. chez Origène: E. Klostermann, E. Benz éds, *Origenes Werke XI. Origenes Matthäuserklärung, II. Die lateinische Übersetzung der Commentariorum Series*, 127 (Leipzig, 1933), 127, 265; Hier. *Ep.* 46.3 (*CSEL* 54:332); *In Eph.* 5.14 (*PL* 26:256)—références données par É. Bonnard, *Jérôme. Commentaire sur S. Matthieu* (Paris, 1979), 288–9, n. 91.

[7] C'était du moins le texte de Josué 14:15 que Jérôme lisait dans la traduction de la Septante qui ne correspond plus à nos traductions modernes.

[8] Hier. *In Math.* 4.27.33.38 (*CSEL* 77:270–72): *Audivi quendam exposuisse Calvariae locum in quo sepultus est Adam et ideo sic appellatum quia ibi antiqui hominis sit conditum caput, et hoc esse quod apostolus dicat: surge qui dormis et exsurge a mortuis, et inluminabit te Christus* (Éphésiens 5:14). *favorabilis interpretatio et mulcens aurem populi nec tamen vera. extra urbem enim et foras portam loca sunt in quibus truncantur capita damnatorum et Calvariae, id est decollatorum, sumpsere nomen. propterea autem ibi crucifixus est Dominus ut ubi prius erat area damnatorum, ibi erigerentur vexilla martyrii; et quomodo pro nobis maledictum crucis factus est et flagellatus et crucifixus, sic pro omnium salute quasi noxius inter noxios crucifigitur. sin autem quispiam contendere voluerit ideo ibi*

Deux autres exégèses, spirituelles cette fois, sont exposées dans le *Commentaire sur Habacuc*. La première porte sur la traduction d'Habacuc 2:11 dans la LXX: "Une pierre depuis le mur criera et le scarabée depuis le bois prononcera ces paroles" (*Lapis de pariete clamabit, et scarabaeus de ligno loquetur ea*). Jérôme rapporte qu'un frère—qui reste difficilement identifiable—avait compris cette pierre qui crie comme une figure du Christ et le scarabée qui parle "depuis le bois" comme une figure du malfaiteur, qui, sur la croix, avait insulté Jésus.[9] Interprétation typologique assurément pieuse, mais Jérôme avoue ne pas voir comment l'adapter à l'ensemble du contexte de la prophétie. Sans donc rejeter complètement l'explication (qualifiée de *pie*), le moine ne la retient pas véritablement et ne semble donc pas considérer ce passage prophétique comme une annonce des blasphèmes du mauvais larron. Plus loin, sur Habacuc 3:2 (LXX)—"Au milieu de deux animaux tu seras connu" (*In medio duorum animalium cognosceris*)—Jérôme expose les différentes opinions proposées pour identifier ces deux animaux entourant le Seigneur. Parmi les nombreuses interprétations rapportées, une *simplex interpretatio* veut qu'il s'agisse des deux brigands entourant Jésus sur la croix.[10] Ici non plus Jérôme ne se prononce pas véritablement sur la valeur de cette lecture typologique qu'il se contente de mentionner et de qualifier d'*opinio vulgi*. En revanche, l'exégète approuve l'évangéliste Marc lorsque celui-ci applique le passage d'Isaïe 53:12 (LXX)—*et cum iniquis reputatus est*—aux deux brigands de l'Évangile (Marc 15:28). Les *iniqui* au nombre desquels a été compté l'innocent dont parle le prophète sont bien la figure des deux malfaiteurs au milieu desquels Jésus a été crucifié.[11] La parole prophétique a trouvé son accomplissement au moment de la mort du Christ.

Si l'Évangile nous rapporte la présence de deux brigands autour du Christ en croix, Jérôme, comme ses prédécesseurs, a en fait moins fait porter son attention

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Dominum crucifixum ut sanguis ipsius super Adam tumulum distillaret, interrogemus eum quare et alii latrones in eodem loco crucifixi sint. ex quo apparet Calvariae non sepulchrum primi hominis sed locum significare decollatorum, ut ubi abundavit peccatum superabundet gratia. Adam vero sepultum iuxta Chebron et Arbe in Iesu filii Nave volumine legimus. […] *Si Golgotha tumulus est Adam et non damnatorum locus et ideo dominus ibi crucifigitur ut suscitet Adam, duo latrones quare in loco eodem crucifiguntur?*

[9] Hier. *In Abac.* 1.2.9/11 (*CCSL* 76A:606): *Scio quemdam de fratribus, lapidem, qui de pariete clamaverit, intellexisse Dominum Salvatorem, et scarabaeum de ligno loquentem, latronem qui Dominum blasphemaverit, quod licet pie possit intellegi, tamen quomodo cum universo prophetiae contextu possit aptari, non invenio*.

[10] Hier. *In Abac.* 2.3.2 (*CCSL* 76A:631): *Porro simplex interpretatio, et opinio vulgi de Salvatore intellegit, quod inter duos latrones crucifixus agnitus sit*.

[11] Hier. *In Es* 14.53.12 (R. Gryson, C. Gabriel éds, *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le prophète Isaïe, 4, Livres XII-XV* [Freiburg, 1998–99], 1533): *Iniquos autem cum quibus reputatus est Marcus evangelista latrones intellegit scribens: et crucifixerunt cum eo duos latrones, unum a dextris et alterum a sinistris, et impleta est scriptura quae dicit: et cum iniquis reputatus est*.

sur le "mauvais larron." Il s'intéresse plutôt au "bon larron"[12] qui confesse sa foi et auquel le Christ promet le paradis, après avoir accepté son repentir.[13]

Le Paradis Promis au "Bon Larron"

Le dialogue entre le larron et le Christ a souvent été commenté par Jérôme. Ses remarques les plus approfondies se trouvent dans l'homélie qu'il a prononcée sur la parabole de Lazare et du riche.[14] C'est donc à partir de la trame fournie par ce sermon que nous étudierons le passage, en complétant les propos du moine par les réflexions qu'il a pu proposer dans ses autres œuvres.

Jérôme ne retient de l'épisode des deux malfaiteurs que la seule mention de cette parole prononcée par le Christ au bon larron: "Aujourd'hui, tu seras avec moi dans le paradis" (Luc 23:43). Par cette promesse en effet, Jésus renverse la situation et assure le salut à celui qui était condamné. Bien plus, il lui ouvre les portes du paradis. Chose étonnante certes, mais plus encore si l'on songe que le paradis avait été fermé à l'homme depuis qu'Adam et Ève en avaient été chassés: "(Dieu) bannit l'homme et il posta devant le jardin d'Éden les chérubins et la flamme du glaive fulgurant pour garder le chemin de l'arbre de vie" (Genèse 3:24). Jérôme rappelle effectivement que, jusqu'à la crucifixion, l'accès du paradis était fermé par une épée enflammée et un tourbillon (ou une roue) de feu et que des chérubins étaient postés devant ses portes.[15] C'est le Christ lui-même qui en avait fermé les portes,[16] lui seul pouvait donc à nouveau en ouvrir l'accès. Personne jusque-là n'avait pu accéder au paradis, et il fallait attendre l'avènement du Christ pour que celui-ci fût ouvert aux hommes justes.[17] Avant la venue du Christ donc, tous les hommes

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[12] Jérôme ne dit rien du crime commis par ce *latro*. Tout au plus laisse-t-il supposer qu'il est un homicide, dans l'*Ep.* 58.1 (*CSEL* 54:528): *Latro crucem mutat paradiso et facit homicidii poena martyrem*.

[13] Hier. *Ep.* 61.1 (*CSEL* 54:575): *Christus perfectae nobis humilitatis exemplar in se tribuit dans osculum proditori et latronis paenitentiam in patibulo suscipiens*.

[14] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:506–16).

[15] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Romphaea illa flammea et vertigo illa claudebat paradisum*; *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281): *Et revera, antequam flammeam illam rotam, et igneam romphaeam, et paradisi fores Christus cum latrone reseraret, clausa erant caelestia et spiritum pecoris hominisque aequalis vilitas coarctabat*; *In Es.* 16.59.1–2 (Gryson-Gabriel, *Commentaires,* 1694): *Qui aperuit paradisi ianuam, quae multo tempore clausa fuerat, et igneum gladium suo cruore restinxit*; *In die dominica Paschae* I (*CCSL* 78:547): *Ignitam illam romphaeam et paradisi ianuam, quam nullus potuit effringere, hodie Christus cum latrone reseravit*; *Ep.* 60.3 (*CSEL* 54:552): *Flammea illa rumphea, custos paradisi, et praesidentia foribus cherubin Christi restincta et reserata sunt sanguine*.

[16] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Non poterat aliquis intrare in paradisum, quem Christus clauserat*.

[17] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Non poterat aliquis intrare in paradisum… Proposueramus enim de paradiso dicere, quod ante adventum Christi nemo fuerit in paradiso*.

étaient également menés aux enfers au jour de leur mort, même les âmes des saints.[18] Veut-on savoir que même les saints se trouvaient dans les enfers? L'Écriture l'atteste à plusieurs reprises. Le premier personnage que Jérôme mentionne est Abraham en personne. En effet, dans l'Évangile de Luc, et plus précisément dans la parabole que Jésus propose sur Lazare et le riche, il est dit qu'Abraham se trouve aux enfers[19] et qu'il accueille en son sein le pauvre Lazare à sa mort, tandis que le riche va dans les supplices (cf. Luc 16:22–3). Avant donc que le paradis ne soit ouvert et que le Christ n'y conduise Abraham, les âmes des justes allaient aux enfers et étaient accueillies dans le sein d'Abraham.[20] Toutefois, tous les morts ne sont pas dans les mêmes lieux aux enfers: Abraham et Lazare sont "dans des lieux différents"[21] et l'Évangile parle d'un "abîme" séparant Abraham et le lieu des supplices du riche (cf. Luc 16:26).[22] Avant l'avènement du Christ, "la terre des vivants" (*terra viventium*) fut donc inaccessible à Abraham, à Isaac, à Jacob, aux prophètes et aux autres justes,[23] et Jérôme d'interroger: "Si Abraham, Isaac et Jacob sont en Enfer, qui est dans le Royaume des Cieux" (*Si Abraham, Isaac et Iacob in inferno, quis in caelorum regno?*)[24] Jacob lui-même n'affirme-t-il pas également qu'il ira aux enfers lorsqu'il dit: "Pleurant et gémissant, je descendrai aux enfers?" (Genèse 37:35).[25] Enfin, Job se plaint que les hommes pieux et les impies sont pareillement retenus aux enfers.[26]

Telle est donc le sort des hommes avant l'avènement du Christ et sa mort sur la croix. Cet événement marque en effet l'ouverture pour les hommes des portes du paradis restées jusque là fermées et dont personne ne pouvait briser les portes. Jérôme note à plusieurs reprises cet avant et cet après dans son œuvre: "Dans la loi, Abraham est aux Enfers; dans l'Évangile, le larron est au paradis" (*In Lege*

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[18] *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281):*…ante adventum Christi omnia ad inferos pariter ducerentur*; *Tract.Marc.* 2.1.13–31 (*CCSL* 78:461): *Antequam Christus aperiret paradisi ianuam cum latrone, omnes sanctorum animae ad inferos deducebantur*.

[19] Cf. Hier. *Tract.Marc.* 2.1.13–31 (*CCSL* 78:461): *Si Abraham ad inferos, quis non ad inferos?*

[20] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Simulque considerandum, quod Abraham apud inferos erat necdum enim Christus resurrexerat, qui illum in paradisum duceret… Abraham necdum erat in paradiso, quia necdum Christus intraverat cum latrone*.

[21] Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 129.2 (*CSEL* 56:165): *Abraham, licet diversis locis, cum Lazaro videtur apud inferos*.

[22] Cf. Hier. *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281): *Et Evangelium, chasmate interposito, apud inferos et Abraham cum Lazaro et divitem in suppliciis esse testatur*.

[23] Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 129.2 (*CSEL* 56:164): *Haec est, ut diximus, terra viventium, in qua sanctis viris atque mansuetis bona Domini praeparantur, quae ante adventum in carne Domini Salvatoris nec Abraham nec Isaac nec Iacob nec prophetae et alii iusti viri consequi potuerunt*.

[24] Hier. *Ep.* 60.3 (*CSEL* 54:551).

[25] Cf. Hier. *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281); *Tract. in Ps.* 107, 11 (*CCSL* 78:207); *Tract.Marc.* 2.1.13–31 (*CCSL* 78:461); *Ep.* 129.2 (*CSEL* 56:165).

[26] Cf. Hier. *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281): *Iob pios et impios in inferno queritur retentari*.

Abraham apud inferos; in Evangelio latro in paradiso).[27] Ou encore: "Avant le Christ, Abraham est aux Enfers; après le Christ, le larron est au paradis" (*Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos; post Christum latro in paradiso*).[28] On voit par là la place essentielle qu'occupe aux yeux de Jérôme le personnage du larron. Il est non seulement une figure emblématique du paradis, mais c'est également par lui que va s'opérer l'ouverture des portes des cieux pour les hommes.

Cette ouverture du paradis se fait discrètement dans le texte de Luc. C'est au travers de la parole du Christ au larron: "Aujourd'hui, tu seras avec moi dans le paradis," que Jérôme et les autres Pères ont vu le signe de cet événement. En effet, Jérôme note à plusieurs reprises que cette parole manifeste bien que le paradis est désormais ouvert,[29] et c'est précisément au moment où Jésus fait cette promesse que les portes s'ouvrent: "Aujourd'hui tu seras avec moi dans le paradis, aussitôt le voile du temple se déchira et toutes choses furent ouvertes."[30] Le signe concret et matériel en est que le voile du temple se déchire. De même donc que c'est le Christ qui avait fermé les portes du paradis, c'est lui qui, à nouveau, les ouvre. La clé du Christ, affirme Jérôme, c'est sa croix: "La croix du Christ est la clé du paradis, la croix du Christ a ouvert le paradis."[31] Ailleurs, il préfère—mais c'est tout un—dire que c'est le sang du Christ qui a ouvert les serrures: "Le sang du Christ est la clé du paradis."[32] Ce sang a éteint le glaive de feu qui gardait le paradis et écarté les chérubins assis devant ses portes.[33]

Mais la parole du Christ a d'autres implications. Si Jésus promet au larron l'entrée au paradis "aujourd'hui," alors celui-ci passera les portes en même temps que lui et sera donc le premier homme à pénétrer dans les cieux. Jérôme n'a pas manqué de faire cette remarque pour le moins surprenante. C'est un malfaiteur qui entre le premier dans le Royaume! *Latro primus intravit.* Cette expression

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[27] Hier. *Tract.Marc.* 2.1.13–31 (*CCSL* 78:461).

[28] Hier. *Ep.* 60.3 (*CSEL* 54:551).

[29] Cf. Hier. *In Es.* 16.59.1–2 (Gryson-Gabriel, *Commentaires*, 1694): *Qui aperuit paradisi ianuam, quae multo tempore clausa fuerat, et igneum gladium suo cruore restinxit, ut audiret latro: hodie mecum eris in paradiso*; *Ep.* 129.2 (*CSEL* 56:165): *Sanguis Christi clavis paradisi est dicentis ad latronem: hodie me cum eris in paradiso*.

[30] Hier. *In Hiez.* 13.44.1–3 (*CCSL* 75:644): *Postquam autem ille pependit in cruce et locutus est ad latronem: Hodie mecum eris in paradiso, statim velum templi scissum est et aperta sunt omnia*.

[31] Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Crux Christi clavis paradisi est, crux Christi aperuit paradisum*. Voir de même, Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* 45.1 (*CCSL* 38:518); *Serm.* 125A (G. Morin éd., *Miscellanea Agostiniana, 1* [Rome, 1930], 372).

[32] Hier. *Ep.* 129.2 (*CSEL* 56:165): *Sanguis Christi, clavis paradisi est*. Voir encore *In Es.* 16.59.1–2 (Gryson-Gabriel, *Commentaires,* 1694): *Igneum gladium suo cruore restinxit.*

[33] Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 60.3 (*CSEL* 54:552): *Flammea illa rumphea, custos paradisi, et praesidentia foribus cherubin Christi restincta et reserata sunt sanguine*.

revient souvent chez lui.[34] Or, note encore Jérôme, le larron l'emporte même sur les apôtres. Ce qui lui vaut cet honneur, c'est son attitude sur la croix, lui qui était un condamné proclame sa foi alors que les apôtres qui avaient suivi Jésus ont pris la fuite. On se souvient de la promesse de Pierre: "Ô condition et sort variés des hommes! Les apôtres avaient suivi, et ils fuient: lui confesse le Seigneur en croix. Ô Pierre, ô Jean, toi qui avais dit: 'Même s'il me faut mourir, jamais je ne te renierai' (Matthieu 26:35). Tu promets, et tu ne fais pas: voici qu'un autre, condamné pour homicide, fait ce qu'il n'avait pas promis. Tu es chassé de ta place, le larron t'a chassé: il entre lui-même le premier avec le Christ dans le paradis."[35] Rappelant ailleurs que seuls les justes passeront par la porte du paradis, Jérôme insiste sur l'antériorité du larron. Certes, par cette porte sont entrés Pierre, Paul, tous les apôtres, les martyrs, tous les saints, mais c'est le larron qui est passé le premier.[36]

Jésus affirme encore que le larron entrera dans le paradis "avec" lui. Jérôme souligne donc l'ouverture simultanée des portes des cieux par le Sauveur et le malfaiteur, écrivant tantôt que c'est le Christ qui a ouvert les portes "avec le larron,"[37] tantôt que le larron est entré "avec le Seigneur."[38] C'est donc donner un

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[34] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Antequam Christus moreretur, nemo in paradisum conscenderat nisi latro…Latro primus intravit cum Christo…Ipse primus ingreditur cum Christo in paradisum; In Zach.* 2.9.11–12 (*CCSL* 76A:832): *Primus cum Domino latro ingressus est*; *In die dominica Paschae* II (*CCSL* 78:549): *Per hanc portam primus latro cum Domino ingressus est*. Voir de même, Ioh.Chrys. *De cruce et latrone homilia* 2.2 (*PG* 49:409).

[35] Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *O conditio varia, et casus hominum! apostoli secuti fuerant, et fugiunt: iste in cruce Dominum confitetur. o Petre, o Iohannes, qui dixeras: et si me necesse est mori, numquam te negabo. promittis, et non facis: ecce alius damnatus in homicidium, quod non promiserat, facit. exclusus de loco es tuo, exclusit te latro: ipse primus ingreditur cum Christo in paradisum*. On explique mal, dans ce passage, la mention de l'apôtre Jean alors que seul Pierre est censé avoir prononcé une promesse de fidélité qu'il ne parvient pas à tenir. Sur la foi du larron qui dépasse celle des apôtres, voir encore Aug. *Serm.* 232 (*SC* 116:270): *Recolamus fidem latronis, quam non invenit Christus post resurrectionem in discipulis suis*.

[36] Cf. Hier. *In die dominica Paschae* II (*CCSL* 78:548–9): *Per hanc portam ingressus est Petrus, ingressus est Paulus, ingressi sunt omnes apostoli, ingressi sunt martyres, et cotidie sancti quique ingrediuntur: per hanc portam primus latro cum Domino ingressus est*.

[37] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515):*…necdum Christus intrauerat cum latrone*; *In Eccl.* 3.18.21 (*CCSL* 72:281): *Et paradisi fores Christus cum latrone reseraret*; *Tract. Marc.* 2.1.13–31 (*CCSL* 78:461):*…antequam Christus aperiret paradisi ianuam cum latrone*; *Tract.Marc.* 7.11.1–14 (*CCSL* 78:487): *Cum latrone intravit in paradisum*; *In die dominica Paschae* I (*CCSL* 78:547): *Hodie Christus cum latrone reseravit*.

[38] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Latro primus intravit cum Christo…Ipse primus ingreditur cum Christo in paradisum*; *In Zach.* 2.9.11–12 (*CCSL* 76A:832): *Primus cum Domino latro ingressus est*; *In die dominica Paschae* I (*CCSL* 78:546):

rôle de premier ordre à un brigand. A tel point que, dans une homélie sur le Psaume 107, l'exégète écrit, dans un raccourci, que le paradis a été ouvert "par le larron," sans mention du Christ![39] Quelle justification apporter à un tel honneur? Aux yeux de Jérôme, le larron a mérité une si grande récompense pour la grandeur de sa foi. En effet, souligne-t-il, dans son homélie sur Lazare et le riche: "La grandeur de sa foi a mérité la grandeur de ses récompenses. Car il n'a pas cru en voyant le Christ en son Royaume, il ne l'a pas vu en son éclat, il ne l'a pas vu regarder du haut du ciel, il n'a pas vu les anges le servir; assurément, pour le dire librement, il ne l'a pas vu marcher librement, mais il l'a vu en croix, il l'a vu boire le vinaigre, il l'a vu couronné de ronces, il l'a vu cloué à la croix, il l'a vu demander en suppliant de l'aide: Dieu, mon Dieu, regarde vers moi, pourquoi m'as-tu abandonné? Et c'est dans ces conditions qu'il a cru."[40] Du coup, la foi du larron et la récompense qu'il en reçoit font de lui une sorte de modèle que le moine entend proposer aux fidèles dans une lecture morale de l'épisode.

Le Bon Larron, Figure Exemplaire pour les Chrétiens

La figure du larron devient effectivement en dernière lecture un modèle présenté en imitation aux chrétiens. Le récit évangélique a valeur générale et tout homme peut se reconnaître, d'une manière ou d'une autre, dans ce brigand confessant sa foi au Christ.[41]

Noster latro cum Domino ingreditur; *In die dominica Paschae* II (*CCSL* 78:549): *Per hanc portam primus latro cum Domino ingressus est*.

[39] Cf. Hier. *Tract. in Ps.* 107.11 (*CCSL* 78:207): *Quia necdum erat paradisus a latrone apertus*.

[40] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Magnitudo enim fidei meruit magnitudinem praemiorum. Non enim credidit in regno videns Christum, non illum vidit fulgentem* (cf. Psaumes 32:13)*, non illum vidit de caelo respicientem, non vidit ei ministrantes angelos. Certe, ut libere dicam, non vidit libere ambulantem, sed vidit eum in cruce, vidit illum bibentem acetum, vidit eum sentibus coronatum, vidit eum confixum ad crucem, vidit eum precantem auxilium: Deus, Deus meus, respice in me, quare me dereliquisti?* (Psaumes 21:2; cf. Matthieu 27:46; Marc 15:34)*. Et sic credidit*. Sur la foi du larron qui lui vaut son entrée au paradis, cf. Ambr. *Hex*. 4.4.13 (*CSEL* 32/1:119): *Latro damnatus ille, qui est cum Domino crucifixus, non beneficio nativitatis suae, sed fidei confessione ad paradisi aeterna transivit*. Sur le fait que le larron reconnaît la divinité sur la croix, cf. Ambr. *Explan.Ps.* 40.22.2 (*CSEL* 64:243): *latro ipse nequitiam suam proposito meliore mutavit, agnovit in cruce Christum, confessus est Dei filium, regem voce propria nuncupavit*.

[41] Voir de même, Aug. *Serm.* 232 (*SC* 116:270): *Si nos propter facta nostra merito patimur, ipse quid fecit? Et conversus ad eum: memento mei, Domine, cum veneris in regnum tuum. Magna fides*.

Celui-ci est d'abord la figure d'une brusque conversion.[42] De tels renversements sont tout à fait caractéristiques de l'Évangile. On trouve effectivement bien d'autres exemples de conversions radicales. Matthieu, Zachée et les publicains sont devenus soudainement des apôtres. Paul, le persécuteur de l'Église, s'est mis à prêcher l'Évangile, les prostituées et les publicains devancent les pharisiens dans le Royaume de Dieu.[43] C'est selon ce même renversement que le larron passe directement de la croix au paradis.[44] Du coup, l'attitude du larron montre que "jamais conversion n'est trop tardive." Cette réflexion semble chère à Jérôme et on la retrouve à deux reprises dans sa *Correspondance*, à chaque fois liée au larron. Dans la lettre 39, adressée à Paula sur la mort de Blésilla, le moine s'adresse à la défunte et l'assure effectivement que "jamais n'est trop tardive la conversion." Pour appuyer son propos, Jérôme ne donne pas d'autre exemple que celui du larron sur la croix.[45] Cette même idée est encore exprimée dans la lettre 107, adressée à Laeta qui désespérait de la conversion de son père. Jérôme la rassure: "Aucune conversion n'est trop tardive," reprend-il, et de citer, entre autres exemples tirés de la Bible ou de l'actualité politique, le larron qui est passé directement de la croix au paradis[46] ou encore le roi Nabuchodonosor qui, après avoir été changé en bête sauvage, a retrouvé une intelligence humaine (cf. Daniel 4:26–33). Cette simultanéité de la foi et du salut chez le larron est bien résumée en une formule frappante du *De Lazaro et divite*: "Il n'y a rien entre les deux : la croix, et aussitôt le paradis."[47]

Deux passages de la *Correspondance* de Jérôme recourent encore au larron pour en faire une figure de la vie chrétienne. Dans la lettre 58 adressée à Paulin, Jérôme reprend son correspondant qui lui avait attribué des vertus que, selon lui, il ne méritait pas. Il ne faut pas apprécier les hommes d'après le nombre des années, rappelle le moine, mais uniquement d'après leur sagesse, et la sagesse ne dépend pas de l'âge. Ce n'est pas parce qu'il a commencé à servir dans l'armée du Christ avant Paulin que Jérôme est forcément meilleur que lui. Quelques exemples bibliques suffisent à le démontrer. Paul, après avoir persécuté l'Église, est devenu apôtre. S'il est, chronologiquement, le dernier apôtre, il est toutefois premier par ses mérites. A l'inverse, Judas, alors qu'il était un proche du Seigneur, est condamné

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[42] Voir de même, Ambr. *Expos.Luc.* 10.121 (*CCSL* 14:379): *Pulcherrimum adfectandae conuersionis exemplum, quod tam cito latroni venia relaxatur et uberior est gratia quam precatio*; 122 (*CCSL* 14:379): *Cito igitur ignoscit Dominus, quia cito ille convertitur*.

[43] Cf. Hier. *In Es.* 15.55.12–13 (Gryson-Gabriel, *Commentaires*, 1588–9).

[44] Ibid.: *Latro de cruce transit in paradisum*.

[45] Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 39.1 (*CSEL* 54:295): *Numquam est sera conversio. vox haec primum dedicata est in latrone: amen dico tibi; hodie mecum eris in paradiso*.

[46] Cf. Hier. *Ep.* 107.2 (*CSEL* 55:291): *Numquam est sera conuersio. latro de cruce transiit ad paradisum*.

[47] Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515–16): *Nihil medium est; crux et statim paradisus*.

comme traître.[48] Dans la lettre 125, la conversion du larron est encore évoquée à propos de considérations générales sur la vie chrétienne. Cette vie chrétienne est caractérisée pour le moine par une double condition: "Rien de plus heureux que le chrétien, puisqu'il a la promesse du royaume des cieux; rien de plus pénible que sa vie, puisqu'elle est en danger tous les jours. Rien de plus fort que lui, puisqu'il vainc le diable; rien de plus faible puisqu'il est dominé par la chair."[49] Nombreux sont les exemples fournis par l'Écriture qui montrent que l'on peut facilement passer d'une condition à une autre. Judas tombe de l'apostolat à la trahison, la Samaritaine qui avait eu six maris trouve l'unique Seigneur et devient la source du salut pour un grand nombre, Salomon—modèle de sagesse—perd la raison par son amour des femmes. Mais le premier exemple cité par Jérôme est celui du larron qui a cru sur la croix et aussitôt (*statim*) a mérité d'entendre le Christ lui dire: "En vérité, je te le dis, aujourd'hui tu seras avec moi dans le paradis."[50]

Le larron de l'Évangile devient donc, pour Jérôme, une figure exemplaire qui, non seulement, témoigne aux chrétiens que jamais conversion n'est trop tardive, mais il peut également devenir modèle à imiter. Chacun est en effet appelé à prononcer à son tour la parole du larron sur la croix: "Souviens-toi de moi quand tu seras dans ton Royaume," et notamment dans les périodes de persécution. Cette demande confiante assure aux martyrs le salut: "Prions le Seigneur pour que…, si vient la persécution nous imitions le larron… Que, si nous accomplissons le martyre, (nous allions) aussitôt au paradis."[51] L'exemple du larron a donc valeur d'encouragement, et il ne faut pas se méprendre sur le récit biblique qui doit provoquer les chrétiens à courir vers la couronne promise à ceux qui combattront jusqu'au bout le bon combat.[52] Dans une réflexion de l'*Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi* sur la pureté de la prière, Jérôme en vient encore à témoigner: "En réalité, bien des fois, dans ma prière, je flâne à travers les portiques, je calcule des intérêts, ou bien, emporté par une songerie honteuse, je m'occupe même de ce que je rougirais de dire."[53] Et de s'interroger sur la prière véritable: "Où est la foi? Pensons-nous que telle fut la prière de Jonas? Et celle des trois enfants? Et celle de

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[48] Hier. *Ep.* 58.1 (*CSEL* 54:528): *E contrario latro crucem mutat paradiso et facit homicidii poena martyrem*.

[49] Hier. *Ep.* 125.1 (*CSEL* 56:118): *Nihil christiano felicius, cui promittuntur regna caelorum; nihil laboriosius, qui cotidie de vita periclitatur. Nihil fortius, qui vincit diabolum; nihil inbecillius, qui a carne superatur*.

[50] Hier. *Ep.* 125.1 (*CSEL* 56:119): *Latro credidit in cruce et statim meretur audire: amen, amen dico tibi: hodie me cum eris in paradiso*.

[51] Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:516): *Deprecemur Dominum, ut…, si persecutio venerit, imitemur latronem…Si martyrium fecerimus, statim in paradisum*.

[52] Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:515): *Latronis corona non nos errare faciat, sed provocet ad coronam*.

[53] Hier. *Lucif.* 15 (*SC* 473:144): *Nunc vero, creberrime, in oratione mea, aut per porticus deambulo, aut de fenore computo, aut abductus turpi cogitatione, etiam quae dictu erubescenda sunt gero*.

Daniel au milieu des lions? Et assurément celle du brigand sur la croix?"[54] Le larron est ainsi cité au même titre que d'autres grandes figures bibliques traditionnellement retenues comme des modèles de prière. Tous ont en commun d'avoir adressé des supplications dans un péril extrême—Jonas a été avalé par un poisson, les trois enfants sont jetés dans une fournaise de feu ardent, Daniel dans une fosse aux lions et le larron va mourir sur la croix—et d'avoir été exaucés pour leur foi. Le larron est d'ailleurs la seule figure du Nouveau Testament évoquée, et c'est un homicide qui est présenté comme modèle de foi et de prière aux chrétiens!

La présente étude a tenté de reconstituer les différentes interprétations, proposées par Jérôme, au travers de ses œuvres, sur l'épisode des larrons en croix. Si celles-ci ne sont pas très nombreuses, elles vont à peu près toutes dans le même sens, focalisées pour la plupart sur la figure du "bon larron." Par sa foi, ce malfaiteur a mérité d'être le premier homme à entrer dans le paradis, devant les patriarches et les apôtres; sa "conversion tardive" lui fait même ouvrir les portes du ciel, jusque là fermées, aux côtés du Christ. Du coup, la prière confiante du larron devient celle des chrétiens, et Jérôme invite à suivre la trace de cet homme, et à reprendre son cri dans les périodes de persécutions. C'est ici précisément que Jérôme va le plus loin dans son exégèse, car, d'un malfaiteur, il fait du larron un véritable martyr qui confesse sa foi sur la croix et gagne la couronne promise à ceux qui auront peiné sur le chemin de la vie chrétienne.[55]

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[54] Ibid. (144–5): *Vbi est fides? Sicine putamus orasse Ionam?* (cf. Jonas 2:1–10) *Sic tres pueros?* (cf. Daniel 3:24) *Sic Danielem inter leones?* (cf. Daniel 6:11–25) *Sic certe latronem in cruce?*

[55] Cf. Hier. *De Laz.div.* (*CCSL* 78:516): *Deprecemur Dominum, ut…, si persecutio venerit, imitemur latronem…Si martyrium fecerimus, statim in paradisum*; *Ep.* 58.1 (*CSEL* 54:528): *Latro crucem mutat paradiso et facit homicidii poena martyrem*.

Chapter 9
The Rabbinic Vulgate?

John Cameron

The great scholar Dominique Barthélemy argued that Jerome sought by means of his Biblical translations to replace the Old Testament of the Church with the Bible of the rabbis.[1] Rufinus[2] and Augustine[3] would likely have been happy to concur. Undaunted by such formidable opposition I intend to disprove this argument.[4]

The emergence of Christianity from Judaism is immensely interesting. Whether understood broadly as "The Parting of the Ways,"[5] or as "The Ways that Never Parted"[6] or, as is more likely, as a progression of ways joined by innumerable interconnecting by-roads, the point is that "The Ways" claimed to share at least a common origin, if not a common trajectory or destination. This was particularly the case with "the Law, the Prophets and the Writings" of the Jews that became the Christian Old Testament. Disputes over the extent to which the historical person of Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecies that Jews had discerned in their Scriptures provided the primary cause of the emergence of an alternative "Way" or "Ways."[7]

The conversion of Constantine and the subsequent promotion of Christianity as the religion of the Empire by no means ruled out the possibility of mutual influence between Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, as Kinzig puts it: "In the wake of the Constantinian revolution Jewish intellectual influence on Christianity may even have increased to a certain degree. One of the areas where this influence

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[1] "L'Ancien Testament a mûri à Alexandrie," *ThZ* 21 (1965) 358–70, at 370: "…un remplacement de l'Ancien Testament de l'Eglise par la Bible des rabbins."

[2] See, for example, Rufinus, *Apol.c.Hier*. 2.36 (*CCSL* 20:111).

[3] M. Müller, "*Graeca sive Hebraica Veritas?* The Defence of the Septuagint in the Early Church," *SJOT* 1 (1989) 103–24.

[4] On the relationship between translation and exegesis in Jerome's translation of the Psalter from the Hebrew, see further J.S. Cameron, *The Vir Tricultus: An Investigation of the Classical, Jewish and Christian Influences on Jerome's Translation of the Psalter Iuxta Hebraeos* (diss.: University of Oxford, 2006).

[5] See, for example, J.D.G. Dunn ed., *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135* (Tübingen, 1992).

[6] See, for example, A.H. Becker, A.Y. Reed eds, *The Ways that Never Parted, Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Tübingen, 2003).

[7] S. Krauss, "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers," *JQR* 5 (1892–93) 129; R.E. Clements, "The Messianic Hope in the Old Testament," *JSOT* 43 (1989) 3–19.

can be discerned is precisely the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures."[8] The scope for cross-fertilization between Jewish and Christian viewpoints was undoubtedly broad, but despite sharing a common background the familial relationship was not a happy one,[9] and Jewish and Christian viewpoints were commonly opposed.

Rahmer and Krauss first showed that Jerome included rabbinic exegetical material in his commentaries on Old Testament books.[10] A less well explored topic is whether—and, if so, to what extent—Jerome's Biblical translations demonstrate the influence of a rabbinic understanding, or of a "Jewish" or "Hebrew" understanding in a wider sense, of the subject matter. Gordon drew attention to this and suggested a number of instances in the book of Proverbs where a rabbinic understanding was reflected in Jerome's translation.[11] Since then only Kraus's doctoral thesis on Jerome's translation of Exodus *Iuxta Hebraeos* (*IH*) has sought to fill this lacuna in Hieronymian scholarship.[12]

Philology and Exegesis

Modern theories of translation assert that every translation is necessarily exegetical to some degree.[13] The extent to which Jerome would have recognized or ascribed

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[8] W. Kinzig, "Jewish and 'Judaizing' Eschatologies," in R. Kalmin, S. Schwartz eds, *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire* (Leuven, 2003) 409–29, at 424. For a general discussion emphasizing the overlap between rabbinic and patristic exegesis, see W. Horbury, "Old Testament Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers," in M.J. Mulder ed., *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Assen/Maastricht and Philadelphia, 1988) 770–76.

[9] F. Millar, "Christian Emperors, Christian Church and the Jews of the Diaspora in the Greek East, CE 379–450," *JJS* 55 (2004) 1–24 (7–8).

[10] Rahmer collected parallels between Rabbinic literature and Jerome's *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim*. See M. Rahmer, *Die hebräischen Traditionen in den Werken des Hieronymus, i. Die 'Quaestiones in Genesin'* (Breslau, 1861). Krauss traced evidence of the Jews in the writings of the Church Fathers more generally. See S. Krauss, "The Jews," *JQR* 5 (1892–93) 122–57; Idem, "The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers," *JQR* 6 (1893–94) 82–99, 225–61 (his final section is concerned entirely with Jerome).

[11] C.H. Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis in the Vulgate of Proverbs," *JBL* 49 (1930/31) 384–416.

[12] M.A. Kraus, *Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus Iuxta Hebraeos in Relation to Classical, Christian, and Jewish Traditions of Interpretation* (diss.: University of Michigan, 1996). It is possible that Benjamin Kedar-Kopfstein's doctoral thesis, *The Vulgate as a Translation: Some Semantic and Syntactical Aspects* (diss.: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1968) would shed some light on this area of research. However, it has not been published and, being written in Hebrew, does not feature much in later scholarship.

[13] P.E. Lewis, "The Measure of Translation Effects," in J.F. Graham ed., *Difference in Translation* (Ithaca and London, 1985) 37; compare S.P. Brock, "Translating the Old

to such theories is debatable even though his statements about his translation practice are as well known as they are difficult to pin down.[14] Jerome's assertion that he made every effort to "understand" a text before "translating" it,[15] and his insistence that the job of the translator is to "understand" a text before "carrying it over" into another language,[16] suggest that he envisaged a direct correlation of basic meaning between original text and translation.[17] A counter argument might be that in the *Commentarioli* on the Psalms[18] Jerome occasionally offered alternative exegeses of the same verse(s).[19] However, he offered these alternative exegeses on the basis of the same Latin text, that is, he divined different exegeses within the same translation, rather than offering different "translation-exegeses" to begin with. It seems that Jerome would not have recognized his translations as being in themselves exegetical.[20] He viewed the task of the exegete as being distinct from that of the translator.

Orlinsky argues that "St. Jerome's Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible… is predominantly Jewish in spirit. It could not be otherwise. While in his commentaries and other works he could and did argue theologically as a Christian,

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Testament," in D.A. Carson, H.G.M. Williamson eds., *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars, SSF* (Cambridge, 1988) 87–98.

[14] See in particular W. Schwarz, *Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation, Some Reformation Controversies and their Background* (Cambridge, 1955) 32–7.

[15] *Interpr. Iob, praef*. (B. Fischer, R. Weber, R. Gryson eds., *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem, Editionem Quartam Emendatam* [Stuttgart, 1994] 731): *Hoc unum scio, non potuisse me interpretari, nisi quod ante intellexeram*. The Latin verb *interpretari* can mean either "translate" or "interpret." In the context of the Preface to Job, in which Jerome defends his new translation from the Hebrew against those who preferred him to use the Septuagint, the meaning "translate" is evidently the one Jerome had in mind. See Brock, "Translating the Old Testament," 87.

[16] *C. Rufin*. 2.25 (*CCSL* 79:63): *Ibi spiritus ventura praedicit, hic … ea quae intelligit transfert*.

[17] Thus Adam Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford, 1993) 69, argues that "Jerome sees *IH* first of all as a scientific version, in which he attempts to represent as accurately as possible the 'Hebraica veritas,' the only true text." However, Jerome's emphasis on "understanding" (*intellexeram* and *intellegit*) implies that this process of accurate representation is not simply mechanical.

[18] See in *CCSL* 72 (1959).

[19] See, for example, on Psalm 107.10 *IH* (*CCSL* 72:231), and on Psalm 143.2 *IH* (*CCSL* 72:244)

[20] Given Jerome's sympathy with the Antiochene tradition, it is not unreasonable to assume that he attempted to provide literal translations of Hebrew texts, leaving exposition to the Commentaries—where, as Braverman notes, he spends more time providing exegeses in line with the Alexandrian tradition. See J. Braverman, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel: A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible* (Washington DC, 1978) 3.

in his translation he was far more limited by the Hebrew text itself."[21] In this paper I take the opposite approach and argue that evidence for Jerome translating the Hebrew text correctly or utilizing Jewish philological expertise when making the *IH* Psalter should not come as a surprise, nor is this particularly significant for the character of his translations. It does not make the *IH* translations "Jewish," it simply (ideally) makes them (philologically) "correct." This does not mean that the *IH* Psalter does not reflect exegetical traditions or that Jerome's ambition was to create an exegetically neutral text. Rather, the motivation behind Jerome's work seems to have been a belief that bringing the Latin Old Testament more closely in line with Jewish Scripture philologically was fundamental to understanding its true Christian significance exegetically. A philologically correct translation supported a Christian exegetical tradition.

Jerome's use of the philological (as opposed to exegetical) expertise of his Jewish teachers is well known. Kamesar argues that Jerome "puts forward and defends a system for interpreting [the Hebrew] text…[which] may be termed a '*recentiores*[22]-rabbinic philology,' and…is presented as an alternative both to the standard LXX-based philology of the Greeks, and to the Greek attempts to go beyond a LXX-based system. It is of course this same '*recentiores*-rabbinic' philological system that underlies *IH*."[23] This argument recognizes the most important resources upon which Jerome drew in his attempts to understand the Hebrew text, but Kamesar's assertion that the same *philological* system underlies Jerome's attempts both to *interpret* the Hebrew text in the *QHG* and (presumably) to *translate* the Hebrew text in the *IH* must be challenged.

A distinction must be drawn between Jerome's use in the *IH* of "*recentiores*-rabbinic" philology as opposed to "*recentiores*-rabbinic" exegesis. Exegesis is often, though not always, closely related to philology but Jerome's attitudes and practice only make sense if Biblical philology and Biblical exegesis are prised apart. The preceding discussion suggests that this will not be straightforward and may in the end not be completely successful. However, if Jerome intended to produce a "scientific" Latin rendering of the *Hebraica veritas*,[24] it will not be surprising to find him utilizing whatever resources were available to him for discovering the "scientific" meaning of the Hebrew text. The versions of the LXX, the *recentiores*, other Greek versions such as the "Quinta" to which he occasionally referred, and possibly the Aramaic tradition of the Psalms,[25] provided textual resources that

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[21] H.M. Orlinsky, *Essays in Biblical Culture and Bible Translation* (New York, 1974) 429.

[22] This is the standard shorthand for referring to the Greek versions known as Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.

[23] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 80–1.

[24] Jerome's way of referring to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament or, perhaps, to the "truth" as revealed to the Hebrews.

[25] Compare Hayward's remark that "the Targum, like the Septuagint and the Peshitta, is a particular version of the Bible, with its own distinctive peculiarities" See C.T.R.

Jerome could mine for the meaning of the Hebrew. His Jewish teachers, steeped in rabbinic thinking, provided a vitally important and ready source of information.[26] Insofar as Jerome employed these sources only to elucidate the meaning of the Hebrew text on a philological, "scientific" level, with the aim of producing a Latin version as close as possible in sense and implication to the Hebrew version, his activity is unremarkable, as are its results. The fact that Jerome drew on "Jewish" expertise, albeit from different historical periods, does not mean that the *IH* would bear a particularly "Jewish" nuance: it is simply that Jewish scholars had the best access to the "scientific" meaning of the Hebrew text.

It would be more significant if Jerome had not produced a "scientific" rendering of the *Hebraica veritas*, that is, if the *IH* more clearly coincided with a particular rabbinic understanding of the Hebrew text than with the Hebrew text itself, or if Jerome's approach to the vocabulary and syntax of a verse reflected rabbinic exegetical techniques.[27] A conscious reflection of Jewish exegesis in the *IH* Psalter would be more significant than a conscious use of Jewish philological expertise. It would suggest that Jerome was not consistent in his determination to produce a "scientific" translation, though of itself this lack of consistency would not be surprising. More importantly it would suggest that, whatever he might argue in principle, he was willing to accept certain exegeses as correct, and propagate them in a translation primarily intended for use in Christian contexts.

Hayward, "Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim," *JSS* 32 (1987) 105–23, at 123. See also Idem, "Jewish Traditions in Jerome's Commentary on Jeremiah and the Targum of Jeremiah," *PIBA* 9 (1985) 100–20, at 108–9, where he suggests two examples in the translation of Jeremiah *IH* where Jerome apparently derives the meaning of a Hebrew word from the Targum. The dating of the Targum Psalms is fraught with difficulty. See D.M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms, Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (Collegeville, 2004) 2: "A very tentative suggestion would be fourth to sixth century C.E." Compare T.M. Edwards, *The Old, the New, and the Rewritten: The Interpretation of the Biblical Psalms in the Targum of Psalms, in Relationship to other Exegetical Traditions, both Jewish and Christian* (diss.: University of Oxford, 2003) 222, who suggests that "any date before the 5th century for the 'original' Tg.Ps. is very unlikely." (This thesis has just been published by Gorgias Press, 2007.)

[26] The assertion by Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis," 398, that "The only ways Jerome had of finding the definition of a Hebrew word in the Bible, were to ask a Hebraeus or consult the meticulous work of Aquila," acknowledges the usefulness of these sources but surely does no justice to the largely accurate translations of other Jewish Greek versions—or to Jerome's own abilities.

[27] Indeed, Gordon's concentration on verses that display these characteristics is what makes his work so successful. See "Rabbinic Exegesis," 384–416.

Jerome and the Jews: Philology and Exegesis Again

Jerome's attitude towards Jews and Jewish traditions is notoriously complex.[28] In his *Commentary on Zechariah* Jerome declared that he passed on to Latin readers whatever Jewish learning "coincides with the Holy Scriptures."[29] His comments are usually understood to refer to Jewish exegesis, the strongest support for which comes in his unexplained criterion for propagating those Jewish views, namely "accordance with Holy Scripture."[30] However, it is worth considering an alternative explanation. Jerome's exposition is heavily weighted towards a philological explanation of the Hebrew text. It seems most likely therefore that this philology is what he meant by the "hidden things of Hebrew knowledge" and the "concealed learning of the masters of the synagogue." Indeed, Jewish exegesis of the Old Testament was not "hidden" from non-Hebrew speakers: in broad terms, at least, it was perfectly evident in the divisions that sprang up between Jews and Christians. But the philological basis of that exegesis certainly was "hidden" from non-Hebrew speakers. This explanation may be more difficult to square with Jerome's criterion of "accordance with Holy Scripture," but Jerome perhaps may have been willing to judge Jewish philology by his own conceptions of "Holy Scripture" as Jewish exegesis.[31] The same emphasis on philology was evident when Jerome urged his Latin readers to enquire of Jews regarding the accuracy of his translation: he expected those Jews to affirm the philological accuracy of the *IH*, not (initially, at least) to debate about the exegesis of the Old Testament.[32]

There is likewise no doubt that Jerome referred to the Hexapla as an aid to translation,[33] as is evident from various entries in the *Commentarioli*, for example

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[28] For a useful survey, see D. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis. A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen, 1992) 167–93. See also S. Rebenich, "Jerome: the 'Vir Trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica Veritas,'" *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77.

[29] *In Zach*., in *CCSL* 76A:796–7.

[30] See especially Kamesar, *Jerome*, 177.

[31] See the discussion by Kamesar, "The Virgin of Isaiah 7:14: The Philological Argument from the Second to the Fifth Century," *JThS* n.s. 41 (1990) 51–75, at 63 and 65, of Jerome's contribution to the debate about Isaiah 7:14, where he suggests that "this original contribution of Jerome was inspired by both rabbinic technique and Christian exegetical tradition…Despite the fact that Jerome employs what is clearly rabbinic exegetical technique, the slant which he gives it was probably determined by a Christian source."

[32] See, for example, Jerome's challenge in the Preface to the Psalter *IH* (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 768): *Sicubi ergo editio mea a veteribus discreparit, interroga quemlibet Hebraeorum et liquido pervidebis me ab aemulis frustra lacerari*.

[33] Kamesar, *Jerome* 70–2; D.P. McCarthy, "Saint Jerome's Translation of the Psalms: The Question of Rabbinic Tradition," in H.J. Blumberg ed., *"Open Thou Mine Eyes…" Essays on Aggadah and Judaica Presented to Rabbi William G. Braude on His Eightieth Birthday and Dedicated to His Memory* (Hoboken, 1992) 155–91.

in those for Psalms 124.5 *IH*[34] and *131.15 IH*.[35] The Jewish provenance of the LXX, and the *recentiores* means that they all constitute storehouses of Jewish philological expertise, reflecting Jewish understandings of the Hebrew Old Testament scriptures over several hundred years.[36] The degree to which these Jewish Greek versions reflect contemporary Jewish modes of exegesis is more complicated.[37] By implication, Jerome believed that the LXX reflected Jewish Old Testament exegesis, at least insofar as it pre-emptively undermined Christian Old Testament exegesis by "hiding" references to Christ.[38] In the preface to his translation of Job, he similarly accused the *recentiores* of hiding references to Christ, and all the more culpably since they wrote after Christ's advent.[39] Jerome argued that by contrast his Christian faith enabled him to reveal the true significance of the Old Testament in "clear and faithful speech."[40]

Despite his grave reservations, Jerome did not argue that the various Greek versions were utterly corrupt. If at certain points the Jewish exegetical concerns of the LXX and the *recentiores* influenced their translations, presumably at other points, where he considered them to be in "accordance with Holy Scripture,"[41] he deemed their translations accurate and useful. It is furthermore significant that the versions Jerome apparently favoured as aids to his translation in the *IH* were the *ILXX*/LXX and Aquila. Both of these gave him close access to the Hebrew text: the former because it was based on Origen's Hexaplaric Greek text that had been "healed" with reference to the Hebrew, and the latter because of what

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34 *CCSL* 72:237.

35 *CCSL* 72:239.

36 For chronology of the Greek versions, see, for example, K.H. Jobes, M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids and Carlisle, 2000) 33–42.

37 Gordon, "Rabbinic Exegesis," 397, states that "these three versions [of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion] contain, in varying degree, rabbinic exegesis." Gordon cites Jerome's reference to *Iudaeus Aquila, Symmachus' et Theodotio iudaizantes haeretici* as support but does not indicate either how much rabbinic exegesis they contain or how to identify it. On Aquila, see L.L. Grabbe, "Aquila's Translation and Rabbinic Exegesis," *JJS* 33 (1982) 527–37. On Symmachus, see A. Salvesen, "Symmachus Readings in the Pentateuch," in A. Salvesen ed., *Origen's Hexapla and the Fragments, Papers presented at the Rich Seminar on the Hexapla, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, 25th–3rd August 1994* (Tübingen, 1998) 197.

38 See, for example, Jerome's extraordinary remark on Psalm 9:1 in the *Commentarioli*: "…the Seventy wanted to hide the suffering and resurrection of Christ…lest it be easily investigated by the Gentiles at that time" (*…unde et Septuaginta interpretes Christi passionem et resurrectionem…celare voluerunt, ne a gentibus illo tempore facile nosceretur* [*CCSL* 72:191]).

39 *Praef. in Iob* (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 732).

40 *Praef. in Iob* (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 732).

41 *In Zach*. (*CCSL* 76A:796).

Jerome argued to be Aquila's literalistic, that is philological rather than exegetical, approach to translation.[42]

The Hebrew Scriptures as the Source of Truth

Kamesar discusses Jerome's striking use of the imagery of a "spring" and "streams" to distinguish between original texts and translations, whereby Jerome describes the Hebrew text as *fons* or even *fons veritatis* in contrast to translations to which he refers as *rivuli opinionum*.[43] This conception of the temporal and veridical priority of the Hebrew text had several important corollaries.

Jerome argued that recourse to the Hebrew text was the way to solve differences between translations.[44] More importantly, he argued that since Jesus and the Apostles quoted the Old Testament according to the Hebrew, Christians should turn to this version.[45] In both cases Jerome uses the phrase *Hebraicam..veritatem*[46] and the word *Hebraeos*[47] to refer to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament but elsewhere exploits the ambiguity inherent in the adjective *Hebraeos* to use it to refer to the Jews themselves as well as to their Scriptures. In the *Commentary on Zechariah* Jerome referred to the confusion among Christian exegetes about Jewish festivals, and suggested that the solution lay in recourse to the Jews: *Cogimur igitur ad Hebraeos recurrere*.[48] In the context of this passage *Hebraeos* can refer only to Jews who were alive and who could impart their understanding of the Scriptures to an enquirer.

Kamesar refers to this passage and points out that the language of *scientiae veritatem*, *fonte*, and *rivulis*, is the same as that which Jerome uses to describe

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[42] Jerome, *In Es*. 13 (*CCSL* 73A:537), writes: *De Aquila autem non miror, quod homo eruditissimus linguae Hebraicae, et verbum de verbo exprimens*… On this occasion, he disagrees with Aquila, but suggests that either Aquila *simularit imperitiam*, or was caught out by *pharisaeorum perversa expositione*. Thus Jerome appears to have had some awareness that Aquila's translation had its own exegetical background and, as noted above, he could refer to him as *Iudaeus Aquila*. However this passage from *In Es.* suggests that Jerome felt able to discern those passages in which Aquila was influenced by the *pharisaeorum perversa expositio*, leaving him otherwise free to utilize the fruits of Aquila's *verbum de verbo* approach to translation.

[43] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 45.

[44] *Ep*. 106.2 (*CSEL* 55:249).

[45] *In Paralip., praef*. (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 547): *Ad Hebraeos igitur revertendum est, unde et Dominus loquitur et discipuli exempla praesumunt. Dominus* could refer to יהוה, but its proximity to *discipuli* suggests that it refers here to Jesus. There is no factual basis for Jerome's argument regarding Christ and the Apostles quoting Old Testament Scriptures from the Hebrew version: see Cameron, *The Vir Tricultus*, 203–42.

[46] *Ep*. 106.2 (*CSEL* 55:249).

[47] *In Paralip., praef*. (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 547).

[48] *In Zach*. (*CCSL* 76A:820); compare Kamesar, *Jerome*, 182.

the Hebrew text itself. He concludes: "It may be, therefore, that in using the same language to describe both the Hebrew text and rabbinic exegesis, Jerome is alluding in this passage not only to the privileged position which he affords the latter, but also to the intimate connection between the two."[49] Kamesar correctly notes the privileged position that Jerome afforded to rabbinic scholars in matters of Jewish exegesis: if the Hebrew text is the *fons* from which all other translations flow, so Jewish (in this case, rabbinic) exegesis is the *fons* from which non-Jewish scholars gain access to Jewish understanding of the Old Testament.

However, Jerome's recourse to the *Hebraei* in this case was specifically to clear up confusion among Christian exegetes about Jewish festivals. Jerome was not relying on the rabbis to provide a Christian exegesis that he could propagate in Christian circles. Nor was he relying on them to provide philological assistance with the Hebrew text. He was simply advocating that the Jewish rabbis explain the significance of Jewish festivals. Jerome certainly did use the same language to describe both the Hebrew text and the knowledge of the rabbis, but he was not thereby implying that the two are intimately connected: simply that in their textual and exegetical spheres, respectively, the Hebrew text and rabbinic exegesis occupy the position of *fons*. Indeed, he suggested that the only reason he was willing to refer, or defer, to Jewish exegetical expertise at this point was precisely because the passage in question had nothing to do with Jesus Christ.[50]

Jerome tried carefully to distinguish between philological and exegetical approaches to the Old Testament. This distinction enabled him to utilize some aspects of Jewish expertise—whether sourced in the LXX, the *recentiores*, or the rabbis—while rejecting others. Rather than face criticism for inconsistency, Jerome must be allowed to draw this distinction between translation and exegesis (whatever modern theories might suggest), and Jewish influences on the *IH* Psalter must be investigated within the framework that he established. Did Jerome avail himself of Jewish help to produce a philological, "scientific," translation? Or was he at times so persuaded by the Jewish exegesis of a particular passage that he allowed this exegesis to be mirrored in his new translation?

Jewish Influences on the Psalter *IH*

There are two difficulties still to be overcome. The first is resisting the temptation to read more significance into a particular translation than Jerome intended. This is a complex problem. The simplest solution is to limit the discussion to verses on which he comments in his exegetical material on the Psalter, on the assumption that his choice to propagate this material in his name signals his agreement with it even if it can be traced to earlier writers. This is the approach taken here. The second difficulty to be surmounted is determining the nature and extent of Jerome's

[49] Kamesar, *Jerome*, 182.

[50] *In Zach*. (*CCSL* 76A:820).

access to the material contained in the various extant rabbinic texts.[51] At a time when much of the extant rabbinic material existed only in oral form, and was constantly developing, Jerome's access to it was limited to what his teachers told him. By contrast, modern access to rabbinic traditions is limited to what is found in extant texts, but these constitute an indeterminate portion of Jewish thought that was contemporaneous with Jerome. Clearly the stronger a tradition and the nearer it can be traced to the late fourth century, the better.

There are very few instances in which the Latin of the *IH* Psalter appears to have been influenced by Jewish exegesis. The two that are most striking will be discussed here. In the first, Jerome's translation owes more to rabbinic exegeses than it does to the Hebrew text of the verse in question. In the second, Jerome utilized a rabbinic method for discovering the philological meaning of an obscure word.

Psalm 7:1 IH

Brock observes that "in cases where the provision of an interpretational element is *optional*, rather than required…we are best able to discern the individual interests and concerns of a particular translator. Thus…when confronted with a geographical name the translator may reproduce the Hebrew…or he may introduce an interpretive element by 'updating' the geography."[52] Rather than transliterating כּוּשׁ in Psalm 7:1, which would conform to his usual practice with Hebrew names,[53] and had a precedent in *ILXX Chusi*, Jerome translated it in the *IH* as *Aethiopis*. Taken on its own this is unremarkable, but in the *Commentarioli* he argues that *Aethiopis* is a reference to Saul and that therefore this Psalm concerns Saul.[54]

This particular interpretation of this Psalm is well established in rabbinic literature. There is long discussion of this verse in *Midrash Tehillim* 7:1–3, which identifies Saul as the subject of the Psalm. This suggests that a rabbinic source informed Jerome's translation of כּוּשׁ as *Aethiopis* in the *IH*. In explanation of כּוּשׁ it is written:

> What do the words *Concerning the matter of Cush the Benjamite* mean? According to R. Hinena bar Papa, David said: "As the wife of Joseph's master accosted Joseph saying *Lie with me*" (Gen. 39:7), and then complained: "The Hebrew servant, whom thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me" (Gen. 39:17), so Saul complained: "My son hath stirred up my servant against me to lie in wait" (1 Sam. 22:8). And David went on: "Even as the Cushite

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51 Compare Horbury, "Old Testament Interpretation," 774–5.

52 Brock, "Translating the Old Testament," 88.

53 See B. Kedar, "The Latin Translations," in Mulder, *Mikra*, 331.

54 *In Ps*. (*CCSL* 72:189): *Sciendum itaque Chusi interpretari Aethiopem, et totum psalmum contra Saul esse conscriptum*.

> woman, the wife of Joseph's master, used lies against him, so Saul the Benjamite used lies against me."[55]

The parallel that the rabbis saw between the accusation of Potiphar's Cushite wife against Joseph and the accusation of Saul against Jonathan helps to explain its interpretation as a reference to Saul and Jerome's subsequent translation of כּוּשׁ as *Aethiopis*.

Targum Psalms 7:1 likewise identifies Saul as the subject of the Psalm: "A loud song of thanksgiving of David, which he sang before the Lord, because he uttered the song about the misfortune of Saul the son of Kish, who was from the tribe of Benjamin."[56] Thus while Psalm 7:1 *IH* is superficially very similar to the ILXX, the *Commentarioli* reveal that there is a greater significance to Jerome's choice of translation in the *IH* than at first meets the eye. Jerome makes no suggestion of any Christological significance of this Psalm. Perhaps it is for this reason that he was willing to follow the rabbis in his identification of the Psalm's subject as Saul in the *Commentarioli*, reflecting this in his slight change in the *IH* translation.

Translations of מִכְתָּם

The Hebrew word מִכְתָּם occurs six times in the Hebrew Psalter, at Psalms 16:1, 56:1, 57:1, 58:1, 59:1 and 60:1 MT. BDB simply notes that it is a technical term used in Psalm titles and that its meaning is unknown.[57] The LXX translates מִכְתָּם by στηλογραφία, "inscription,"[58] which Jerome follows in the ILXX with tituli inscriptio, "inscription of the title." In the IH, however, Jerome translates מִכְתָּם as humilis et simplex at Psalm 15:1, 55:1, 56:1, 57:1 and 58:1 IH, and as humilis et perfectus at Psalm 59:1 IH.

The significance of Jerome's translation of מִכְתָּם by *humilis et simplex* becomes apparent from the entries in the *Commentarioli* for Psalms 15:1[59] and 55:1 *IH*,[60] which are the only two of these six verses on which Jerome comments. In both cases the *ILXX* follows the LXX, but the *IH* follows the alternative translation of מִכְתָּם that Jerome notes in the *Commentarioli*. Similarly, in both cases the exegesis

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[55] Midrash Tehillim 7.3 (W.G. Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms* [New Haven: 1959] 103). Unless otherwise stated, translations from Midrash Tehillim are from this edition.

[56] As translated by Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, 35.

[57] F. Brown, S.R. Driver, C.A. Briggs eds., *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, with an Appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA, 2000) 508.

[58] The word is unattested in classical Greek, but appears in patristic Greek, meaning primarily "(inscribed) monument, memorial" or "indictment (for heresy)." Its use as a titular inscription for certain Psalms is also noted. See G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961) 1259.

[59] *CCSL* 72:194.

[60] *CCSL* 72:211.

that he offers, in which he explains that *humilis et simplex* and *humilis atque perfectus* are references to Jesus Christ, reveals the full Christian significance of these phrases in the *IH*. It is likely that Jerome translated מִכְתָּם in this way because he considered it to be the best translation, though his judgement was dependent upon the consequent "revelation" of Jesus Christ as the "true" subject of these Psalms.

Jerome's *Tractatus de Psalmo XV* is more interesting still. The opening lines reveal his belief that מִכְתָּם is a compound of two distinct Hebrew words that had been run together. They also show that he used the Hexapla as an aid.[61] The *Tractatus* furthermore reveals that Jerome understood the titles of all six מִכְתָּם Psalms to refer to Christ.[62]

Estin mentions these texts but suggests simply: "Comme dans tous ces psaumes figure le nom de David, l'application au Christ est immédiate et l'interprétation d'Aquila et de Symmaque apparaît des plus suggestives à Jérôme."[63] A stronger argument than this can be sustained. The *Commentarioli* and *Tractatus* on Psalm 15:1 suggest that Jerome may have taken his reading *humilis et simplex* in Psalm 15:1 *IH* from Aquila, no doubt in an attempt to make sense of the obscure Hebrew מִכְתָּם. This is immediately significant. The LXX (Στηλογραφία) and thence *ILXX* (*Tituli inscriptio*) readings are likewise attempts to translate this obscure Hebrew word. Nevertheless, Jerome rejects that tradition in favour of Aquila's, whose philological accuracy Jerome rates highly elsewhere.[64] It is most likely in Aquila's case, and cannot be discounted in Jerome's, that both of these translators are reflecting the rabbinic device of divining "hidden" meaning in words by dividing them into their orthographically constituent parts.[65] This technique, which lies on the boundary between philological and exegetical expertise, undoubtedly gives rise to false etymologies but it does occasionally allow for useful exegeses.[66] There is a remark in the *Tractatus* that suggests Jerome's awareness of an alternative vocalization for מִכְתָּם.[67] Thus Jerome appears to have known about the rabbinic debates about the meaning of this word as well as about the textual basis of those debates.

This indeed is what we find in *Midrash Tehillim* 16:1: "*Miktam of David* (Ps. 16:1). There are some of the Rabbis who say that *Miktam* is compounded of two

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61 *Tract. in Ps*. 15 (*CCSL* 78:364).

62 *Tract. in Ps*. 15 (*CCSL* 78:364).

63 C. Estin, *Les Psautiers de Jérôme à la lumière des traductions juives antérieures* (Rome, 1984) 123–4.

64 Kraus, *Jerome's Translation*, 42–3.

65 Kedar, "Latin Translations," 334, notes that "Analytical renderings of supposed compounds reflect Jewish tradition," and offers the well-known example of צַלְמָוֶת being translated as *umbra mortis*, "shadow of death."

66 Kamesar, "The Virgin of Isaiah," 63, notes Jerome's utilization of this rabbinic technique in his attempt to explain the meaning of the Hebrew עלמה of Isaiah 7:14.

67 *Tract. in Ps.* 15 (*CCSL* 78:366).

words which describe David: *mak*, 'meek,' and *tam*, 'undefiled.' And there are others who derive *miktam* from *ketem*, 'fine gold,' and say that *Miktam of David* means the 'golden Psalm' of David."[68] The only other reference to מִכְתָּם is a short entry at Midrash Tehillim 56:1: "And *Michtam*? Because of this incident, David became humble (*mach*) and upright (*tam*)."[69]

Similarly Targum Psalms 16:1 has: "An *upright composition* of David..." and Stec explains in the notes: "It would appear that TgPss has understood this word as being derived from *mktb*, 'writing' and *tm*, 'blameless.' This is in line with the way it renders MT *mktm* in the other five titles in which the word occurs. A derivation of *mktm* from *mktb* is also suggested at Ps 60:1, where *mktm ldwd* is rendered *pršgn 'l yd dwd*, 'a copy by David.'"[70] Tg. Pss. 56–9 all render מִכְתָּם as "the humble and blameless one,"[71] and Tg. Ps. 60:1 renders it as "a copy."[72] The parallel with Jerome is not as neat as that demonstrated by *Midrash Tehillim*, but it nevertheless provides a (probably) more ancient witness to the same interpretive tradition.

From wherever Jerome derived his "translation" of מִכְתָּם, the important point is that he exploited Jewish exegetical techniques to discern a Christian meaning in the Hebrew text. Far from being *iudaizantes haeretici*, in these examples Aquila and Symmachus revealed (however unwittingly) something of the character of Christ, and his presence in the Psalter.

Conclusion

The two examples just discussed of the influence of Jewish exegetical traditions on the *IH* Psalter are the clearest of the few that have been discovered, but they are hardly overwhelming and do not change the character of the *IH* Psalter as a whole. This must be contrasted with Jerome's *Commentaries*, where he routinely included Jewish exegeses of a particular verse or passage. The evidence from his commentaries suggests that he was not implacably opposed to Jewish exegetical expertise; to the contrary, he often found it useful for explaining the text in question. But the evidence from the Psalter *IH* is that while he was willing to utilize whatever philological assistance he could muster, he was very reticent to reflect Jewish exegetical expertise in his translations. Jerome may have advocated a return to the Hebrew Scriptures, but his *IH* translations are not, *pace* Barthélemy, "rabbinical" in character.[73]

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[68] Midrash Tehillim 16.1.

[69] Midrash Tehillim 56.1.

[70] Translation and notes by Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, 46.

[71] Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, 113, 115–17.

[72] Stec, *Targum of Psalms*, 119.

[73] Compare A. Salvesen, "A Convergence of the Ways? The Judaizing of Christian Scripture by Origen and Jerome," in Becker-Reed, *The Ways that Never Parted*, 255.

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Chapter 10
How Should We Measure Jerome's Hebrew Competence?

Hillel I. Newman

In March of 1701, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, wrote to the eminent polyhistor, Jean Le Clerc of Amsterdam: "I have read with amasement your Exercitations upon the new edition of Jerome's works…You have a peculiar happines of making even dry subjects lively by your way of handling them."[1] The book that earned this enviable endorsement was Le Clerc's *Quaestiones hieronymianae*, a polemical tract criticizing the recent edition of Jerome's works, prepared and annotated by the Benedictine monk, Jean Martianay.[2] Le Clerc argued, among other things, that Martianay failed to appreciate the limits of Jerome's command of Hebrew and that the French monk's apologetics on behalf of the Church Father were philologically unsound. Jerome had an uncanny knack for making enemies, but in his own day it was not his well-cultivated reputation as a Hebraist that they called into question, so much as his program of using his presumed Hebrew skills to produce a new Latin translation of the Bible. Rufinus, his most dogged opponent, accused him of being a dupe of the Jews, but not, as Rebenich has observed, of exaggerating the extent of his own Hebrew knowledge—not that Rufinus was in a position to judge.[3] With the emergence of modern European Christian study of Hebrew in the sixteenth and especially the seventeenth centuries, however, the groundwork was laid for a new kind of critique: the new Hebraists took their own measure against the precedent of Jerome's Hebrew achievements, and in doing so found him lacking. Le Clerc was not the first to voice such criticism. For example, his own uncle, David Le Clerc, professor of Oriental literature in Geneva, had already noted Hebrew errors in Jerome's writings, for which he had been taken to task by Martianay.[4] Needless to say, this

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[1] For the complete text, see A. Barnes, *Jean Le Clerc (1657–1736) et la république des lettres* (Paris, 1938) 257.

[2] J. Clericus, *Quaestiones hieronymianae* (Amsterdam, 1700). On this book in the greater context of Le Clerc's work, see Barnes, *Jean Le Clerc*, 142–3.

[3] S. Rebenich, "Jerome: The *vir trilinguis* and the *hebraica veritas*," *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77, at 60.

[4] See Martianay's polemic against David Le Clerc in *PL* 23:1487–92. For Martianay's *Eruditionis hieronymianae defensio* in response to the younger Le Clerc, see *PL* 25:1577–1608.

reassessment and the debate which it engendered were colored also by religious concerns, pitting the Protestant Le Clerc and his less than reverent evaluation of Saint Jerome against the Catholic piety of the Benedictine Martianay. In the final analysis, Le Clerc was the better philologist, and his remarks on Jerome's Hebrew failings in large measure anticipated discussion of the topic in our own day. The most thorough contemporary contribution to the study of the question—if not the most methodologically rigorous—is Burstein's unpublished dissertation from 1971, whose approach is, overall, largely reminiscent of Le Clerc's.[5] Some, especially Nautin, have taken their skepticism of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge to extremes.[6] But recent years have also brought greater moderation and more balanced assessments based on solid philological foundations, the outstanding example being Kamesar's study of the *Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim*.[7]

Jerome surely had greater control of Hebrew than has been denied him by his severest detractors, but less than that attributed him by his more ardent admirers from his own day till the present. Most scholars would concede as much. But while, for reasons which should become clearer below, precision must ultimately elude us, it is possible nonetheless to refine our methodology and improve our results by learning to frame our questions properly. I would like to recommend, with the aid of a few examples, several principles for how one should—and should not—go about measuring Jerome's Hebrew competence.

It is unnecessary to recount all the passages in Jerome's writings in which he cultivates his own reputation as a *vir trilinguis*, nor need we dwell on those rare expressions of self-deprecation concerning his command of Hebrew, statements which Adkin has encouraged us to view as more than mere rhetorical conceits.[8] Let us look first at Jerome's description of the circumstances of his translation of the

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[5] E. Burstein, *La compétence en hébreu de saint Jérôme* (diss.: University of Poitiers, 1971). See also the brief discussion in his article, "La compétence de Jérôme en hébreu. Explication de certaines erreurs," *REAug* 21 (1975) 3–12.

[6] P. Nautin, "Hieronymus," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 15.309–10. Cf. R. Gryson, "Saint Jérôme traducteur d'Isaïe," *Le Muséon* 104 (1991) 57–72; Idem, *Commentaires de Jérôme sur le prophète Isaïe. Livres I–IV* (Freiburg, 1993) 107–8.

[7] A. Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* (Oxford, 1993). See also P. Jay, *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme d'après son Commentaire sur Isaïe* (Paris, 1985) 39–40; B. Kedar, "The Latin Translations," in M.A. Mulder ed., *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Assen/Maastricht and Philadelphia, 1988) 299–338, at 315–18; D. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen, 1992) 71–85; M.A. Kraus, *Jerome's Translation of the Book of Exodus Iuxta Hebraeos in Relation to Classical, Christian, and Jewish Traditions of Interpretation* (diss.: University of Michigan, 1996) 36–8; R. González Salinero, *Biblia y polémica antijudía en Jerónimo* (Madrid, 2003) 41–4.

[8] N. Adkin, "A Note on Jerome's Knowledge of Hebrew," *Euphrosyne* 23 (1995) 243–5; cf. Idem, "'Ad fontem sermonis recurramus Hebraei': Jerome, Marcella and Hebrew (*Epist*. 34)," *Euphrosyne* 32 (2004) 215–22.

Book of Tobit from the Aramaic. Jerome himself admitted that his knowledge of that language was relatively limited, hence, he tells us, he engaged an experienced speaker of Hebrew and Aramaic (*utriusque linguae peritissimum loquacem*) to translate the book orally from Aramaic to Hebrew, while he, Jerome, translated simultaneously from Hebrew to Latin, completing the entire project in the course of a single day.[9] Here ostensibly we see Jerome at his best, translating Hebrew instantly by ear. The evidence of the translation itself, however, suggests that the translation procedure was more complex than Jerome would have us believe, because his version betrays considerable dependence on the *Vetus Latina* and the influence of the New Testament.[10] In other words, in his translation of Tobit, Jerome is dependent on more than just the spoken word of his bilingual assistant. Be that as it may, Jerome's claim draws our attention to the question of spoken versus written Hebrew among contemporary Jews. It is a commonplace that Biblical Hebrew in Jerome's day was not a spoken language, though the Hebrew Bible was patently the object of study among Jews. Le Clerc emphasized that Jerome sought to learn a defunct dialect without benefit of dictionaries and reference grammars and was therefore all the more dependent on his Jewish teachers.[11] Indeed, what we seek to measure almost exclusively in Jerome's writings—and virtually all for which we have evidence—is his command of Biblical Hebrew. Control of a defunct language will of course be measured by different criteria than control of a spoken one, and we naturally expect passive knowledge of the language to surpass active knowledge. The assumption of the demise of spoken Hebrew in Roman and Byzantine Palestine, like the reports of the death of Mark Twain, is, however, greatly exaggerated. At the very least, Hebrew (albeit not Biblical Hebrew) continued to function in the shadow of Aramaic as a spoken language in the Rabbinic academies of Palestine in the third and fourth centuries, and Rabbinic Hebrew (which may be something of a misnomer) is recognized and studied by linguists as a dialect in its own right. How much it served as a spoken language in other circles is open to debate, but it certainly was not exclusively scholastic. A third-century rabbi, R. Yonatan of Beth Guvrin (Eleutheropolis, south-west of Bethlehem), is cited in the Palestinian Talmud as saying: "There are four languages which are fitting for the world to use: Greek for song, Latin for battle, Aramaic for mourning, Hebrew for speaking."[12] The passage itself, incidentally, is in Hebrew. The use of Hebrew outside of the academy is confirmed also by epigraphic evidence, particularly synagogue inscriptions. Some of the more notable of these come from southern Judea (in its limited regional sense), and it has been suggested that these reflect a regional inclination—an hypothesis which Schwartz supposes

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[9] *Prologus Tobiae:* R. Weber ed., *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem* (Stuttgart, 1985[3]) 1.676.

[10] E.g., Tobit 8:5, borrowing from 1 Thessalonians 4:4–5. See in general V.T.M. Skemp, *The Vulgate of Tobit Compared with Other Ancient Witnesses* (Atlanta, 2000).

[11] Clericus, *Quaestiones hieronymianae*, 75–6.

[12] *Megilla* 1:8, 71b; *Sota* 7:2, 21c.

may even be of some consequence for understanding the linguistic milieu of Jerome's Jewish informants.[13] This may be so, though Schwartz is mistaken when he suggests that this in some way illuminates Jerome's remarks concerning the pronunciation of Hebrew gutturals and sibilants; Jerome in fact refers to these linguistic phenomena in other regional contexts, as when he reminisces about the *stridentia anhelantiaque uerba* of his early Hebrew lessons in the desert of Chalkis,[14] or when describing the Aramaic speaking demon of Gaza in the *Life of Hilarion*.[15] The vitality of so-called Rabbinic Hebrew is also demonstrated by its use as an epistolary language in papyri from Egypt from the fifth century onward, including correspondence with Palestine.[16] In the post-Amoraic period (that is, after the fourth century), there are even signs of a renaissance of Hebrew in both halachic and aggadic sources from Palestine, and beginning already in the fourth century, the overwhelming majority of Palestinian liturgical poems are written in Hebrew. In light of all this, the lack of evidence for Jerome's command of vernacular Hebrew takes on greater significance and points to the linguistic disparity between him and his Jewish informants, a gap which, it seems, was never closed.

Another potential avenue of investigation of Jerome's knowledge of post-Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic emerges from his dependence on traditional Jewish exegesis. Without opening up the entire debate, it may be stated categorically that there is no doubt that Jerome owed a considerable debt to Jewish exegesis above and beyond anything he could find in the writings of his predecessors, including Origen and Eusebius.[17] But careful examination of all of Jerome's hundreds of explicit allusions to Jewish interpretations of scripture reveals that with the exception of references to written Jewish apocryphal books, there is virtually no evidence for the existence of written Jewish traditions.[18] The growing consensus among scholars of rabbinic literature confirms that this literature was indeed almost exclusively oral, not written, till Jerome's days and even beyond.[19] Among the

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[13] J. Schwartz, *Jewish Settlement in Judaea After the Bar-Kochba War Until the Arab Conquest, 135 CE–640 CE* (Jerusalem, 1986) 198–9 (in Hebrew).

[14] *Ep*. 125.12 (*CSEL* 56:131); *Prologus in Danihele* (Weber, 1341).

[15] *Vit.Hilar.* 13.7, on which see S. Weingarten, *The Saint's Saints: Hagiography and Geography in Jerome* (Leiden, 2005) 113.

[16] M. Mishor, "A Hebrew Letter, Oxford MS. Heb.d.69 (P)," *Leshonenu* 53 (1989) 215–64; Idem, "The Hebrew Papyri in the Geniza-Epistolary Fragments," *Leshonenu* 55 (1991) 281–8 (both in Hebrew).

[17] See H.I. Newman, *Jerome and the Jews* (diss.: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997) 70–129 (in Hebrew).

[18] For discussion, including minor exceptions to the rule, and for a catalogue of all sources, see Newman, *Jerome and the Jews*, 98–103, 207–19.

[19] See especially Y. Sussmann, "'Oral Torah' Plain and Simple," in Y. Sussmann, D. Rosenthal eds, *Mehqerei Talmud* (Jerusalem, 2005) 3.209–384 (in Hebrew). Sussmann argues that the transition from oral to written literature took place only in the seventh century, though this may be putting it a little late (cf. the following note).

many references in Greek and Latin sources to the Jewish δευτέρωσις (literally, *mishna*), the first explicit reference to δευτέρωσις as written tradition appears only in the sixth century in the commentary of Olympiodorus of Alexandria on Ecclesiastes.[20] Given this picture, it becomes clear that we must look to Jerome's Jewish informants in the flesh as the source of his substantial knowledge of Jewish exegesis, beside that which he found in the writings of Origen and Eusebius. Yet, there is no evidence that Jerome's Jewish teachers conversed with him in Hebrew or Aramaic, any more than Origen's or Eusebius' did. Several scholars assume that such exchanges took place in Greek, and while there is little or no direct evidence for this conclusion, it is eminently plausible.[21] Hence this avenue proves to be a dead end as far as Jerome's command of Hebrew is concerned, though it is of primary importance for an appreciation of the nature of his knowledge of Jewish midrash and the Aramaic targum.

In light of these considerations, it is not surprising that in the relatively rare cases where we have an opportunity to observe Jerome generating a Hebrew word on his own, and not merely quoting the Hebrew Bible, we often find him stumbling, both lexically and grammatically. The following examples are chosen largely at random from the mass of available material, but preference has been given to several passages that are either lesser known or have been inadequately explained. For example, in a letter of 383 to Damasus, Jerome proposed to correct the translation of *osanna* (הושענה in Hebrew) in Hilarius' commentary to Matthew 21.3.[22] Hilarius explained that *osanna* means *redemptio domus Dauid*. Jerome remarked that this is mistaken because, he said, *redemptio* is rendered in Hebrew by *ephod* (אפוד). We can recognize in Jerome's transcription the name of one of the priestly vestments, and we must ask what this could possibly have to do with *redemptio*. One solution is that of Martianay and subsequent editors, who emend their way out of the problem by printing *pheduth* (פדות, an acceptable Hebrew translation of *redemptio*) instead of *ephod*. The manuscript evidence is, however, unambiguous, and the emendation itself is superfluous, for the solution lies elsewhere: one of the explanations of Hebrew *ephod* preserved in the Greek onomastic lists edited by Wutz is λύτρωσις, that is to say *redemptio*.[23] It appears that Jerome has used such a list in reverse as a Greek-Hebrew dictionary. Yet anyone familiar with these lists knows the dangers inherent in this technique—a problem to which we shall return presently. In later

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[20] *PG* 93:625. See C.-M. Merchavia, *The Talmud in Christian Perspective* (Jerusalem, 1970) 13 (in Hebrew).

[21] See J. Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation of Hebrew," *BRL* 49 (1967) 289–90; G. Stemberger, "Exegetical Contacts Between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire," in M. Sæbø ed., *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation* (Göttingen, 1996) 1/1.582; Newman, *Jerome and the Jews*, 122, n. 65; J. Lössl, "Hieronymus und Epiphanius von Salamis über das Judentum ihrer Zeit," *JSJ* 33 (2002) 414, n. 16.

[22] *Ep*. 20.1 (*CSEL* 54:104).

[23] F. Wutz, *Onomastica sacra* (Leipzig, 1914–15) 319–20, 889.

writings, Jerome discretely retreats from and ignores this explanation of *ephod*.[24] This brief example illustrates several principles. First, we see Jerome using and abusing a Greek source to acquire Hebrew knowledge. Second, the aforementioned retreats reveal something of Jerome's learning curve; indeed, it is always helpful to note when Jerome corrects himself over time. Third, we see that the discussion of Jerome's Hebrew competence is still plagued by lower critical problems. In this case and elsewhere, editors who found an error inconceivable replaced it with something more congenial. In recent times, the opposite prejudice has also found expression in the editorial process. Thus, Kamesar notes that in Gryson's edition of the *Commentary on Isaiah*, given the choice between variants of transcriptions from the Hebrew that are consistent with the Masoretic text and those that are not, the editor chooses the latter, reflecting his underlying conception of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge.[25]

Critics have pointed out inadequacy or error in some of Jerome's explicit discussions of Hebrew grammar. Some of these errors are genuine and significant; occasionally, however, the criticism is frivolous or even irrelevant. By way of example: in various passages Jerome explains to his Latin readers that in Hebrew the masculine plural suffix is *-im*, while the feminine is *-oth*. Burstein, and more recently Gryson, have taken Jerome to task for ignoring the many exceptions to this rule.[26] Yet, as Kamesar has noted, such a generalization is hardly unreasonable. It was not Jerome's purpose to compose a complete reference grammar of the Hebrew language.[27] Furthermore, the only vocabulary available to him to describe the mechanics of Hebrew to his readers was that borrowed from the scientific study of Greek and Latin, which was often inadequate to the task, so that he could not help but be handicapped in his efforts.[28]

The overwhelming mass of evidence for Jerome's Hebrew competence reflects only his passive control of the language, that is to say, his ability to interpret a Hebrew Biblical text and to translate from Hebrew into Latin. What constitutes admissable evidence for judging this sort of knowledge? Let us begin by reviewing several categories of evidence which must be considered *in*admissable. From the days of Le Clerc to the present, Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, filled with fanciful Latin etymologies of Biblical names, has been cited to demonstrate Jerome's ignorance of even the most basic Hebrew. One could add countless other etymologies scattered throughout his writings. Yet the *Book of Hebrew Names* is

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[24] Cf. *Ep*. 29 (*CSEL* 54:232–42). In the *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* (*CCSL* 72:81, 99) there is no reference to the explanation of *Ep*. 20, though Jerome may simply be faithful to his source.

[25] A. Kamesar, "Review of Gryson, *Commentaires de Jérôme*," *JThS* 45 (1994) 730–1 (on Isaiah 7:14).

[26] Burstein, *Compétence en hébreu*, 87; Gryson, "Saint Jérôme traducteur d'Isaïe," 58.

[27] Kamesar, "Review of Gryson, *Commentaires de Jérôme*," *JThS* 45 (1994) 730.

[28] See Barr, "St. Jerome's Appreciation," 283–4.

irrelevant for our purposes. For one thing, it is not an original composition, but rather a Latin translation of a lost Greek composition attributed by Jerome (following Origen) to Philo of Alexandria. The book stands within a long Hellenistic-Jewish literary tradition, later adopted by Greek Christians.[29] For another, as de Lange has noted with respect to Origen, according to the same philological standards, we would have to conclude that the rabbis were completely ignorant of Hebrew as well, because they too engaged in etymological *midrashim* in blatant disregard of spelling and of all rules of grammar.[30] Yet the philology of the rabbis is not that of Gesenius, but rather, to use Heinemann's phrase, it is "creative philology,"[31] and to measure one by the criteria of the other is simply to bark up the wrong tree.

One must also be wary of attempts to categorize translations or interpretations in Jerome's writings that are not in accordance with the strictly literal meaning of the Hebrew text as "bad Hebrew." A single example—though a rather colorful one—will have to suffice. In his *Commentary on Psalms*, Jerome explains that the phrase על השמינית (literally "on the eighth"—*pro octava*) in the opening verse of Psalm 6 alludes, among other things, to the eighth day of circumcision.[32] Burstein has argued that this interpretation demonstrates that Jerome mistakes Hebrew יום ("day") to be a feminine noun (which it is not), hence על השמינית, as against the masculine על השמיני.[33] Yet by the same token we would have to conclude once again that the rabbis of the Talmud were similarly ignorant, for in several rabbinic sources we find a midrashic account of King David entering a bath house and bemoaning the fact that naked, he is bereft of *mitsvot*, that is to say, bereft of the merits of the commandments. He then observes his own circumcision and offers praise to God in the form of the opening verse of Psalm 12, almost identical to that of Psalm 6: לַמְנַצֵּחַ עַל הַשְּׁמִינִית.[34] Clearly, "creative philology" again takes precedence. With a text as fraught with traditional exegesis as the Hebrew Bible, any interpreter, Jewish or Christian, working in the shadow of a long line of predecessors, soon discovers that conventional philological categories collapse and cease to have meaning.

Let us return to what constitutes *admissible* evidence for measuring Jerome's control of Biblical Hebrew in his translations and interpretations. How successful or unsuccessful was Jerome in achieving unmediated control of the Hebrew before him, control that was not merely a reflection of his dependence on his Greek sources, especially the Hexaplaric translations, or on his Jewish assistants? One way to go

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[29] The fundamental work remains that of Wutz. Cf. Newman, *Jerome and the Jews*, 81–5.

[30] N.R.M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge, 1976) 7.

[31] I. Heinemann, *The Methodology of the Aggadah* (Jerusalem, 1950) *passim* (in Hebrew).

[32] *CCSL* 72:187.

[33] Burstein, *Compétence en hébreu*, 97.

[34] *Siphre ad Deuteronomium* 36 (L. Finklestein ed., 6) and parallels. Some versions refer to Psalm 6:1, as in Jerome's commentary.

about answering this question is by studying his errors. It might be argued that this is unfair, that it gives undue weight to what Jerome gets wrong even though he usually gets things right. While it is it true that prejudiced "defectology" may lead to skewed results, the study of errors is valuable all the same. Errors often reveal how students learn, and by their very distinctiveness mistakes are useful markers for tracing borrowing and paths of influence.

Though a thorough "defectology" of Jerome has yet to be written, several examples of methodological value may be noted. In his *Commentary to Psalms* Jerome interprets Psalm 21.13: כי תשיתמו שכם במיתריך תכונן על פניהם (NJV: "For You make them turn back by Your bows [or cords?] turned to their face"). He explains for the benefit of his non-Hebrew-speaking readers that where the *Vetus Latina* reads *in reliquiis tuis* (corresponding to ἐν τοῖς περιλοίποις σου in the Septuagint), the Hebrew has *in bonis*.[35] Thus, where the Masoretic text reads במיתריך ("your bows" or "your cords"), Jerome tells us that the Hebrew has a word meaning *in bonis*. Morin recognized that this is inconsistent with the Masoretic text, and in the spirit of Martianay and Vallarsi suggested in the notes to his edition that Jerome had before him a different Hebrew *Vorlage*, one which read במיטביך ("in your goodness") instead of במיתריך. Whereas in an earlier example we found editors emending Jerome's Latin text to rescue him from a Hebrew error, here Morin postulates the existence of an alternate reading in the Hebrew Biblical text for the same reason. In fact, it can be shown that Jerome has not consulted the Hebrew at all. We find in the Hexapla that Aquila translates במיתריך as ἐν κάλοις, which can be loosely translated as "in ropes."[36] Jerome here is clearly dependent on Aquila, but makes the simple error of confusing two Greek words which are distinguished only by their accents, reading ἐν καλοῖς ("in good") for ἐν κάλοις ("in ropes")—an error found in the Syro-Hexapla as well. Ostensibly translating from the Hebrew, Jerome, it turns out, does not even have the Hebrew in front of him, and if he does, he fails to understand it except by means of Aquila—whom he does not understand either. Things might have easily turned out differently: Jerome might have translated Aquila correctly without our knowing it, or at least without our being able to prove that he was not confronting and "controlling" the Hebrew text directly. The question is: how often does this happen without our being any the wiser? Incidentally, in his translation of Psalms *Iuxta Hebraeos*, Jerome translates *funes tuos*; in other words, he has corrected himself, or someone else has pointed him in the right direction. Once again we see the importance of the learning curve.

Let us examine one of Jerome's more famous blunders, found in his *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* and in his expanded translation of Eusebius' *Onomasticon*. In Genesis 28.19 we read of Jacob's visit to Beth El: ויקרא את שם המקום ההוא בית אל ואולם לוז שם העיר לראשונה ("He called the name of that place Beth El, but Luz was the name of the city at first"). The Septuagint translates the latter part of the verse as: καὶ Οὐλαμλους ἦν ὄνομα τῇ πόλει τὸ πρότερον. In other words,

35 *CCSL* 72:198.

36 F. Field ed., *Origenis Hexapla* (Oxford, 1875), 2.116–17.

the disjunctive *ulam* (אולם), "but," is taken to be part of the toponym (Luz) and becomes Οὐλαμλους. Aquila, ignoring the disjunctive and modifying the Hebrew word order, translates: καὶ πρότερον Λοὺζ ὄνομα τῇ πόλει. Jerome, appearing blindly and mechanically to follow Aquila, explains the perceived error of the Septuagint by saying that *ulam* is not part of the toponym, but rather it means *prius*, "at first"; he mistakenly assumes a direct substitution by Aquila of πρότερον for *ulam*, a common word whose true meaning escapes him.[37] Jerome may not have invented this error himself, for it also appears in an anonymous passage in a Greek catena on Genesis.[38] Here, then, the situation may be slightly more complex than in our previous example: Jerome may not merely be lead astray by the Hexapla, he may err under the influence of an earlier Greek attempt at resolving the meaning of the Hebrew—just the sort of mistake of earlier commentators that he set out to correct by writing his book in the first place. There is, however, an ironic twist to Jerome's mistake: neither he nor his latter-day critics are aware of the fact that the interpretation of the Septuagint, reading Οὐλαμλους as a place name, which Jerome takes to be a gross error, is shared implicitly by a midrash in the name of R. Pinhas bar Hama, of the fourth century, whose Hebrew credentials are in perfectly good order. We read in *Genesis Rabba*: "An almond tree (*luz*) stood at the entrance to the cave, and the almond tree was hollow, and they would enter the cave via the almond tree and through the cave they would enter the city."[39] R. Pinhas bar Hama describes the hollow almond tree and cave as a vestibule at the entrance to the city. This is nothing more than an imaginitive explanation of Hebrew *ulam*, in its alternate and unrelated sense of "hall" or "vestibule," and *luz*—"almond tree,"[40] combined to form the supposed place name, *Ulam Luz*. While Jerome is familiar with these senses of both *ulam* and *luz*, it does not occur to him to interpret the verse accordingly. So much for textbook philology.

Passing finally from Jerome's written Greek sources to his Jewish informants, we encounter a different and more subtle sort of difficulty in his grasp of the language. Consider the following case. In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Jerome explains that in Hebrew the word עולם spelled with a *vav* (as *mater lectionis*), means "eternity", but that when spelled defectively without a *vav* it means a fifty-year or Jubilee period. As an example of the latter meaning he cites Exodus 21.6, where we read of the ear-piercing of the Hebrew slave, who is to serve his

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[37] *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* 28.19 (*CCSL* 72:34); cf. Jerome's translation of Eusebius' *Onomasticon* (*GCS* 11/1:41–3). See Clericus, *Quaestiones hieronymianae*, 121–3; Burstein, "La compétence de Jérôme en hébreu," 4–5; C.T.R. Hayward, *Saint Jerome's Hebrew Questions on Genesis* (Oxford, 1995) 198–9.

[38] F. Petit ed., *Catenae Graecae in Genesim et in Exodum, II. Collectio Coisliniana in Genesim* (Turnhout, 1986) 222–4 (= *CCSG* 15); note especially no. 237. Cf. Kamesar, *Jerome, Greek Scholarship, and the Hebrew Bible*, 155, n. 210.

[39] *Genesis Rabba* 69:19 (J. Theodor, C. Albeck eds, 798).

[40] For the almond tree of Bethel cf. the account of the Bordeaux Pilgrim (*CCSL* 175:14); there may be a similar allusion in Jubilees 27:20.

master לעלם (spelled defectively).[41] In strict philological terms this is nonsense. The underpinnings of the explanation are, however, familiar to us from rabbinic sources. Thus, in the *Mekhilta de'Rabbi Yishmael* and elsewhere we find that לעלם in Exodus is indeed taken to refer to the Jubilee year, though there is no suggestion there that this meaning is implied by the defective spelling.[42] We encounter a closer parallel to Jerome's explanation in *Midrash Haserot Vi-yterot*, a medieval midrash on Biblical words spelled *plene* and defectively: "'And he will serve him forever' (Ex. 21:6)—it is spelled לעלם (defectively), because he does not serve him forever and ever (לעולם ועד), but only till the Jubilee."[43] This is, by the way, not the only case where a Jewish tradition found for the first time in Jewish literature in a late Hebrew source is attested centuries earlier by Jerome. What is intriguing about Jerome's comment is that he presents what is in fact a contextually contingent midrash as a sort of generalized and unconditional lexical rule. This conceptual gap between the "creative philology" of midrash on the one hand and Jerome's more conventional notions of orthography and meaning on the other points to a fundamental difficulty he has in grasping the very nature of midrash, and this too has implications for how we evaluate Jerome's grasp of Biblical Hebrew.

The precise extent of Jerome's command of Biblical Hebrew is ultimately unknowable. First, most of the Hexaplaric material that he used so intensively and extensively in producing his translation is lost. Second, Jerome is supremely discrete about the limits of his own knowledge and, to put it mildly, does not readily volunteer information about the nature of his dependence on other sources—including his Jewish informants. In forensic terms, the question is whether in the overwhelming number of cases to be studied, where we have no direct means of measuring Jerome's unmediated and independent control of Hebrew, there should be a presumption of guilt or of innocence. In either case, as has been shown, allowances must be made for Jerome's increasing competence over time and for his correction of his own errors, and any "defectology" must also take chronology into account. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that anyone with Jerome's native intelligence and linguistic sensitivity could spend years doing what he did without something rubbing off, even if we cannot be certain how much.

Ultimately, though the matter is of considerable importance for an understanding of the inner workings of Jerome's scholarship, to a greater degree it distracts us from what is truly important in his literary estate. Regardless of the precise nature and extent of his competence in Hebrew, his contribution as one of the great cultural mediators of all time, if not unsullied, nevertheless remains intact. If only for this, he deserves our enduring respect.

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41 *In Gal.* 1.1–4 (*CCSL* 77A:16–17).

42 *Mekhilta de'Rabbi Yishmael*, *Tractate Nezikin* 2 (H.S. Horovitz, I.A. Rabin eds., 253–4).

43 S.A. Wertheimer ed., *Batei Midrashot* (Jerusalem, 1980), 2.259. See R. Loew, "Jerome's Rendering of עולם," *HebrUCA* 22 (1949) 278–9; Loew was not familiar with this particular version of the midrash.

Chapter 11
Jerome Keeping Silent: Origen and his Exegesis of Isaiah

Alfons Fürst

My purpose in this paper is to put forward some reflections about a curious silence. As we know only from Jerome,[1] Origen delivered twenty-five homilies on Isaiah.[2] Nine of them are preserved in Latin translation. In the manuscript tradition the name of the translator is not indicated. Only one piece of evidence confirms that this translation is Jerome's. Rufinus of Aquileia twice quoted a sentence from these homilies, stating explicitly that Jerome had translated them.[3] Surprisingly, Jerome himself never mentioned this translation either in his own works on Isaiah or in the famous last chapter of his *De viris illustribus*, where he enumerated the books he had written down to 392/3.[4] This suppression, which is not typical of a man such as Jerome, who constantly spoke about his literary production, has long been noticed and has given rise to various explanations. After a brief survey of traditional statements on this topic, I shall propose some further considerations which it is hoped will lead to a better understanding of this curious silence.

In the last chapter of *De viris illustribus*, Jerome mentioned four collections of Origen's homilies he had rendered into Latin: fourteen on Jeremiah; fourteen on Ezekiel; two on the Song of Songs; and thirty-nine on the Gospel of Luke.[5] The fact that he did not say anything about the homilies on Isaiah prompted some scholars, following the lead of Domenico Vallarsi, the editor of Jerome's works in the eigtheenth century, to date this translation after 392/3.[6] This suggestion does not really solve the puzzling question. Since Rufinus quoted from Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah in 401, this translation must have been published by that time. Therefore, the question remains as to why Jerome did not mention this translation in his commentary on Isaiah, which was written between 408 and 410. Of course, when commenting on the vision of Isaiah (Isaiah 6), he

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1 *In Es*. 1.1 (*VL.AGLB* 23:138): *Viginti quinque homiliae*.

2 The number 32 reported by Jerome in *Ep*. 33.4 (*CSEL* 54:257) is not reliable.

3 Ruf. *Apol.c.Hier*. 2.31 (*CCSL* 20:106):*...in omeliis Esaiae...tu...transtulisti*; 2.50 (20:122).

4 *Vir.ill*. 135 (Ceresa-Gastaldo 230–34).

5 *Vir.ill*. 135.2, 4 (Ceresa-Gastaldo 230, 232).

6 O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur* (Freiburg, 1912) 3.612; W.A. Baehrens, *GCS Origenes* 8 (Leipzig, 1925) xlvi.

had the opportunity of doing so, since five of the nine homilies on Isaiah (nn. 1, 4, 5, 6 and 9) are concerned with this famous chapter. But while Jerome did refer to the *libellus* he had written about this vision in Constantinople in 380/1[7]—in *De viris illustribus* this treatise, which we now read as number 18A in the collection of his *Epistles*, is entitled *De seraphim*[8]—he remained silent about the homilies. Furthermore, it does not seem convincing that Jerome should have translated these homilies in the years between 392/3 and 401 (I shall return to this point later). Rather, it is more plausible that Jerome translated them at an early stage in his career. We may infer this from two hints. First, as all scholars agree, their language and style is not as mature as what we find in Jerome's later works. Secondly, in his treatise *De seraphim*, Jerome depended strongly upon Origen's homilies on the vision of Isaiah. It is highly unlikely that Jerome, after correcting some of Origen's comments in *De seraphim*, as we shall see later, would have translated these homilies. Hence, it is advisable to maintain the traditional view that Jerome translated these homilies in Constantinople in 380/1 before producing his own exegesis of the vision of Isaiah.

If we accept this, and if we do not suppose that, at an early stage of the manuscript tradition, a scribe omitted this translation by accident,[9] Jerome must have failed to mention it deliberately. One reason may be his rejection of one aspect of Origen's exegesis (which I shall explain afterwards), which made him condemn the work as a whole.[10] One possible explanation that has been put forward appears rather plain and harmless: strikingly, in his translation of the homilies of Isaiah the *clausulae* usually employed by Jerome are completely missing.[11] Hence, one may suppose that Jerome did not intend to publish this translation, regarding it, perhaps, as preliminary private work in preparation of his own exegesis of the vision in the *De seraphim*.[12] According to this view, Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on

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[7] *In Es*. 3.3 (*VL.AGLB* 23:309): *De hac visione ante annos circiter triginta, cum essem Constantinopolim et apud virum eloquentissimum Gregorium Nazanzenum tunc eiusdem urbis episcopum sanctarum scripturarum studiis erudirer, scio me brevem dictasse subitumque tractatum, ut et experimentum caperem ingenioli mei et amicis iubentibus oboedirem. **Ad illum itaque libellum mitto lectorem oroque ut brevi huius temporis** expositione contentus sit*; "Thirty years ago, while I was in Constantinople, seeking erudition by studying the Holy Scriptures with Gregory of Nazianzen, a most eloquent man and the bishop of that city, I remember dictating offhandedly a brief treatise on this vision. Its purpose was to test my small talents and obey my friends' bidding. It is to this book, hence, that I refer my reader, asking him to be content with the exposition penned down in little time."

[8] *Vir.ill*. 135.2 (Ceresa-Gastaldo 230).

[9] This was the opinion of P. Nautin, *Origène. Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1977) 257.

[10] Cf. P. Nautin, "La liste des œuvres de Jérôme dans le 'De viris illustribus'," *Orpheus* n.s. 5 (1984) 319–34, at 329.

[11] Cf. Baehrens, *GCS Origenes* 8, xlvi. xlviii.

[12] Cf. R. Gryson and D. Szmatula, "Les commentaires patristiques sur Isaïe d'Origène à Jérôme," *REAug* 36 (1990) 3–41, 30 (see *ibid*. 10 n. 35); F. Pieri, "*Isaia* 6 nell'esegesi di

Isaiah is to be regarded as an unfinished work that Jerome did not want to make public.[13]

I am not inclined to contend that all these considerations are completely wrong. The style of these homilies is awkward. In many passages, moreover, the language is clumsy and difficult to understand. The *clausulae* are missing, and Jerome did not write a preface. It is possible that Jerome, in fact, regarded this translation as a private work and therefore no longer mentioned it. However, two points contradict this all too plain explanation: Rufinus, at least, had read it and quoted from it correctly; and, more importantly, as we shall see soon, Jerome altered the text in a passage in which Origen offered a highly problematic reading, and in some other passages, too, dealing with the trinitarian concept of God. Why should Jerome have done this in a text he translated for private use only? The observations presented so far may lead to some new insights.

As is well known, Jerome's translations of Origen's works are highly trustworthy. Their reliability can be confirmed when one compares Jerome's Latin versions of Origen's homilies on Jeremiah with the homilies extant in Greek.[14] Still, in a few passages concerning the Holy Trinity, Jerome altered Origen's texts to render them orthodox according to fourth-century standards. In the homilies on Isaiah, then, it is highly probable that Jerome added some orthodox explanations to four passages,[15] and, as to one passage in the homilies on Jeremiah, we are even

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Girolamo," *AnnSR* 5 (2000) 169–88, 175–6.

[13] Cf. F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme. Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1922) 1.71; 2.81; P. Jay, *L'exégèse de Saint Jérôme d'après son Commentaire sur Isaïe* (Paris, 1985) 62–3.

[14] Cf. V. Peri, "I passi sulla Trinità nelle omelie origeniane tradotte in latino da san Gerolamo," *StudPatr* 6 = *TU* 81 (Berlin, 1962) 155–80 (157–64).

[15] Orig. *In Es.hom*. 1.4 (*GCS Orig*. 8:246): *Nec putes naturae contumeliam, si filius a patre mittitur. Denique ut unitatem deitatis in Trinitate cognoscas, solus Christus in praesenti lectione "peccata" nunc dimittit et tamen certum est a Trinitate "peccata" dimitti. Qui enim in uno crediderit, credit in omnibus*; "And do not believe it to be a debasement for the son's nature if he is sent by the father. Lastly, for you to see the godhead's unity within the Trinity, the following is to be said: In the present reading, it is Christ alone who is remitting 'sins' now, but it is certain that 'sins' are remitted by the Trinity. For whoever believes in one (person) believes in all three (of them)"; 3.3 (257): *Nec putandum est aliquid indigere "sapientiam" et "intellectum" ceterosque "spiritus", quia alium cibum habeant, cum totius dispensationis unus sit cibus natura Dei*; "Nor must you believe 'wisdom', 'intellect' and the other spirits to be lacking anything, as someone else is their food, for the whole dispensation has but one kind of food: God's essence"; 7.1 (281): *Nec putandus est non habuisse, qui accepit, cum adhuc habeat ipse, qui "dederit"*; "Nor must one suppose that the one who has received them cannot have them because they are still in the possession of the one who has given them to him"; probably also 4.1 (259):*...quae est trinae sanctitatis repetita communitas; sanctitati patris sanctitas iungitur filii et Spiritus sancti*; "…which consists in the ever-renewed community of their three-fold holiness; to the Father's holiness are joined the Son's and the Holy Spirit's." Cf. Peri, "I passi sulla Trinità," 177–9; Nautin, *Origène*, 257.

able to prove this conduct by comparing Jerome's translation with Origen's Greek text.[16]

The most interesting passage altered by Jerome is to be found in the first homily on Isaiah. The text we now read in his Latin translation runs as follows:

> Scripture, however, says: "They stood around him, each with six wings; with two they covered his face, with two they covered his feet and with two they were flying; and they were calling to one another" (Isaiah 6:2–3). It is, in fact, in a solely spiritual fashion that the seraphim surrounding God are saying: "Holy, holy, holy!" (Isaiah 6:3). They are guarding the secret of the Trinity, because they, too, are holy. Indeed, there is nothing in all there is that is holier. And it is not without reason that they are "calling to one another": "Holy, holy, holy!," but rather they are crying out a creed salutary to all people. Who are those two seraphim? The Lord, my Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. And do not assume the essence of the Trinity to fall apart if we look at the roles connected with these names.[17]

In this chapter and in other passages of the first and fourth homilies,[18] Origen interpreted the seraphim as the Son of God and the Holy Spirit. As he said in *De principiis*, he took this Trinitarian interpretation from a *Hebraeus*,[19] that is,

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[16] Orig. *In Hier.hom*. 9.1 (*GCS Orig*. 3:64):...ἡμεῖς δὲ ἕνα οἴδαμεν θεὸν καὶ τότε καὶ νῦν, ἕνα Χριστὸν καὶ τότε καὶ νῦν, translated by Jerome in this way (cf. *ibid*. *app. crit*.):*...nos unum novimus Deum et in praeterito et in praesenti, unum Christum, et tunc et modo similiter*, and added to as follows: *et unum Spiritum Sanctum, cum Patre et Filio sempiternum*. Cf. Peri, "I passi sulla Trinità," 161.

[17] Orig. *In Es.hom*. 1.2 (*GCS Orig*. 8:244-5): *Scriptum vero est: "stabant in circuitu eius, sex alae uni et sex alae alteri; et duabus quidem velabant faciem et duabus velabant pedes, et duabus volabant; et clamabant alter ad alterum"* (Isaiah 6:2–3). *Verum haec "Seraphim", quae circa Deum sunt, quae sola cognitione dicunt: "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus!"* (Isaiah 6:3), *propter hoc servant mysterium Trinitatis, quia et ipsa sunt sancta; his enim in omnibus, quae sunt, sanctius nihil est. Et non leviter dicunt "alter ad alterum": "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus!", sed salutarem omnibus confessionem clamore pronuntiant. Quae sunt ista duo "Seraphim"? Dominus meus Iesus et Spiritus sanctus. Nec putes Trinitatis dissidere naturam, si nominum servantur officia*.

[18] Orig. *In Es.hom*. 1.3 (*GCS Orig*. 8:246); 1.4 (246); 4.1 (258); 4.4 (261).

[19] Orig. *Princ*. 1.3.4 (*GCS Orig*. 5:52–3): Ἔλεγε δὲ ὁ Ἑβραῖος τὰ ἐν τῷ Ἡσαίᾳ δύο Σεραφὶμ ἐξαπτέρυγα, κεκραγότα ἕτερον πρὸς τὸ ἕτερον καὶ λέγοντα· "Ἅγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κύριος Σαβαώθ" (Isaiah 6:3) τὸν μονογενῆ εἶναι τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. Ἡμεῖς δὲ οἰόμεθα ὅτι καὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ ᾠδῇ Ἀμβακούμ· "Ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζώων γνωσθήσῃ" (Habakkuk 3:2) περὶ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος εἴρηται; "My Hebrew master used to say that the two six-winged seraphim in Isaiah who cry one to another and say, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts' (Isaiah 6:3), were the only-begotten Son of God and the Holy Spirit. And we ourselves think that the expression in the song of Habakkuk, 'In the midst of the two living creatures thou shalt be known' (Habakkuk 3:2), is spoken of Christ and the

a Jew converted to Christianity.[20] However, the problem later theologians had with this exegesis was not its Jewish-Christian origin, but its Trinitarian scheme in which the Son and the Spirit were subordinated to the Father.[21] With regard to this subordinationism, Origen was vilified as the alleged father of Arianism in the fourth century.

In his *De seraphim*, Jerome took over Origen's exegesis of the vision of Isaiah in nearly all details, but he rejected his Trinitarian explanation of the seraphim:

> Certain ones who have interpreted this passage before me, Greeks as well as Romans,[22] have declared that the Lord sitting upon a throne is God the Father, and the two seraphim which are said to be standing one at each side are our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. I do not agree with their opinion, though they are very learned men. Indeed, it is far better to set forth the truth in uncouth fashion than to declare falsehood in learned style. I dissent especially because John the Evangelist wrote that it was not God the Father but Christ who had been seen in this vision. For when he was speaking of the unbelief of the Jews, straightway he set forth the reasons for their unbelief: "Therefore they could not believe in Him, because Isaias said: 'Ye shall hear with the ear and not understand, and perceiving ye shall behold and shall not see'" (Isaiah 6:9). "And he said these things when he saw the glory of the Only-begotten and bore witness concerning Him" (John 12:39–41). In the present roll of Isaias he is bidden by Him who sits on the throne to say: "Ye shall hear with the ear and not understand." Now He who gives this command, as the Evangelist understands it, is Christ. Whence we comprehend that the seraphim cannot be interpreted as Christ, since Christ is He who is seated. And although in the Acts of the Apostles Paul says to the Jews that agreed not among themselves: "Well did the Holy Ghost speak to our fathers by Isaias the prophet, saying: Go to this people and say: With the ear you shall hear

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holy Spirit" (Origen, *On First Principles*, trans. B.G. Butterworth [London, 1936] 32). Rufinus' translation: *Dicebat autem et Hebraeus magister quod duo illa Seraphin, quae in Esaia senis alis describuntur clamantia adinvicem et dicentia: "Sanctus sanctus sanctus dominus Sabaoth", de unigenito filio dei et de spiritu sancto esset intellegendum. Nos vero putamus etiam illud, quod in cantico Ambacum dictum est: "In medio duorum animalium (vel duarum vitarum) cognosceris", de Christo et de spiritu sancto sentiri debere*. The Greek fragment is transmitted by Justinian, *Ep. ad Menam* (*ACO* 3:210). Cf. also *Princ*. 4.3.14 (*GCS Orig*. 5:346).

[20] Cf. G. Bardy, "Les traditions Juives dans l'œuvre d'Origène," *RBi* 34 (1925) 217–52 (221–2, 248–9); J. Daniélou, "Trinité et angélologie dans la théologie judéo-chrétienne," *RSR* 45 (1957) 5–41 (26–8).

[21] See Pieri, "Isaia," 186–8.

[22] Besides Origen, Jerome may have had in mind Victorinus of Pettau who, in commenting on the Bible, followed Origen, as Jerome states in *Ep*. 61.2 (*CSEL* 54:577); cf. P. Nautin, "Le 'De seraphim' de Jérôme et son appendice 'Ad Damasum'," in M. Wissemann ed., *Roma renascens. Beiträge zur Spätantike und Rezeptionsgeschichte. Festschrift für I. Opelt* (Frankfurt a.M. et al., 1988) 257–93 (270–71).

> and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see and shall not perceive. For the heart of this people is grown gross, and with their ears have they heard heavily, and their eyes they have shut, lest perhaps they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:25–7; Isaiah 6:9–10)—for me, however, the diversity of the person does not raise a question, since I know that both Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one substance, and that the words of the Spirit are not other than those of the Son, and that the Son has not given a command other than the Spirit.[23]

Isaiah 6:9–10 are among the famous verses in the book of Isaiah used in the New Testament and by many Christian theologians in anti-Jewish apologetics.[24] Based on the application of Isaiah 6:9 in John 12:39–41, Jerome argued against the identification of one of the seraphim with Christ. By analogy, starting from the use of the same verse in Acts 28:25–7, he contested the interpretation of the other seraph as the Holy Spirit. Instead, he proposed a new explanation that he had

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[23] *Ep*. 18A.4 (*CSEL* 54:78–9): *Quidam ante me tam Graeci quam Latini hunc locum exponentes dominum super thronum sedentem deum patrem et duo seraphim, quae ex utraque parte stantia praedicantur, dominum nostrum Iesum Christum et spiritum sanctum interpretati sunt. Quorum ego auctoritati, quamvis sint eruditissimi, non adsentio, multo si quidem melius est vera rustice quam diserte falsa proferre, maxime cum Iohannes evangelista in hac eadem visione non deum patrem, sed Christum scribat esse conspectum. Nam cum de incredulitate diceret Iudaeorum, statim causas incredulitatis exposuit: "Et ideo non poterant credere in eum, quia dixit Esaias: Aure audietis et non intellegetis, et cernentes aspicietis et non videbitis* (Isaiah 6:9). *Haec autem dixit, quando vidit gloriam unigeniti et testificatus est de eo"* (John 12:39–41). *In praesenti uolumine Esaiae ab eo, qui sedet in throno, iubetur, ut dicat: "aure audietis et non intellegetis". Qui autem hoc iubet, ut euangelista intellegit, Christus est; unde nunc colligitur non posse seraphim Christum intellegi, cum Christus sit ipse, qui sedeat. Et licet in Actibus apostolorum adversus Iudaeos inter se dissidentes Paulus dicat: "Bene spiritus sanctus locutus est per Esaiam prophetam ad patres nostros dicens: Vade ad populum istum et dic: Aure audietis et non intellegetis, et videntes videbitis et non perspicietis, incrassatum est enim cor populi huius et auribus suis graviter audierunt et oculos suos clauserunt, ne quando videant oculis et auribus audiant et corde intellegant et convertant se et sanem illos"* (Acts 28:25–7; Isaiah 6:9ff.), *mihi tamen personae diversitas non facit quaestionem, cum sciam et Christum et spiritum sanctum unius esse substantiae nec alia spiritus uerba esse quam filii nec aliud filium iussisse quam spiritum*. The English translation has been taken from C.C. Mierow and T. Comerford Lawler, *Ancient Christian Writers* 33 (London 1963) 82–3.

[24] Cf. P. Jay, "Jesaja," *RAC* 17 (1996) 764–821 (813), and especially J. Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels. Isaias 6,9–10 in der Theologie der Synoptiker* (Munich, 1961); C.A. Evans, "Isaiah 6:9–10 in Rabbinic and Patristic Writings," *VChr* 36 (1982) 275–81; Idem, *To see and not perceive. Isaiah 6.9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation* (Sheffield, 1989).

taken from Eusebius of Caesarea:[25] Misunderstanding the meaning of the Hebrew *adonaj*, Jerome interpreted the *dominus* (κύριος) in Isaiah 6:1, seen by Isaiah, as Christ, thus replacing Origen's trinitarian exegesis of the vision by a christological reading, and, by means of etymology, allegorizing the two seraphim as the Old and the New Testaments:

> *Seraphim*, as we have found in the *Translation of Hebrew Words*,[26] may be rendered either "fire" or "the beginning of speech"[27]…Therefore, let us inquire, where is this saving fire? No one can doubt that it is in the holy books, by the reading of which all sins of men are washed away…Therefore, both fire and the beginning of speech may be observed in the two Testaments. And it is not surprising that they stand about God, since it is through them that the Lord Himself may be known.[28]

In his commentary on Isaiah, Jerome summed up this exegesis of the vision of Isaiah:

> It was impious of a certain person [i.e., Origen] to understand the two seraphim to be the Son and the Holy Spirit. By contrast, we, in accordance with John, the evangelist (John 12:39–41), and with Paul, the apostle (Acts 28:25–7), teach that it is the son who is seen in the glory of his rule and the Holy Spirit who has spoken. A certain Latin writer [i.e., Jerome][29] understands the two seraphim to be the Old and the New Testaments.[30]

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[25] Euseb. *In Es*. 41 (*GCS Eus*. 9:35–7). Cf. J.-N. Guinot, "L'héritage origénien des commentateurs grecs du prophète Isaïe," in L. Lies ed., *Origeniana Quarta* (Innsbruck and Vienna, 1987) 379–89 (381–2).

[26] Cf. *Hebr.nom*. (Lagarde=*CCSL* 72:50): *Seraphim ardentes vel incendentes*; *In Es*. 3.7 (*VL.AGLB* 23:318):...*seraphim, qui interpretatur incendens*.

[27] For the mistake made by Jerome with this second etymology, see G. Menestrina, "La visione di Isaia (Is. 6 ss) nell'interpretazione di Girolamo," *BeO* 17 (1976) 179–96 (183); Nautin, "Le 'De seraphim'," 269.

[28] *Ep*. 18A.6 (*CSEL* 54:81–2): *Seraphim, sicut in interpretatione nominum Hebraeorum invenimus, aut "incendium" aut "principium oris eorum" interpretantur... Ergo quaerimus, ubi sit hoc incendium salutare.* ***Nulli dubium, quin in sacris voluminibus,*** *ex quorum lectione universa hominum vitia purgantur...Igitur et incendium et initium oris in duobus animadvertitur testamentis, quae circa deum stare non mirum est, cum per ea dominus ipse discatur*. Cf. *ibid*. 18A.7 (54:83); 18A.14 (54:91). The English translation is taken from Mierow and Comerford Lawler, *Ancient Christian Writers* 33, 84–5.

[29] Or perhaps Victorinus too; cf. Gryson-Szmatula, "Commentaires," 5.

[30] *In Es*. 3.4 (*VL.AGLB* 23:315): *Impie ergo quidam duo seraphim filium et spiritum sanctum intellegit, cum iuxta evangelistam Iohannem* (John 12:39–41) *et Paulum apostolum* (Acts 28:25–7) *filium dei visum in maiestate regnantis et spiritum sanctum locutum esse doceamus. quidam Latinorum duo seraphim vetus et novum instrumentum intellegunt...*

The combination of the passages quoted from the book of Isaiah, the Gospel of John and the Acts of the Apostles was an invention of fourth-century theologians. Against the subordinatianism of the "Arians" these theologians were searching for Biblical testimonies in which the same features are attributed to all the persons of the trinity alike. The texts mentioned seemed to fulfil this requirement: Their subject matter is the same, though in Isaiah the motif is ascribed to the Father, in the Gospel of John to the Son, and in the Acts of the Apostles to the Holy Spirit. In his exegesis of the vision of Isaiah, Jerome took over this pattern and used it against the trinitarian explanation of the *seraphim* in Origen's homilies.[31] The last sentence in the long passage of *De seraphim* quoted above referred to some issues of the Arian controversy: "For me, however, the diversity of the person does not raise a question, since I know that both Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one substance (ὁμοούσιος), and that the words of the Spirit are not other than those of the Son, and that the Son has not given a command other than the Spirit."[32]

This controversy on the Trinity, likewise, was the context in which Jerome altered the text of Origen's homilies on Isaiah. As we know from Rufinus, Jerome added a sentence in a passage from Origen's first homily already quoted above:

> For instance, in the Homilies on Isaiah, at the vision of God Origen refers the words to the Son and the Holy Spirit; and so you [i.e., Jerome] have translated, adding, however, words of your own which would make the passage have a more acceptable sense. It stands thus: "Who are then these two seraphim? My Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit." But you add of your own: "And do not think that there is any difference in the nature of the Trinity, when the functions indicated by the several persons are preserved."[33]

In adding these words, Jerome intended to make Origen's bold exegesis acceptable in the eyes of post-Nicene theologians, who were always looking for an orthodox understanding of the nature of the Holy Trinity. At the end of his *Apology against*

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[31] See L. Chavoutier, "Querelle origéniste et controverses trinitaires. À propos du Tractatus contra Origenem de visione Isaiae," *VChr* 14 (1960) 9–14; Nautin, "Le 'De seraphim'," 274–5.

[32] Hier. *Ep*. 18A.4 (*CSEL* 54:79): *mihi tamen personae diversitas non facit quaestionem, cum sciam et Christum et spiritum sanctum unius esse substantiae nec alia spiritus verba esse quam filii nec aliud filium iussisse quam spiritum*. The English translation is taken from Mierow & Comerford Lawler, *Ancient Christian Writers* 33, 83.

[33] Ruf. *Apol.c.Hier*. 2.31 (*CCSL* 20:106–7): *Denique in omeliis Esaiae visio Dei Filium et Spiritum Sanctum retulit. Ita tu ista transtulisti, adiciens ex te quod sensum auctoris ad clementiorem traheret intellectum. Ais enim: "Quae sunt ista duo Seraphin? Dominus meus Iesus Christus et Spiritus Sanctus." Et ex tuo addidisti: "Nec putes Trinitatis dissidere naturam, si nominum seruantur officia."* The English translation is taken from W.H. Fremantle, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* II/3 (Grand Rapids, 1983) 472.

Jerome, Rufinus frankly stated that Jerome "updated" Origen's texts in the same fashion as he himself did, namely with a view to accommodating Origen's theology to the orthodox standards of the fourth century:

> I said that when grounds of offence appeared in the Greek he [i.e., Jerome] had cleared them away in his Latin translation; and not wrongly; but he had done this just in the same sense as I have done it. For instance, in the Homilies on Isaiah, he explains the two seraphim as meaning the Son and the Holy Ghost, and he adds this of is own: "Let no one think that there is a difference of nature in the Trinity when the offices of the Persons are distinguished"; and by this he thinks that he has been able to remedy the grounds of offence. I in a similar way occasionally removed, altered or added a few words, in the attempt to draw the meaning of the writer into better accordance with the straight path of the faith. What did I do in this which was different or contrary to our friend's system? what which was not identical with it? [34]

Surprisingly, this was not Jerome's only alteration of Origen's text. We are able to deduce this from a passage in the so-called "Treatise against Origen about the vision of Isaiah" discovered in the library of Montecassino in 1901.[35] Around 400, this pamphlet was originally written in Greek probably by Theophilus of Alexandria and then translated into Latin by Jerome. In this treatise, the intriguing passage of Origen's first homily on Isaiah is heavily criticized. The most ardent reproach is to be found in the last chapter:

> And if his audacity had gone to this point, we might still endure his [i.e., Origen's] insanity; now, however, his blasphemy concerns larger issues, and his impiety reaches God himself. For he calls the Son and the Holy Spirit, as though he were some creator of new idols and images of the gods, two seraphim; and he does not hesitate to burst out sacrilegiously that "the seraphim receive their share in holiness from him who is holy in a principal way (*a principali Sancto Seraphin*

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[34] Ruf. *Apol.c.Hier*. 2.50 (*CCSL* 20:122): *Dixi eum purgasse in Latina translatione si qua illa offendicula fidei videbantur in Graeco, et non immerito: ita tamen ut eadem etiam a me conprobem gesta. Nam sicut ille in omeliis de Esaia duo Seraphin Filium et Spiritum Sanctum esse interpretatus est, et addens de suo: "Nemo aestimet in Trinitate naturae esse differentiam, cum nominum discernuntur officia," per hoc curare se credit offendicula potuisse, ita nos, vel ademptis vel immutatis quibusdam vel additis, sensum auctoris adducere conati sumus ad intellegentiae tramitem rectiorem. Quid hic diversum aut quid contrarium aut quid non idem fecimus?* The English translation is taken from Fremantle, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* II/3, 481.

[35] *Editio princeps: S. Hieronymi Stridonensis presbyteri tractatus contra Origenem de visione Esaiae*, quem nunc primum ex codd. mss. Casinensibus A. M. Amelli in lucem edidit et illustravit (Monte Cassino, 1901). Emended edition: G. Morin, *Anecdota Maredsolana* III/3 (Maredsous and Oxford, 1903) xviii-xix, 103–22.

> *sanctitatis accipere consortium*), and that they are calling to one another: Holy, holy, holy." In addition, he says: "Who are those two seraphim? My Lord and the Holy Spirit." We shall not deny that it is from God, who is the source of holiness in all that is holy, that the seraphim receive their holiness, nor that they are calling to one another: Holy, holy, holy; what we do reject totally, however, is the way he views the Son and the Holy Spirit.[36]

The second quotation in this text is clearly taken from Origen's homily. Likewise, the first quotation is obviously presented as an extract from this homily as well. However, it is not to be found in this sermon or in other texts written by Origen. What are we to make of this? Initially we might assume that the author quoted directly from the Greek text and that Jerome, translating this treatise into Latin, produced a version different from his previous translation of Origen's homilies. But, on account of the great differences between both versions, another suspicion arises. As the author of the treatise suggests, the sentence was part of Origen's homily, but in his translation Jerome omitted it.[37] This assumption fits well into the theological background. First and foremost, the subordinating way of thinking expressed in the sentence *a principali Sancto Seraphin sanctitatis accipere consortium*, in combination with Origen's explanation of both the seraphim as the Son and the Spirit, irritated the author: *Filius et Spiritus Sanctus non alterius consortio habent sanctitatem, ne similes creaturis esse videantur et aliunde accipere, quod non habebant, inferioresque esse eo cuius possident sanctitatem.*[38] In the context of the Arian controversy, Origen's concept of the Trinity had become heretical—whether this verdict does justice to Origen's theology and whether it is convenient to apply categories like "heretical" and "orthodox" to such issues is another question. In any case, Jerome's alterations of Origen's text were part of the same theological background against which he rejected Origen's Trinitarian exegesis of the vision of Isaiah. As early as 380/81, during his stay in Constantinople, Jerome was apparently well aware of what he was doing.

Knowing these circumstances, we are in a position to infer why Jerome did not mention his translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah. Perhaps, he regarded this

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[36] Theophilus (?), *Tract.vis.Es*. (Morin 119–20): *Et si huc usque temeritas processisset, ferremus utcumque eius amentiam; nunc autem maiora blasphemat et inpietas eius ad ipsum pervenit Deum. Filium enim et Spiritum Sanctum, quasi quidam fictor idoli et novorum simulacrorum conditor, appellat duo Seraphin; et in hunc sacrilegii erumpit vomitum "a principali Sancto Seraphin sanctitatis accipere consortium, et alter clamat ad alterum: Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus". Et iterum: "Quae sunt, inquit, ista Seraphin? Dominus meus et Spiritus Sanctus." Quod Seraphin a Deo, qui sanctitatis omnium caput est, acceperint sanctitatem, et clament alter ad alterum, Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus, negare non possumus; ut autem Filius aestimetur et Spiritus Sanctus, hoc penitus refutamus*.

[37] Morin, *Anecdota Maredsolana*, III/3.119. Compare Gryson-Szmatula, "Commentaires" 33.

[38] Theophilus (?), *Tract.vis.Es*. (Morin 120).

work—one of his first translations, if not indeed the very first one—as unfinished and negligible. However, in the course of the theological debates at the end of the fourth century, he might have had another reason for suppressing it. In 380/81, while translating these homilies and writing his own commentary on the vision of Isaiah, he perceived that Origen's explanation of the seraphim as the Son and the Spirit was deemed heretical. Thus, in his translation he was at pains to render it safe and orthodox, and in *De seraphim* he rejected it entirely. In the course of the debate about Origen's orthodoxy in the last decade of the fourth century, the latter's exegesis of Isaiah, especially of the vision in Isaiah 6, was a central issue. In the sixth century, Justinian would still find fault with Origen about this point.[39] At the end of the fourth century, Origen's treatment of Isaiah 6 was in fact regarded as one of his most grievous mistakes. In an early polemic against Origen written in 396, Jerome denounced this exegesis as Origen's worst deviation from orthodoxy:

> Origen is a heretic, true; but what does that take from me who do not deny that on very many points he is heretical? He has erred concerning the resurrection of the body, he has erred concerning the condition of souls, he has erred by supposing it possible that the devil may repent, and—an error more important than these—he has declared in his commentary upon Isaiah that the seraphim mentioned by the prophet are the divine Son and the Holy Ghost.[40]

Considering this theological context, I propose that Jerome suppressed his translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah in order to evade allegations against himself of unorthodoxy. It is well known how fervently he endeavoured to present himself as the great champion of orthodox Christian exegesis and asceticism.[41] The best example might be Jerome's image of himself as living in the desert among wild beasts, although in reality he had never lived as an eremite, neither in the Syrian desert nor in Bethlehem.[42] The issue dealt with in this paper provides

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[39] See above note 19.

[40] *Ep*. 61.2 (*CSEL* 54:577): *Origenes haereticus: quid ad me, qui illum in plerisque hereticum non nego? Erravit de resurrectione corporis; erravit de animarum statu, de diaboli paenitentia et—quod his maius est—filium et spiritum sanctum seraphin esse testatus est*. The English translation is taken from Fremantle, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* II/6, 131–2. Compare *Ep*. 84.3 (*CSEL* 55:123–4): *In lectione Esaiae, in qua duo seraphin clamantia describuntur, illo interpretante filium et spiritum sanctum nonne ego detestandam expositionem in duo testamenta mutavi?*; "In the portion of Isaiah which describes the crying of the two seraphim he explains these to be the Son and the Holy Ghost; but have not I altered this hateful explanation into a reference to the two testaments?" (Fremantle, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* II/6, 176).

[41] See Andrew Cain's essay in this volume.

[42] S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992) 85–9; A. Fürst, *Hieronymus. Askese*

another example. Jerome's translation of Origen's homilies on Isaiah menaced his reputation as the orthodox hero of Latin exegesis. Consequently, he resolved to suppress it even at high costs. Keen on presenting himself as the foremost representative of Christian literature and erudition, Jerome boasted an impressive list of titles in the last chapter of *De viris illustribus*. He enumerated as many treatises as he could, exaggerating his own merits and achievements. Evidently, then, an additional title would have been welcome in such a comprehensive and imposing catalogue. But, surprisingly, Jerome did not include his translation after all, since a title as disputed as Origen's homilies on Isaiah might have had the opposite effect. All in all, Jerome carefully presented himself to his readership as a prolific and orthodox writer, but he did so not only by writing, but also by keeping silent.

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und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike (Freiburg, 2003) 47–9; A. Cain, "*Vox clamantis in deserto:* Rhetoric, reproach, and the forging of ascetic authority in Jerome's letters from the Syrian desert," *JThS* n.s. 57 (2006) 500–25; Idem, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009).

Chapter 12
L'*In Zachariam* de Jérôme et la Tradition Alexandrine

Aline Canellis

En 406, c'est-à-dire vingt ans après son séjour à Alexandrie (386) auprès de Didyme l'Aveugle,[1] Jérôme dédie les trois livres de son *In Zachariam*[2] à Exupère, l'évêque de Toulouse.[3] Pour commenter ce Prophète, le "plus obscur" et le "plus long" des douze,[4] qu'il avait traduit de l'hébreu avant 393,[5] le moine de Bethléem dispose jusqu'à la fin de son premier livre, des deux volumes d'Origène se terminant sur la vision des quadriges de *Za* 6,[6] et surtout, pour l'ensemble de son explication, du commentaire d'Hippolyte de Rome et des cinq livres du *Sur Zacharie* que Didyme a dictés à sa demande.[7] Malgré la rapidité de la dictée, l'*In Zachariam* est cependant fort érudit et loin d'être la "copie conforme" du commentaire didymien,[8] contrairement au jugement trop catégorique que le Père Doutreleau a donné du commentaire hiéronymien dans son édition du *Sur Zacharie.*[9]

A la différence des commentaires d'Origène et d'Hippolyte qui sont perdus, l'ouvrage de Didyme a été conservé avec toutefois des lacunes longues et

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[1] Voir F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme, sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris, 1922) 2.156 ; J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome, His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (London, 1975) 124–6.

[2] Hier. *In Zach.,* M. Adriaen ed., *CCSL* 76A (Turnhout, 1970) 747–900. Nos références y renverront.

[3] *In Zach.* 2 (795).

[4] *In Zach.*, prol. (747–8).

[5] Hier. *Ep.* 48.4; voir Y.–M. Duval, "Compte rendu bibliographique," *REAug* 25 (1979) 194–5.

[6] *Ep.* 33.4; *In Zach,* prol. (748); *In Os.* 1, prol. (*CCSL* 76:5).

[7] *In Zach*., prol. (748).

[8] Le présent travail est la synthèse d'une triple étude sur l'*In Zachariam* de Jérôme, dans laquelle nous conservons la même méthode et la même progression. Sur le livre I, voir A. Canellis, "Le livre I de l'*In Zachariam* de saint Jérôme et la tradition alexandrine," in *Colloquium Origenianum Octauum, Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition (Pise, 27–31 août 2001), Origeniana Octava* (Leuven, 2004) 861–75; Eadem, "Le livre II de l'*In Zachariam* de saint Jérôme et la tradition alexandrine," *SEJG* 47 (2007), à paraître; Eadem, "Le livre III de l'*In Zachariam* de saint Jérôme et la tradition alexandrine," *Adamantius* 13 (2007) 66–81.

[9] Didym. *Sur Zach.* 1 (*SC* 83:129–36).

nombreuses dans les Livres II, III, IV et V.[10] Malgré cela, la comparaison entre le Commentaire de Jérôme et son modèle alexandrin révèle que le Stridonien ne se livre pas à une imitation servile de son prédécesseur. De fait, les parentés évidentes entre les deux œuvres ne font que mieux ressortir la touche personnelle dont le Latin colore son *In Zachariam*: l'architecture d'ensemble, le détail des procédés, l'utilisation de sources diverses personnalisent son Commentaire. Ils lui donnent en effet un ton et un style particuliers, tout en l'inscrivant, en partie, dans la lignée des divers courants de l'exégèse alexandrine, entièrement allégorique d'après Jérôme.[11]

Architecture d'Ensemble

Les différences entre la structure de l'*In Zachariam* de Jérôme et le modèle didymien apparaissent d'emblée. Pour commenter la même matière scripturaire, le Latin, peut-être pressé par le temps, se montre moins prolixe que son devancier qui détaille grandement son explication. Le désir hiéronymien de condenser, de mieux centrer et de rendre plus cohérent son commentaire éxégétique que son devancier, ne se révèle pas que dans cet équilibre de son explication puisque, à l'inverse de Didyme qui écrit avec toujours plus de *copia*, Jérôme rédige trois livres plus courts que les cinq de son prédécesseur. Il va même jusqu'à regrouper des lemmes, que fractionne Didyme, pour mieux respecter la *consequentia* du texte biblique et mettre en valeur certaines séquences narratives et/ou unités de sens, comme Zacharie 1:2–4; 6:9–15 ou 11:7b–9.

Avec, en outre, ses fréquents renvois internes au texte de Zacharie soulignant l'enchaînement et la cohérence des péricopes, l'organisation générale du commentaire hiéronymien n'est pas seule à dévoiler la distance que prend le moine de Bethléem vis-à-vis de son prédécesseur: Jérôme ne "cueille" pas les citations bibliques "comme elles se présentent."[12] Le butin est même fort pauvre. En effet, sur un total de 1964 citations ou allusions bibliques, l'exégète latin ne reprend que 392 citations ou allusions bibliques à Didyme; en clair, toutes les autres ne proviennent pas du commentaire de l'Alexandrin! En outre, la trame des citations bibliques est loin d'être la même chez les deux exégètes.[13] Parfois, pour commenter quelques péricopes,[14] Jérôme ne reprend nullement l' "appareil des citations" de son devancier. Il fait encore preuve d'innovation et de *variatio* dans le choix et l'agencement de ses citations bibliques même lorsqu'il s'inspire de son modèle. Il

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[10] Didym. *Sur Zach.* 1 (*SC* 83); 2–3 (*SC* 84); 4–5 (*SC* 85).

[11] Hier. *In Zach.*, prol. (748).

[12] Didym. *Sur Zach.* 1 (*SC* 83:130).

[13] Le terme, pris au sens large, ne distingue pas les citations ou allusions bibliques.

[14] Jérôme ne reprend à Didyme aucune citation pour commenter par ex. les versets de Zacharie 1:1; 7:1–3; 11:3.

en extrait de fait les citations de façon isolée,[15] ou par série de deux[16] ou plus.[17] Et, bien souvent, au lieu de reproduire l'ordre établi par Didyme, il entrelace à son gré les fils de l'écheveau scripturaire et construit un texte obéissant à une logique toute personnelle: il déplace telle citation,[18] intervertit deux citations ou des séries.[19] Bien plus, loin de reprendre telles quelles les citations de l'Alexandrin, il raccourcit[20] ou rallonge,[21] regroupe, dissocie, préfère l'allusion à la citation, ou l'inverse. Même les citations qu'il reprend à Didyme, il les adapte parfois, en ajoutant des mots voire des idées ou en en retranchant, en changeant, dans la phrase, la structure, le temps, le mode, la personne, certains termes—et quelquefois aussi le sens[22]—en simplifiant et rendant même plus précis son propos, sans parler des hésitations entre la traduction de l'Hébreu et celle des LXX.

Ces divergences portant sur l'organisation et la trame scripturaire des deux Commentaires soulignent les différences d'orientation et de méthode des deux exégètes. D'un côté, on le sait, Didyme ne commente que la Septante, alors que le moine de Bethléem explique en premier lieu le texte hébreu, dont il donne une traduction,[23] puis, en second lieu le texte des LXX, dans la version d'une vieille latine plus ou moins retouchée.[24] Autant que possible, il tient compte des différences de traduction sans pouvoir toujours trouver une solution convaincante. Il juxtapose sans justification les commentaires des textes, très différents parfois, de l'Hébreu et de la Septante,[25] alors qu'il donne en parallèle une traduction

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[15] Par ex. Luc 1:69 (799); Ézéchiel 31:3–4 (849).

[16] Par ex. Jérémie 3:20 et Ézéchiel 16:42 (758); 2 Timothée 4:8 et Jacques 1:12 (798–9).

[17] Par ex. 758–9; 808–9; 877–9.

[18] Par ex. Matthieu 5:34–7, après Romains 1:29 (28), qui devrait être après Éphésiens 4:25; cf. Didym. *O.C.* 622; Ézéchiel 31:3–4 qui devrait être après Isaïe 2:13 (849); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 812, 820.

[19] Par ex. Jacques 1:12; Psaume 84:12/Jean 29:29, 36; Luc 1:69 (798–9); Psaume 47:2 et Isaïe 2:2–3 (807); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 538, 540; Psaume 85:16 et Isaïe 60:19 (863); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 904–6.

[20] Par ex. Psaume 125:1 (757); cf. Didym. qui cite Psaume 125:1 et 3 (220); 2 Timothée 4:8 (798); cf. Didym. qui cite 2 Timothée 4:7–8, après avoir deux fois fait allusion à 2 Timothée 4:7 (438–40); Matthieu 10:34–6 (858), cf. Didym. *O.C.* 886: Matthieu 10:34.

[21] Par ex. Philippiens 2:6–8 (767); cf. Didym. qui ne cite que Philippiens 2:7 (270); Isaïe 58:5–8 (802); cf. Didym. qui cite Isaïe 58:5 et 58:7–8 (478).

[22] Par ex. *Domini* de Psaume 106:23–4 (846); cf. τοῦ θεοῦ chez Didym. *O.C.* 780; *manibus*, *illic reptilia*, *quorum non est numerus* de Psaume 103:25–6 (846) n'est pas chez Didym. (*O.C.* 783) et Jérôme intervertit l'ordre des deux propositions qui suivent (*animalia*.. *pertransibunt*) et change le temps du verbe (*pertransibunt* au lieu du présent en Grec).

[23] On peut noter quelques variantes—par toujours signalées par M. Adriaen—avec le texte de la *Vulgate*.

[24] Il n'est pas sûr que la traduction latine des LXX du commentaire hiéronymien soit de Jérôme.

[25] Hier. *In Zach.* 1.5.1–4 (786–7); 2.6.9–15 (795–6); 3.11.6–7 (852).

latine, ou mieux, grecque, de certains termes hébreux, sans même l'exploiter. Bien souvent, il en fait des équivalents qu'il signale ou non. Cette double compétence, en Grec et en Hébreu, lui permet aussi de comparer les traductions grecques autres que la LXX[26] (dans les *Hexaples d'Origène* sans doute), de recourir habilement à l'étymologie—plus souvent celle qu'il donne dans son *Livre sur l'interprétation des noms hébreux* [389] que celle transmise par Didyme[27]—voire à l'orthographe des mots hébreux, avant de valoriser l'*Hebraica veritas* à laquelle il est attaché et revient. Bibliste au confluent de l'Orient et de l'Occident, des cultures romaine, grecque et hébraïque, il fait même écho aux discussions portant sur le canon et l'authenticité des textes bibliques. Ainsi recourt-il, à la suite de Didyme, à *l'Épître aux Hébreux,*[28] dont il accepte la canonicité, discutée pourtant par la majorité des occidentaux,[29] ainsi qu'au livre de la *Sagesse,* lui aussi controversé à l'époque.[30] Scientifique et rigoureux, humble et objectif en cas de trop grande difficulté ou d'obscurité,[31] le commentaire de Jérôme est ainsi novateur, comparé à celui de l'Alexandrin. En effet, même si Didyme aborde quelquefois l'histoire ou l'explication littérale,[32] son exégèse est avant tout allégorique. Jérôme, pour sa part, qui l'a annoncé dès son *Prologue*,[33] établit un équilibre entre "l'interprétation historique," appuyée sur le texte hébreu, et "l'interprétation spirituelle,"[34] fondée sur la traduction des LXX. Il balise généralement[35] son texte de transitions claires facilitant la lecture et marquant bien le début de l'interprétation "allégorique."[36] Ces qualités pédagogiques s'ajoutent à la qualité de son information. Si elle ne dépassait pas le cadre de la présente étude, destinée à montrer l'originalité de

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[26] *Passim* mais en particulier en 1.3.10 (776); 2.6.9–15 (797); 11.6–7 (852).

[27] Hier. *In Zach.* 2.9.5–8: *Ascalon* interpretatur *ignis ignobilis* sive *ponderata*; cf. Hier. *Hebr.nom.* (*CCSL* 72:143): *ignis ignobilis*; cf. Didym. *O.C.* 671, § 102: "Ascalon, la mesurée au cordeau."

[28] Hier. *In Zach.* 2.8.1–3 (807).

[29] Hier. *Ep.* 129:3 (*CSEL* 56:169): *Illud nostris dicendum est, hanc epistulam, quae scribitur ad Hebraeos, non solum ab ecclesiis orientis sed ab omnibus retro ecclesiae Graeci sermonis scriptoribus quasi Pauli apostoli suscipi, licet plerique eam vel Barnabae vel Clementis arbitrentur, et nihil interesse, cuius sit, cum ecclesiastici viri sit et cotidie ecclesiarum lectione celebretur. quodsi eam Latinorum consuetudo non recipit inter scripturas canonicas*..

[30] *In Zach.* 2.8.4–5 (809); 3.12.9–10 (866).

[31] C'est, en particulier, le cas en 2, 9, 15b–16 (836), en 2, 10, 1–2 à propos des divergences de traduction *niues/phantasias* (838).

[32] Par ex. Didym. *Sur Zach.* 1, § 3 (190–93); 2, §§ 6–14 (428–34); 4, § 132–40 (868–72).

[33] Hier. *In Zach.,* prol. (748).

[34] Voir P. Jay, "Le vocabulaire exégétique de saint Jérôme dans le *Commentaire sur Zacharie*," *REAug* 14 (1968) 3–16.

[35] Par ex. Hier. *In Zach.* 1.1 (754, 756); 2.7.8–14 (805); 3.12.4 (863).

[36] *In Zach.* 1.5.9–11 (791); 2.6.9–15 (798); 3.14.5 (881).

l'exégète latin face à son prédécesseur, une analyse minutieuse révélerait sa bonne connaissance de l'histoire et des *realia* des Juifs, son habileté à utiliser les historiens grecs et latins. Mais c'est dans la façon dont il traite dans le détail la source didymienne que transparaît le mieux l'érudition de Jérôme.

Détail des Procédés

Une lecture plus approfondie du commentaire latin révèle que Jérôme ne plagie pas Didyme, du reste jamais nommé, et que, contrairement à l'affirmation de L. Doutreleau, "étudier l'allégorie de l'un," ce n'est pas forcément "étudier celle de l'autre."[37] Non seulement Jérôme ne suit pas particulièrement son devancier dans l'emploi du vocabulaire exégétique,[38] mais encore il laisse de côté un grand nombre de thèmes. Évidemment, aux emprunts signalés par L. Doutreleau et M. Adriaen, peuvent êtres adjoints les quelques nouveaux passages où des citations bibliques sont reprises, ainsi que quelques autres rencontres, sans que les ait signalées l'éditeur du *CC*. Mais, dans l'ensemble, Jérôme ne s'embarrasse pas d'un certain nombre de détails, à ses yeux, superflus, des circonlocutions, des développements appelés simplement par les rapprochements de termes ou d'idées qu'affectionne l'exégèse allégorique de Didyme.

Au chapitre 7, dans le livre II de l'*In Zachariam,* sont omis: la distinction des deux jeûnes, le bon et le mauvais,[39] le thème du mauvais jeûne,[40] l'assimilation de Jérusalem et des villes environnantes à l'Église et aux croyances orthodoxes,[41] l'examen du contraire de la justice,[42] le développement sur les veuves et orphelines spirituelles que sont les âmes,[43] l'attention et la docilité à la Loi, la louange à Dieu,[44] l'analyse de la libre détermination humaine,[45] le thème du cœur docile,[46] le développement sur la colère et les châtiments de Dieu,[47] les interprétations allégorique et tropologique de la terre d'élection transformée en désert.[48]

Au chapitre 13, dans le dernier livre de l'*In Zachariam,* sont abandonnés le développement sur les cris de douleur des idoles,[49] l'excursus grammatical

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37 Didym. *Sur Zach.* (*SC* 83:134–5).

38 Voir Jay, "Vocabulaire exégétique."

39 Ibid., 476, §§ 119–21.

40 Ibid., 478, § 124.

41 Ibid., 478–82, §§ 124, 126–31.

42 Ibid., 486, §§ 139–42.

43 Ibid., 490, §§ 148–9.

44 Ibid., 494–6, §§ 155–61.

45 Ibid., 504–10, §§ 175–85.

46 Ibid., 512–14, § 189.

47 Ibid., 514–24, §§ 192–210.

48 Ibid., 524–30, §§ 211–20.

49 Ibid., 952, §§ 289–90.

concernant l'emploi au singulier et au pluriel du mot "esprit" et le développement portant sur la disparition du nom des idoles,[50] l'explication sur les faux prophètes et les hypocrites,[51] l'évocation de la noirceur de Satan,[52] la division tripartite du peuple hébreu,[53] les longs développements sur les trois catégories par rapport à la vertu et par rapport au pur et à l'impur.[54]

Ce choix établi par Jérôme aboutit à une sélection de thèmes traités sous la forme d'emprunts rapides, de reprises de plusieurs lignes ou d'imitation d'une ou plusieurs pages de Didyme, rapprochements d'ailleurs pas toujours indiqués par M. Adriaen. Les emprunts rapides à l'Alexandrin se bornent souvent aux seules citations bibliques. Livrées avec très peu d'explication—voire *sans*—seules ou en série, elles semblent parler d'elles-mêmes. Énigmatiques, elles invitent le lecteur à restituer l'enchaînement des idées, l'argumentation ou la démonstration que ne permettent pas toujours de retrouver les connecteurs logiques employés par le Latin.

Plus travaillés, les remplois de plusieurs lignes de l'Alexandrin révèlent déjà les qualités intellectuelles et l'habileté de l'exégète latin, qui s'écarte subtilement de son prédécesseur. Certes, il le cite parfois en Grec ou le traduit plus ou moins littéralement;[55] il corrige ses erreurs;[56] mais il préfère reprendre ses références scripturaires, en respectant ou variant l'ordre, pour en faire un usage différent et/ou leur donner une interprétation autre, souvent plus positive ou adoucie, parfois forcée ou surenchérie, voire justifiée différemment. Il modifie, sinon inverse, les angles d'approche. Il transforme, adapte la pensée de Didyme en lui ajoutant des idées plus proches de la vie des hommes et de l'éthique chrétienne, ou clarifie son exégèse, et la rend moins abstraite mais mieux ancrée dans la réalité ecclésiale et la vie de ses contemporains que son devancier.[57] De même, il rend son exégèse plus vivante en la dynamisant par des marques d'oralité tandis que l'alexandrin en reste à un exposé plus neutre.[58]

Cet art de la marqueterie, ce talent de l'*imitatio* et de la *variatio* apparaissent surtout dans le livre I de l'*In Zachariam,* dans l'explication de la sixième vision (Zacharie 5:1–4),[59] dans le livre II, à l'occasion des explications de Zacharie 8:4–

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[50] Ibid., 954, §§ 293.

[51] Ibid., 958–960.

[52] Ibid., 964, § 312.

[53] Ibid., 968, §§ 4–6.

[54] Ibid., 974–6.

[55] Par ex. Hier. *In Zach.* 2.8.20–22 (822); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 638, § 45, l. 11; 3.12.6–7 (865); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 914, §§ 218–20.

[56] Hier. *In Zach.* 1.1.7 (753); cf. Didym., 134–5; cf. 2.6.9–15 (798); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 432, § 12.

[57] Hier. *In Zach.* 2.7.1–7 (801); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 476–8, § 122–3; 3.13.7–9 (875); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 962–4, §§ 311.

[58] Hier. *In Zach.* 2.7.8–14 (804); cf. Didym. *O.C.* 484, § 135.

[59] Hier. *In Zach.* 1.5.1–1 (786–7).

5;[60] 8:11–12;[61] 8:16–17;[62] 8:23;[63] 9:13;[64] 10:6–7;[65] 10:8–10[66] et 10:11–12,[67] et dans le livre III lors des explications de Zacharie 14:1–2;[68] 14:3–4a;[69] 14:8–9;[70] 14:10–11,[71] et 14:15.[72] Les procédés communs à la méthode utilisée dans les remplois de plusieurs lignes de Didyme ne parviennent pas à occulter la liberté prise à l'égard du modèle et l'originalité des exégèses hiéronymiennes aux multiples facettes: variation, clarification, érudition, innovation.

Pour finir, cas extrêmes, Jérôme refuse ou délaisse le modèle didymien. Par exemple, pour commenter Zacharie 8:16–17 évoquant les jugements de paix qui doivent être rendus et la nécessité de ne nourrir en son cœur aucune "malice," il décrie ironiquement l'allégorisation—avec la citation d'un *topos* comique—en visant sans doute son devancier.[73] Paradoxalement, il développe une argumentation tropologique assez proche de l'"allégorie" de Didyme. Il lui reprend en particulier la classification de la *malitia* en *afflictio* et *malum*,[74] mais ajoute la notion de "miséricorde" aux notions de vérité et de justice indispensables aux jugements de paix.[75] Plus loin, tout en la résumant, le Latin ne retient pas l'interprétation de son prédécesseur sur les arbres du Liban de Zacharie 11:1–2.[76] Il trouve même superflu de commenter, comme Didyme, les passages évidents,[77] ou de s'embarrasser, comme lui, de circonlocutions interminables.[78] Ainsi le savoir-faire et les constants procédés d'anamorphose, les oublis volontaires comme les effets de miroirs déformants, prouvent-ils que l'œuvre de Jérôme n'est ni le plagiat ni le pastiche du commentaire de Didyme et que, au lieu d' "emprunter la personnalité"[79] de l'Alexandrin, le Stridonien affirme la sienne propre, en rehaussant son commentaire par la confluence de divers courants éxégétiques.

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60 Ibid., 2.8.4–5 (808, 809).
61 Ibid., 2.8.11–12 (813, 816).
62 Ibid., 2.8.16–17 (818, 819).
63 Ibid., 2.8.23 (823, 824).
64 Ibid., 2.9.13 (833, 834).
65 Ibid., 2.10.6–7 (841, 842).
66 Ibid., 2.10.8–10 (843, 845).
67 Ibid., 2.10.11–12 (846, 847).
68 Ibid., 3.14.1–2 (877).
69 Ibid., 3.14.3–4a (878).
70 Ibid., 3.8–9 (884, 885).
71 Ibid., 3.10–11 (886, 889).
72 Ibid., 3.14, 15 (892, 893).
73 Ibid., 2.8.16–17 (819).
74 Ibid., 2.8.16–17 (819); cf. Didym. *O.C.*, 627, §§ 24–8.
75 Ibid., 2.8.16–17 (818)
76 Ibid., 3.11.1–2 (849).
77 Ibid., 3.11.4–5 (850, 851).
78 Ibid., 3.11.14 (858).
79 Voir *SC* 83:132.

Utilisation de Sources Diverses

Didyme, selon l'indication du *Prologue,* n'est pas le seul inspirateur de Jérôme. Hippolyte de Rome et Origène, jamais explicitement nommés par la suite, ont aussi nourri sa réflexion. Le Commentaire d'Hippolyte étant perdu, il est difficile d'évaluer l'influence du "Romain" sur l'œuvre hiéronymienne d'après les rares fragments de son exégèse![80] Mais, plus que celle d'Hippolyte, c'est l'exégèse d'Origène, lui-même initiateur de Didyme, qui se devine tout au long du commentaire de Jérôme. Même si le Commentaire d'Origène s'achève sur la huitième vision de Zacharie 6, l'influence de cet Alexandrin est perceptible à maints indices: interprétation ressemblante de telle citation, *imitatio* d'Origène dans les passages non inspirés par Didyme ou encore influence d'Origène par le prisme de l'exégèse didymienne.

Par exemple, dans le livre I de l'*In Zachariam*, pour Zacharie 2:6–9, Jérôme, à la suite d'Origène,[81] associe le thème du chaudron de Jérémie 1:13 et d'Ézéchiel 24:3–5—non mentionné par Didyme—à la dévastation venant de l'Aquilon, un "vent très rigoureux," d'après Sirach 43:20 (*durissimus ventus*) selon le traducteur des *Homélies sur Ézéchiel* d'Origène,[82] c'est-à-dire Jérôme. D'ailleurs l'expression est reprise dans le commentaire hiéronymien.[83]

En commentant Zacharie 6:12, dans le livre II de l'*In Zachariam*, Jérôme voit le Christ dans l'*Orient*, tout comme Didyme à la suite d'Origène,[84] mais il développe longuement l'idée à la différence de Didyme qui la survole.[85] On retrouve aussi chez Jérôme les thèmes du Sauveur du monde, de la justice du Seigneur, présents dans le Commentaire origénien de Jean 1:29.[86] Dans le même livre de ce Commentaire, Origène, comme Jérôme, associe Jean 14:6 au thème de la justice du Christ,[87] et commente le Psaume 136:1.[88] De même, le Psaume 136:1 est commenté en lien avec Zacharie 6:12 dans les *Homélies sur les Nombres.* L'explication de Jérôme est dans le même esprit que celle d'Origène pour qui Babylone représente le péché, et le retour à Jérusalem, le regard tourné vers la Loi de Dieu.[89] Ainsi le *quidam* évoqué par Jérôme, pour la péricope Zacharie 6:9–15, est-il vraisemblablement Origène.[90]

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80 *Biblia Patristica* (Paris, 1977), 2.175–6.

81 Orig., *Hom.Ex.* 9.4 (*SC* 321:299); *Hom.Ez.* 1.14 (*SC* 352:91).

82 Orig. *Hom.Ez.* 1.14 (*SC* 352:91).

83 Hier. *In Zach.* 1.2.6–9 (766).

84 Orig. *Hom.Iud.* 8.1 (*SC* 389:186–9).

85 Didym. *O.C.* 444, § 33 sq.

86 Orig. *In Ioh.* 6, §§ 301, 304 (*SC* 157:359–60).

87 Ibid., 6, §§ 40–41 (158–61).

88 Ibid., 6, §§ 245–6 (314–17).

89 Orig. *Hom.Num.* 15.1.4 (*SC* 442:166–99).

90 Hier. *In Zach.* 2.6.9–15 (799).

En expliquant Zacharie 13:7–9, il n'est pas impossible que Jérôme, dans le livre III de son *In Zachariam*, vise Origène en attaquant les *quidam* qui "en voulant passer pour en savoir plus que les autres, ne respectent pas la règle de la vérité."[91] De fait, si tant est que l'on puisse en juger d'après l'exégèse de Zacharie 13, 7 de l'*Homélie 11, 2 sur l'Exode*, Origène rapproche cette prophétie non de l'interprétation de Matthieu 26:31 et 26:56, mais bien plutôt d'Exode 17:5–6 et de I Corinthiens 10:4, du rocher frappé par Moïse, en réalité le Christ qui a fait jaillir les sources du Nouveau Testament.[92]

En plus de ces sources grecques des éléments romains personnalisent le commentaire hiéronymien. De fait, dans certains passages, y compris ceux fort influencés par Didyme, apparaissent des notions qui ne proviennent ni de la source didymienne ni du matériau origénien. Premier facteur de romanisation, la référence aux auteurs latins inscrit l'œuvre hiéronymienne dans la tradition littéraire et historique occidentale: les emprunts à Cicéron (évocation des *quattuor perturbationes* des *Tusculanes*, des quatre *uirtutes* du *De Officiis,* reliées au v. 733 du Chant 6 de l'*Énéide*,[93] la mention de la *frugalitas* de la *Troisième Tusculane*[94]), *qui symbolisent au mieux* la "romanisation" de la philosophie grecque vulgarisée; l'introduction de certains thèmes, dans la lignée de la philosophie stoïcienne transmise par Sénèque (idée de la "clémence," nécessaire à l'homme vis-à-vis de ses "frères de sang" et "dans la foi"[95]); les renvois à Virgile,[96] Horace,[97] et à Tacite.[98] A ces références païennes s'ajoutent des allusions implicites ou explicites aux auteurs chrétiens: Tertullien (*Contre Marcion*[99]), Cyprien (*Testimonia*[100]), Lactance (*Institutiones*,[101] *De ira Dei*,[102] *De mortibus persecutorum*[103]). Si le Commentaire hiéronymien réalise le syncrétisme entre divers courants de pensée, il renvoie aussi l'écho des controverses doctrinales du moment. Or certains "anthropomorphismes" embarrassent quelque peu Jérôme qui propose des justifications absentes de l'argumentation des Alexandrins. Par exemple, les

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91 Ibid., 3.13.7–9 (875).

92 Orig. *Hom.Ex.* 11.2 (328–31).

93 Hier. *In Zach.* 1.1.18–21 (761–762). Voir A. Canellis, "Saint Jérôme et les passions: sur les *quattuor perturbationes* des *Tusculanes*," *VigChr* 54 (2000) 178–203, et en part. 186–8.

94 Hier. *In Zach.* 3.12.6–7 (865); cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 3.8.16–18.

95 Hier. *In Zach.* 2.7.8–14 (804); cf. Sen. *De clem.* 2.3.1–2.

96 Hier. *In Zach.* 2, prol. (795); 3, prol. (848).

97 Ibid., 2, prol. (795).

98 Ibid., 3.14.1–2 (878).

99 Ibid., 2.7.8–14; cf. Tert. *Adv.Marc.* 4.16.2–5.

100 Hier. *In Zach.* 1.3.8–9 (774–5); cf. Cyp. *Test. (Ad Quir.)* 2.16 (*CCSL* 3:51–2).

101 Hier. *In Zach.* 1.3.1–5 (771); cf. Lact. *Inst.* 4.14.12–14 (*SC* 377:122–31); Hier. *In Zach.* 3.12.6–7 (865); cf. Lact. *Div.inst.* 6.3–4 (*CSEL* 19.1:485–6).

102 Hier. *In Zach.* 2.10.11–12; cf. Lact. *De ira Dei,* 20.12 (*SC* 289:194–5).

103 Hier. *In Zach.* 3.14.12 (889); cf. Lact. *Mort.persec*. (*SC* 39).

thèmes de l'immutabilité et de l'invisibilité de Dieu, si débattus par les hérétiques, ne pouvaient laisser indifférent ce champion de l'orthodoxie![104] Pour finir, le dernier facteur de romanisation, c'est la référence constante à la langue latine tout au long du Commentaire, mais en particulier dans le recours au vocabulaire des institutions romaines pour l'explication de Zacharie 8:6[105] et dans l'exégèse personnelle fondée sur la traduction de l'hébreu en Zacharie 9:5–8.[106]

Ainsi, les trois livres de l'*In Zachariam* révèlent la distance prise par le moine de Bethléem vis-à-vis de son principal devancier alexandrin. Tout y est matière à innovation et démarquage: l'organisation générale du commentaire est refondue, les idées de la source sont sélectionnées et traitées de manière personnelle. Travail de broderie raffiné et triomphe de la romanisation, le Commentaire de Jérôme s'inscrit dans une longue tradition historique, exégétique voire littéraire qu'il tisse et entrelace à son gré : histoire des Juifs, allégorie alexandrine, philosophie grecque transmise par des vulgarisateurs latins de génie, et plus largement les pensées occidentale et orientale, s'y côtoient et s'y mêlent pour le bonheur des lecteurs latins de l'époque. Opposées à celles de Didyme, la démarche argumentative et la technique d'explication de Jérôme visent toujours à la synthèse, à la concision, au syncrétisme offrant ainsi à cette exégèse un aspect novateur, une grande originalité et une richesse qui empêchent de voir en l'*In Zachariam* une "copie conforme" du Commentaire didymien. Loin d'"emprunter la personnalité" de son prédécesseur, il la masque pour courir librement, mais à son allure propre dans le "vaste champ des Écritures."[107]

104 Hier. *In Zach.* 2.8.13–15 (817); 2.8.20–22 (821–2).

105 Ibid., 2.8.16–17. (810).

106 Ibid., 2.9.5–8 (828).

107 Ibid., prol. (748).

Chapter 13

The Significance of Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians* in his Exegetical Production

Giacomo Raspanti

In recent decades scholars have become increasingly interested in the flourishing of Pauline exegesis in the late antique Latin Church, and in particular in Rome during the later fourth and early fifth centuries. At least four Latin writers produced commentaries during this period: Marius Victorinus (c.363); Ambrosiaster (366–384); Jerome (386); and Pelagius (c.405–410). To this list we may add Augustine's Pauline commentaries written in Tagaste around the mid-390s, the so-called Budapest Anonymous, on whom Pelagius depended and who is therefore also to be located in Rome in the last few decades of the fourth century, and Rufinus with his translation of Origen's commentary on Romans.[1]

The recent critical editions of Jerome's commentaries on Titus and Philemon[2] and on Galatians[3] provide a better grounding than has hitherto been available for the debate about a number of important issues related to the exegesis of the "younger" Jerome. These include the relationship between Latin and Greek sources (and in particular Origen's Pauline commentaries), the explanation of the so-called incident at Antioch (Galatians 2:11–14)—that is, the question about whether Peter

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[1] For general discussions of the phenomenon with updates on recent specialist literature, see M.G. Mara, "Ricerche storico-esegetiche sulla presenza del 'corpus' paolino nella storia del cristianesimo dal II al V secolo," in *Paolo di Tarso e il suo epistolario* (L'Aquila, 1983) 6–64; Idem, "Il significato storico-esegetico dei commentari al corpus paolino dal IV al V sec.," *AnnSE* 1 (1984) 59–74; S.A. Cooper, *Marius Victorinus's Commentary on Galatians. Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (Oxford, 2005) 3–15, 182–246; J. Lössl, "Augustine, 'Pelagianism', Julian of Aeclanum, and Modern Scholarship," *ZAC* 11 (2007) 129–50, 129–33.

[2] F. Bucchi ed., *S. Hieronymi commentarii in epistulas Pauli apostoli ad Titum et ad Philemonem*, *CCSL* 77C (Turnhout, 2003).

[3] G. Raspanti ed., *S. Hieronymi commentarii in epistulam Pauli apostoli ad Galatas*, *CCSL* 77A (Turnhout, 2006). Hereinafter quotations from *In Galatas* contain the book number of Jerome's commentary, the chapter and verse number of the Pauline Epistle, the *CCSL* 77A page and line numbers from that edition. For an annotated translation of the commentary, see A. Cain, *St. Jerome, Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, FOTC 120 (Washington DC, 2010). For a source-critical studies of the commentary, see A. Cain, "Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius in Jerome's *Commentary on Galatians* (3.6.11)," JThS n.s. 60 (2009) forthcoming.

and Paul genuinely quarrelled in that incident, or whether they just pretended[4]—the impact of this question on part of the correspondence between Jerome and Augustine,[5] and numerous statements on exegetical theory and examples of routine practice contained in the Commentary on Galatians (*In Gal.*), which constitute the first testimony of the philological and hermeneutic method that the Dalmatian was to refine and perfect in subsequent decades.[6]

Among the numerous issues that it would be possible to discuss, I would like briefly to deal with one that has previously been treated but that is nevertheless of such importance that it warrants discussion in the present volume. The question, raised in several quarters and on various occasions, concerns Jerome's reasons for embarking in 386 upon what he defined in the preface to the first book of the commentary on Galatians as "an enterprise not tried before me by writers in our language and, among the Greeks themselves, frequented by very few people, as the dignity of the subject required."[7] Here, and in what follows in the preface, Jerome expresses not only his intention to write a commentary on Galatians but also his reasons for relying upon the commentaries by Marius Victorinus, Ambrosiaster,[8] Origen, Didymus the Blind, Apollinaris of Laodicea and Eusebius of Emesa. He hoped to elaborate on them with elements of his own and a large cultural, doctrinal and even pastoral baggage, and to produce in consequence a work that, despite its youthful imperfections, is profound and original in its conception. In the past I have tried to answer this question by reconstructing the historical and cultural context in which the work was written[9] and, through internal references to the

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[4] See G. Raspanti, "San Girolamo e l'interpretazione occidentale di *Gal* 2, 11–14," *REAug* 49 (2003) 297–321.

[5] See A. Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Münster, 1999).

[6] See G. Raspanti, "*Adgrediar opus intemptatum*: l'*Ad Galatas* di Gerolamo e gli sviluppi del commentario biblico latino," *Adamantius* 10 (2004) 194–216.

[7] *In Gal.* Praef., 6 23–6.

[8] In fact, the only Latin author whom Jerome mentions in this context is Marius Victorinus. He does not mention an author who might be recognized as Ambrosiaster. His silence on this matter is strange and very difficult to explain. At the time (c.380), Ambrosiaster's work was perhaps the most important extant Latin Pauline commentary. According to H.J. Vogels, "Ambrosiaster und Hieronymus," *RBén* 66 (1956) 14–19 (15), Jerome's silence is probably due to reasons of reciprocal hostility. J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London and New York, 1975) 149, writes that Jerome's silence is a deliberate "relegation to oblivion"; see also G. Raspanti, "*Adgrediar opus intemptatum*," 198–9; A. Cain, "In Ambrosiaster's Shadow: A Critical Re-Evaluation of the Last Surviving Letter Exchange between Pope Damasus and Jerome," *REAug* 51 (2005) 257–77.

[9] After leaving Rome in 385, full of bitterness and acrimony towards the clergy in the Roman church that had been hostile to him, in the spring or summer of 386 Jerome settled in Bethlehem in a monastic community. A few kilometres away lay Caesarea, where, thanks to the library of Pamphilus, he could consult Origen's *Hexapla* and his numerous exegetical works: an ideal situation for daily reading of and commentary on the Bible (see P. Jay, *L'exégèse de saint Jérôme d'après son Commentaire sur Isaïe* [Paris, 1985] 529–34)

texts of Jerome, Marius Victorinus and Ambrosiaster, to reconstruct a picture of intertextual polemics that would suggest that one of the possible motivations of Jerome's Pauline exegesis may have been the desire to emulate and to challenge Biblical exegetes who enjoyed a certain success in Rome.[10] This, however, cannot be considered the only reason for his decision to comment on Paul, since Pauline exegesis was certainly not the only area of Biblical scholarship in which Jerome aimed for excellence. In what follows I therefore shall propose some further reasons for which Jerome committed himself to the demanding exegesis of Paul's letter to the Galatians, with an eye to throwing new light on his thought in this critical phase of his life and work.

What Bible for the Western Christians?

A decisive stimulus for the choice of Galatians, after Philemon, may have come to Jerome from the relevance that the letter had for him in 386. During his time in Rome Jerome had matured in the conviction that, when faced with issues raised in the New Testament by references to and quotations from the Old Testament or with other textual matters regarding the Old Testament, it was essential to turn to the "original" sources. In practice this meant the Hebrew version of the Bible rather than the Greek of the Septuagint (LXX) or the Old Latin Bible (*Vetus Latina*). He affirms this principle clearly in *In Gal.*: "I am in the habit, every time the apostles quote the Old Testament, of having recourse to the original texts and of looking carefully to see how the quotations were written in the original context."[11] Today this might appear to us an obvious and methodically sound choice. For Jerome, however, it was a difficult and in fact quite dramatic decision, as Alfons Fürst has rightly pointed out.[12] Above all it led to at least five serious consequences, which I shall discuss below.

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and for devoting himself to the writing of Scriptural commentaries in accordance with the hope expressed by Paula and Eustochium (who lived not far away in a convent), as well as by Marcella, who had remained in Rome but was constantly in touch with her friends in the Holy Land. On the circumstances surrounding Jerome's expulsion from Rome in 385, see A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009), Chapter 4.

[10] G. Raspanti, "*Adgrediar opus intemptatum*," 195–201; see also G. Raspanti, "L'esegesi della lettera ai Galati nel IV secolo d.C. Dal commentario dottrinale di Mario Vittorino ed Ambrosiaster a quello filologico di Girolamo," *Ho Theològos* 25 (2007) 109–28.

[11] *In Gal*. 2 3.10, 83 4–7: *Hunc morem habeo ut quotienscunque ab apostolis de veteri instrumento aliquid sumitur recurram ad originales libros et diligenter inspiciam quomodo in suis locis scripta sint*.

[12] A. Fürst, *Hieronymus. Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg, 2003) 109.

1. His recourse to the Hebrew original exposed Jerome to the hostility of the Western ecclesiastical communities that considered the Septuagint and the Latin translations based on them to be divinely inspired texts and that were inclined to judge a blasphemer and a counterfeiter anyone who, like Jerome, was about to modify the current translation of the sacred text on the basis of the Hebrew.[13]
2. By not using a text that was shared across the Western Church Jerome ran the risk of appearing to open the door to almost every type of heresy that had haunted the Church in the previous centuries. For, in the perception of most ecclesiastical writers at least, it was mainly due to the use of an unshared interpretation of the Biblical text that the heresies of the third and fourth centuries had arisen. A systematic revision of the Latin translation of the Bible therefore would inevitably have involved Jerome in taking up controversial positions, since every word translated in a new way clearly represented a potentially problematic theological option.
3. Related to the second point discussed above, the use of the original text of the Bible inevitably entailed the broaching of the sensitive matter of the unity of the Old and New Testaments, an issue that had been pregnant with consequences in the late second and early third centuries in the time of Marcion and Gnosticism.
4. Furthermore, it was necessary for Jerome to enter fully into the hermeneutic debate on the type of interpretation to be given to the Old Testament, at a particularly delicate moment for the exegesis of the Church, when some illustrious exegetes affirmed open hostility to the excesses of allegorization, and when a passion for Origen was looked upon with suspicion.
5. Lastly, a new Biblical translation resulted in the intensifying of polemic between the Christian and Jewish communities. The latter certainly could only look with suspicion upon a Christian taking an interest in textual matters concerning the sacred Hebrew text; and this is what Jerome in fact ended up doing. With a view to a new translation he had to work intensely in order to have before him a sufficiently reliable textual witness of the Jewish Bible.[14]

Paul as a Model of Philology and Biblical Exegesis

But what does Saint Paul's letter to the Galatians have to do with this debate? This letter, as expounded by Origen and other eminent early Christians, offered

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[13] Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 106.

[14] As the new book by M. Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology* (Leiden, 2007) shows once more, this process continued until the very end of Jerome's life; for this topic and related topics see also in the present volume the contributions by Hillel Newman, John Cameron, and Daniel King.

virtual solutions to each of the five problems mentioned above. As Jerome and his exegetical forebears rightly saw, the third and fourth chapters of Galatians are not concerned with the legalistic ("halachic") observance of the Jewish rites and their blending with the Christian cult, but on the contrary show us Paul in the guise of an ("haggadic") exegete dealing with the interpretation of the semantic meaning of the Bible. This, for Jerome and the ecclesiastical exegetes on whom he drew, was the true and precise model to be imitated by those who intended to read and explain the Scriptures in a Christian way. In this context, according to Jerome's explicit commentary on Galatians 4:21, the law which the Apostle mentions in Chapters 3 and 4 is often to be understood with reference to all the books of the Old Testament, and Paul's words in these chapters are to be considered as instructions to the Galatians, and actually to all Christian communities, both present and future, on how to behave when faced with the text of the Old Testament:

> It must be noted that here the term "law" is referred to the book of Genesis, and not, as is commonly believed, to the rules on what is to be done and what is to be avoided, but everything that is written about Abraham and his wives and children is called "law"; we read in another passage that the prophets too are called "law". Then he who according to the indications of Paul looks not at the surface but at its marrow listens to "the law"; he who in the manner of the Galatians only follows the outer shell does not listen to the law.[15]

It is in this sense that some verses of the epistle are interpreted by Jerome (and others) to relate to themes and key terms of the debate about the Bible in the fourth century. A typical example of this kind is Galatians 4:24, which contains the term "allegory." In this passage Paul reflects on the two covenants, one represented by Agar, the other by Sarah. His words provided a frame of reference for Christian interpreters of the Bible since the second century, and in the age of Jerome they continued to be of fundamental importance. Indeed, in the wake of Galatians 4:24 Jerome dwells on the meaning of the word "allegory" both in the Scriptural sphere and in the Greco-Roman cultural tradition, for the purpose, first of all, of contextualizing the Apostle's use of the term. Jerome thus observes the constant presence of allegorical language in the Scriptures and identifies in Paul's use of allegory a precise strategy borrowing the rhetorical terminology of *litterae saeculares* in order to show the need for *intellegentia spiritalis* as the true and only way of interpreting all the Scriptures and perceiving their full meaning,

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[15] *In Gal*. 2 4.21, 136 1–9: [Galatians 4:21: "*Dicite mihi qui sub lege vultis esse, legem non audistis?*"] *Notandum "legem" hic dictam esse Geneseos historiam, non, ut vulgo aestimant, quae facienda sint quaeve vitanda, sed totum quod de Abraham et eius uxoribus liberisque contexitur legem appellatam; legimus et in alio loco prophetas quoque legem vocari. "Audit" ergo "legem" qui iuxta Paulum non superficiem, sed medullam eius introspicit; non "audit legem" qui similis Galatis exteriorem tantum corticem sequitur*.

that is Christ, without admitting elements of the Jewish ritual tradition (Origen's influence is evident in these words).

> "They are allegorical affirmations" [Galatians 4:24a]. Allegory belongs properly to the grammatical art, and in what it differs from metaphor and all other tropes we learn as children at school: one thing places something in front of us with words, the other signifies in the sense; the books of orators and poets are full of it. The sacred Scriptures too were written through it to no mean extent. The apostle Paul (a man who to some degree had also touched on secular literature) knowing this, used precisely the term of the figure of speech to quote allegory, as it is called by his people, evidently so that it could better show the meaning of this passage with a catachresis proper to the Greek language […] From these and other examples it is evident that Paul did not ignore secular literature and what he here defined as "allegory" he elsewhere called "spiritual intelligence". […] But we call "spiritual", able to judge everything and not be judged by anyone, that man who knowing all the mysteries of the Scriptures understands them in a sublime way, and seeing Christ in the divine books admits nothing of the Judaic tradition in them.[16]

This is not all. Jerome seizes the opportunity to take his commentary on Galatians 4:24–6 in yet another direction, or rather, he exploits a second aspect which is suggested by this particular hermeneutic line of Paul. That is to say, he explains that for some people the two covenants (and in my opinion one has to think once more of Origen as the most likely source of these considerations) represent two different ways of interpreting the Scriptures. One is the interpretation according to the letter, represented by the children of Agar (the female slave), and the other, represented by the children of Sarah (the free woman), detects the deeper meanings of Scripture in an allegorical or spiritual way (according to Jerome's explanation as quoted above).[17] Moreover, this distinction suggests also in actual fact a hierarchical gradation of meaning which every interpreter of the Bible has to

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[16] *In Gal*. 2 4.24a, 139–40 1–40: [Galatians 4:24a: "*quae quidem sunt allegorica*."] *Allegoria proprie de arte grammatica est, et quo a metaphora vel caeteris tropis differat in scholis parvuli discimus: aliud praetendit in verbis, aliud significat in sensu; pleni sunt oratorum et poetarum libri. Scriptura quoque divina per hanc non modica ex parte contexta est. Quod intellegens Paulus apostolus (quippe qui et saeculares litteras aliqua ex parte contigerat) ipso verbo figurae usus est ut allegoriam, sicut apud suos dicitur, appellaret, quo scilicet sensum magis loci huius graeci sermonis abusione monstraret [..] Ex quibus et aliis evidens est Paulum non ignorasse litteras saeculares et quam hic allegoriam dixit alibi vocasse intellegentiam spiritalem [..] Sed nos spiritalem, qui omnia iudicet et ipse a nemine diiudicetur, eum virum dicimus qui universa Scripturarum sacramenta cognoscens sublimiter ea intellegat et Christum in divinis libris videns nihil in eis Iudaicae traditionis admittat*.

[17] *In Gal.* 2 4.24b–26, 141–2 29–47.

consider. It passes from the literal level (*historia*) to the upper level at which Christ opens up the meaning of the text and reveals himself as its ultimate meaning. We thus find once again that Jerome, following a number of earlier Christian exegetes, especially from the Greek tradition (principally, Origen), drew from Paul's very words his hermeneutic of the Bible. We may have become accustomed to ascertaining this method of his exegesis by studying his later commentaries, but it may well be worth noting that it was already fairly well developed at that rather early stage in his career as a Biblical commentator; and *In Gal*. itself contains many interesting examples that demonstrate how Jerome, already in 386, adhered to this way of explaining the sacred text.[18]

Also remarkable is that Jerome at one point discusses the question of whether Paul, when quoting or alluding to Old Testament passages in Galatians, resorted to an LXX or an original Hebrew version of the text. Jerome uses the difficulty of answering this question definitively as a pretext for arguing that what matters for the Biblical text is less the actual language in which it is originally written than the vivifying action of the Spirit that inspired both those who wrote it and those who are to interpret it. For example, on Galatians 3:13b–14 Jerome asks why Paul might have made certain textual choices when quoting Deuteronomy 21:23, and he discusses both the LXX and the Hebrew textual versions known to him. He uses this opportunity to emphasize the authoritative status of the LXX, but he also stresses the Apostle's deference to the Hebrew original. Owing to the combination of these two factors, he concludes, it is possible to demonstrate the fraudulent nature of the intervention of the Jews. For after the crucifixion of Christ, he asserts, they inserted in the vulgate text of Deuteronomy 21:23, both in the Hebrew and in the LXX text the term "*Dei*":

> I fail to understand why the apostle removed and added something in the verse "Cursed by God whoever hangs on the wood." If at first he followed the authority of the LXX, he should, as it was edited by them, also have added the noun "God"; if instead as a Jew among Jews he believed that what he had read in his language was very correct, he should not have quoted the words "whoever" or "on the wood." On this basis it seems to me either that the ancient Hebrew texts were different from now or that the Apostle, as I have previously said, quoted the meaning of the scriptural text, not the words, or, which seems preferable to me, that after the passion of Christ both in the Hebrew texts and in our codices the noun "God" was added to brand us with infamy because we believe in Christ cursed by God.[19]

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[18] Compare for example *In Gal.* 2 4.17–18, 128–9 16–29; 2 5.3, 151–2 10–43.

[19] *In Gal*. 2 3.13b–14, 89–92 4–87:*..scire non possum quare Apostolus in eo quod scriptum est: "maledictus a Deo omnis qui pendet in ligno" vel subtraxerit aliquid vel addiderit. Si enim semel auctoritatem Septuaginta interpretum sequebatur, debuit, sicut ab illis editum est, et Dei nomen adiungere; si vero ut Hebraeus ex Hebraeis id quid in sua lingua legerat putabat esse verissimum, nec "omnis" nec "in ligno", quae in Hebraeo non*

Thus, while Jerome reasserts the ecclesiastical authority of the LXX and its divine inspiration, it is possible for interpreters to work on the Hebrew original because this had been done by the model exegete himself, Paul. Hence the Hebrew is worthy of the same respect as the LXX (textually speaking) and therefore the work of those who turn to the Hebrew text to improve the Latin translation of the Bible is legitimate.[20] Moreover, Paul's exegesis provided Jerome with an important answer to one of the fundamental questions he was facing, namely to what extent it was legitimate to use the Hebrew version of the Old Testament as a reference for making systematic changes to the ancient Latin translations (based on the LXX) known as *Vetus Latina*.

Finally, returning to Jerome's reasons for the decision to comment on Galatians in the first place, we must recall that individual verses in this letter were used by orthodox and heterodox authors in support of their respective doctrines, as can be verified, for example, in the conclusive part of the commentary on Galatians 4:24b–26, in which Jerome polemicizes against Marcionites and Manicheans. Jerome refers to the habit of these heretics to undertake arbitrary textual interventions and to indulge in allegorical interpretation based on their personal beliefs rather than on the authority of those who wrote the sacred text, and in particular on the authority of Paul, a witness to the spiritual nature of the Mosaïc legislation and of the Old Testament. Jerome of course is not unaware of the fact that it was precisely this Paul and his teaching whom both Marcionites and Manicheans elected as the supreme authority for their speculations.

> Marcion and the Manicheans would not remove from their volumes this verse in which the Apostle said "they are allegorical affirmations" and the other verses that follow, believing that they are intended against us, that is to say that the law

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habentur, adsumere. Ex quo mihi videntur aut veteres Hebraeorum libri aliter habuisse quam nunc habent aut Apostolum, ut ante iam dixi, sensum Scripturarum posuisse non verba aut, quod magis est aestimandum, post passionem Christi et in Hebraeis et in nostris codicibus ab aliquo Dei nomen appositum ut infamiam nobis iureret qui in Christum maledictum a Deo credimus. In the commentary to Galatians 3:10 Jerome also stresses Paul's attention to the Hebrew text (*In Gal*. 2 3.10, 84 21–6): "The apostle, who had expert knowledge of Hebrew and also knew the law, if they had not been present in the Hebrew text would never have mentioned the words 'every' and 'in everyone'." *In hanc me autem suspicionem illa res stimulat quod verbum "omnis" et "in omnibus" quasi sensui suo necessarium ad probandum illud quod "quicumque ex operibus legis sunt sub maledicto sint" Apostolus, vir hebraeae peritiae et in lege doctissimus, numquam protulisset nisi in hebraeis voluminibus haberetur.*

[20] As we know, even though this position of Jerome's (to which he held on until the end of his life) did not amount to a dismissal of the LXX as a valid basis for theological exegesis, it was perceived as provocative and dangerous, e.g., by Augustine. For an overview of a variety of positions on this question in the time of Jerome and Augustine see J. Lössl, "A shift in patristic exegesis: Hebrew clarity and historical verity in Augustine, Jerome, Julian of Aeclanum and Theodore of Mopsuestia," *AugStud* 32 (2001) 157–75.

> must be interpreted in a different way from how it was written, although in any case, even if it has to be understood in an allegorical sense (as we also admit and Paul teaches), it was written in this way not on the basis of the wish of the person reading but because of the authority of the writer, and they are confuted by what they themselves believed they were preserving against us, because Moses, a servant of the creator God, also wrote texts with a spiritual content according to the teaching of their Apostle, whom they affirm to be the preacher of another Christ and of a better God.[21]

The verses on the divine inspiration of the Apostle's announcement, the fruit of the revelation of Christ and not of human teachings (Galatians 1:11–12), are an opportunity for Jerome to reaffirm again the need, against the threat of Marcion and other heretical pestilences, not only for a tropological reading aiming at the marrow and not stopping at the surface of the Biblical text, but above all for a reading that on this tropological basis is also Trinitarian in the sense that it derives from the Father, is uttered by Christ and is inspired by the Spirit among those who spread it.[22] Without going into the numerous examples of these positions and these pickets against heresies based on the Pauline text, I refer the reader to the works of other scholars, who in the past have already drawn attention to these aspects of the commentary on Galatians.[23]

Among a variety of reasons why Jerome decided to comment on Paul when he did, and more specifically on Galatians (not long after he had written a commentary on the letter to Philemon), there remains the possibility that Paul's letter to the Galatians represented for him a particularly valuable key for interpreting the Old Testament, and for illustrating and also defending his translation agenda for it, relying at least to some extent on the Hebrew text, to compare it with the Greek text in the context of the Greek exegetical tradition, and to take the liberty occasionally to suggest exegetical and even translational changes on the basis of that text. Thus for Jerome, the commentary on Galatians was a fundamental step he took toward the work he was about to do on the Bible, namely the recovery of *Hebraica veritas* and the valorization in the West of the rich hermeneutic tradition extant in Greek.

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[21] *In Gal*. 2 4.24b–26, 142 48–58: *Marcion et Manichaeus hunc locum in quo dixit Apostolus "quae quidem sunt allegorica" et caetera quae sequuntur de codice suo tollere noluerunt putantes adversum nos relinqui, quod scilicet lex aliter sit intellegenda quam scripta est, cum utique, etiamsi allegorice (ut nos quoque fatemur et Paulus docet) accipienda sit, non pro voluntate legentis, sed pro scribentis auctoritate sic condita sit et eo ipso quod contra nos servare visi sunt conterantur, quod Moyses, creatoris Dei servus, spiritalia scripserit Apostolo quoque eorum docente quem ipsi alterius Christi et melioris Dei adserunt praedicatorem*.

[22] *In Gal.* 1 1.11–12, 24–6 1–44.

[23] See especially the overview provided by B. Jeanjean, *Saint Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris, 1999) 104–25, 173–8, 220–5.

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PART III

Reception: Fifth through Sixteenth Centuries

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Chapter 14

The Raven Replies: Ambrose's *Letter to the Church at Vercelli (Ep.ex.coll. 14)* and the Criticisms of Jerome

David G. Hunter

Jerome's disdain for Bishop Ambrose of Milan has long been a matter for comment. Ever since Rufinus of Aquileia pointed out Jerome's abusive (albeit anonymous) allusions to Ambrose,[1] attentive observers have discerned many other attacks on Ambrose in his writings. Some of these assaults were explicit, such as Jerome's brusque dismissal of Ambrose in *De viris illustribus*.[2] Others were implicit, though unmistakable nonetheless. Scholarly discussion of this topic has focused on the reasons behind Jerome's hostility.[3] It has always been assumed that Ambrose remained aloof from the conflict and did not respond in kind.[4] My aim in

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[1] See Ruf. *Apol.c.Hier.* 2.25–8; cf. 2.39 and 2.47.

[2] *Vir.ill.* 124: "Ambrose, bishop of Milan, continues writing down to the present day. Concerning him I postpone judgment in that he is still alive lest I get blamed for flattery, on the one hand, or, on the other, for telling the truth"; T.P. Halton, *Saint Jerome: On Illustrious Men* (Washington, DC, 1999) 158.

[3] A. Paredi, "S. Gerolamo e s. Ambrogio," in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, 5 (Studi e Testi, 235; Vatican City, 1964), 153–98; P. Nautin, "L'activité littéraire de Jérôme de 387 à 392," *RThPh* 115 (1983) 247–59; W. Dunphy, "On the Date of St. Ambrose's De Tobia," *SEJG* 27 (1984) 29–33; G. Nauroy, "Jérôme, lecteur et censeur de l'exégèse d'Ambroise," in Y.-M. Duval ed., *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient: XVIe centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly*, septembre 1986 (Paris, 1988) 173–203; M. Testard, "Jérôme et Ambroise: Sur un 'aveu' du De officiis de l'évêque de Milan," in Duval, *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient*, 227–54; S. Oberhelman, "Jerome's Earliest Attack on Ambrose: On Ephesians, Prologue (ML 26:469D–70A)," *TAPhA* 121 (1991) 377–401; N. Adkin, "Ambrose and Jerome: The Opening Shot," *Mnemosyne* 46 (1993) 364–76; Idem, "Jerome on Ambrose: The Preface to the Translation of Origen's Homilies on Luke," *RBén* 107 (1997) 5–14; I. Davidson, "Pastoral Theology at the End of the Fourth Century: Ambrose and Jerome," *StudPatr* 33 (1997) 295–301.

[4] See R.A. Layton, "Plagiarism and Lay Patronage of Ascetic Scholarship: Jerome, Ambrose, and Rufinus," *JECS* 10 (2002) 489–522, at 514: "The bishop of Milan never deigned—at least publicly—to acknowledge the persistent criticism he received from Jerome"; Adkin, "Jerome on Ambrose," 9 n. 17: "… in [Ambrose's] extant works there is

this essay is to suggest that Ambrose was not entirely silent in the face of Jerome's abuse. In one of the final letters of his life, written to the church at Vercelli in 396 or early 397, Ambrose penned several passages that appear to have been responses to criticisms made by Jerome, especially in his *Ep*. 69 to Oceanus. Attention to these passages will shed new light on the conflict between Ambrose and Jerome. Furthermore, if my argument is correct, Ambrose's letter will provide a means to date more precisely the letter to Oceanus, the dating of which has hitherto been a matter of debate.

Jerome's Attacks on Ambrose

In order properly to contextualize Ambrose's response to Jerome, we must take a brief look back at the course of the latter's barbed references to the former. Through the efforts of scholars such as Angelo Paredi, Gérard Nauroy, Maurice Testard, and more recently, Neil Adkin and Ivor Davidson, a subtle and complex web of allusions to Ambrose has emerged out of Jerome's letters and treatises. It is possible to discern at least three distinct phases in Jerome's engagement with Ambrose: the first was his implicit criticism of Ambrose's *De virginibus* in *Ep*. 22 to Eustochium, composed in 384; the second was a series of negative allusions to Ambrose's competence as a Biblical scholar, which stretched from 386 into the early 390s; the third phase was Jerome's response to Ambrose's *De officiis* in several letters of the early to mid-390s, which included an attack on Ambrose's lack of preparation for the episcopacy in *Ep.* 69 to Oceanus. It was the cumulative effect of all these criticisms, but especially those in *Ep.* 69, I shall argue, that forced the bishop of Milan finally to respond to his accuser.

Jerome versus Ambrose, *De Virginibus*

Most scholars have argued that Jerome's hostility to Ambrose emerged only after his expulsion from Rome in 385, and that this event may have somehow provoked Jerome's attacks on Ambrose. In 1993, however, Neil Adkin, following some hints from Pierre Nautin and Yves-Marie Duval, argued that Jerome's famous *Ep.* 22 to Eustochium, composed in 384, already contained subtle critiques of the bishop of Milan. According to Adkin, when Jerome stated that Ambrose had "expressed himself with such eloquence that he has sought out, arranged, and given expression to all that pertains to the praise of virgins," he was subtly alluding to the

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of course no mention of Jerome"; Oberhelman, "Jerome's Earliest Attack," 383: "Ambrose gives us no hint whether he was aware of this attack"; Testard, "Jérôme et Ambroise," 254: "Et lorsque Jérôme s'est déchaîné contre lui, peut-être l'évêque a-t-il estimé que les devoirs de sa dignité lui demandaient de ne pas répondre et de ne pas même relever l'injure?"

derivative character of Ambrose's treatise *De virginibus*.[5] Moreover, Adkin cited other passages from *Ep.* 22 to show that Jerome deliberately distanced himself from Ambrose's praise of virginity, and even alluded indirectly to the bishop's *pompa sermonis*. The reason for these gibes, Adkin suggests, was Jerome's envy of Ambrose's superior intellectual gifts.[6]

Adkin's arguments are persuasive, although we must be careful not to exaggerate the degree of Jerome's antipathy to Ambrose in 384. Adkin has characterized Jerome's remarks as "scathing attacks on the *De virginibus*" and "snidely malicious," but Jerome's so-called "attacks" were so subtle that they have been missed by most commentators; in fact, they have often been taken for compliments. While Adkin was probably correct to see Jerome as already ill-disposed to Ambrose in 384, we must acknowledge that Jerome's criticisms of Ambrose became significantly more pronounced in the decade after his departure from Rome. This gives credence to the view of those who see Jerome's expulsion from the City as a turning point in relations between the two men, owing to Ambrose's failure to support Jerome in his conflict with the Roman clergy.[7] But whatever was the original cause of their conflict, it is clear that Jerome's hostility to Ambrose became more explicit in the second phase of his attack on Ambrose, which consisted of a series of hostile references that we find in Jerome's writings beginning in 386 and continuing into the early 390s.

Jerome versus Ambrose as a Biblical Scholar

In the second phase of Jerome's anti-Ambrosian polemic we find a new focus on the deficiencies of Ambrose specifically as an interpreter of scripture. For example, several scholars have observed that in the preface to his commentary on Ephesians, composed ca. 386, Jerome had contrasted his own careful, scholarly study of scripture with that of an unnamed author, whose approach to scripture he characterized as pompous, overly rhetorical, and haphazard. As Jerome put it:

> It is quite one thing to compose treatises on particular topics, for example, on avarice, as well as on faith, on virginity, and on widows, to harness secular eloquence to scriptural testimonies that one has extrapolated from this place or that on any one particular subject, and, as I may say, to utter bombastically a

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[5] Adkin, "Ambrose and Jerome," 366; citing Hier. *Ep.* 22.22. Adkin acknowledges Nautin, "L'activité littéraire," 258.

[6] "Ambrose and Jerome," 374.

[7] Andrew Cain has recently argued against the view that Jerome's expulsion was a factor in relations between him and Ambrose. See "In Ambrosiaster's Shadow: A Critical Re-Evaluation of the Last Surviving Letter Exchange between Pope Damasus and Jerome," *REAug* 51 (2005) 257–77. I remain inclined to the view that Ambrose's failure to support Jerome soured relations between the two men.

> pompous discourse filled with rhetorical topoi. It is quite another thing, however, to enter into and decipher what a prophet or apostle meant to say and to gain an understanding of matters such as what propelled them to write, what sort of reasoning they used to shore up their thoughts, and what particular role was played in the Hebrew Bible by the Idumeans, Moabites, Ammonites, Tyrians, Philistines, Egyptians, and Assyrians, and in the New Testament by the Romans, Corinthians…[8]

Although Jerome did not mention Ambrose by name in the passage above, the reference to him is unmistakable, if only because Jerome has listed the names of several of Ambrose's writings: *de fide*, *de virginitate*, and *de viduis*. Commenting on this passage, Adkin has noted that it stands at the head of a series of writings in which Jerome criticized Ambrose's lack of expertise in the area of Biblical interpretation. Not only has Jerome echoed his earlier comment in *Ep.* 22 about Ambrose's excessive rhetoric by referring here to the bishop's *pompaticum… sermonem*, but he has also subtly stressed his own expertise in Hebrew scholarship in contrast to Ambrose's ignorance.[9]

In roughly these same years (that is, in the later 380s and early 390s) we find several, even more hostile allusions to Ambrose in Jerome's writings. Two of these are the famous passages already noted by Rufinus. In 387 Jerome composed the preface to his translation of Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit*. After alluding to his forced departure from Rome at the instigation of the Roman clergy (a "senate of the Pharisees"),[10] Jerome contrasted his own fidelity as translator to that of "a certain person" (*cuiusdam*) who had shamelessly plagiarized from Didymus.[11] Characterizing Ambrose as "a deformed little crow" (*informis cornicula*) who adorned himself with foreign colors, Jerome described Ambrose's books *De spiritu sancto* as "bad Latin made from good Greek" (with an echo of Terence, *Eunuch*).[12] Jerome's translation of Didymus' *On the Holy Spirit*, as Rufinus already recognized, was a thinly veiled assault on the literary reputation of Ambrose, designed to expose the bishop as a plagiarist.[13]

Around 392 Jerome issued another hostile notice on Ambrose in the preface to his translation of Origen's homilies on Luke. In this instance he referred to Ambrose's commentary on Luke as a work that "sported in word and slept in

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[8] Trans. Oberhelman, "Jerome's Earliest Attack," 393–4.

[9] Adkin, "Jerome on Ambrose," 11–12.

[10] On the significance of the expression *senatus Pharisaeorum*, see A. Cain, "Origen, Jerome, and the *Senatus Pharisaeorum*," *Latomus* 65 (2006) 727–34.

[11] Hier. *Didym.spir.*, prol. (*SC* 386:138–40); trans. Layton, "Plagiarism," 500–501.

[12] Cited in D.S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as Satirist: A Study in Christian Latin Thought and Letters* (Ithaca, NY, 1964) 241.

[13] It may be the case that Jerome's appeal to Damasus as the promoter of his translation of Didymus was entirely fictional. See P. Nautin, "Le premier échange épistolaire entre Jérôme et Damase: lettres réelles our fictives?," *FZPhTh* 30 (1983) 331–44.

thought." Jerome then proceeded to offer his own translation of Origen as an alternative to Ambrose: "I have set aside for a short while the books on *Hebrew Questions*, to dictate, in accordance with your judgment, these words of a useful work, such things as belong to someone else and not to myself. I say this, since I may hear from the left the ominous raven croaking, who strangely laughs at the colors of all other birds, although he is himself completely dark." After noting that Origen's homilies on Luke were not his most serious work, Jerome promised to translate the more mature writings of the Alexandrian: "Then through your agency, the Roman language will know of how much good it had earlier been ignorant and has now begun to learn."[14]

Most scholars have seen in Jerome's preface to his translation of Origen's homilies on Luke a repetition of the charge of plagiarism found in the Didymus preface. In an article published in 1999, however, Adkin suggested that Jerome's portrait of "the ominous raven croaking, who strangely laughs at the colors of all other birds" must be an allusion to Ambrose (who lacked Hebrew) mocking Jerome's Hebrew scholarship.[15] In the later 380s and early 390s Jerome produced a series of works of Hebrew scholarship, including the *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, the *De situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum liber*, and the *Hebraicae Quaestiones in Genesim*. At the same time, he is known to have pointed out deficiencies in Ambrose's Biblical knowledge. For example, in his *Hebraicae Quaestiones* he censured a "certain person" (*quendam*) who identified Gog and Magog with the Goths, a (mis-)interpretation found in Ambrose's *De fide*.[16] Similarly in *Ep.* 54 to Furia (395) Jerome rebuked a "certain person" (*quidam*), who "lacking in knowledge" (*inperite*) numbered Debbora among the widows and considered Barak to be her son.[17] This misreading of Judges 4 is found in Ambrose, *De viduis*.[18] Although we have no explicit evidence that Ambrose actually did mock Jerome's Hebrew scholarship, Adkin may be correct to suggest that he did so. What is significant for our purposes here, however, is the fact that Jerome's dismissal of Ambrose as a "croaking raven" was meant to malign his training in scripture. As we shall see, part of Ambrose's response to Jerome in his letter to the church at Vercelli was to interpret Biblical ravens as symbols of those (like himself) who interpret scripture properly.

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[14] Hier. *Orig.hom in Luc.,* prol. (*SC* 87:94–6); trans. Layton, "Plagiarism," 508. Jerome then went on to recommend that Paula and Eustochium read the commentaries of Hilary and Victorinus on the gospel of Matthew, "lest you remain ignorant of how much study our own people (i.e., the Latins) once devoted to the sacred scriptures." The omission of Ambrose from the list of Latin commentators was, most likely, another slap at Ambrose's competence as a Biblical commentator.

[15] Adkin, "Jerome on Ambrose," 10–14.

[16] Discussed by Nauroy, "Jérôme," 185–92.

[17] *Ep.* 54.17 (*CSEL* 54:484), alluding to Ambrose, *De viduis* 8.44–7.

[18] Nauroy, "Jérôme," 183–4; Wiesen, *St. Jerome as Satirist*, 243 n. 157.

Jerome versus Ambrose, *de Officiis*

This brings me to the third phase in Jerome's assault on Ambrose. Sometime in the later 380s Ambrose composed *De officiis*, his treatise on the moral life dedicated especially to the clergy. Maurice Testard and Ivor Davidson have offered strong reasons for seeing the influence of *De officiis* on Jerome's *Ep.* 52 to Nepotian, composed in 393, and on several other letters of Jerome.[19] Among the passages signaled by both Testard and Davidson was Ambrose's statement about his own inadequate preparation for scriptural preaching, which is found in the opening paragraphs of *De officiis*:

> My wish is only to attain to the attention and diligence towards the divine Scriptures which the apostle ranked last of all among the duties of the saints. This is all I desire, so that, in my endeavor to teach others, I might be able to learn myself. For there is only one true Master, who never had to learn all that he taught everyone else: in this he is unique. Ordinary men must learn beforehand what they are to teach, and receive from him what they are to pass on to others. In my own case, not even this was allowed. I was snatched into the priesthood from a life spent at tribunals and amidst the paraphernalia of administrative office, and I began to teach you things before I had started to learn. With me, then, it is a matter of learning and teaching all at the same time, since no opportunity was given me to learn in advance.[20]

As both Testard and Davidson have observed, Ambrose acknowledged the irregular character of his ordination by repeatedly playing on the words *docere* and *discere*: that is, he admitted that he was compelled to "teach" before he had the opportunity to "learn." Furthermore, Testard has shown that Jerome used these same words against Ambrose in a series of writings, especially in *Ep.* 52 to Nepotian and in *Epp.* 53 and 58 to Paulinus of Nola. According to Testard, Jerome was virtually

[19] For the date of 393, see P. Nautin, "Études de chronologie hiéronymienne (393–397): IV. Autres lettres de la période 393–396," *REAug* 20 (1974) 251–84, at 251–3. I remain unconvinced by Neil Adkin's efforts to challenge Testard's conclusions; see Adkin, "Jerome, Ambrose and Gregory Nazianzen (Jerome, *Epist.* 52, 7–8)," *Vichiana* 4 (1993) 294–300. In *Ep*. 52 Jerome echoed numerous passages of *De officiis*, certainly enough to warrant the conclusion that Jerome had read and absorbed much of the treatise. As Davidson, "Pastoral Theology," 301, has noted: "Not all of what Jerome says need have come from Ambrose… However, the degree of detailed thematic overlap between the two documents is surely too substantial to be attributed merely to the repetition of commonplace professional tips for junior clerics who are about to take up new and onerous responsibilities."

[20] *De off*. 1.3–4; trans. I. Davidson, *Ambrose: De officiis* (Oxford, 2001) 119.

obsessed with this phraseology and constantly invoked it in order to characterize Ambrose as an inexperienced teacher and one ignorant of the scriptures.[21]

Among the texts of Jerome in which he made allusion to Ambrose's lack of preparation for the episcopacy there is one that is especially pertinent to my argument: *Ep.* 69 to Oceanus. The date of this letter has been something of a puzzle to scholars of Jerome. It must have been written after June of 395, the date at which Oceanus and Fabiola departed from Bethlehem for Rome. J.N.D. Kelly, for example, placed it somewhere in the years between 395 and 401,[22] but others have suggested a more restricted period: sometime between 395 and the death of Ambrose in April of 397. Both Wiesen and Oberhelman, for example, have noted that Jerome's attack on Ambrose in *Ep.* 69 was still anonymous, thus indicating that Ambrose was still alive.[23] I believe this date is correct, although the arguments of Wiesen and Oberhelman are not sufficiently persuasive. In the remainder of this essay I shall provide further reasons to locate Jerome's *Ep.* 69 prior to 397. I shall argue that Ambrose's letter to the church of Vercelli, composed late in 396 or early in 397, contains several allusions to Jerome's earlier attacks and, specifically, to the attacks found in *Ep.* 69.[24] If these arguments are correct, Jerome's *Ep.* 69 must have been written sometime before Ambrose's letter, most likely in 396.

Ambrose's Response to Jerome's Criticisms

The immediate occasion of Ambrose's letter to the church of Vercelli was the disputed episcopal election there, which pitted the monk Honoratus (Ambrose's preferred candidate) against a wealthy landowner, who appears to have been the people's choice. Ambrose's letter offered both an ardent defense of the ascetic ideal and a mini-treatise on the proper characteristics of a bishop. These topics naturally raised the issue of Ambrose's status at the time of his ordination, and there are at least three distinct places in Ambrose's letter to the church at Vercelli where the bishop of Milan seems to be engaging the criticisms made of him by Jerome. First, both Jerome's *Ep*. 69 and Ambrose's letter contain extensive discussions of the problem of digamous clergy, a matter on which the two men had conflicting views. Second, Jerome's letter contains criticisms of bishops (such as Ambrose) who were ordained without sufficient preparation, and Ambrose's letter appears to respond to this criticism. Third, Ambrose's letter contains an unusual

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[21] Testard, "Jérôme et Ambroise," 240–48, argues that Jerome was particularly interested in dissuading Paulinus from allying himself too closely with Ambrose.

[22] *Jerome. His Life, Writings, and Controversies* (New York, 1975) 214 n. 18. Kelly suggests "about 400."

[23] For this argument, see Wiesen, *St. Jerome as Satirist*, 243; Oberhelman, "Jerome's Earliest Attack," 378 n. 5.

[24] For the date of Ambrose's letter, see M. Zelzer, "Prolegomena," in *CSEL* 82/3: cxxvi.

exegesis of 1 Kings 17:3–7, in which a prominent place is given to the ravens who fed the prophet Elijah. When read in the light of Jerome's dismissal of Ambrose as a "croaking raven," Ambrose's interpretation of the Biblical ravens as sound Biblical interpreters can be seen as a subtle response to Jerome's denigration of his training as a Biblical interpreter. Each of these three arguments must be examined in detail.

Ambrose versus Jerome on Digamous Bishops

My first argument is that Ambrose appears to be responding to Jerome's criticisms of his view on the issue of digamous bishops. The issue between them was whether a marriage contracted before baptism should be counted against a candidate for ordination. Ambrose had first discussed this issue in *De officiis* and argued that a second marriage, even one undertaken before baptism, was an impediment to the episcopate. As he noted there, unlike sins of fornication which could be forgiven in baptism, the existence of a first marriage was no sin and, therefore, was unaffected by the reception of baptism:

> A lot of people find this surprising: why should a second marriage, even one contracted before baptism, raise obstacles to a person's election to sacred office and to the privilege of ordination? After all, they reason, even serious crimes are not normally an impediment, once they have been remitted by the sacrament of baptism. But we need to understand this: just because sin can be forgiven through baptism, this does not mean that the law can be abolished. There is no sin in marriage, but there is a law. When we are talking about sin, we are dealing with something that can be relieved in baptism; when we are talking about the law in marriage, we are dealing with something that cannot be annulled.[25]

It has long been recognized that in *Ep.* 69 Jerome was responding to Ambrose's discussion in *De officiis*.[26] Jerome's letter to Oceanus was concerned primarily with the topic of digamous bishops, and in it Jerome summarized the main arguments of his opponents. These arguments were precisely those articulated by Ambrose in *De officiis*. As Jerome put it somewhat provocatively: "All fornication and contamination with open vice, impiety towards God, parricide and incest, the change of the natural use of the sexes into that which is against nature and all extraordinary lusts are washed away in the fountain of Christ. Can it be possible

[25] *De off.* 1.248; trans. Davidson, *Ambrose: De officiis*, 261.

[26] First suggested by Paredi, "S. Gerolamo e s. Ambrogio," 193, and later confirmed by Davidson, *Ambrose: De officiis*, 677.

that the stains of marriage are indelible, and that harlotry is judged more leniently than honorable wedlock?"[27]

Jerome's ironic comments pointed to the paradox in Ambrose's argument: sins of fornication committed before baptism did not prevent a man from later advancing to the episcopate, but more than one honorable marriage did. Given his earlier attacks on *De officiis*, it is virtually certain that he was here responding to the arguments presented by Ambrose in *De officiis*.

Ambrose's letter to the church at Vercelli echoed Jerome's *Ep.* 69 in several ways. First, Ambrose explicitly acknowledged that he was broaching the topic only because someone had previously contradicted him. As he put it: "I have put forward these points, which I have learnt should be avoided. But our instructor in virtue is the Apostle, who teaches us that those who contradict are to be rebuked with patience."[28] A few lines later Ambrose again observed: "I have not passed over this topic because many argue that 'the husband of one wife' applies to a wife married after baptism, on the assumption that through baptism the defect which had been a barrier to remarriage was washed away."[29] It is clear that Ambrose was responding to someone who had challenged his absolute prohibition of digamy and who did so on the same grounds as Jerome: namely by seeing marriage as a defect that could be washed away by baptism.

It is also worth noting that Ambrose's defense of his position in the letter to Vercelli was much more extensive than his discussion in *De officiis*, which again suggests that his views had come under fire. For example, he appealed (erroneously) to the Council of Nicaea to support his position and argued that a bishop had to adhere to higher moral standards than a lay person.[30] Since in *Ep.* 69 Jerome had urged his opponent to follow the canons of the church in selecting bishops, it seems plausible that Ambrose's allusion to the canons of Nicaea is a response to Jerome.[31]

Ambrose versus Jerome on Neophyte Bishops

This first argument, of course, is not in itself conclusive. It is possible that both Ambrose and Jerome were simply engaging a common question of their day.

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[27] *Ep*. 69.3 (*CSEL* 54:684): *Omnia scorta, publicae conluuionis sordes inpietas in deum, parricidium et incestum in parentes atque in extraordinarias voluptates utriusque sexus mutata natura Christi fonte purgantur: uxoris inhaerebunt maculae et lupanaria thalamis praeferentur?*

[28] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.62 (*CSEL* 82/3:267); trans. J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and Speeches* (Liverpool, 2005) 317.

[29] *Ep. extra coll.* 14.63 (*CSEL* 82/3:268); trans. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 317 (slightly altered).

[30] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.64 (*CSEL* 82/3:269).

[31] *Ep*. 69.10 (*CSEL* 54:699).

There is, however, a second, more compelling reason to see in Ambrose's letter a direct response to Jerome. In *Ep*. 69 Jerome moved immediately from the issue of a bishop's marriage before baptism to a direct assault on Ambrose's suitability for the episcopate. Jerome prefaced his attack by remarking that he did not wish to darken the reputation of the bishops of his own day—a sure sign, perhaps, that he intended to do just that.[32] After quoting the description of bishops from 1 Timothy 3:1–6, Jerome observed that if one wants to insist on strict monogamy for ordination, one should require all of the qualities enumerated by the Apostle. The last of these requirements was that the bishop "should not be a recent convert lest he be puffed up with pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil" (1 Timothy 3:6). Jerome then uttered what appears to be a direct assault on Ambrose:

> I cannot sufficiently express my amazement at the great blindness that makes people discuss such questions as that of marriage before baptism and causes them to charge people with a transgression which is dead in baptism…while no one keeps a commandment so clear and unmistakable as this one. Yesterday a catechumen, today a bishop; yesterday in the amphitheatre, today in the church; in the evening at the circus, in the morning at the altar; just a little while ago the patron of actors, now the consecrator of virgins![33]

It has long been acknowledged that Ambrose was the target of Jerome's jibe at the ordination of neophytes to the episcopacy. In 1988, for example, Testard noted that Jerome had not only alluded to Ambrose here, but even echoed the opening lines of *De officiis*. Ambrose had begun *De officiis* with the following disclaimer: "I shall not appear presumptuous (*adrogans*), I trust, if I adopt the approach of a teacher when addressing my own sons, for the master of humility himself has said 'Come, my sons, listen to me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord'."[34] Jerome, in response, had stated that the apostle's prohibition of the ordination of a neophyte "lest he be puffed up by pride and fall into the condemnation of the devil" referred precisely to the vice of *adrogantia*. As Jerome put it: "A bishop who is made such in a moment does not know the humility and meekness of the lowly, he does not know Christian courtesies, he does not know how to think little of himself. He is transferred from dignity to dignity, yet he has not fasted, he has not wept, he has not often rebuked his past life and corrected it with diligent meditation. He has not given his substance to the poor. He moves from chair to chair, that is, from pride to pride. There can be no doubt that the judgment and 'condemnation of the devil'

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[32] *Ep*. 69.8 (*CSEL* 54:694).

[33] *Ep*. 69.9 (*CSEL* 54:697–8): *Mirari satis non queo, quae hominum tanta sit caecitas de uxoribus ante baptismum disputare et rem in baptismate mortuam…in calumniam trahere, cum tam apertum euidensque praeceptum nemo custodiat. heri catechumenus, hodie pontifex; heri in amphitheatro, hodie in ecclesia; vespere in circo, mane in altari; dudum fautor strionum, nunc virginum consecrator.*

[34] *De off*. 1.1; trans. Davidson, *Ambrose: De officiis*, 119.

refers to arrogance. And those who are made teachers in an instant, before they are disciples, fall into this."[35] If, with Testard, we take these words of Jerome as yet another jab at Ambrose's lack of preparation for the episcopacy, we see that Jerome has charged Ambrose not only with ignorance, but also with arrogance at daring to "teach" before he had the opportunity to "learn."

When we turn to Ambrose's letter to the church at Vercelli, we find yet further evidence of a response to Jerome's *Ep*. 69. Jerome's attack on Ambrose had immediately followed his arguments about marriage before baptism and his citation of 1 Timothy 3:6. Ambrose, likewise, turned immediately from the issue of marriage before baptism to a defense of his own hasty ordination and violation of 1 Timothy 3:6:

> How strongly I strove to resist ordination, and eventually, when compulsion was being applied, that ordination might at least be postponed. But the rules were of no avail; popular pressure prevailed. The western bishops nevertheless approved my ordination by a formal decision, and the eastern bishops did the same by following the precedent. It is indeed forbidden to ordain a new convert in case he is puffed up with pride. If force prevented the postponement of the ordination, it was because of constraint; and if the humility appropriate to the office is not lacking, where there is no cause, blame will not be imputed.[36]

There are good reasons to see Ambrose's defense of his ordination at this point as a direct response to Jerome's attack in *Ep*. 69. Like Jerome, Ambrose raised the question of his own ordination immediately after discussing the question of digamous clergy. Ambrose, however, had no reason to raise this issue (which he must have found personally embarrassing), unless he was responding directly to criticisms, such as those found in Jerome's letter. In his letter Ambrose was trying to persuade the community to accept an ascetic candidate, the Milanese monk Honoratus, as their bishop. He was not trying to impose a neophyte on the congregation. His defense of himself must have been a response to the criticisms present in Jerome's *Ep*. 69.

Moreover, Ambrose seems to have had in mind specifically Jerome's accusation of pride and the passage of 1 Timothy 3:6 that Jerome had cited. As Ambrose noted, his ordination had been a matter of constraint and, therefore, there was no

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[35] *Ep.* 69.9 (*CSEL* 54:698–9): *Ignorat momentaneus sacerdos humilitatem et mansuetudinem rusticorum, ignorat blanditias Christianas, nescit se ipse contemnere, de dignitate transfertur ad dignitatem; non ieiunavit, non flevit, non mores suos saepe reprehendit et adsidua meditatione correxit, non substantiam pauperibus erogavit: de cathedra, quod dicitur ad cathedram, id est de superbia ad superbiam. iudicium autem et ruina diaboli, nulli dubium, quin adrogantia sit. incidunt in eam, qui in puncto horae necdum discipuli iam magistri sunt.*

[36] *Ep.ex.coll*. 14.65 (*CSEL* 82/3:269); trans. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 318 (slightly altered).

reason to contest his humility. Furthermore, Ambrose acknowledged that his own ordination had violated canonical procedure, but that it was approved by both Eastern and Western bishops. Again, such a defense makes sense in the light of Jerome's suggestion in his letter to Oceanus that all of the canons of the church be followed in respect to the ordination of clergy.[37]

Ambrose versus Jerome on the "Raven"

If my arguments thus far have merit and if Ambrose's letter contains at least these two passages written in response to Jerome's *Ep.* 69, we are justified in asking whether Ambrose might have had Jerome in mind elsewhere in the letter. It appears that he did. As we saw above, Jerome had once criticized the bishop for his lack of skill as a Biblical interpreter and scorned his lack of Hebrew. Moreover, Jerome had emphasized Ambrose's deficiencies by calling him "a deformed little crow" and "a croaking raven." It is perhaps significant that in his letter to the church at Vercelli, Ambrose also had occasion to discuss ravens. The passage is found a few paragraphs after the ones we have examined, following an extended presentation of the life of Eusebius, former bishop of Vercelli. Ambrose had invoked Eusebius as the model of a bishop who had been trained in the monastic life; he hoped thereby to persuade the people of Vercelli to elect a suitably ascetic successor to the deceased bishop Limenius.

At this point in his letter Ambrose began a curious discussion of 1 Kings 17:3–7, the story of Elijah's flight into the Wadi Cherith east of the Jordan, where he was fed by ravens. For Ambrose, the prophet (like Bishop Eusebius) had prepared for his public, prophetic ministry by staying in the desert beyond the Jordan (14.75). Like John the Baptizer, Elijah was trained in the desert in order to acquire the strength to rebuke kings (14.76). Ambrose's exegesis would be unremarkable, if it were not the case that he proceeded to develop an allegorical reading of the story in which the main role was played by the ravens who fed Elijah in the desert. For Ambrose, the ravens stand for interpreters of scripture who have true understanding of what the scriptures mean, unlike "the Jews" who lack faith in Christ which provides the key to reading both of the testaments. Furthermore, Ambrose based his allegorical reading of 1 Kings on several interpretations of Hebrew names. Given Jerome's attack on Ambrose as a "croaking raven" mocking the colored feathers of other birds, it is reasonable to suggest that Ambrose's presentation of the ravens in his letter was a direct retort to Jerome's dismissal of him both as an interpreter of scripture and as a properly trained bishop. A closer look at the passage will make this clear.

The story of Elijah's flight to the brook Cherith, where he was fed by ravens in the morning and evening, was often cited by Ambrose. Usually, however, he

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[37] *Ep.* 69.10 (*CSEL* 54:699): *Haec, fili Oceane, sollicito timore perquirere, haec magis ecclesiae custodire debebunt, hos in sacerdotibus eligendis canones observare…*

gave the text a strictly literal reading. In *De officiis*, for example, he cited the example of Elijah as someone who had given up everything and in return had received sustenance from God.[38] Similarly, in *De Helia et ieiunio* Ambrose simply observed that "Elijah was in the desert, so that no one might see him fast except the ravens alone, when they supplied him with food."[39] In his letter to the church at Vercelli, however, Ambrose gave the passage an uncharacteristically allegorical interpretation. Borrowing etymologies that may have come from Jerome's *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum*, Ambrose interpreted the brook Cherith to mean "understanding."[40] Then citing a twofold interpretation of the name Beersheba as both the "seventh well" (*puteus septimi*) and "of the oath" (*iuramenti*),[41] Ambrose interpreted the story as an account of how to understand scripture, particularly the Old Testament:

> Elijah first went to Beersheba, to the mysteries of the holy law and the sacraments of divine justice; later he was sent to the brook, to that current of water that "makes glad the city of God." You have here the two testaments of the one author. The old scripture is like a deep and dark well, out of which you have to draw water with difficulty. It is not full because the one who was to fill it had not yet come…So the holy man was ordered by Christ to cross the river, because he who drinks from the New Testament not only drinks from the river, but "in addition rivers of living water will flow from his belly," rivers of understanding, rivers of knowledge, spiritual rivers.[42]

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[38] *De off.* 2.2; trans. Davidson, *Ambrose: De officiis*, 277: "And think of holy Elijah. He would have found himself without bread to eat if he had looked for it, but it was precisely because he did not look for it, it seems that he never went without it. The ravens ministered to him every day; bread was brought to him in the morning, and meat in the evening."

[39] *Hel.* 11.40 (*CSEL* 32/2:434); M. Buck, *S. Ambrosii De Helio et Ieiunio: A Commentary with an Introduction and Translation* (Washington, DC, 1929) 73 (slightly altered). See also *Nab.* 12.51 (*CSEL* 32/2:496); *Luc.* 1.36 (*CCSL* 14:24).

[40] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.77 (*CSEL* 82/3:278): *Intellege quae legis, quia Chorrat intellectus est*. Cf. Hier. *Hebr.nom.* (*CCSL* 72:110): *Charith division sive cognitio*. In *De fug.saec.* 6.34 (*CSEL* 32/2:190) Ambrose cited an etymology that is even closer to the one provided by Jerome: *Erat enim ad torrentem Chorrad, quod est cognitio*. While Ambrose may have taken these interpretations from Jerome, it is also possible that he made direct use of other collections of *Onomastica*. I owe the latter suggestion to Adam Kamesar. Ambrose's use of *Onomastica* on other occasions has been documented by R. Gryson, "L'interprétation du nom de Lévi (Lévite) chez saint Ambroise," *SEJG* 17 (1966) 217–29.

[41] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.77 (*CSEL* 82/3:276); cf. Hier. *Hebr.nom.* 62.20: *Bersabee puteus satieties vel puteus septimus*. Ambrose's second interpretation of the name may have been mistakenly derived from Jerome's interpretation of the name "Bethsabee" in *Hebr.nom.* 110.5: *Bethsabee filia iuramenti*.

[42] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.78 (*CSEL* 82/3:276–7); trans. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 323 (slightly altered).

At this point the ravens appear. For Ambrose the ravens who fed the prophet signify those who recognized and acknowledged him as a prophet, unlike "the Jews" who did not acknowledge him. Jezabel, who persecuted the prophet, signifies the synagogue, that is, "those who vainly abound in the scriptures, but neither keep them nor understand them."[43] By contrast, the ravens who fed the prophet "knew whom they were feeding, because they were close to understanding, and they carried nourishment to that river of sacred knowledge."[44] In Ambrose's letter the ravens are those who nourish and support the prospective prophet (or bishop).

I propose that Ambrose developed this reading of 1 Kings 17 as a way of responding to Jerome's denunciation of him as the "ominous croaking raven" who mocked the colored feathers of other birds. There is no doubt that Ambrose saw himself in the role of providing Biblical and spiritual sustenance to prospective clergy. Unlike Jerome, whose letters usually contained bitter and often scandalous critiques of clerical mores, Ambrose was deeply committed to the formation of an ascetical clergy in the West. His description of the ravens in the following passage suggests that he has assimilated his own mission to that of the Biblical birds:

> He nourishes the prophet who both understands and observes what has been written. It is our faith that gives him strengthening drink, it is our progress that gives him nourishment; he feeds on our minds and senses. His conversation feasts on our understanding. We give him bread in the morning, when living in the light of the Gospel we offer him the support of our hearts. By these he is nourished, by these he grows strong, with these he fills the mouths of those who fast, to whom the irreligion of the Jews was offering no food of faith. For them all prophetic discourse amounts to a fast, since they cannot see the riches it contains; it is a scanty and thin diet which cannot bring fat to their jaws.[45]

Ambrose has offered here an interpretation of the Biblical ravens that also served as a riposte to Jerome's denunciation of his skill as a Biblical commentator. If my interpretation is correct, Ambrose has taken Jerome's denunciation of him as a "croaking raven" and turned it on its head. The Biblical ravens (to whom Ambrose assimilates himself) are those Biblical interpreters who are committed to providing spiritual sustenance to prospective clergy. By employing Hebrew etymologies Ambrose showed that he, too, was capable of wearing colored feathers, even as he asserted that the true Biblical interpreter employs his faith

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[43] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.79 (*CSEL* 82/3:277): *Vane abundans scripturas, quas neque custodit neque intellegit.*

[44] *Ep.ex.coll*. 14.79 (*CSEL* 82/3:277): *Sciebant illi corvi quem pascerent, qui iuxta intellectum errant et ad illum cognitionis sacrae fluvium escam vehebant.*

[45] *Ep.ex.coll.* 14.80 (*CSEL* 82/3:277–8); trans. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan*, 324. My interpretation of this paragraph, therefore, differs somewhat from that of Liebeschuetz, 324 n. 2, who suggests that Ambrose "is now making the new and interesting point that a bishop draws strength from his community."

and spiritual understanding to support the prospective clergy. By rehabilitating the ravens, Ambrose has also rehabilitated his own status as a Biblical interpreter and ecclesiastical leader, the very roles that Jerome had attacked in his *Ep*. 69 to Oceanus.

Conclusion

In this essay I have offered several reasons to believe that Ambrose's letter to the church at Vercelli was written partly to respond to criticisms issued against him by Jerome, especially in the latter's *Ep*. 69 to Oceanus. Ambrose's letter contained a rebuttal of Jerome's views on digamous bishops, as well as a defense of the bishop's hasty elevation to the episcopate. Moreover, Ambrose's discussion of the ravens who fed the prophet in 1 Kings 17:3–7 can be read as an inversion of Jerome's dismissal of him as a "croaking raven" who lacked expertise in scriptural study. The fact that Ambrose waited until the final months of his life to respond to Jerome's criticisms is, perhaps, an indication of the increased prominence of Jerome in the last decade of the fourth century. It suggests, as well, that the bishop of Milan was motivated by a desire to leave a last testament to his most abiding concerns: the establishment of a monastic clergy in the West and the reinforcement of his own reputation. The criticisms of Jerome seem to have been an obstacle to both of these goals.

Finally, if Ambrose's letter to the church at Vercelli was written with Jerome's *Ep*. 69 in mind, then we have conclusive evidence that Jerome must have written to Oceanus sometime prior to 397. As noted above, the *terminus a quo* of Jerome's letter was June of 395. Since it would have taken some time for Jerome's *Ep*. 69 to be copied, circulated, and find its way into the hands of Ambrose, we can with confidence suggest a date late in 395 or early in 396 for its composition.

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Chapter 15
The Use and Misuse of Jerome in Gaul during Late Antiquity

Ralph Mathisen

Gallic ecclesiastical writers of the fifth and sixth centuries participated enthusiastically in debates over topics ranging from grace and free will to the nature of the soul. Along the way, they evaluated and used the writings of the major patristic authors such as Augustine and Jerome. The Gauls felt free to agree or disagree with other Christian intellectuals of their day, and no writers were accepted solely on the basis of their authority. This can be seen in their treatment of Augustine.[1] In many cases, such as in the condemnation of Pelagianism, the Gauls and Augustine got along just fine. Where they parted company with him, however, was on predestination. The *Gallic Chronicle of 452* noted under the year 418: "The heresy of the predestinarians, which is said to have received its impetus from Augustine, once having arisen, creeps along."[2] Around 426, Augustine's Gallic theological partisan Prosper of Aquitaine wrote to him: "Many of the servants of Christ who live in Marseille think that in your writings…whatever you said in them about the choice of the elect according to the fixed purpose of God is contrary to the opinion of the fathers."[3] And in a letter to his friend Rufinus, Prosper revealed what the main Gallic cause for complaint was: "They say that [Augustine] has eliminated free will and that in the guise of grace he preaches fatal necessity."[4] The definitive Gallic response came in 434, when Vincentius of Lérins published his *Commonitorium*, stating: "The fraudulence of new heretics

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[1] R. Mathisen, "For Specialists Only: The Reception of Augustine and His Theology in Fifth-Century Gaul," in J.T. Lienhard et al. eds, *Augustine. Presbyter factus sum* (Peter Lang, 1994) 29–41.

[2] *Chron.Gall. 452*, no.81 (*MGH AA* 9:656): *Praedestinatorum haeresis quae ab Augustino accepisse initium dicitur his temporibus serpere exorsa*.

[3] *Apud* Aug. *Ep*. 225 (*CSEL* 57:455): *Multi ergo servorum Christi qui in Massiliensi urbe consistunt in sanctitatis tuae scriptis, quae adversus Pelagianos haereticos condidisti, contrarium putant patrum opinioni et ecclesiastico sensui, quidquid in eis de vocatione electorum secundum dei propositum disputasti*.

[4] *Ep. ad Ruf*. 3 (*PL* 51:79): *Dicentes eum liberum arbitrium penitus submovere et sub gratiae nomine necessitatem praedicare fatalem*.

demands great care and attention."[5] So much, then, for this particular theological doctrine of Augustine, at least as far as the Gauls were concerned. But Augustine's thought, of course, was not universally condemned. Faustus expressed the Gallic ambivalence toward Augustine in a letter to the deacon, later bishop, Graecus of Marseille: "Even if some part of the works of the blessed bishop Augustine is thought to be suspect by the most learned men, you should know that there is nothing reprehensible in those sections that you thought should be condemned."[6] And Gennadius reacted similarly in his *De viris illustribus*, where he described Augustine as "a man brilliant in divine and human learning, complete in faith and pure in his life," but then went on to say: "Error was incurred by his excessive speaking, was enlarged by the attack of his enemies, and not yet has escaped the accusation of heresy."[7] For the Gauls, therefore, Augustine the writer was to be admired, but his theology was suspect. The determination of proper theological opinion was something the Gauls reserved to themselves.

Jerome's Gallic Correspondents

If the Gauls treated Augustine thus, how was Jerome received in Gaul? At first glance, it would appear that Jerome had a wide following there. According to Stefan Rebenich, for example, "there is no doubt that, after Rome, southern Gaul was the most important center of Jerome's contacts."[8] If one counts the letters to Pontius Meropius Paulinus of Bordeaux, who moved in 390 to Barcelona and

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[5] *Comm.*1 (*PL* 50:637–40): *Novorum haereticorum fraudulentia multum curae et attentionis indicat*.

[6] *Ep.* 7 (*CSEL* 21:201): *In scriptis sancti pontificis Augustini etiamsi quid apud doctissimos viros putatur esse suspectum, ex his quae damnanda indicasti nihil noveris reprehensum*.

[7] *Vir.ill.* 39 (*PL* 58:1080): *Vir eruditione divina et humana orbi clarus, fide integer et vita purus…unde et multa loquenti accidit, quod dixit per Salomonem spiritus sanctus, in multiloquio non effugies peccatum..error tamen illius sermone multo, ut dixi, contractus, lucta hostium exaggeratus, necdum haeresis questionem absolvit*. See also Faust. *De grat.* 1.12 (*CSEL* 21:40–44): *Ecce haereticus sub praetextu gratiae qualem vult hominem esse post gratiam..cum alio loco haereticus apostoli sententiam praedestinationem dei vel praefinitionem interpretetur esse*.

[8] *Hieronymus und sein Kreis. Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992) 208: "Lassen keinen Zweifel daran, dass das südliche Gallien—neben Rom—das wichtigste Zentrum hieronymianischer Kontakte war." For Jerome and Gaul, see also H. Crouzel, "Saint Jerome et ses amis toulousains," *BLE* 74 (1973) 125–46; Idem, "Les échanges littéraires entre Bordeaux et l'Orient au IV[e] siècle: Saint Jérôme et ses amis aquitains," *RFHL* 3 (1973) 301–26; A. Cain, "Defending Hedibia and Detecting Eusebius: Jerome's Correspondence with Two Gallic Women (*Epp.* 120–21)," *MP* 24 (2003) 15–34; D. Frye, "A Mutual Friend of Athaulf and Jerome," *Historia* 40 (1991) 507–8; R. Génier, "Les amis gallo-romains de s. Jérôme," *Le Correspondant*,

thence to Nola in Italy, this means that 18 of Jerome's extant 123 letters, or nearly 15%, were addressed to Gauls, not to mention several literary works dedicated to Gauls, as follows:

* *Ded.* = "Dedicatee"

No.[9]	Addressee	Approx. Date
53	Paulinus of Nola	394
55	Amandus, presbyter of Bordeaux[10]	394
58	Paulinus of Nola	395/396
61	Vigilantius of Calagurris	396/398
85	Paulinus of Nola	399
109	Riparius, presbyter of Aquitania	404
Ded.	Minervius and Alexander, monks of Toulouse: *In Mal.*	405
Ded.	Exuperius of Toulouse: *In Zach*.	405
Ded.	Riparius and Desiderius: *c.Vigil.*	405
117	Anonymous mother and daughter in Gaul[11]	unknown
118	Julian of Dalmatia (relative of Ausonius of Bordeaux)	407
119	Minervius and Alexander	405
120	Hedibia	407
121	Algasia	407
122	Rusticus, aristocratic monk	407
123	Geruchia	409
123	Rusticus, monk (not the Rusticus of *Ep*.122)	412
129	Claudius Postumus Dardanus	414
138	Riparius, presbyter of Aquitania	417
151	Riparius, presbyter of Aquitania	419
152	Riparius, presbyter of Aquitania	418

Perhaps it is no surprise that Jerome had connections to Gaul, for he had spent some of his younger days in Trier, apparently pursuing a secular career that came to naught. But he soon left and never returned.[9] He subsequently corresponded with several Gauls on topics relating to theological questions, Biblical exegesis, the Christian lifestyle, and accusations of heresy. Correspondence with other Gauls, such as Bishop Exsuperius of Toulouse, to whom he dedicated his *Commentary on*

Nouvelle Serie (1920) 830ff.; D.S. Wiesen, *St. Jerome as a Satirist: A Study in Christian Latin Thought and Letters* (Ithaca, NY, 1964) 218–25.

[9] J. Steinhausen, "Hieronymus und Laktanz in Trier," *TZ* 20 (1951) 126–54.

Zechariah, and a Desiderius, who helped to foment the *Against Vigilantius*, does not survive.

One of Jerome's earliest Gallic correspondents, Pontius Meropius Paulinus, had moved away from Gaul, first to Barcelona and then to Nola in Italy, before his correspondence with Jerome even began, c.394.[10] Jerome's dealings with Paulinus followed an interesting trajectory. At first, in the middle 390s, relations were very cordial, at least in part because Paulinus was sending Jerome financial subsidies.[11] But by 399, Jerome had abandoned work on a commentary on Daniel that Paulinus had requested and communications broke down. Several factors could have interfered with their friendship: Paulinus' ties to Jerome's rivals Rufinus, Melania, and Vigilantius; Jerome's connection to Origenism; and the cessation of Paulinus' financial subsidies once he became bishop of Nola. In many ways, the pattern established with Paulinus played out with Jerome's other Gallic correspondents: when he saw the opportunity to enhance his reputation, no one could be more flattering, but when he thought that he had been disrespected, his responses ranged from ending the correspondence to boundless vituperation.

This model is particularly evident in the case of Jerome's most interesting Gallic contact, Vigilantius,[12] a priest of Calagurris in southern Gaul who visited Jerome in the Holy Land in 395, bringing with him a letter and financial assistance from Paulinus. Vigilantius got off to a bad start with Jerome by accusing him of Origenism, an accusation that resulted in an indignant, and unsolicited, response (*Ep.* 62) to Vigilantius the following year in which Jerome heaped invective on his rival. He wrote: "You are bent, I suppose, on magnifying yourself and boast in your own country that I found myself unable to answer your eloquence and that I dreaded in you the sharp satire of a Chrysippus." Jerome made fun of Vigilantius' inn-keeper father, saying: "One and the same person can hardly be a tester both of gold coins on the counter and also of the scriptures, or be a connoisseur of wines and an adept in expounding prophets or apostles." He also lampooned his name: "For my part I imagine that even your name was given you out of contrariety. For your whole mind slumbers and you actually snore, so profound is the sleep—or rather the lethargy—in which you are plunged…Your tongue deserves to be cut out and torn into fragments." Vigilantius clearly had gotten to Jerome.

Nor was this the end of Jerome's vituperation of Vigilantius. About eight years later, another Aquitanian priest, Riparius, delated Vigilantius to Jerome, saying that Vigilantius was preaching against the veneration of relics and the keeping of nightly vigils. Jerome replied: "The wretch's tongue should be cut out, or he should be put under treatment for insanity," and asked Riparius to send him some of Vigilantius' writings. Riparius did so, and Jerome became even more

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[10] For Jerome's relations with Paulinus, see Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 220–37.

[11] Hier. *Ep*. 53.1 (*CSEL* 54:442): *Frater Ambrosius tua munuscula perferens detulit et suavissimas litteras*.

[12] See Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 240–51.

aroused, for in addition to his previous agenda, Vigilantius also was preaching against an exaggerated pursuit of virginity and—horrors!—the sending of alms to the Holy Land. Jerome sharpened his pen and, in *Against Vigilantius*, wrote: "As for you, when wide awake you are asleep, and asleep when you write," accusing Vigilantius of drunkenness and fornication. But Jerome's ire had little effect. In Gennadius of Marseille's catalogue of illustrious writers, the entry for Vigilantius (*Vir.ill*. 36) praises his "polished language," but also condemns him, not for anything that Jerome accused him of, but for his interpretation of the vision of Daniel.

Jerome's sycophantic side, on the other hand, is seen in his continual quest for distinguished correspondents. One such was the patrician and ex-two-time Prefect of Gaul Claudius Postumus Dardanus. Dardanus' wife Naevia Galla may have been related to the imperial family, and his brother Claudius Lepidus was an ex-*Comes rei privatae*.[13] Around 414, Dardanus wrote to Jerome asking him for some scriptural exegesis. Jerome happily responded: "You ask, Dardanus, most noble of Christians, most Christian of nobles, what is the Promised Land…" After seven chapters of discussion, he concluded: "I have dictated this for you, most eloquent of men, you who have fulfilled your office-holding with a double prefecture but now are more honored in Christ."[14] When it served his purpose, Jerome could be an expert flatterer.

But Jerome's correspondence with Dardanus would not have enhanced his stature with the most distinguished sector of the Gallic aristocracy. During the Gallic usurpation of Constantine III (407–11), Dardanus supported the Italian regime: the *Gallic Chronicle of 452* noted "the diligence of the vigorous man Dardanus, who alone did not capitulate to the tyrant."[15] And after the Gaul Jovinus was proclaimed emperor in 411, Dardanus persuaded the Visigothic king Athaulf to support the emperor Honorius. In 413, Dardanus was said to have executed Jovinus with his own hand (Olymp.fr.19). Dardanus' anti-Gallic activities alienated him from the mainstream of the Gallic aristocracy. Sidonius Apollinaris recalled that his grandfather's family "reviled the inconstancy of Constantine, the tractability of Jovinus, the perfidy of Gerontius, and all these faults at once in Dardanus."[16] Dardanus' ill repute may explain why he and his family retired to a fortified Alpine estate near Sisteron, ostentatiously called "Theopolis," or "The City of God,"

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[13] For Dardanus and his family, see *PLRE II*, 346–7, 491, 675.

[14] *Ep*. 129.1,8 (*CSEL* 56:162,175): *Quaeris Dardane, Christianorum nobilissime, et nobilium christianissime, quae sit terra repromissionis..haec tibi, vir eloquentissime, in duplicis praefecturae honore transacto, nunc in Christo honoratior.*.

[15] *Chron.Gall.452*. a. 411, no.69 (*MGH AA* 9:654): *Industria viri strenui, qui solus tyranno non cessit, Dardani*.

[16] *Ep*. 5.9.1: *Cum in Constantino inconstantiam, in Iovino facilitatem, in Gerontio perfidiam, singula in singulis omnia in Dardano crimina simul execrarentur*. For the resultant "deep and lasting resentment" against Dardanus, see J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A.D.364–425* (Oxford, 1975) 332–3.

perhaps an allusion to Augustine's *De civitate dei*, which was circulated at just this time.[17] Dardanus' devotion to Augustine also is attested by his request sent c.417 to Augustine for answers to questions about paradise and the baptism of infants. Augustine, delighted to receive a letter from such a distinguished interlocutor, replied: "I confess, my most esteemed brother Dardanus, more illustrious to me in the charity of Christ than in secular dignity, that I have answered your letter later than I should have."[18] Dardanus, thus, turned from Jerome to Augustine in his search for theological advice. In doing so, he certainly received better value, for Augustine's response totalled no less than 41 chapters.

Only one other Gallic correspondent of Jerome can—perhaps—be identified. To the aristocratic monk Rusticus of *Ep*. 125, Jerome wrote: "Live in the monastery, so that you might deserve to become a cleric."[19] He apparently was suggesting the role of the monastic life as a stepping-stone to greater things. Rusticus may have taken Jerome's advice, if he is the Rusticus who later served as the powerful and distinguished bishop of Narbonne.[20]

Jerome's Gallic correspondence was top down, never bottom up. Jerome never instituted any correspondence as a client or suppliant, that is, he never wrote to anyone asking their advice or humbly begging them to send him a letter; he expected the initiative to come from outside so he could cast himself as the patron. On some occasions, a Gaul would write to Jerome out of the blue and Jerome would respond. In addition, the twelve letters that were replies to letters from Gauls were addressed to only eight Gallic addressees (Paulinus [3], Riparius [4], Amandus, Minervius and Alexander, Hedibia, Algasia, Dardanus [1 each]). These seven, plus Exsuperius, make a total of only eight Gallic correspondents who actually wrote to Jerome, indicating that Jerome's Gallic correspondence was not as broad as it might at first appear. The remaining six letters to Gauls, or 33%, were purely unsolicited letters to Vigilantius, Julianus, the two Rustici, Geruchia, and the anonymous mother and daughter, in response to something that Jerome had heard from some third party.[21] Of his named Gallic correspondents who received extant letters, therefore, 38% (5 of 13), leaving out the anonymous mother and daughter, had not requested their letters. Jerome was happy to write over-the-transom letters whenever he heard (1) of anyone who might be receptive to one or (2) about some

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[17] See F. Chatillon, "Dardanus et Theopolis (409–417)," *BSHSL-HA* 62 (1943) 29–151; H.-I. Marrou, "Un lieu dit Cité de Dieu," *Augustinus magister* 1 (1954) 101–10.

[18] Aug. *Ep.* 187.1 (*CSEL* 57:100): *Fateor me, frater dilectissime Dardane inlustrior mihi in caritate Christi quam in huius saeculi dignitate, litteris tuis tardius respondisse, quam debui*. For Dardanus as a potential Pelagian, see Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, 323; R. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Washington, DC, 1989) 34, 40.

[19] *Ep*. 125.17 (*CSEL* 56:136): *Vive in monasterio, ut clericus esse merearis*.

[20] See Mathisen, *Factionalism*, 173–205; M. Chalon, "A propos des inscriptions dédicatoires de l'évêque Rusticus," *NAH* 1 (1973) 223–32.

[21] *Epp.* 61, 117, 118, 122, 123, 125.

issue that he might offer advice about, especially regarding peoples' lifestyles. The observation that a third of his letters to Gauls were unsolicited suggests that, along with not being very broad, his Gallic correspondence did not penetrate very deeply into Gallic society.

Missing Persons

Jerome's extant correspondence with Gauls also is noteworthy for those whom we do not find in it.[22] Where, for example, is Sulpicius Severus, the most prolific Gallic ecclesiastical writer of his day, as attested by his *Dialogues* (c.405), *Chronicle* (c.403), and *Life of Martin* (c.397)?[23] Severus discusses how one of his friends, Postumianus, even spent six months with Jerome c.404,[24] and could have carried back correspondence, but seems not to have done so. Now, Jerome was familiar at least with Severus' *Dialogues*, in which he was mentioned, for c.405, in the *Commentary on Ezekiel* he referred to a point that "our Severus recently made in a dialogue on which he imposed the name 'Gallus'."[25] Jerome also corresponded with the Desiderius who probably was the dedicatee of Severus' *Life of Martin*. So why the lack of direct contact between Jerome and Severus?[26] Perhaps because Severus had not first approached Jerome, but in this instance a more likely reason for the lack of contact is that Severus moved in circles that included people with whom Jerome had broken off relations. For example, Severus corresponded extensively with Paulinus of Nola,[27] who in turn corresponded with Jerome's arch-rival Rufinus of Aquileia.[28]

Severus is not the only distinguished Gaul missing from Jerome's Gallic correspondence. Indeed, the only Gallic non-correspondent whom Jerome even mentions is Proculus of Marseille, in a letter to one of Proculus' own parishoners (Rusticus) in which the only other distinguished Gallic bishop he can cite is

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[22] It is always possible, of course, that correspondence with these individuals has not survived, but Jerome's almost complete failure to mention these persons in his extant correspondence or other writings tells against such a hypothesis.

[23] See Rebenich, *Hieronymus*, 252–5.

[24] Sulp.Sev. *Dial*. 1.7–9.

[25] *In Hiez*. 36.1–5 (*CCSL* 75:500): *Quod...nuper Severus noster in dialogo cui 'Gallo' nomen imposuit*.

[26] For speculations regarding Severus' feelings about Jerome, see Y.-M. Duval, "Sulpice Sévère entre Rufin d'Aquilée et Jérôme dans les Dialogues 1,1–9," in *Mémorial Dom Jean Gribomont* (Rome, 1988) 199–222; and R.J. Goodrich, "*Vir Maxime Catholicus*: Sulpicius Severus' Use and Abuse of Jerome in the *Dialogi*," *JEH* 58 (2007) 189–211.

[27] Paul.Nol. *Epp*. 1, 5, 11, 17, 22–5, 27–32.

[28] Paul.Nol. *Epp.* 46–7.

Exsuperius of Toulouse.[29] But there were many other distinguished Gallic bishops: in a "Top Seven" list, Paulinus of Nola cited six others in addition to Exsuperius.[30] Proculus did not even make that cut, but Jerome's old friend Amandus, if he in fact became bishop of Bordeaux, did. Yet, no more letters to Amandus survive. Another Gallic epistolographer and ecclesiastical author missing from Jerome's extant Gallic correspondents' list is Victricius of Rouen, a correspondent of Paulinus and author of the *De laude sanctorum*.[31] Jerome's failure to correspond with bishops Victricius and Amandus also might be attributed to guilt by association, for these two both received multiple letters from Paulinus.[32] If this model is valid, Jerome's circle of correspondents would have been increasingly circumscribed by his rejection of correspondence not only with perceived rivals, but even with persons associated in any way with his perceived rivals. Thus, it may be that, outside of his own narrow circle of admirers and adventitious correspondents, Jerome actually had little contact with, and knew little about, contemporary Gallic ecclesiastical—or any other—issues.

Jerome's Image of Gaul

Perhaps as a consequence of his lack of accurate information, Jerome's image of Gaul in the early fifth century is a caricature of the contemporary political situation, and one that often has been retailed in modern-day depictions of the woes caused by the "barbarian invasions." Who, for example, is not familiar with the oft-quoted passage from Jerome's letter to Geruchia of c.407:

> Innumerable and most ferocious nations occupy all Gaul. Whatever is between the Alps and the Pyrenees, that which is bounded by the ocean and the Rhine, the Quadi, the Vandals, the Sarmatians, the Burgundians, the Alans, the Gepids, the

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[29] *Ep*. 125.20 (*CSEL* 56:141): *Habes istic sanctum doctissimumque pontificem Proculum, qui viva et praesenti voce nostras schedulas superet, quotidianisque tractatibus iter tuum dirigat; nec patiatur te in partem alteram declinando, viam relinquere regiam, per quam Israel ad terram repromissionis properans, se transiturum esse promittit.. sanctus Exsuperius, Tolosae Episcopus, viduae Sareptensis imitator, esuriens pascit alios: et ore pallente ieiuniis, fame torquetur aliena: omnemque substantiam Christi visceribus erogavit*.

[30] Greg.Tur. *Hist.* 2.12: *Testatur Paulinus dicens, si enim hos videas dignos Domino sacerdotes, vel Exsuperium Tolosae, vel Simplicium Viennae, vel Amandum Burdegalae, vel Diogenianum Albigae, vel Dynamium Ecolismae, vel Venerandum Arvernis, vel Alithium Cadurcis, vel nunc Pegasium Petrocoriis*. The original source of this passage is not extant.

[31] D.G. Hunter, "Vigilantius of Calagurris and Victricius of Rouen: Ascetics, Relics, and Clerics in Late Roman Gaul," *JECS* 7 (1999) 401–30; G. Clark, "Victricius of Rouen: Praising the Saints," *JECS* 7 (1999) 365–99.

[32] To Amandus: Paul.Nol. *Epp.* 2, 9, 12, 15, 21, 36, 40; to Victricius: *Epp*. 18, 37.

> Heruls, the Saxons, the Alemanni and, O unfortunate Republic!, the Pannonian hordes devastate…Mainz, once a noble city, has been taken and overturned, and in the church thousands were slain. Worms has been destroyed by a long siege. Reims, a strong city, Amiens, Arras, distant Thérouanne, Tournai, Spire, Strasburg, all carried into Germany…[33]

When he thought of contemporary Gaul, Jerome visualized wild barbarians and ruined cities.

Citations of Jerome

In spite of Jerome's efforts to circulate his works in Gaul, his initiatives initially do not seem to have borne much fruit. Even though he had more Gallic correspondents than Augustine, he had surprisingly little impact in the fifth and sixth centuries. Jerome was respected, yes, but for most Gauls he was just one of many good writers. A look at Jerome's appearance, or lack of it, in Gallic lists of distinguished ecclesiastical authors provides a devastating commentary on his reputation in Gaul. He was, of course, known for his continuation of the Chronicle of Eusebius, but only Sulpicius Severus and Gregory of Tours gave him credit for this.[34] He also was cited in the *Chronicle* of Prosper of Aquitaine—no surprise, given that Prosper was continuing Jerome.[35]

Only a few Gauls went beyond brief mentions of Jerome. Gennadius, in his continuation of Jerome's *De viris illustribus*, referred six times to the personality and achievements of his model. He described Philip, who published a commentary on Job, as "the presbyter Jerome's best pupil."[36] The entry for Rufinus adds: "Not all of Origen, however, is his work, for Jerome translated some which are identified by his prologue,"[37] thus recalling Jerome's troublesome association with Origen. Regarding Helvidius, Gennadius noted: "In reply to his perverseness,

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[33] *Ep*. 123.15 (*CSEL* 56:92): *Innumerabiles et ferocissimae nationes universas Gallias occuparunt. Quidquid inter Alpes et Pyrenaeum est, quod Oceano et Rheno includitur, Quadus, Vandalus, Sarmata, Halani, Gipedes, Heruli, Saxones, Burgundiones, Alemani, et, o lugenda respublica! hostes Pannonii vastarunt...Moguntiacum, nobilis quondam civitas, capta atque subversa est, et in Ecclesia multa hominum millia trucidata. Vangiones longa obsidione deleti. Remorum urbs praepotens, Ambiani, Attrebatae, extremique hominum Morini, Tornacus, Nemetae, Argentoratus, translatae in Germaniam...*The same theme resurfaces in Jerome's letter to Rusticus of the same date (*Ep*. 122.4).

[34] Greg.Tur. *Hist.*, praef., 1.34, 1.37; *Glor.mart.*, praef.

[35] Prosp. *Chron.*a. 420: *Hieronymus presbyter moritur anno aetatis suae xci, pridie kal Octobris*.

[36] *Vir.ill*. 63: *Optimus auditor Hieronymi*.

[37] *Vir.ill*. 17: *Origenis autem non omnia (quia et Hieronymus aliquanta) transtulit, quae sub prologo discernuntur*.

Jerome published a book against him, well filled with scriptural proofs."[38] But regarding Vigilantius, Gennadius merely commented: "And the blessed Jerome responded to him."[39] Gennadius' most fulsome comment on Jerome related to his lack of linguistic knowledge: "That the blessed Jerome mentions this man in his *Chronicle* as a man of great virtues and yet does not place him in his catalogue of writers will be easily explained if we note that regarding the three or four Syrians whom he mentions he says that he read them translated into the Greek. From this it is evident that, at that period, he did not know the Syriac language or literature and therefore did not know a writer who had not yet been translated into another language."[40] And nearly a century later, Gregory of Tours sympathetically reported Jerome's dream about being condemned as a "Ciceronian."[41] The most favorable report of Jerome comes from Sidonius Apolliniaris, who linked him to Augustine, identifying Jerome with his ability to instruct and interpret, whereas Augustine was admired for his argumentation.[42]

But in many Gallic lists of illustrious writers, Jerome's name is noteworthy by its absence. The *Gallic Chronicle of 452*, another continuation of Jerome's *Chronicle*, cites Augustine and Ambrose several times, along with figures such as John of Lycopolis, Claudian, Paulinus of Nola, and John Chrysostom—but not Jerome.[43] Sidonius Apollinaris' list of the contents of the library of a friend included Augustine, Varro, Horace, Prudentius, Origen, and even Rufinus—but no Jerome.[44] Ruricius of Limoges borrowed from a friend the works of Augustine, Cyprian, Hilary of Poitiers, and Ambrose—but no Jerome.[45] And in the late sixth century, Venantius Fortunatus listed as famous writers Athanasius, Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzen, Augustine, and Basil of Caesarea—but not Jerome.[46]

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[38] *Vir.ill*. 33: *Cuius pravitatem Hieronymus arguens libellum documentis Scripturarum sufficienter factum adversum eum edidit*.

[39] *Vir.ill*. 36: *Huic et beatus Hieronymus presbyter respondit*.

[40] *Vir.ill*. 1: *Hunc virum beatus Hieronymus in libro Chronicon velut magnarum virtutum hominem nominans in Catalogo cur non posuerit, facile excusabitur, si consideremus quod ipsos tres vel quatuor Syros, quos posuit, et interpretatos in Graecum se legisse testetur. unde constat eum illo tempore ignorasse. Syram linguam vel litteras, et ideo hunc, qui necdum versus est in aliam linguam, nescisse scriptorem*.

[41] *Glor.mart*., praef.

[42] *Ep*. 4.3: *Instruit ut Hieronymus..adstruit ut Augustinus*; *Ep.* 9.2: *Hieronymus interpres, dialecticus Augustinus*. Note also the connection of Jerome and Augustine in the contemporary Gallic debate over the nature of the soul, discussed below.

[43] *Chron.Gall. 452* a. 379, 381, 386, 387, 390, 397, 399, 400, 402, 403, 417, 420, 429, 433, 438, 449.

[44] *Ep*. 2.9: *Nam similis scientiae viri, hinc Augustinus, hinc Varro; hinc Horatius, hinc Prudentius lectitabantur. quos inter Adamantius Origenes, Turranio Rufino interpretatus*.

[45] See Taurent. *Ep*. "*Litterae sanctitatis*."

[46] Ven.Fort. *Carm.* 5.1.7, 5.3.35–40: *Fortis Athanasius, qua clarus Hilarius adstant / dives Martinus suavis et Ambrosius, / Gregorius radiat, sacer Augustinus inundat / Basilius*

Likewise, Jerome's works, at least in comparison to those of authors such as Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose, and, in particular, Augustine, were rarely directly quoted or engaged with, by Gallic authors. Even indirect allusions are more rare than for other authors. For example, the Eusebian corpus of sermons contains about 23 allusions to Jerome, but over 170 to Augustine.[47] Unlike Augustine, whom Gauls debated and cited in the context of several issues, hardly anyone cited Jerome as an authority in any of the fifth and sixth century Gallic theological debates.[48]

Jerome and the Debate over the Nature of the Soul

Jerome was directly cited only once as an authority in a Gallic theological controversy. In the late 460s, Gallic theologians became embroiled in a debate over the nature of the soul.[49] Faustus, bishop of Riez, took a corporealist stand, arguing that God alone was incorporeal, whereas Mamertus Claudianus, a priest

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rutilat Caesariusque micat.

[47] In *CSEL* 101. Note that whereas unattributed citations of Jerome (and many other patristic writers) have been identified in the writings of several Gauls, the focus here is on Gauls who actually named Jerome and engaged with Jerome the writer, not with modern suggestions about how the thought of Jerome might have been transmitted, perhaps second- or third-hand, to Gaul. For the possible influence of Jerome on Gallic authors, see S. Driver, "From Palestinian Ignorance to Egyptian Wisdom: Jerome and Cassian on the Monastic Life," *ABR* 48 (1997) 293–315, at 298–301, 315; C. Mandolfo, "L'influsso delle *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos* di Girolamo sulle *Instructiones* di Eucherio di Lione," in C. Curti, C. Crimi eds, *Scritti classici e cristiani offerti a Francesco Corsaro* (Catania, 1994) 2.435–53; Eadem, "L'influsso geronimiano sulla terminologia del *De uestibus* (*Instr.* II) di Eucherio di Lione," *Orpheus* n.s. 16 (1995) 441–8; Eadem, "L'influsso di Girolamo sul *De idolis* (*Instr*. II) di Eucherio di Lione," *SicGymn* 49 (1996) 127–31; Eadem, "L'influsso di Girolamo sul *De locis* et sul *De fluminibus vel aquis* di Eucherio di Lione (*Instr*. II)," *Orpheus* n.s. 18 (1997) 504–20; G. Pintus, "Autorità di Girolamo e testo biblico in un passo delle *Formulae spiritalis intellegentiae* di Eucherio di Lione," *Sandalion* 15 (1992) 163–74. My thanks to Andy Cain for these citations.

[48] The dossier of documents related to the Second Council of Orange of AD 529 published in *CCSL* 149A:69–76, concludes with a work entitled *Sententiae sanctorum patrum*, which includes several quotations from Jerome and has been attributed by G. Morin, "Un travail inédit de Saint Césaire: Les 'capitula sanctorum patrum' sur la grâce et le libre arbitre," *RBén* 21 (1904) 225–39, to Caesarius of Arles. But these *Sententiae* not only do not appear in any of the Gallic manuscripts but in fact appear only in an Italian manuscript (the *Codex Napolitanus* 2, of the eighth or ninth century), and it seems much more likely that they have an Italian provenance.

[49] For this debate, see Mathisen, *Factionalism*, 235–41; and C. Brittain, "No Place for a Platonist Soul in Fifth-Century Gaul? The Case of Mamertus Claudianus," in R. Mathisen, D. Shanzer eds, *Society and Culture in Late Antique Gaul. Revisiting the Sources* (Aldershot, 2001) 239–62.

of Vienne, was an incorporealist, believing that the soul also was incorporeal. Both cited distinguished authorities on their side. In a brief tract in support of his position, Faustus cited two passages from Jerome:

> For just as in a certain tractate of St. Jerome we read, "The globes of stars," he says, "are thought to be bodily spirits," and elsewhere, "If the angels," he says, "are said to be celestial bodies that are perfect as compared with God, what do you think that man must be considered?" But in the context of these words you therefore deny that the soul is corporeal because according to the opinion of some it is not localized nor does it subsist in quality or quantity, which it is clear ought to be believed about the majesty of God alone.[50]

Faustus used the first passage, that the stars were corporeal, in conjunction with the second, that the angels are akin to celestial bodies, that is, stars, to conclude that if, according to Jerome, stars and angels were corporeal, the soul must be corporeal too.

In his much more lengthy response, the *De statu animae*, Mamertus Claudianus challenged Faustus' use of the two citations of Jerome. Regarding the first, he replied by quibbling over the sense of the word *arbitror*:

> Now, compelled by a serious lack of testimonies, you attach from a certain work of St. Jerome a certain chapter, which in fact it is clear that you have not understood, where he says, "The globes of stars are supposed (*arbitrantur*) to be corporeal spirits." There is no doubt that one who "supposes" doubts everything. Indeed, you say that the blessed Jerome reports the supposition of certain people regarding spirits that are corporeal. If he, perhaps, follows the opinion of those who are supposing, that is, doubting, this, because you also follow the opinion of the same person and because not unless by ignorance should the doubt of the one supposing be set forth, you should acknowledge that you have brought to me, seeking the truth, a lack of knowledge of many things rather than the one knowledge that you promise. For when one who is in doubt regarding those whose testimony is being used presents as doubtful those whom he summons as witnesses and uses testimony as if it is most approved, what must be thought that you can pronounce, you yourself as the third from the doubtful source of your own doubting source?...Wherefore, because [philosophers] clearly distinguish a vivified body from an incorporeal vivifier, it seems to me that that the advocate of the corporeal has not understood the philosophical meaning of incorporeal

[50] Faust. *Ep*. 3 (*CSEL* 21:173–4): *Nam sicut in quodam sancti Hieronymi tractatu legimus, globos, inquit, siderum corporatos esse spiritus arbitrantur', et item, si angeli, inquit, caelestia etiam corpora ad conparationem dei inmunda esse dicuntur, quid putas homo aestimandus est? sed inter haec ideo tu animam negas esse corpoream, quia iuxta aliquorum opinionem nec localis sit nec qualitate aut quantitate subsistat, quod de sola dei maiestate credi debere manifestum est.*

> substance and by no means ought to make an argument on his own behalf under the very name of St. Jerome.[51]

But rather than explaining in this piece of rhetorical obfuscation just what was wrong with Faustus' use of his first passage, Claudianus passed to Faustus' second citation:

> There follows, and [Faustus] adds, "If the angels," he says, "are said to be celestial bodies that are perfect as compared with God, what do you think man must be considered [to be]?" As far as I can see, this most violent disputer does not understand this passage. Indeed, he believes that the angels are of one substance in order to have a better understanding of the stars, which he judges to be corporeal spirits. For what else would the learned man Jerome be thought to have said here, except that the bodies of angels greatly exceed human bodies in hability and power? Likewise when he said, "if the angels," and he added, "in fact celestial bodies," whereby he wishes certain things to be understood, that the angels also are celestial bodies, because, whereas the angels are corporeal spirits, there are certain things in the sky that are solely corporeal. Therefore, he clearly shows that no body, however supreme in place, however powerful in strength, can be preferred to the incorporeal.[52]

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[51] *De statu animae* 1.11–12 (*CSEL* 11:51): *Iam nunc testimoniorum vel maxime penuria coactus de quodam opere sancti Hieronymi capitulum quiddam, quod quidem te constat non intellexisse, subiungis, quo ait: globos siderum corporatos esse spiritus arbitrantur. omnem qui arbitratur dubitare non dubium est. beatum vero Hieronymum de spiritibus corporatis quorundam referre dicis arbitrium: qui, si arbitrantium hoc est dubitantium sequitur forte sententiam, cum eiusdem <quo>que tu sequare, cumque non nisi ab ignorantia profiscatur dubietas arbitrantis, agnosce te nobis quaerentibus veritatem pro una quam polliceris scientia multorum nescientias adtulisse. nam cum quasi probatissimo testimonio eius utaris, qui de eis dubitans, quorum testimoniis utitur, eos dubitantes adfert, quos testes adhibet, quid te posse pronuntiare censendum est, qui ab auctoris tui dubitantis auctore dubio tertius ipse iam dubitas?..quapropter cum dilucide vivificatum corpus ab incorporeo vivicante discreverint, videtur mihi quod iste corporis advocatus aut philosophicam de substantia incorporali sententiam non intellexerit aut nequaquam pro se obiectare debuerit sub ipso sancti Hieronymi nomine.*

[52] *De statu animae* 1.12 (*CSEL* 11:53–4): *Sequitur, et adiungit: Si angeli, inquit, caelestia etiam corpora ad conparationem dei inmunda esse dicuntur, quid putas homo aestimandus est? quantum video, violentissimus disputator nec istud intellegit. angelos enim unius credit esse substantiae, ut melius de sideribus sentiat, quae corporatos spiritus iudicat. nam quid hic aliud vir doctus Hieronymus dixisse censibitur, nisi angelorum corpora habilitate sui atque potentia humanis longe praestare corporibus? pariter cum dixit, si angeli, et adiecit, caelestia etiam corpora, quo quaedam intellegi voluit, angelos et caelestia corpora, quia cum angeli spiritus corporati sint, sunt in caelo quaedam quae sola sunt corpora. igitur evidenter ostendit nullum corpus quamlibet supremum loco, quamlibet potens motu incorporeis posse praeponi.*

Only then does Claudianus return to the first citation, adding: "Lest, perhaps, it happen that this be attached, which the same Jerome is remembered to have said, 'The globes of stars are supposed to be corporeal spirits,' so that celestial things everywhere, whether the very stars or the bodies of angels, are corporeal, because those spirits that are embodied in them are corporeal, just we say that God is incarnate, and just as the human soul itself is incarnate, when it accepts the rule of the flesh."[53]

Claudianus clearly had problems with Faustus' first citation from Jerome. And with good reason. Although the second passage is a direct quotation of Jerome's *Commentary on Job*,[54] the putative first citation, *globos, inquit, siderum corporatos esse spiritus arbitrantur* is nowhere to be found, either in this work or anywhere else in Jerome's extant corpus. Jerome comes close in the same passage of the *Commentary on Job*, where he says that the saints in the resurrection are *ut siderum radiantium globi* ("like the globes of shining stars"). But no outright statement that celestial bodies were corporeal. Has Faustus just misremembered? Perhaps.

If Faustus did fabricate the troublesome passage, Claudianus never realized it, and he essentially ceded the point. But perhaps Claudianus felt that he did not need to belabor the issue, for he had an ace in the hole. He countered the testimony of Jerome by citing a much higher authority:

> Aurelius Augustinus, in the acuity of his intelligence and the multitude of his topics and the mass of his work..spoke thus in his book to Jerome *On the Origin of the Soul*, "The soul is incorporeal, even if it can be difficult to persuade more blockheaded persons, I confess that I, however, have been persuaded." And because he argues this will be so with such great rationality and with incontrovertible argumentation and demands this opinion over that of Jerome, he recovers so much of his own praise from the writing of Jerome so that there is no doubt that Jerome says that he can understand nothing more truly about the soul and is able to argue nothing more perfectly. See for yourself that these two most outstanding men, greatly endowed, moreover, with a preeminence of virtues and teachings agree with me about the nature of the soul and make you helpless under the weight of their authority and prostrate you with the force of their reason, and, disparate in their bodies, they make their spirits one with a unity of wisdom. Thus, I greatly marvel that Jerome was cited as a witness for

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[53] *De statu animae* 1.12 (*CSEL* 11:54): *Ne forte hic aptari conveniat illud quod eundem Hieronymum dicere meminit: globos siderum corporatos esse spiritus arbitrantur, ut ipsa sidera sive angelorum corpora corpora utique caelestia sint, cum illi spiritus qui istis corporati sunt corporei non sint, sicut et deum dicimus incarnatum, et sicut ipsa anima humana incarnatur utique, cum administrandam suscipit carnem.*

[54] *PL* 26:687: *Si enim angeli, inquit, et caelorum etiam corpora ad comparationem Dei, immunda esse dicuntur, quid putas, homo existimandus est?*

> you, when this most able of discussants is hardly able to argue both for and against the soul.[55]

Claudianus knew that Augustine had corrected Jerome's views on the soul, and that Jerome—according to Claudianus—had acknowledged the superiority of Augustine's arguments. Claudianus, therefore, trumped Faustus' citation of Jerome with his own citation of Augustine from a letter-cum-tract addressed to Jerome that Claudianus fortunately had in his possession. Nevertheless, Faustus seems to have emerged the victor in the Gallic debate over the soul,[56] but in spite of this the reputation of Jerome apparently suffered, for people remembered that it was Augustine who had instructed Jerome: in his entry on Orosius, Gennadius recalled: "This is the Orosius who was sent by Augustine to Jerome to teach him the nature of the soul."[57]

Pseudo-Hieronymiana

In general, when it came to being cited in Gaul, Jerome appeared far less than writers such as Augustine, Ambrose of Milan, and Hilary of Poitiers, to name a few. So it is something of a surprise that in one regard Jerome did outshine Augustine and other patristic writers: it was much more common, in Gaul and elsewhere, for pseudonymous works to pass under the name of Jerome than, for example, Augustine.[58] But perhaps this is not surprising. Augustine was controversial. Jerome, it seems, was not. A respected name, but not one that would arouse scrutiny.

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[55] *De statu animae* 2.9 (*CSEL* 11:133–4): *Aurelius Augustinus et acumine ingenii et rerum multitudine et operis mole..libro ad Hieronymum de origine animae sic pronuntiat: incorporeum esse animam etsi difficile tardioribus persuaderi potest, mihi tamen fateor esse persuasum. Cumque id ita fore rationibus magnis atque insolubili argumentatione convincat ac super hoc Hieronymi sententiam poscat, laudis suae tantum a Hieronymo scripta recuperat, quin haud dubie Hieronymus nihil de anima sentire dicit verius, nihil disputare posse perfectius. en tibi duos praeclarissimos virtutum doctrinarum praeeminentia longe porro praeditos super statu animae sentire nobiscum inermemque te auctoritatis pondere et rationis viribus prosternidare disparatosque corporibus unitate sapientiae suas animas unam facere. unde multum miror Hieronymum tibi testem citatum, cum potissimus tractatorum minime potuerit et pro anima et in animam disputare.*

[56] For discussion, see Mathisen, *Factionalism,* 235–44.

[57] *Vir.ill.* 40: *Hic est Orosius, qui ab Augustino, pro discenda animae ratione, ad Hieronymum missus, rediens reliquias.*

[58] For ancient Christian apocryphal correspondence, see G. Bardy, "Faux et fraudes littéraires dans l'antiquité chrétienne," *RHE* 32 (1936) 5–23, 275–302; A.C. Anton, *Authentizität als Fiktion. Briefkultur im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1995).

Works of all sorts were transmitted under the name of Jerome, such as the famous commentary on Mark.[59] In Gaul, a number of sermons in the Eusebian corpus passed under his name.[60] It was particularly common for Jerome's name to be attracted to letters. Letters that at one time or another were falsely attributed to Jerome are collected in volume 30 of the *Patrologia Latina*. About twelve more survive in other sources. Some were forgeries, such as the purported correspondence between Jerome and Damasus.[61] Several of these letters have Gallic connections. Hincmar of Reims, for example, supposed that the *De septem ordinibus ecclesiae* had been written by Jerome.[62] Four letters-cum-tracts sometimes assigned to Jerome in manuscripts now are attributed to the priest Eutropius mentioned by Gennadius.[63] Other apocryphal letters attributed to Jerome, such as one to the prefect Dardanus entitled *De diversis generibus musicorum*,[64] have not yet been assigned to any author.

Many letters transmitted under the name of Jerome were addressed to women, some of whom are otherwise unknown, including Celantia (Hier. *Ep*. 148),[65] a

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[59] G.W. Olsen, "The Ecclesia Primitiua in John Cassian, the Ps. Jerome Commentary on Mark, and Bede," in M. Gorman, C. Leonardi eds, *Biblical Studies in the Early Middle Ages* (Florence, 2004) 3–25; note also C.D. Wright, "Hiberno-Latin and Irish-Influenced Biblical Commentaries, Florilegia and Homily Collections 18. Ps-Hier. *Expositio quatuor euangeliorum*, in F. Biggs et al. eds, *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version* (Binghamton, NY, 1990) 87–123, at 100–101; M. Cahill, "Is the First Commentary on Mark an Irish Work? Some New Considerations," *Peritia* 8 (1994) 34–45.

[60] *CCSL* 100.

[61] See G. Mercati, "Il carme Damasiano *de Davide* e la falsa corrispondenza di Damaso e Girolamo riguardo al Salterio," in G. Mercati, *Note di Letteratura Biblica e Cristiana Antica* (Rome, 1905) 113–26; P. Blanchard, "La correspondance apocryphe du pape S. Damase et de S. Jérôme," *EphL* 63 (1949) 376–88; R.E. Reynolds, "An Early Medieval Mass Fantasy: The Correspondence of Pope Damasus and St Jerome on a Nicene Canon," in P. Linehan ed., *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Medieval Canon Law (Cambridge, July 23–27, 1984)* (Rome, 1988) 73–89; J. Bignami-Odier, "Une lettre apocryphe de saint Damase à saint Jérôme sur la question de Melchisédech," *MEFRA* 63 (1951) 183–90.

[62] E. Griffe, "L'apocryphe hieronymien *De septem ordinibus ecclesiae*," *BLE* 57 (1956) 215–24; A.W. Kalff, *Ps.-Hieronymi De septem ordinibus ecclesiae* (Wurzburg, 1938); G. Morin, "Portion inédite de l'apocryphe hiéronymien *De septem ordinibus ecclesiae*," *Rbén* 40 (1928) 310–18; Idem, "Le destinataire de l'apocryphe hiéronymien *De septem ordinibus ecclesiae*," *RHE* 34 (1938) 229–44.

[63] Gennad. *Vir.ill*. 50; see J. Madoz, "Herencia literaria del presbítero Eutropio," *EstEcl* 16 (1942) 7–54; P. Courcelle, "Une nouveau traité de Eutrope, prêtre Aquitain vers l'an 400," *REA* 56 (1954) 377–90.

[64] Ps.-Hier. *Ep*. 23 (*PL* 30:213–15).

[65] A letter often attributed to Pelagius; see B.R. Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius and His Followers* (Woodbridge, 1991).

"virgin sent into exile" (Ps.-Hier. *Ep*. 4[66]), and the daughters of Geruntius (Ps.-Hier. *Ep*. 2[67]). Others are addressed to famous women who appear in Jerome's genuine collection, such as an *Epistola consolatoria ad Marcellam* (ps.-Hier. *Ep*. 3[68]),[69] a letter to Eustochium (Ps.-Hier. *Ep*.30[70]), and two letters to Paula and Eustochium (Ps.-Hieron. *Epist*. 9, 51: *PL* 30.122–43, 305–8). In addition, the *Codex Sangallensis* 190, written perhaps in the late eighth century, preserves on 50–66 two little-known pseudonymous letters of Jerome. The first, *Nisi tantum*, lacks a heading and is followed by a letter with the heading, *INCIP(IT) ALIAM AD S(AN)C(T)AM MARCELLA(M) VIDUA(M)* ("There begins another [letter] to the blessed widow Marcella")[71] and concludes with the comment, *EXPLICIT HIERONIMI AD MARCELLA[M]* ("[The letter] of Jerome to Marcella ends"). Further insight into what the compilers thought of these two letters can be gleaned from the table of contents, which describes them as "Two letters of the priest Jerome."

In these latter cases, the ascription to Jerome was made even more convincing by adding the names of one or more of Jerome's famous female correspondents, for Jerome's interest in ladies was well known.[72] Venantius Fortunatus even commemorated five of "Jerome's girls"—Eustochium, Blesilla, Paula, Fabiola, and Marcella—in one of his *carmina*.[73] Jerome had a particularly close connection to Marcella: no less than 18 of his letters are addressed to her, and she is mentioned in many others.[74] Thus, once an ascription to Jerome was made, an additional

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[66] *PL* 30:55–60.

[67] *PL* 30:45–50.

[68] *PL* 30:50–55.

[69] Also attributed to Pelagius; see G. de Plinval, "Recherches sur l'oeuvre littéraire de Pélage," *RPh* 8 (1934) 9–42, at 33, 41; Idem, *Pélage. Ses écrits, sa vie et sa réforme* (Lausanne, 1943), 172; S. Letsch-Brunner, *Marcella—Discipula et magistra. Auf den Spüren einer römischen Christin des 4. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin/NY, 1998) 225–6.

[70] *PL* 30:226–32.

[71] *SG* 190 has "*Ep*. 148" noted next to the letter "To Marcella." This is a letter of Jerome to Marcella using the pre-Vallarsian numbering system; it now is *Ep*. 59, "*Ad Marcellam de quinque novi testamenti quaestionibus*."

[72] J. D'Ivray, *Saint Jérôme et les dames de l'Aventin* (Paris, 1937); M. Turcan, "Saint Jérôme et les femmes," *BAGB* 4 (1968) 259–72; C. Krumeich, *Hieronymus und die christlichen feminae clarissimae* (Bonn, 1993); A. Arjava, "Jerome and women," *Arctos* 23 (1989) 5–18; P. Devos, "Saint Jérôme contre Poemenia? Appendice à Sylvie la sainte pèlerine," *AB* 91 (1973) 117–20; P. Rousseau, "'Learned women' and the development of a Christian culture in Late Antiquity," *SO* 70 (1995) 116–47.

[73] Ven.Fort. *Misc.* 8.1 (*PL* 88:262–3): *Parca cibo Eustochium superans, abstemia Paulam / Vulnera quo curet, dux Fabiola monet / Melaniam studio reparans, pietate Blesillam / Marcellam votis aequiparare valens.*

[74] See, e.g., Hier. *Epp.* 23–9, 34, 37–8, 40–44, 46, 59, 87, 97. For Jerome and Marcella, see K. Sugano, "Marcella von Rom. Ein Lebensbild," in M. Wisseman ed., *Roma renascens: Festschrift Ilona Opelt* (Frankfurt/Main, 1988), 355–70; P. Laurence, "Marcella,

ascription to Marcella made real sense and suggests that whoever made the ascription was at least marginally familiar with Jerome's works. The chances that these works would survive were greatly increased as a consequence of their ascription to a famous name.

Thus, in some regards, Jerome's legacy in Gaul was to lend his name to fakes—faked citations and fake letters. Indeed, his name was ascribed to so many works not actually by him that the search for forgeries has led to the authenticity of some obviously genuine letters also being challenged.[75] As for his genuine works, which Jerome circulated far and wide either at his own expense or with the assistance of his patrons, multitudes of them survived as well and contributed to Jerome being cited later in the Middle Ages as an authority on a multitude of different topics. Jerome therefore recovered from the Gallic failure to appreciate him as much as he would have liked in the fourth and fifth century, and went on to become, in AD 1295, one of the four great doctors of the Western church.

Jérôme et Origène," *REAug* 42 (1996) 267–93; Letsch-Brunner, *Marcella*; see also Andrew Cain's essay "Rethinking Jerome's *Lives* of holy women" in this volume, as well as A. Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2009), Chapter 3.

[75] For the letter to Sunnias and Fretela as fictive, see D. de Bruyne, "La lettre de Jérôme à Sunnia et Frétela sur le Psautier," *ZNTW* 28 (1929) 1–13, refuted by A. Allgeier, "Der Brief an Sunnia und Fretela und seine Bedeutung für die Textherstellung der Vulgata," *Biblica* 11 (1930) 80–107, and by J. Zeiller, "La lettre de saint Jérôme aux Goths Sunnia et Frétela," *CRAI* (1934) 338–50; for the letter to Hedibia as fictive, see D. Bruyne, "Lettres fictives de s. Jérôme," *ZNTW* 28 (1929) 229–34, refuted by Cain, "Defending Hedibia."

Chapter 16
Vir Quadrilinguis? Syriac in Jerome and Jerome in Syriac

Daniel King

Jerome's "trilingualism" (his knowledge of Latin, Greek and Biblical Hebrew) has become a well-established fact in Hieronymian scholarship.[1] A fourth language in contrast, which also played an important role in Jerome's life and work as well as in his reception, has been somewhat neglected: Aramaic (the language which Jerome himself sometimes referred to as "Chaldee"). This paper aims to answer two questions. First, did Jerome really know any of the Aramaic dialect which was local to him in his monastery in Bethlehem? Second, how were the person and work of Jerome received in the Aramaic/Syriac literary traditions? Furthermore, could there be a link between the two? We shall first look briefly at Jerome's stance towards Aramaic as a language and the use to which he put it in his exegesis and in his self-promotion as an expert philologist. In a second part we shall then survey the phenomenon of *Hieronymus Syrus* and, in particular, the Syriac translation of the *Life of Malchus*. As we shall see, the reception of Jerome in the East differs somewhat from that in the West, but it does so in a way that might not have been entirely unsatisfactory to Jerome, especially in light of his own knowledge of and love for Aramaic.

Jerome's Experience of Learning Aramaic/Syriac

It is not entirely surprising that after having lived in the region for many years Jerome should have claimed to have at least some knowledge of the language spoken around Bethlehem: Palestinian Aramaic (sometimes also referred to as Palestinian Syriac). This was related to the dialect in which certain portions of the Old Testament had been written and was also very close to the language of the Targumim.[2] But through all the blustering boasts about language acquisition, what

[1] For the coinage of the expression *vir trilinguis* see S. Rebenich, "Jerome. The 'vir trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica veritas'," *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77; for the latest on Jerome's Hebrew scholarship in particular (with a strong focus on *In Hier*.) see now M. Graves, *Jerome's Hebrew Philology* (Leiden, 2007).

[2] The question of Jerome's knowledge of Aramaic is related to, but not identical with, his knowledge of the exegetical traditions of the Targumim and of Jewish exegetical

might Jerome have really known of the Aramaic language? What might any Roman living in the Eastern provinces have known? In the Mel Gibson film, *The Passion of the Christ*, Pilate both understands and speaks quite reasonable Aramaic, albeit with an Italian accent. Even the common soldiers have a few rough words from the common tongue of the people under their control. Whether or not this reflects reality, it is plausible enough that a governor of the Jewish people might try to learn some of their language as a means of bringing down barriers and preserving the peace. Where there was special cause, distant languages might very well be learned by well-educated Romans. J.N. Adams comments that "while there might have been *individual Romans* [my emphasis] who picked up the language, communication with primary speakers of Aramaic will usually have been effected through the medium of Greek in the typical Roman way."[3] Now it is those few "individuals," who struggled, but nevertheless made the effort, to master a Semitic tongue, with whom we are here concerned.

For Jerome, of course, there were two possible motivating forces behind making such an effort to become acquainted to some extent with the language: first, the fact that he was living in the relevant linguistic environment, initially in the Syrian desert and later in Palestine; and second, the obvious importance of Aramaic as a Biblical language, both for the translation of the books of Daniel and Ezra, and also for the interpretation of many difficult Hebrew terms, as well as un-translated Aramaic terms in the New Testament. All these would have provided excellent reasons for Jerome to attempt to learn a language far removed from the experience of most, if not all, of his readership and thereby to bring great esteem upon himself. In fact, as we shall see shortly, Jerome's use of Syriac and Aramaic references appears to have been motivated primarily by a sense of ostentation.

There is no doubt but that Jerome did make some attempt to learn this language. He describes his experience as follows:

> When, in lily youth, after reading the flowery rhetoric of Quintilian and Tully, I entered on the vigorous study of this language, the expenditure of much time and energy barely enabled me to utter the puffing and hissing words; I seemed to be walking in a sort of underground chamber with a few scattered rays of light shining down upon me; and when at last I met with Daniel, such a sense of weariness came over me that, in a fit of despair, I could have counted all my former toil as useless. But there was a certain Hebrew who encouraged me, and was for ever quoting for my benefit the saying that "Persistent labour conquers all things"; and so, conscious that among Hebrews I was only a smatterer, I once

traditions in general. His knowledge of the former may have required a working reading knowledge of Aramaic, but by no means would this have been necessary. See principally, C.T.R. Hayward, "Saint Jerome and the Aramaic Targumim," *JSS* 32 (1987) 105–23, 121.

[3] J.N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge, 2003) 271.

> more began to study Chaldee. And, to confess the truth, to this day I can read and understand Chaldee better than I can pronounce it.[4]

Jerome thus admits that he struggled greatly to speak the language at all and yet he doubtless takes pride in his hard-earned ability to read and understand it. However, even his reading knowledge can never have been especially fluent, as he admits in the preface to his translation of Tobit, where he explains how he called on a Hebrew/Aramaic bilingual to translate the words into Hebrew first:

> Inasmuch as the Chaldee is closely allied to the Hebrew, I procured the help of the most skilful speaker of both languages I could find, and gave to the subject one day's hasty labour, my method being to explain in Latin, with the aid of a secretary, whatever an interpreter expressed to me in Hebrew words.[5]

The Utility of Learning Aramaic/Syriac

To what use did Jerome put his knowledge of Syriac, whatever its extent may have been? It should be stated first that it often served a purely rhetorical end, such as to show that his linguistic competence was above suspicion and therefore above criticism. Thus, for example, commenting on Isaiah 29:1, he points out that Aquila, the second- century Greek translator of the Old Testament, had accurately understood the Hebrew *qiryāh* as meaning a small village rather than a *civitas*, and accordingly wants to use the term *civitatula*. He then adds that the Syriac equivalent is *cartha* (sic—ܩܪܬܐ) and that from this derives the place name *cariathiarim* (that is, Kiriath Jearim), meaning "village of forests." It is important to note that this comment adds nothing to the overall argument and is pure showmanship on the exegete's part. Again, in his discussion of Jeremiah 6:7, he refers to the Syriac for "cistern," *gubba* (ܓܘܒܐ), although this adds nothing in particular to his argument that *cisterna* should be preferred to *lacus* in the Latin version.[6] In a polemical passage in which Jerome defends his new translation of Jonah 4:6 (where he replaced *cucurbita* with *hedera*) he adds fuel to his argument by pointing out that both Syriac and Punic, in addition to Hebrew, use the term *ciceia* (קיקיא, the Hebrew is actually קִיקָיוֹן) for *hedera*. The point has no independent value as such—the mention of Punic is probably a shot across the bows of his

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[4] Hier. *Vulg.Dan.,* praef. (B. Fischer et al. eds, *Biblia sacra iuxta Vulgatam versionem* [Stuttgart, 1975] 1341–2). Chaldee here means the Biblical form of Aramaic; for Jerome's discussion of these terms, see further below.

[5] Hier. *Vulg.Tob.* praef. (Fischer, *Biblia Sacra*, 676).

[6] Jerome knew about the *gubba* for its importance for certain ascetics (*Vit.Paul.*6) and its insertion here in an exegetical context is perhaps just a small piece of "ascetical" showmanship; for this and the references to the "Life of Paul" further below compare also Stefan Rebenich's contribution to this volume.

adversary in this argument, who made much of being descended from the Aemilii (of "Africanus" fame). The reference to the Syriac word is just showing-off.[7]

Jerome's awareness of Syriac/Aramaic extends also, and more positively, to a strong appreciation for Christian Syriac literary productions. In *De Viris Illustribus* he mentions three Syriac authors, Bardesanes, Archelaus of Mesopotamia, and Ephrem. Of Bardesanes' writings he states: "If there is such force and vigour in the translation, how much must there have been in the original itself?"[8] This shows a high degree of respect for this language as a vehicle of philosophical thought. Syriac works of value are attributed also to Archelaus of Mesopotamia and, naturally, to Ephrem, of whom it is said that "I recognized the incisiveness of his lofty mind even in translation."[9] The same language was the tongue of holy men such as Hilarion and the references to the Syriac tongue in the *Vita Hilarionis* bear close resemblances to similar stories in the *Historia Religiosa* of Theodoret. To take an example: A stranger from Francia turns up to be healed by Hilarion and ends up speaking "pure Syriac…and that without the absence of a sibilant, or an aspirate, or an idiom of the speech of Palestine."[10] The last comment about the idiomatic phonology of the dialects smacks of Jerome again boasting his wide linguistic experience—with perhaps just a hint of jealousy. He knew Syriac as a liturgical language too, and his wholly tangential comment about the trilingual liturgy used at Paula's funeral provides us with one of those delightful insights into a man for whom language in itself was simply a matter for fascination.[11]

Now Jerome was well aware that too close an acquaintance with such a barbaric language could be a dangerous matter. He admits, in evident hyperbole, but nevertheless playing upon the assumptions of his audience, that the whole of Syria is infected with the Messalian heresy.[12] Such an admission, coming from a man who took pride in his intimacy with this part of the world, might appear unfortunate. In fact, however, Jerome actually plays up this dubious status of Syriac: "You are afraid, I suppose, that, with my fluent knowledge of Syriac and Greek, I shall make a tour of the churches, lead the people into error, and form

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[7] *In Ion.* 4.6. The point was raised again many years later with Augustine (*Ep.* 112 [*CSEL* 56:24]) where Jerome claims the term *ciceia* to be specifically Syriac, although at the same time he accuses the Jews of lying about their own language when they deny its Hebrew origin.

[8] *Vir.ill*. 33.

[9] *Vir.ill.* 72, 115. The fact that Jerome read Ephrem in translation (probably in Greek) is worth noting; compare D.G.K. Taylor, "St. Ephraim's Influence on the Greeks," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 1/2 (1998) [http://syrcom.cua.edu/syrcom/Hugoye].

[10] *Vit.Hilar.* 13. The devil is addressed in Syriac again in the story of the possessed camel, *ibid.* 16.

[11] *Ep.* 108 (*CSEL* 55:348).

[12] *Adv.Pelag.* prol.; see also *Adv.Iovin.* 2.37, where Jerome attributes all past heresies to the Greek, the Chaldee and the Syriac tongues.

a schism."[13] Jerome is playing on the fears of his audience, deliberately placing himself at the limits of their known world, both as a "wise man" who can bring the wisdom of the barbarians into the service of the church, and as a danger and a threat, one whose judgements may be secretly heretical but who remains impervious to criticism from those without the necessary linguistic faculties.

This slightly mysterious and liminal power of Syriac comes to the fore most of all, as we would expect, when asceticism is in view. (That the principal heresy mentioned above was Messalianism is only to be expected.) Jerome strongly promotes himself as part of this world "on the edge," a fearsome place inextricably linked with the equally ferocious, almost mythological, Saracens.[14] He identifies himself thereby with that breed of (anti-)hero, the Syrian ascetic.[15] A few years later Theodoret of Cyrrhus would prove himself a master of a similar image manipulation, setting himself up as being on both sides of the divide, both an "in-man" with the bizarre creatures of the Syrian desert and a cultivated, urbane bishop of the orthodox church. We can see Jerome cultivating much the same image of himself throughout his writings.

The *Life of Malchus* provides Jerome with a good opportunity for just this sort of self-presentation. In the first and last parts of the story we see the author himself moving effortlessly among the locals, hobnobbing with the ascetic Malchus, a man among his peers. Of course, he lets us know allusively that he was living there, near Maronia, in Syria, at that time. He kindly lets us know the meaning of the name Malchus, pointing out, naturally, that he is *Syrus natione et lingua*, implying that their conversation must thus have proceeded in that tongue; we are presented with a terrifying spectacle of the Saracens as they attack the vulnerable caravan, as well as the wild beasts that inhabit the caves in that district.[16] He tells us that, after inquiring into the nature of the relationship between Malchus and the old woman, he was told that they were *sancti,* an answer with which he appears quite satisfied, because of course he, with his local knowledge, understands the meaning—that they are in fact *qadishe* (ܩܕܝܫܐ), or "children of the covenant," belonging to the second rank of Syrian ascetics, couples who live together in chastity.[17] The Syrian colouring of this text, so firmly and deliberately implanted by its author, was so powerful that there are two thirteenth-century Latin manuscripts of the life which,

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[13] *Ep.* 17 (*CSEL* 54:72); compare D. Brown, *Vir Trilinguis: A Study in the Biblical Exegesis of Saint Jerome* (Kampen, 1992) 83; Rebenich, "Jerome. The 'vir trilinguis'," 56–70.

[14] *Ep.* 5 (*CSEL* 54:21); *Ep.* 7.1 (*CSEL* 54:26); *Ep.* 15.2 (*CSEL* 54:64); *Ep.* 16.2 (*CSEL* 54:72); see also the Saracen involvement in the *Life of Malchus* (ed. Mierow, § IV).

[15] See, for example, *Vit.Paul.* 6.

[16] We have already noticed the very frequent reference to the Saracens in Jerome's descriptions of his desert sojourn.

[17] See Brock, "Early Syrian Asceticism," *Numen* 20 (1973) 1–19, repr. in Idem, *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (London, 1984) Chapter 1, esp. 11.

in their titles, actually claim that the work is a translation from Syriac. Jerome even hoodwinked his own Western successors![18]

Biblical Aramaic

While Jerome's use of the language and culture of Syria as a weapon in the battle over image-manipulation is insightful in itself, what of his actual capability as an Aramaist in exegetical and philological matters *per se*? His desire to bend every tool in the linguistic cupboard toward the exegetical goal derives evidently from his hero-worship of Origen. Writing against Rufinus, Jerome has to defend Origen from the apparent crime of knowing as many as five languages.[19] In trying to learn Syriac/Aramaic, it would seem that he yearned to achieve the linguistic heights upon which stood the Exegete himself. A brief survey of references to Aramaic in the exegetical works will give us some idea of how he went about using this knowledge.

In the *Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim* Jerome twice alludes to the Aramaic/Syriac language in order to explain certain terms; once to tell us that the name of Lot's city of refuge, Zoar (Genesis 19:22), comes from the Syriac for "*parvulum*"; the second to explain that Laban was using his native "Aramaean" tongue when he described the "heap of testimony" (Genesis 31:47) as *igar sedutha* (יְגַר שָׂהֲדוּתָא).[20] The first of these did present a problem in need of explanation, for the LXX's *Sogar* resulted from an error in the Hebrew tradition (a gimel being read for 'ain) and only by referring simultaneously to the *Hebraica veritas* and the Syriac can Jerome explain the apparently obscure etymology. Referring to the same issue again at Isaiah 15:5, however, Jerome defends the LXX/Latin by telling us that *sogar* is the correct Hebrew term, meaning "insignificant" and being equivalent to Syriac *zoar*.[21]

In the *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum*, awareness of the Syriac language is required many times in order to explain the Semitic words found in the Scriptures. Thus pithy explanations such as *sed syrum est* and *syrum est, non hebraeum* are reasonably common.[22] A host of terms such as "Aceldemach" ("the field of blood") and "Talithakumi" ("girl, arise"), as well as well known place

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[18] For the argument that the text does, in fact, have an oriental origin, and for the disproving of this thesis, see below, n. 56.

[19] *C. Rufin*. 2.22.

[20] *Hebr. Quaest. in Gen.* 22.5; 50.30. Jerome returns to the same discussion *In Es.* 15.5.

[21] In fact, צער is the equivalent of Syriac ܙܥܘܪ, and there is never a "g" in the root in Hebrew or Aramaic, only in the Arabic root صغر. However, the Semitic 'ayin could occasionally be transliterated as "g" in Greek and Latin.

[22] The same sort of comment is found elsewhere too, e.g. *Ep.* 26.4 (*CSEL* 54:222) and in *Ep.* 78.13 (*CSEL* 55:61–2).

and personal names such as Golgotha, Bethphage, Zacchaeus, are all explained with recourse to Aramaic/Syriac.[23] This interest in names derived from the Syriac is found sporadically throughout the exegetical works, in both Old and New Testaments[24]—quite a number of times, for instance, does Jerome explain the origin of the term *Mammon*.[25]

In the commentaries, the language is often put to exegetical use. Thus the pun on the name Baal found at Hosea 2:18 (Vulgate, 2:16) is correctly explained by Jerome on the basis of the fact that while Baal means either "husband" or "master" in both Aramaic and Hebrew, *issa* is the special Hebrew term for husband and hence should now be the exclusive term used for Yahweh, in order to avoid the idolatrous connotations of the term "Baal." Even modern commentators sometimes miss the true nature of this point. At Matthew 10:13, he points out that an Aramaic substratum must underlie the Greek, for the *pax* which the disciples are exhorted to leave with their hosts must refer to the standard Aramaic *salama* greeting.

There are also text-critical implications: At Isaiah 51:20, the Septuagint and Latin versions read "half-cooked beet" where the Hebrew clearly read *tho mikmar*, "an ensnared gazelle." Jerome explains the error by reference to the Syriac word for beet, *thoreth*, which he assumes the translators had read for the Hebrew *tho*. This example is of special interest because it shows us Jerome putting to good effect his knowledge of the everyday words of the language of his adopted compatriots.

Jerome's knowledge of Syriac led to a particularly interesting translation at Malachi 3:8. The Hebrew *yiqba'* (יִקְבַּע—a word of uncertain meaning but usually translated as "rob") was turned into πτερνιεῖ (*supplantat*) in LXX (probably via metathesis to *yi'qb*), and ἀποστερήσει (*fraudat*) in the "Three" (Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion). While the root *qb'* (קבע) is barely attested in Hebrew, however, it is commonly found in Syriac with the meaning "to affix, thrust in," thereby yielding a surprisingly messianic interpretation, which Jerome leapt upon, producing the Vulgate's *si affiget homo Deum*. The particular confessional motives for this move Jerome both admits and defends in his commentary on the verse.

It should cause no surprise that very often the supposed Syriac base to which Jerome appeals is quite false. Thus it is assumed that the term *Aram* itself derives from the Hebrew root *rwm* and means *sublimitas* or *excelsus*. This manifestly false etymology is applied to various texts: with reference to Ezekiel 16:57 and Isaiah 7, he suggests that Aram, in its attempts to overthrow Judah, typified the haughtiness (*sublimitas*) of the nations and their wisdom; again at Amos 9:7, he links the name with the suggestion (based on the apparent analogy of Hebrew *kyr* and Latin *Cyrene*) that the Syrians came originally from the lowlands of Cyrene

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[23] *Hebr.Quaest. in Gen.* 60.18; 63.30; 61.23; 60.25; 63.17.

[24] Bethacarma (*In Hier.* 6.1); Hamath (*Hebr. Quaest. in Gen*. 17.17; *In Es.* 10.9); Zoar (*Hebr.Quaest. in Gen.* 22.5; *In Es.* 15.5; *In Os.* 11.8; *Ep.* 108.12 [*CSEL* 55:320]); Zor, the Hebrew and Syriac name for Tyre (*In Hiez.* 26.2); Saphir (*In Mich.* 1.11).

[25] *In Math.* 6.24; a reference to the same point can be found in *Ep.* 22.31 (*CSEL* 54:192).

into the *higher* place where they now reside. The randomness of the use of this particular etymology is further enhanced when he applies it even to Rome on the basis of the similarity of the sounds.[26] Elsewhere, Jerome claims that the name *Miriam* must have something to do with the Syriac word for mistress, although this particular flight of fancy actually applies better to the Latin spelling *Maria* (from, putatively, the Syriac *Mar*) than to the Semitic spelling.[27]

Knowledge of Aramaic became especially vital, of course, when it came to translating and commenting upon the Aramaic portions of the Old Testament, in particular the books of Daniel and Tobit. We have seen already how Jerome comments on his struggles with the language in the context of dealing with these books. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the commentary on Daniel contains a large number of discussions of Aramaic terms. In this way, for instance, are explained obscure terms such as the *saraballa* of Daniel 3:21. It may well have been Jerome's clever use of locals as assistants in his work (as described in the prologue to the vulgate translation of Tobit) that led to certain felicitous translations, as at Daniel 4:10, where the Vulgate reads quite correctly *vigil*, a watchful one, in imitation of the Aramaic *'ir* (עִיר), whereas Theodotion (whose version had been adopted as that of LXX) had merely transliterated the word for lack of certainty about the meaning.

The translation of Daniel raises also the question of the terms that Jerome uses to refer to the language in which the non-Hebrew parts of the book are written. For in this context he often refers to it as *Chaldaeus* rather than *Syrus*. The extremely common but inaccurate appropriation of the former term was due, in fact, to an old misunderstanding of a comment in Daniel 2:4. Here, the term *aramith* in the Hebrew text is probably a gloss indicating the point at which the language of the book changes. Translated into Greek, however, the verse appears to read: "The Chaldaeans spoke to the King in Aramaic," thus giving the impression that Aramaic and Chaldee were one and the same thing. Despite the fact that Jerome does not break from this usage, he nevertheless clearly understood the purpose and implication of the word *aramith* in this verse.[28] A number of factors (such as his translation of *saraballa*, mentioned above) point to the likelihood that Jerome well knew the difference between Chaldee (meaning the language of the Babylonian court) and Aramaic, and that he recognized that both languages are in fact used in the book—the Aramaic being littered with many Babylonian

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[26] *Adv.Iovin.* 38, though of course Jerome is not suggesting a real historical link between the words in this latter case.

[27] *Hebr.nom*. (*CCSL* 72:62): *sciendumque quod maria sermone syro domina nuncupatur*.

[28] The point itself is discussed in *In Dan.* 1.4, where the various earlier explanations for the difficulties arising from this identification are dealt with. The common use of Chaldee as a synonym for Syriac is in evidence when Jerome refers to the original language of the Gospel according to the Hebrews, *Adv.Pelag.* 3.2. Do his extensive quotes from this work derive from a Greek translation or were they mediated by a local, as in the case of Tobit?

and Persian loanwords. Thus, where the language of the book reverts again to Hebrew (Daniel 7:28), he refers to the fact that "this book of Daniel was written in both the Chaldee and the Syriac languages," suggesting that he understood the distinction and observed that both languages are in fact used. Elsewhere, however, *Syrus* is the term that Jerome always uses, and never *aramith* (אֲרָמִית). Just as the LXX translators had rendered the term *aramith* with Συριστί,[29] so Jerome follows their lead with *syra lingua*. This simply illustrates his blanket use of the term for both the language of the Middle East in the first millennium BC and the language current in his day. The place name *Aram* is also rendered always as *Syria*.[30]

Jerome in Syriac

Thus far we have considered the influence of the Syriac language upon Jerome and his work. We have seen how his knowledge of it, while doubtless far from thorough, could sometimes make a substantial difference in matters of exegesis, text criticism, and translation. We have considered also the importance of Jerome's Syriac milieu for his self-positioning in relation to that world and for the image manipulation of himself as the *vir quadrilinguis*. We come now to consider the other side of the coin. What was Jerome's legacy within the Syriac world? Did it take any notice of this eccentric Western monk? If so, was the image of Jerome the same from that perspective as it was, or is, from the perspective of the West? Who was *Hieronymus Syrus*? The material evidence with which we might construct some sort of an answer to this question is slight but nonetheless revealing. We may begin by briefly detailing the evidence such as it is.

One of the oldest Syriac manuscripts to contain translated hagiographies, Sinai Syr. 46 + Amb A 296 inf. (D in Draguet's edition), which dates to 534, contains a unified collection of eighteen lives of Egyptian desert Fathers.[31] Of these eighteen, fourteen derive from Palladius' *Lausiac History*, three from the *Historia Monachorum*, and the final one is Jerome's *Life of Paul of Thebes*, which appears in the collection as no. 17. The latter text includes a small note at the end identifying the author in a typical Syriac formulary: "I, Jerome, a sinner, ask all who read this book to pray for me." The eighteenth and final text in the collection is a composite version of the lives of the two Macarii from the *Lausiac History*, *Macarius of Egypt* and his namesake *of Alexandria*. This is then followed by a subscription which repeats approximately the same words as before, that is, "I, Jerome, a sinner, who is diligent, have written the histories of the Holy Fathers." This was no one-off error, as the same pattern is present in another sixth-century

[29] Isaiah 36:11.

[30] E.g. *In Hiez.* 27.16.

[31] R. Draguet ed., *Les formes syriaques de la matière de l'Histoire lausiaque*, 2 vols. (Louvain, 1978), is the most important survey of this material. I shall be using his manuscript designations.

manuscript of the same recension, London, BL Add. 17177 (C). From a very early stage, therefore, Jerome was being used as a peg on which to hang hagiographies of (to the Syrians) unknown origin.

London, BL Add. 12173 (E, again from the sixth century) contains an alternative recension of the above-mentioned "group of eighteen." Most of the same lives are present, including that of *Paul of Thebes*, again with the Jerome-signature. The *Life of Macarius*, however, still with its own Jerome-signature, has now been separated from the rest by a lengthy collection of "Sayings of the Desert Fathers," and is to be found, not among the "group of eighteen," but rather at the close of the whole collection. Its Jerome-signature is thus found at the very end of the whole composite compilation, giving the strong impression that Jerome was the author of the whole, despite the fact that the name of Palladius is given at the very beginning as the author of the *Lives*. The long term effects of this error on the ascriptions of the Lausiac texts can be seen, for instance, in a thirteenth-century manuscript, London, BL Add. 14732 (o), in which the *Life of Macarius*, in a stand-alone form, is followed by the subscription "The Life of the Holy Father Macarius of Alexandria, written by Jerome."

Now these various sixth-century collections, which can be traced through a number of manuscripts, formed the raw material for the so-called *Paradise of the Fathers*, a larger anthology of lives of the Desert Fathers which was made toward the end of the seventh century by a monk of the Syrian Church of the East, Henanisho'. The process by which the *Paradise* was compiled by Henanisho' has been admirably dissected in Draguet's edition of the Syriac Lausiac fragments.[32] According to our very earliest testimony (a contents page to a copy of the *Paradise*, dating to 794, which was copied into a later version), the anthology consisted originally of four parts, the last of which was the sort of miscellaneous collection that we would call an *Apophthegmata Patrum*; the first part was taken almost entirely from the *Lausiac History* and was correctly attributed to Palladius; the second part was also attributed to Palladius, but in fact contains hagiographies mostly from other sources, to some of which we shall return shortly; the third part is roughly co-terminous with the work known today as the *Historia Monachorum* and is attributed, even in the very earliest witnesses, to none other than Jerome.

This latter attribution is not limited to the Syriac version of the *Historia Monachorum*, for there are three important manuscripts of the Greek tradition which make the same claim. In the eleventh-century manuscript Paris, BNF, Gr. 853, which contains both the *Lausiac History* and the *Historia Monachorum*, the latter is entitled: "Another account of the holy Egyptian Fathers, compiled by Jerome, a monk and priest from Dalmatia."[33] The evident interest in this individual, otherwise unknown to a medieval Greek readership, is extended to a note, added earlier in the same hand, to the effect that "you should know that the Romans hold

[32] See the introduction to the *versio* volume of Draguet.

[33] Ἑτέρα ἱστορία εἰς τοὺς βίους τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν αἰγυπτίων συγγραφεῖσα παρὰ ἱερωνύμου μοναχοῦ καὶ πρεσβυτέρου τοῦ ἀπὸ δαλματίας.

this man Jerome in high esteem on account of his leaving them diverse writings in their own tongue."[34] Two further manuscripts repeat the attribution.[35] The information and interest may well have been generated by Palladius' own account of Jerome in his life of Posidonius.[36] These data thus attest to the interest that the person of Jerome generated in the East, which, when taken together with what we know of the *Historia Monachorum*—namely that it dates from the last years of the fourth century, that its provenance lay in a Jerusalem monastery, and that Rufinus was its Latin translator[37]—makes the otherwise unexpected attribution in the Syriac *Paradise* a little less perplexing.

Let us return again to the *Paradise of the Fathers*, and initially to its first book, which happens to include among its contents that same Lausiac *Life of Macarius of Alexandria*, which, as was noted above, was attributed to Jerome in a number of very early manuscripts. What happened to this attribution in its new context? Even from the very earliest witnesses, it would appear that the editor, Henanisho', added the following editorial comment at the end of the life:

> I request all the brothers who read this book or who want to take a copy not to forget, after the narrative, that which is found in several exemplars at the end of this history concerning Macarius, to the effect that these histories were written by Jerome; but that they should know for sure that Palladius wrote them. For I have found, in an accurate edition of this book, attached to these histories concerning Macarius, an apology together with a preface made by Palladius to Lausus the Praepositus, in which he makes known all the various kinds of histories of men and women which were written by him. This also I am preparing, with the help of God, to write down in the appropriate place.[38]

This editorial criticism does indeed appear to belong to the compiler Henanisho' himself, for it is present in virtually all known witnesses to the text of the *Paradise*.[39]

What else do we know of this man who was astute enough a critic to remove a Hieronymian attribution from an almost sacred text? Henanisho' was a monk and scholar of the East Syrian church who flourished in the middle part of the seventh century. After being educated in the Church's famous university at Nisibis, he entered its equally famous monastery on Mount Izla. Later, after a

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[34] Δεῖ γινώσκειν ὅτι τοῦτον τὸν ἱερωνύμον ἐν μεγάλῃ ὑπολήψει οἱ ῥωμαῖοι ἔχουσι διὰ τὸ καταλελοιπέναι αὐτοῖς διαφορὰ τῇ οἰκεία γλώσσῃ συγγράμματα.

[35] C^1 (10th c.) and A (15th c.) in the edition by A.J. Festugière, *Historia monachorum in Aegypto: édition critique du text grec et traduction annotée* (Brussels, 1971) xxi, xxv.

[36] *Hist.Laus.* 36.6, and also the reference to Dalmatia as his home at 41.2.

[37] See the critical edition by E. Schulz-Flügel, *Tyrannius Rufinus. Historia monachorum sive De vita sanctorum patrum* (Berlin, 1990).

[38] Draguet 1.153,5–17 (T); 107,7–18 (V).

[39] I.e. Draguet's *A*, *Z*, *C*, *H*, *T*, *B*, *F*, *J*, *m*.

pilgrimage to the Desert of Scete in Egypt, he moved to the monastery of Beth Abhe in his home territory of Adiabene.[40] Thomas of Marga, the ninth-century historian of the East Syrian monasteries, describes how Henanisho‘ "laboured so hard in the study of books that he surpassed all who were before and after him in his knowledge."[41] His patriarch and teacher, Isho‘-Yabh III, evidently thought very highly of Henanisho‘ and was on close terms of friendship with him, as is clear from the letters which passed between them, in which the patriarch shares some of his deepest personal troubles.[42] On the untimely death of Henanisho‘, Isho‘-Yabh wrote a moving eulogy in a letter to the former's pupil, ‘Abdisho‘.[43]

Henanisho‘ is known to have penned four important works other than the *Paradise*: (1) a treatise *De aequilitteris*, that is, a lexicographical work dealing with words which look the same in Syriac script but are pronounced differently—this was a subject taken up by a number of later writers, including Ḥunayn ibn Iṣhaq, the famous translator of the ‘Abbasid period; (2) a work concerning difficult words found in the writings of the Fathers, again lexicographical in nature; (3) a book concerning the divisions of philosophy, which evidences his education in the Aristotelian schools of the East; (4) a revision of the Hudra, or Syriac breviary, a work done at the request of the patriarch Isho‘-Yabh III. It can at once be seen that, monk and pilgrim though he was, Henanisho‘ was no pure hagiographer, but a highly learned and well-read scholar, with renowned expertise in grammatical and linguistic matters, as well as philosophy and the wisdom of the Greeks.[44] No wonder, then, that this "Jerome" of the Church of the East was prepared to exercise a little criticism of the earlier manuscript tradition of the *Life of Macarius*. Perhaps he was made wary of Jerome also by the unfavourable comment that he must have read in the *Life of Posidonius* in the *Lausiac History*.[45] Despite this, however, Henanisho‘ never had reason to query the attribution of the entire third book of the *Paradise* (= the *Historia Monachorum*) to Jerome and thus, despite this astute

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[40] For general overview of his life and work, A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922) 201–3, and W. Wright, *A Short History of Syriac Literature* (London, 1894) 174–6.

[41] Quoted in E.A.W. Budge, *The Paradise or Garden of the Holy Fathers: being histories of the anchorites, recluses, monks, coenobites, and ascetic fathers of the deserts of Egypt*. Translated into English (London, 1907) xxvii.

[42] *Ep*. 3. Syriac text in P. Scott-Moncrieff, *The Book of Consolations, or the Pastoral Epistles of Mar Isho‘-Yahbh of Kuphlana in Adiabene* (London, 1904) 4–5. Henanisho‘ was also sent on a mission to a prince in an attempt to alleviate the persecution of the Church of the East: *Ep*. 41 (*ibid.* 71–6).

[43] *Ep*. 9 (*ibid.* 10–12).

[44] For a thorough appraisal of his contributions to Syriac grammatical studies, A. Merx, *Historia artis grammaticae apud Syros* (Leipzig, 1889) 102–5. Although very much in the grammatical shadow of his near contemporary Jacob of Edessa, Henanisho‘ nevertheless receives some approval from this demanding scholar.

[45] Draguet 2.255,15–21 (T); 172, 31–5 (V); also n. 35 above.

criticism in the case of the *Life of Macarius*, Jerome continued to be known among the East and West Syrians primarily as a hagiographer and ascetical pioneer.

This fame of Jerome as hagiographer was, as we might have expected, passed on by the Syrians to their successors, the Arabic-speaking churches. The Arabic versions of the *Paradise*, existing in numerous recensions, also include Jerome's name as the author of the third part of the work. Thus even to the Arabic-speaking Christians of the Middle Ages, our philological exegete was known merely as the author of thirty one lives of Egyptian monks.[46]

It was observed above that the correctly-attributed *Life of Paul of Thebes* had found its way into hagiographical collections in Syriac manuscripts of the sixth century. It is no surprise that this text also was included by Henanisho' in his *Paradise*. However, since it was incorporated into the second book, attributed as a whole to Palladius despite the fact that the majority of its contents were of non-Lausiac origin, the correct attribution was lost. Following the *Life of Paul*, which is the second text of that second book, we find here also Jerome's *Life of Malchus*, again without any indication of its true provenance. Leaving aside the transmission of the former text,[47] let us take a look at the *Malchus* narrative to see how it was translated into Syriac in the first place and how it evolved thereafter in the Syriac tradition.

The *Life of Malchus* is extant in three non-*Paradise* manuscripts of the Nitrian collection in the British Library: London, BL Add. 12175, fols.1–48 (7th/8th c.), where it is part of a small collection of three lives, the others being those of Pachomius and Jacob,[48] London, BL Add. 17173, a wide-ranging collection from the seventh century, and London, BL Add. 12174, dated to 1197. The first version from a non-*Paradise* manuscript to be made known, however, was from Berlin, Syriac 27 (usually dated eighth century), published by Sachau in 1899, despite the significant lacuna in the middle of the text.[49] The lacuna was supplied shortly afterward from London, BL Add. 12175 by van den Ven.[50] When one compares this

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[46] G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (Modena, 1975) 1.383–4. Jerome was not the only one to receive such dubious honours. A number of Arabic manuscripts attribute a collection of *Lives of the Desert Fathers* to the sixth-century Syrian theologian Philoxenus of Mabbog.

[47] The manuscripts have already been described and discussed by F. Nau, "Le texte grec original de la Vie de S. Paul de Thèbes," *AB* 20 (1901) 121–57, and as part of the more extensive work of J.M.A. Bidez, *Deux versions grecques inédites de la Vie de Paul de Thèbes* (Gand, 1900).

[48] This manuscript must not be confused with London, BL, Add. 12175, fols. 49–80, which comes originally from a different and rather older codex and is a key witness to the "group of eighteen" mentioned above (B in Draguet's edition).

[49] E. Sachau, *Verzeichniss der syrischen Handschriften der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1899) 103–9.

[50] P. Van den Ven, "S. Jérôme et la Vie du Moine Malchus le Captif, pt. 1," *Le Muséon M* 1 (1900) 413–55, 450–55 (hereinafter cited as Ven, "Malchus 1").

to the version which Henanisho‘ included in the *Paradise*,[51] it becomes clear that they are one and the same version. This Syriac translation, extant in manuscripts as early as the seventh century, must therefore be one and the same with the text that Henanisho‘ knew. Now Henanisho‘ is nowhere noted as being a translator of texts, always rather as a compiler of pre-existing material.[52] We should, therefore, conclude that the Syriac version of *Malchus* must have existed well before the time of Henanisho‘, namely in the middle of the seventh century.

There is, however, a difficulty with the title of the life as it appears in the Berlin ms: “Again, a history of [by] the same holy hermit Marcus, who is called Malchus.”[53] Now Marcus was a well known local saint of the fourth/fifth century whose works are contained in the earlier part of this manuscript. The title, however, was considered corrupt by Bäthgen, who restored it to read “again, a history by the holy hermit Marcus, concerning a hermit called Malchus,”[54] and Sachau accepted the emendation. This was significant, for it suggested that Jerome had taken the story from an earlier Syrian source (a life of Malchus by the monk Marcus) and that he adjusted it for his own purposes rather than composing it himself *de novo*. Zöckler used this argument to attribute to the story a greater historical reliability than it had been afforded under Jerome’s authorship.[55] In a study on the œuvre of Marcus the Hermit, however, Kunze showed that, emended or not, the title was still only a copyist’s conjecture based on the similarity of the names, and that the text had nothing to do with Marcus.[56]

Not being fully persuaded by these earlier discussions, van den Ven added the further observation that it is only here in the Berlin ms that the “apparent” attribution is made.[57] However—and this is what is of interest to us in thinking about the reception of the work—he is partially incorrect in this assertion, for

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[51] This can be found either in P. Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum* (Paris and Leipzig, 1890–97) 7.236–51, which is drawn from a late manuscript, Paris Syr. 317; or from Budge’s now-vanished copy (Lady Meux 6) of the Mosul manuscript, edited in E.A.W. Budge, *The Book of Paradise, being the histories and sayings of the monks and ascetics of the Egyptian desert by Palladius, Hieronymus and others*, 2 vols. (London, 1904).

[52] See the notice about Henanisho‘ in Thomas of Marga’s *Book of Governors* 2.11. A translation of the relevant portion, describing the *Paradise*, can be found in the introduction to Budge, *The Book of Paradise*, xxvi–xxviii.

[53] Sachau, *Verzeichniss* 103.

[54] See P. Van den Ven, “S. Jérôme et la Vie du Moine Malchus le Captif, pt. 2,” *Le Muséon* 2(1901) 208–326, 208 (hereinafter cited as Ven, “Malchus 2”). The original discussion can be found in *ZKG* 11 (1889–90) 444.

[55] Van den Ven, “Malchus 2,” 209. For Zöckler’s argument see *Neues Jahrbuch für deutsche Theologie* 3 (1901) 172.

[56] J. Kunze, “Markus Eremita und Hieronymus,” *Theologisches Literaturblatt* 19 (1898) 393–8. Kunze does not give the work to Jerome either, but considers the latter to have copied it from a Greek original.

[57] Van den Ven, “Malchus 2,” 210, n. 1.

"Marcus" is also given as the title of the *Life of Malchus* in the above-mentioned "Table of 794," the contents list for the *Paradise of the Fathers* which is our earliest witness of any sort to that particular anthology, although in that context it appears to refer to the subject matter of the work rather than the author.[58] We cannot tell whether there is necessarily any connection between these two pieces of data in the Berlin ms and the "Table of 794" respectively, but there is now good evidence that, even before the recension of Henanisho', the work was circulating with the title Marcus attached to it, whether as a reference to the subject-matter or to the author. Given the resulting confusion, it comes as no surprise that any memory of the real authorship was long forgotten. For, unlike in the case of *Paul of Thebes*, the *Life of Malchus* is never given its correct attribution in any Syriac (or Greek) manuscript.

The Syriac text itself, after its initial publication by Sachau, was discussed at some greater length, in the two-part study already referred to, by van den Ven for the first two issues of *Le Muséon*.[59] It was then briefly referred to by Jameson in the relevant chapter of the 1947 volume dedicated to the textual history of Jerome's Lives.[60] Other than these two surveys, in which the analysis of the Syriac has been carried out with the aim only of establishing its textual relations to the Greek *Vorlage*, the text *per se* has not been the object of any serious attention, either in terms of its significance for Syriac literature or in terms of its own distinctive contribution to our knowledge of the reception of Jerome. Its principal interest lies in the observation that, as the *Life* was anyway set in a Syrian context, and involves the description of Syrian monasticism, there is a sense in which the text receives a "homecoming" when translated into Syriac. Some early scholars even considered the Syriac the original from which Jerome took the story.

Just as Jerome's knowledge of Aramaic/Syriac was somewhat shaky and was used with an eye to making an impression upon the reader rather than to elucidating philological problems *per se*, so the Syrians' knowledge of Jerome was also built upon a narrow foundation and quickly engendered a certain amount of confusion. Despite the scepticism of Henanisho', the monks and scribes of Syria continued to remember the Latin monk as a hagiographer of some renown rather than as a learned exegete or linguist. One suspects he might not have been altogether disappointed to have been construed as "one of them."

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58 Draguet, Introduction, 53* (Textus).

59 Van den Ven, "Malchus 1"; Idem, "Malchus 2."

60 H.C. Jameson, "The Greek Version of Jerome's *Vita Sancti Malchi*," in W.A. Oldfather ed., *Studies in the Text Tradition of St. Jerome's Vitae Patrum* (Urbana, IL, 1943) 512–33.

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Chapter 17
Jerome and the *Jeromanesque*

Mark Vessey

Aesthetics of Production

It is getting late, and so we have come to reception. Reception is what comes later, once what came before can be safely taken for granted. Reception studies are fashionable these days, especially among scholars of ancient Greek and Latin literatures and cultures, freed or constrained as they now are to work without society's presumption in favour of the civilizing value of the "classical tradition." Reception refashions tradition as modernity, or so we had better hope. (Tradition itself used to make the same claim.) There are doctrines of reception, both theological and literary-theoretical. For the most part, however, classical "reception" studies are refreshingly undoctrinaire. Why would classicists even need a theory of reception? Classics itself *is* a theory of reception in reverse. In place of the *textus receptus* of an ancient culture, with all its latterday accretions and corruptions, classical study offers the repristinated *textus datus*, or something as close to it as can now be conjectured. As a belated outgrowth of classical philology, the present-day study of (late) ancient Christian texts and authors proceeds in the same backwards way. *Mutatis mutandis*, scholars of Jerome received their charter from Marrou when he summoned scholars of Augustine "to appeal constantly from Augustinianism, from all Augustinianisms, to Saint [*sic*] Augustine."[1] Some such historicist credo, shorn of the presumption of sanctity, undergirds our continuing attempts to decipher the texts, personalities, actions, and opinions of late fourth- and early fifth-century Roman Christian writers. Once there was Jerome, the theory goes: man, life, work, thought. After that, for at least a millennium or even until quite recently, there were only Jeronimianisms, pseudo-Jeromes, Jerome-like simulacra in various media. Historicist study of the Church Fathers made great strides in the twentieth century. Jerome, Augustine, and others now belong to a common culture of Late Antiquity. However the proceedings of this conference may be received, they will not easily be mistaken for another "Monument to Saint Jerome."[2] So late in the day, with Jerome already so largely repristinated, could we not at last switch the poles of our research and turn to *reception* as such? There are favourable precedents for the move, both in the study of Augustine and in the work of early modern historians

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[1] H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et l'augustinisme* (Paris, 1955) 180.

[2] Cf. F.-X. Murphy ed., *A Monument to Saint Jerome: Essays on Some Aspects of His Life, Works, and Influence* (New York, 1952).

interested in the legacy of Jerome.[3] Take the historical Jerome for granted, and what would follow—now?

That is not the line that will be pursued here. Even at this late stage, the idea of taking "Jerome" for granted is still worth resisting. When or where was "Jerome" or "Jerome of Stridon" ever a *given* quantity? And of what? By what absolute standard shall we ever assess the fidelity or adequacy of one or another species of latercoming Jeronimianism? Even to pose such questions is to expose the weakness of the ordinary "receptionist" metaphor, which assumes something to have been given in the first place. Jerome, we may be sure, could never be more a given than anyone else: mind, body, soul, life, works, thoughts, feelings, foibles. "Jerome" is a proper name; we know how proper names work among living human beings, and that none of them properly designates anything. Yet our handbooks, prosopographies, *lexika*, *claves*, *corpora*, and other instruments conspire to insinuate the contrary when it comes to historical personages. "Personage"—the word itself gives the game away. It evidently derives from medieval Latin *personagium*, meaning "effigy." Instead of "the reception of Jerome," we may as well say "Jerome in effigy," or we had better say that. The immediate effect of the substitution is to install a figure of *production* in place of a theme of reception. The disparaging sense of "effigy" is modern. The classical Latin word *effigies* denoted an artistic representation: a copy, image, statue, or portrait. If we take anything for granted, it should perhaps be that the object of our studies is a work of art without original in nature. *Hieronymus fit, non nascitur.* The real history of Jerome, as of any historical person or personage, is one of continuous *production*—a history that begins, we have been reminded several times already, with Jerome the self-producer.[4]

There is no need to plead again the relevance of the concept of "self-fashioning" to Jerome's case. More necessary now may be a caution against letting our emphasis on Jerome's consummate self-production become the pretext for another, more exclusive history of reception. For as often as we grant Jerome the power to fashion the image by which he became known, we also risk ascribing to him effects that he could never have anticipated, even had he desired them. One reason the idiom of self-fashioning fits Jerome so well is that he, like the Augustan poets he so often mimicked, had a passion for statuary. Once he even went so far as to claim that the only true and immortal monuments of human beings are the images (*imagines*) of their intellects that they leave behind in books (*Ep.* 34.1).[5] The high-classical figure

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[3] A.D. Fitzgerald ed., *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids, 1999); K. Pollmann, D. Lambert, "After Augustine: A Survey of His Reception from 430 to 2000. An Interdisciplinary and International Five-Year Research Project Financed by the Leverhulme Trust," *Millennium Jahrbuch* 1 (2004) 165–83; E.F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985), with extensive coverage of the medieval *Nachleben.*

[4] See, e.g., the essays by Stefan Rebenich and Andrew Cain in this volume.

[5] On the monumental impulse in Jerome's self-presentation, see M. Vessey, "From *Cursus* to *Ductus*: Figures of Writing in Western Late Antiquity (Augustine, Jerome, Cassiodorus, Bede)" in P. Cheney, F.A. de Armas eds., *European Literary Careers: The*

of the authorial work as freestanding monument or verbal icon was destined to a long life in the later Latin West.[6] It is a natural corollary of classical or classicizing theories of authorship and reception, fixated as they have been on the autonomy or self-entirety of the original. In constant tension with this monumental imaginary, in Jerome's writing as elsewhere in the Latin tradition, is the contrasting figure of artistic or poetic expression as a mode of bodily performance akin to song, dance or the drama.[7] *Imago*, we may recall, regularly means "mask" as well as "statue." While these opposing characterizations of verbal works of art, respectively as *plastic* and *dramatic*, may seem to be encompassed in the unitary trope of self-production, they nonetheless remain at odds. Whereas the monumental Jerome lends itself to classical (and "patristic") reception theory, the performative Jerome resists it. To make himself publicly known, Jerome like anyone else needed an audience as well as an act. And in the improvised action of daily life the audience is always on stage too—and no actor, however accomplished, ever entirely controls the script.[8]

What would it mean to regard the historical "Jerome" as protagonist in a long-running drama of that title, rather than as an artefact signed *Ego Hieronymus feci*? What obstacles lie in the path of such an historiographical project? What, finally, might this way of looking at Jerome contribute to our sense of his significance, as it were over the *longue durée*?

Urban Legends

Let us begin again with a scene that Jerome could never have scripted for himself:

> [On a certain day] Jerome came to Pope Siricius bearing a copy of his translation of the Bible. On being told that a learned monk wished to see him, Siricius told

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Author from Antiquity to the Renaissance (Toronto, 2002) 47–103, at 53–9. Cf. M.H. Williams, *The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship* (Chicago, 2006) 261: "Jerome's life and work, viewed as a cultural program, impresses upon the observer a sense of coherence, even monumentality. This study has traced some of the contours of that monumental legacy."

[6] For reflections on Latin as a "stone language," partly inspired by Nietzsche's emulation of the Horatian *monumentum aere perennius*, see J. Farrell, *Latin Language and Latin Culture: From Ancient to Modern Times* (Cambridge, 2001) 114–23; also W.M. Bloomer, *Latinity and Literary Society at Rome* (Philadelphia, 1997) 25–8; D. Fowler, "The Ruin of Time: Monuments and Survival at Rome," in his *Roman Constructions: Readings in Postmodern Latin* (Oxford, 2000) 193–217; A.J. Boyle, *Ovid and the Monuments: A Poet's Rome* (Bendigo, 2003).

[7] See now T.N. Habinek, *The World of Roman Song: From Ritualized Speech to Social Order* (Baltimore, 2005).

[8] A point now well illustrated by R. Goodrich, "Sulpicius Severus' Use and Abuse of Jerome," *JEH* 58 (2007) 189–210.

> his attendants to bring him in. But when those present saw Jerome clad in rough skins they all despised him and so he left the presence. On the following day he dressed himself in very costly garments, so that everyone gazed on him with admiration as he crossed the Forum. A certain cardinal met him and invited Jerome to come with him to the papal palace. This time Jerome was welcomed with the greatest honour and placed on a seat beside Siricius. As various dainties were brought to [him], he gazed reverently at the costly garments he was wearing and finally bent his head and kissed his own robes. When those around asked Jerome what he was doing, the saint answered that he himself honoured those things which brought him honour—namely, his rich clothes. Hereupon the pope and the whole papal court were enraged and the light of the world was driven from the capital city of the world (*a mundi capite lux mundi pellitur urbe*).

This complement to our biographical information on Jerome appears as a marginal addition to the notice on Pope Siricius in a copy of the *Liber pontificalis* made at Worcester in the twelfth century. A few pages later, next to the life of Pope Gregory I, we read the sequel:

> It was an ancient custom in Rome for lights to burn day and night over the tombs of the popes; for, according to the Gospel, it is to these that the keys are entrusted with which to bind and unbind. The custom fell into disuse, either from poverty or negligence. But that burning and shining light Gregory, while he was pope, either read or heard of the way Siricius had treated Jerome. One day when he was wandering around the tombs of the popes, he came across that of Siricius. "This tomb," he exclaimed, "holds that pope who once drove forth from the city the light of the world that fills the world with God's word. It is wrong that a light should shine on his tomb." With these words he broke the vessel with his staff and spilled the oil. Thus he avenged Jerome on Siricius.

This story of Jerome, Siricius, and Gregory is apparently much older than the manuscript that is now our best witness to it.[9] A reduced and scrambled version of it also occurs in the earliest "Life" of Gregory the Great, composed by a monk of Whitby at the beginning of the eighth century. Even in that abbreviated version the luminary conceit of the source-narrative shines through: the pope whose tomb-light Gregory put out was one who had himself dared to put out or expel the light of the world. Jerome, writes the Whitby monk,

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[9] The above account follows B. Colgrave ed. and trans., *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby* (Lawrence, 1968) 159–60, in turn based on the transcript of the MS Cambridge University Library Kk. 4.6 given by W. Levison, "Aus Englischen Bibliotheken II," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 35 (1910) 424–7.

> was a light upon the lampstand in Rome, not only for the Romans but for the whole world (*non solum Romanorum sed totius mundi*); for Rome is the chief of cities and mistress of the world (*urbium caput est orbisque domina*). So when saint Jerome left Rome through the wretched faithlessness of the pope's judgment, that same pope, so far as he was able, extinguished the lamp which God had lit with a light of surpassing brilliance.[10]

Given the exclusively insular attestation of this story, it is tempting to interpret the scene of Gregory's rehabilitation of the Roman memory of Jerome as part of a larger historical-fictional construction of English catholicity, of the kind definitively accomplished by Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* a few decades after the Whitby *Life.* The imaginary scene of Jerome's attempted presentation of his Latin Bible to the new pope is in any case consistent with the generally favourable reception of "Vulgate" texts in Anglo-Saxon England.[11]

Whoever they were, the Whitby monk and the fabulator who supplied his material can stand here as early exponents of what we may call the *jeromanesque.* Simply put, the *jeromanesque* is what modern historical accounts of Jerome seek to avoid relapsing into. It is the name of one province—Jerome's, as it were—of the vast hinterland of myth, legend, and pious invention from which our modern scientific historiography of late antiquity is (by its own account) every day more completely detaching itself. Were we to assign a date to the beginning of that process of detachment, the obvious year to choose would be 1516, when Erasmus of Rotterdam published his edition of the works of Jerome, prefacing them with a new "Life" of the author derived in the main from texts which he, Erasmus, judged to be authentically Jerome's and had endeavoured to purge of the corruptions and interpolations of the past millennium and more.[12] Erasmus' repristinated "Jerome" makes a convenient *terminus a quo* for all that we may now think of as the scholarship on our subject. With Erasmus' edition we hail the Jerome of philology, history, and biography—and the end of the *jeromanesque*.[13]

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[10] Colgrave, *Earliest Life of Gregory*, 125.

[11] R. Marsden, *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1995); cf. n. 23 below for the evidence of the Codex Amiatinus.

[12] Text of the *Hieronymi Stridonensis vita* in W.K. Ferguson ed., *Erasmi opuscula: A Supplement to the Opera omnia* (The Hague, 1933) 134–90; English translation in J.F. Brady, J.C. Olin eds, *Patristic Scholarship: The Edition of St Jerome, Collected Works of Erasmus* 61 (Toronto, 1992) 15–62, with other material from Erasmus' edition. See also B. Clausi, *Ridar voce all'antico Padre: L'edizione erasmiana delle "Lettere" di Gerolamo* (Rubbettino, 2000).

[13] Thus, e.g., Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance*, ch. 5 ("*Hieronymus redivivus*: Erasmus and St. Jerome"). Similarly, F. Cavallera, *Saint Jérôme: Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Louvain, 1922) 2.145: "Le premier effort sérieux, pour dégager la biographie de Jérôme des légendes et des erreurs, accumulées dans les vies anciennes et popularisées par [l'*Hieronymianus*] de Giovanni d'Andrea, est dû à Érasme." H.M. Pabel, *Herculean Labours: Erasmus and the*

Images of the Saint in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction

As we acknowledge Erasmus to be a pioneer of modern philology, so we have him partly to thank for the belief that the posthumous history of literary works and figures like Jerome's is best conceived in terms of "reception." Acting on the suggestions of Petrarch, Valla and other Italian humanists, Erasmus chose to *reproduce* (the texts of) Jerome and other ancient Christian authors as if they could be received directly from their own time and hands, despite the lapse of centuries. Erasmus makes a thousand-year gap in Christian "literary" history, to begin again where Jerome and his kind left off, before the Church was corrupted by temporal power, before the monastic vocation was debased, and before the barbarians all but extinguished the learned culture (*litterae*) to which the saving "philosophy of Christ"—as Erasmus liked to call his religion—had been providentially committed. To oversimplify only slightly, we can say that for Erasmus Christian literary history ends prematurely with Jerome and picks up again in his own time, with his own work.[14] The long-term unity of Christendom would be assured not by any continuous tradition of textual or other observance but by the preservation and eventual reanimation of a body of *early* Christian texts, the "outstanding monuments of distinguished men" (*egregiis clarissimorum virorum monumentis*) as Erasmus calls them in a headnote to his edition of Jerome's catalogue of Christian writers, the *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* or *De viris illustribus*.[15]

In restoring the horizon of Christian "letters" in the time of Jerome, Erasmus hoped most particularly to recover a lost text and understanding of the Latin Bible, beginning with the New Testament. The extant "monuments" of Christian writers, as Jerome had defined them in the preface to *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, were the works of men "who ha[d] published something worthy of memory concerning the holy scriptures" (*qui de scripturis sanctis memoriae aliquid prodiderunt*). In the same year (1516) as the edition of Jerome, the publishing firm of Froben in Basel issued Erasmus' annotated Greek and Latin edition of the New Testament, the *Novum Instrumentum*. The proximity of the two publications was anything but casual. "Jerome," as Jardine notes in her study of *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, "stood for the dissemination of scripture throughout

Editing of St. Jerome's Letters in the Renaissance (Leiden, 2008) 23–114, narrows the gap between Erasmus and the "medieval" tradition concerning Jerome."

[14] M. Vessey, "Erasmus' Jerome: The Publishing of a Christian Author," *ERSY* 14 (1994) 62–99, repr. in Idem, *Latin Christian Writers in Late Antiquity and their Texts* (Aldershot, 2005), Study XII.

[15] *Omnium operum divi Hieronymi Stridonensis tomus primus* (Basel, 1516) fol. 138r; M. Vessey, "*Vera et aeterna monumenta*: Jerome's Catalogue of Christian Writers and the Premises of Erasmian Humanism," in G. Frank et al. eds., *Die Patristik in der frühen Neuzeit: Die Relektüre der Kirchenväter in den Wissenschaften des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 2006) 351–76.

the Western world."[16] The anonymous author of the early eighth-century *Life of Gregory the Great* had made the same point with his story about the tomb-light of Pope Siricius. Erasmus, following Valla, may not have believed that the *textus receptus* of the Latin New Testament owed much directly to Jerome, but he missed no opportunity to build up Jerome's reputation as the promulgator of sound Biblical learning. Even the Greeks, he claimed in his *Life of Jerome*, had had Jerome's commentaries translated into their language: "After producing so many distinguished writers, the perennial teacher of the entire world was not ashamed to learn from a man from Dalmatia. And now there would be a stream of people from everywhere to the cave at Bethlehem, as if to a public oracle of the whole Christian world (*non secus atque ad publicum totius Christiani orbis oraculum*), if any matter in Holy Scripture perplexed anyone." Bethlehem, world-renowned as the place of Christ's nativity, had been made far more famous (*longe celeberrimum*) by the writings and virtues of Jerome. [17]

It is fully consistent with Erasmus' reception-oriented approach that he should affirm the traditional, indeed *authorial*, image of Jerome at Bethlehem as source of scriptural production: his *Life of Jerome*, its original title declared, was woven together primarily from Jerome's own writings (*ex ipsius potissimum litteris contexta*). As even Erasmus would have recognized, however, the authorial image was itself originally *co-authored* by Jerome, his assistants, friends and patrons, and visitors to his Bethlehem monastery.[18] From the beginning, the promulgation of "Jerome" (person, life, lifestyle, opinions, writings) was collaborative, a many-handed, many-tongued performance.[19] There is no line dividing original production from first reception. Jerome in the world is Jerome distributed, reflected, re-produced, co-produced, an image or images without natural equivalent. The same would be true of anyone. Jerome is not *just* anyone, however. Jerome is extraordinary, to a degree that a conference-volume such as this one is too apt to conceal. After all, any ancient Christian writer of note—even Augustine!—may be the subject of a conference.

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[16] L. Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print* (Princeton, 1993) 4.

[17] *Hieronymi Stridonensis vita* (ed. Ferguson) 171, 163; trans. Brady and Olin 47, 42. Cf. the end of the peroration, where Jerome is paragoned with Homer, whom seven cities had claimed as their own: *Stridon sibi gratuletur, quae tam eximium orbi lumen produxerit... sed praecipue Bethlehem bis felicissima, et quod in hac Christus natus sit mundo, et quod in eadem Hieronymus natus sit coelo* (ed. Ferguson 190).

[18] The more-than-millennial continuity of this style of learned co-production is a main theme of A. Grafton, M.H. Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), a study which implicitly revises the rather strong claims made by Jardine (n. 16 above) for the novelty of Erasmus' own collaborative enterprise as conditioned by print technology.

[19] On the strictly collaborative nature of Jerome's literary production, dependent as it was on amanuenses of several kinds, see now Williams, *The Monk and the Book*, 201–21; the evidence was already assembled by P.E. Arns, *La Technique du livre d'après saint Jérôme* (Paris, 1953).

Writing after Rome

It is of course pure accident that Jerome's name lends itself in English and French to the coinage *jeromanesque*. Yet it could seem almost fated. To argue, *pace* Erasmus and the whole philological tradition, that Jerome and the *jeromanesque* are originally and forever indistinguishable, is not merely to assert the performativity of human identity in the particular case of Jerome. (Augustine's identity was equally performative, but who will talk of the "augustinesque"?) The *jeromanesque*, in the sense in which that term is employed here, is a mode of performance absolutely peculiar to Jerome and of unique cultural-historical importance. It originates as the mode of production of a man who might have had some kind of a career at Rome but who instead made a name for himself by issuing works "concerning the holy scriptures," in Latin, from a well-appointed "cave" in Bethlehem.[20]

The author of the Whitby *Life of Gregory* and his unknown source already knew as much. *A mundi capite lux mundi pellitur urbe*: "The light of the world is driven from the capital city of the world." The post-, extra- and supra-Urbanity of Jerome's mature profession as a Christian text-producer is at least as vital to his reputation and (re)production as the assimilation of his light to the Light that came into the world in Bethlehem and that the world was famously unable to comprehend. Rome the cosmopolis, Rome the "city of letters," Rome the centre of civilization is at once literally the place from which Jerome was unjustly excluded and symbolically the guarantee of his world-wide dissemination.[21]

Nothing cemented Jerome's association with Rome like his leaving it. We know that he used Rome as a distribution centre for his works after he had settled in Palestine.[22] Beyond such practicalities, however, the traditional identification of *urbs* and *orbis* came, as it were accidentally, to favour him as it did no other Christian author of late antiquity. Bethlehem, capital of the *jeromanesque*, became indeed a new Rome. *Te Bethlehem celebrat, te totus personat orbis* ("Bethlehem praises you, the whole world proclaims you") runs the caption for Jerome's portrait in the library of Isidore of Seville, which was later repeated verbatim in the preliminaries of the Codex Amiatinus.[23] The first hemistich surely echoes the well-known epitaph of Virgil (*Mantua me genuit...*), gratuitously but purposefully

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[20] As any reading of Jerome's "career" now must, this one follows closely in the tracks of S. Rebenich, *Hieronymus und sein Kreis: Prosopographische und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Stuttgart, 1992), partly resumed in the same author's *Jerome* (London, 2002).

[21] For the ideological context, see the essays in C. Edwards, G. Woolf eds., *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge, 2003), esp. G. Woolf, "The City of Letters," 203–21.

[22] P. Nautin, "L'activité littéraire de Jérôme de 387 à 392," *RThPh* 115 (1983) 247–59; Arns, *Technique du livre,* 144–9.

[23] C.H. Beeson, *Isidor-Studien* (Munich, 1913) 160; P. Meyvaert, "Bede, Cassiodorus, and the Codex Amiatinus," *Speculum* 71 (1996) 827–83, at 868–9.

quoted by Jerome in the *Chronicle*.[24] The Virgilian model is evoked even more clearly at the end of the notice on Jerome that appears in the early-sixth-century continuation of his *Chronicle* by Count Marcellinus: *quem Stridon oppidum genuit, Roma inclita erudivit, Bethlem alma tenet* ("He whom the town of Stridon begot, and glorious Rome educated, kind Bethlehem holds").[25]

Such epitaphic tributes are of the essence of what is sometimes disparagingly called "chroniclers' literary history." Although Eusebius had included a certain amount of antiquarian information alongside the *res gestae* of military and political history in his *Chronicle*, it was Jerome who established a pattern for the future by importing quantities of material from the Varronian-Suetonian tradition of the (Latin) *De viris illustribus* and then extending the coverage, as well as he could, into his own times.[26] Jerome's adaptation of the Eusebian *Chronicle* is an eccentrically Rome-centred, and even more eccentrically Jerome-centred work. It inaugurates the *jeromanesque*, by recording—or better, enacting—the moment at which the life and writings of this particular pupil of Donatus (*Chron.* s.a. 354) entered the field of Roman history (*Chron.* s.a. 356). Entered it, with intent to occupy it. At the end of his preface to the *Chronicle* Jerome made the routine declaration of historians approaching the reigns of living emperors: let those who would go further ascend to the panegyrical style! A few years later, in the city of Rome itself, Ammianus Marcellinus reached the same point of no-advance (Amm. 31.16.9).[27] Ammianus the Greek was the second and last Roman imperial historian to write in the fashion of Tacitus. Thereafter, Latin historiography (as distinct from panegyric) would proceed mainly by supplements to Jerome's Constantinopolitan chronicle, marking the life-dates of Christian writers along with those of monarchs

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[24] *Chron.* s.a. 18 BCE. He would have known the epitaph from the ancient *Life of Virgil*.

[25] B. Croke ed. and trans., *The Chronicle of Marcellinus* (Sydney, 1995) s.a. 392, the date dictated by Jerome's composition of the *De viris illustribus* with its terminal notice on himself.

[26] M. Fuhrmann, "Die Geschichte der Literaturgeschichtsschreibung von den Anfängen bis zum 19. Jahrhundert," in H.U. Gumbrecht, U. Link-Heer eds., *Epochenschwellen und Epochenstrukturen im Diskurs der Literatur- und Sprachtheorie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985) 49–72, at 56: "[Hieronymus] wurde so zum Urheber einer der antiken Historiographie so gut wie unbekannten Gepflogenheit: daß universalgeschichtliche oder einzelnen Epochen geltende Werke zumindest skizzenhaft auf Tatsachen der Geistes-, insbesondere der Literaturgeschichte hinweisen"; R. Helm, *Hieronymus' Zusätze in Eusebius' Chronik und ihr Wert für die Literaturgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1929); G. Brugnoli, *Curiosissimus excerptor: Gli "Additamenta" di Girolamo ai "Chronica" di Eusebio* (Pisa, 1995); B. Jeanjean, "Saint Jérôme, patron des chroniqueurs en langue latine," in B. Jeanjean, B. Lançon eds., *Saint Jérôme, "Chronique": Continuation de la "Chronique" d'Eusèbe, années 326–378* (Rennes, 2004) 137–78.

[27] For the conventions, see now F. Paschoud, "Ammien 31,16,9: Une *recusatio*?," *REL* 82 (2004) 238–48.

and notable bishops.[28] After Jerome, Roman history is also (Christian) "literary" history. We have no reason to think that he himself anticipated these continuations, any more than we can suppose that he would have wished to see the Christian *De viris illlustribus* extended beyond his own *explicit.* As we have seen, it would take an Erasmus to reimpose that terminus. Not even Jerome himself could control the unfolding of the *jeromanesque*.

Jerome's World

"You are renowned the world over" (*in orbe celebraris*), Jerome told Augustine, as he hailed him as "second founder of the faith" after the defeat of Pelagius (*Ep.* 141.2). But it was Jerome himself, among Latin churchmen, who first became famous for being famous, and who did so as a writer, like the Latin poets and orators he admired and whose names he dropped so freely in his *Chronicle.* The early testimony is startling in its unanimity. "I would be surprised," says Postumianus in the *Dialogues* of Sulpicius Severus, "if [Jerome] were not also known to you [i.e. in Gaul] on account of the many works that he has written, for he is read the world over (*cum per totum orbem legatur*)" (1.8). In the patristic florilegium assembled by Cassian in Book 7 of his tract *Against Nestorius*, Jerome alone is introduced explicitly as a literary figure, and then as one "whose writings shine throughout the world like divine lamps (*cuius scripta per universum mundum quasi divinae lampades rutilant*)" (7.26).[29] Still in Gaul, Prosper of Aquitaine in the *Carmen de ingratis* ("The Ungrateful [or Grace-less]") calls Jerome a universal teacher (*mundi… magister*) (1.57).

Prosper, like Cassian, was massing authorities against heresy, intent therefore on maximizing Jerome's catholicity. Both of these Gallic writers were almost certainly influenced by one of the earliest western examples of doctrinal argument from patristic citation, namely that provided by Augustine in Book 1 of *Against Julian*.[30] There Jerome is commended for his trilingual learning, his straddling of

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[28] B. Croke, *Count Marcellinus and his Chronicle* (Oxford, 2001) 145–265.

[29] Cf. Ioh.Cass. *Inst.*, praef. 5 (*CSEL* 17:5): *Hieronymus..non solum suo elucubratos ingenio edidit libros, verum etiam Graeca lingua digestos in Latinum vertit eloquium.* Jerome himself was notably fond of the language of literary lucubration (see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* s. vv. "*lucubratio*," "*lucubratiuncula*"). For Erasmus' adaptation of Hieronymian lucubrology, see M. Vessey, "Erasmus' Lucubrations and the Renaissance Life of Texts," *ERSY* 24 (2004) 23–51, at 43–9.

[30] See F. Perago, "Il valore della tradizione nella polemica tra S. Agostino e Giuliano d'Eclano," *AnnNap* 10 (1962) 143–60; M. Vessey, "*Opus imperfectum*: Augustine and his Readers, 426–435 A.D.," *VChr* 52 (1998), 264–85 at 272–7, now repr. in Idem, *Latin Christian Writers in Late Antiquity and their Texts* (Aldershot, 2005), Study VII; É. Rebillard, "A New Style of Argument in Christian Polemic: Augustine and the Use of Patristic Citations," *JECS* 8 (2000) 559–78.

East and West, his long residence in the Holy Land, his Biblical studies, and finally for his mastery of the archive of ecclesiastical doctrine from both halves of the Christian-Roman world, *ex utraque parte orbis* (1.7.34). An interpolation in one branch of the manuscript tradition adds for good measure that Jerome's eloquence "radiates from East to West like a lamp" (*ad instar lampadis*), recalling Cassian's image of Jerome's works as "divine lamps" and underlining the figurative impulse that produced the story of Gregory the Great's destruction of the tomb-light of Pope Siricius. Even before this gloss was incorporated in the text, Jerome's presumed universality would have been sufficiently emphasized by Augustine's placing him last in a list of witnesses said to speak "from widely separated regions of the world" (*ex diversis orbis terrarum partibus*). On this point, it seems, Augustine only spoke as others did. Already in his own lifetime, Jerome's name and literary *persona* had become figures for imagining a universal order of Latin learning theoretically independent of the fortunes of Rome, city or empire.

In citing Jerome against Julian, Augustine described the worthy and learned presbyter of Bethlehem as still living but in extreme old age. We could call this miniature tribute Augustine's "monument" to Jerome. Like other textual monuments to Jerome erected both during his life and in the early decades after his death, it is impressive not least for its conformity with the terms of Jerome's own self-presentation. The point can be reformulated, and further developed, in the more fluid idiom of performance: the role that Jerome had improvised for himself by the early 390s at the latest, when the final notice of his Christian bio-bibliography could seem already to encapsulate a lifetime's work, was one that his contemporaries and immediate successors, or as many as were active as *writers* in the service of their religious beliefs, were largely content to see him act. We should not be too surprised by the degree of accommodation. For was it not Jerome, most obviously in his two adaptations of Eusebian historical works, the *Chronicle* and *De viris illustribus,* who raised the world-stage on which *all* such performers—down to Erasmus' time and beyond—would play out the drama of Latin Christian "letters"? Augustine, who was quick to react to the *De viris illustribus* (*Ep.* 40.2, 9), and whose *Confessions* betrays a close engagement with key literary-historical notices of the *Chronicle*,[31] may have struggled more than others to find a way of sharing the public performance-space of Latin "scriptural" production inaugurated by Jerome. Yet he too may finally be counted an early exponent of the *jeromanesque*.

[31] As argued by M. Vessey, "History, Fiction, and Figuralism in Book 8 of Augustine's *Confessions*," in D.B. Martin, P. Cox Miller eds., *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and Historiography* (Durham, NC, 2005) 237–57, esp. 239–44 ("Confession and Chronicle"); see also G. Clark, "City of Books: Augustine and the World as Text," in W.E. Klingshirn, L. Safran eds., *The Early Christian Book* (Washington, DC, 2007) 117–38.

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Chapter 18
Martin Luther's Jerome: New Evidence for a Changing Attitude

Josef Lössl

Modern research on Jerome emerged from traditions that were not, or at least not primarily, concerned with the study of history but the generation and preservation of memory.[1] These traditions, as has been illustrated in recent years by a growing number of publications,[2] are immensely rich and colourful, and well worth being studied in their own right. That they are in need of critical examination regarding their usefulness for historical study has long been recognized. What is sometimes still overlooked is the fact that modern research itself needs to be examined as to what extent it may have retained agendas which it inherited from these traditions as elements of cultural memory.[3] Not that it were at all possible, or even desirable, to "purge" all such influence from modern research, which is, after all, itself very much part of a valued cultural tradition. But an increasing awareness of the forces shaping this tradition and an ability critically to reflect on the processes involved

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[1] In this paper I revisit (and expand on) some of the ground covered in J. Lössl, "Konfessionelle Theologie und humanistisches Erbe. Zur Hieronymusbriefedition des Petrus Canisius," in R. Berndt ed., *Petrus Canisius SJ (1521–1597). Humanist und Europäer* (Berlin, 2000) 121–53; and J. Lössl, "Hieronymus—Ein Kirchenvater?," in J. Arnold et al. eds, *Väter der Kirche. Ekklesiales Denken von den Anfängen bis in die Neuzeit. Festgabe für Hermann Josef Sieben SJ zum 70. Geburtstag* (Paderborn, 2004) 431–64.

[2] Some of the most important are E.F. Rice, *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore, 1985); D. Russo, *Saint Jérôme en Italie. Étude d'iconographie et de spiritualité (xiii^{e}-xv^{e} siècle)* (Paris, 1987); P. Bietenholz, "Erasmus von Rotterdam und der Kult des Heiligen Hieronymus," in S. Füssel, Joachim Knape eds, *Poesis und Pictura. Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Bild in Handschriften und alten Drucken. Festschrift Dieter Wuttke* (Baden-Baden, 1989) 191–221; P. Conrads, *Hieronymus, scriptor et interpres. Zur Ikonographie des Eusebius Hieronymus im frühen und hohen Mittelalter* (Würzburg, 1990); B. Hamm, "Hieronymusbegeisterung und Augustinismus vor der Reformation. Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Humanismus und Frömmigkeitstheologie am Beispiel Nürnbergs," in K. Hagen ed., *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300–1650). Essays Dedicated to Heiko Augustinus Oberman in Honor of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Leiden, 1990) 127–235; A. Fürst, *Hieronymus. Askese und Wissenschaft in der Spätantike* (Freiburg, 2003) 15–21.

[3] I use this term loosely following J. Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory* (Stanford, 2006) 1–30.

may enhance the quality and credibility of such research in a wider culture that is increasingly aware of its own relativity and limitations.

One set of events which we might consider as such a case of cultural memory is "The Reformation," the religious and cultural revolution which, as a dominant narrative would have it, initiated the process that ultimately led to the birth of the "modern world."[4] One, if not the, key figure of this Reformation is Martin Luther. Though it has been recognized in recent scholarship that Luther himself was still very much part of the (Late Medieval/Early Renaissance) culture which was to be superseded by the new developments which he himself in part initiated, or at least supported and carried forward,[5] there is a continuing tendency to view him in positive terms as progressive and forward looking, and his conservative opponents in negative terms as the opposite. To some extent it is impossible to avoid looking at influential historical figures and events in any other way. History is presented in narrative form, using narrative techniques, and this is also, to a large extent, how cultural memory is formed and preserved.[6]

Of course, if we look at the evidence more closely, we are presented with a far more complex picture. Luther is not always and in every instance identifiable as an undoubted champion of reform and progress in his time, while there were some high profile contemporaries of his who might, alongside him, be counted as such champions, but were in fact in fundamental disagreement with him.[7]

When it comes to assessing the major Patristic influences upon Luther and the development of his thought, the situation is similarly complex.[8] The most obvious set of influences, linked to Augustine and his reception, has its own complexities.[9] And Jerome? In an important article published now more than a decade ago Stefan

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[4] For a very popular recent re-telling of this narrative see D. MacCulloch, *Reformation. Europe's House Divided* (London, 2004).

[5] One scholar perhaps worth mentioning in this context is Heiko A. Oberman, whose acclaimed work culminated in the biography *Luther: Man Between God and Devil* (New Haven, 1989).

[6] It is interesting in this context how positive a view of Luther Catholic scholars have developed in the past four decades, appreciating the Medieval (Catholic) roots of Luther's thought as well as his corrective influence upon Catholic doctrine in the post-Tridentine era; compare for example J.C. Olin et al. eds., *Luther, Erasmus and the Reformation. A Catholic-Protestant Reappraisal* (New York, 1980).

[7] Most notably Erasmus; compare the relevant contributions in Olin, *Luther*.

[8] For a general introduction see M. Schulze, "Martin Luther and the Church Fathers," in I. Backus ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West from the Carolingians to the Maurists*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1997) 2.573–626.

[9] For a balanced account see now V. Leppin, "Kirchenväter," in A. Beutel ed., *Luther-Handbuch* (Tübingen, 2005) 45–9, 46–7.

Rebenich cited some apparently quite damning statements of Luther's concerning Jerome:[10]

> He called him a babbler,[11] pointed out that there is more erudition in Aesop's fables than in the whole of Jerome,[12] and gave utterance to his hope that God may forgive Jerome the damage he had done by his doctrinal teaching;[13] the man was, in Luther's opinion, obviously in need of a wife since with a female companion he would have written so many things in a different way.[14]

But hidden in a footnote of Rebenich's article is also the following sentence, puzzling and striking at the same time, a testimony to the complexity of Luther's relationship with Jerome: "I cannot think of a doctor whom I have come to detest so much, and yet I have loved him and read him with the utmost ardour."[15]

It has long been known that Jerome is one of the authors most referred to by Luther.[16] Luther deeply appreciated and admired Jerome's Hebrew scholarship (the topic of Rebenich's article), which did not prevent him from correcting the "*doctor*" when he deemed it necessary. He also benefitted in a wider sense from Jerome's Biblical scholarship. At the same time he criticized some of Jerome's dogmatic teaching, though in some areas, e.g. the doctrine of grace against the Pelagians, he saw Jerome in agreement with himself and Augustine, against his contemporary Erasmus.[17]

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[10] S. Rebenich, "Jerome: The 'Vir Trilinguis' and the 'Hebraica Veritas'," *VChr* 47 (1993) 50–77, with the following quotation on p. 50; for the following discussion see also Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 15–17.

[11] "Hieronimus ist ein schwetzer wie Erasmus..." (*WA.TR* 4.611 (n. 5009)).

[12] *In Aesopo certe plus est eruditio quam in toto Hieronymo* (*WA.TR* 1.194 (n. 445)).

[13] *Staupicius meus aliquando dicebat*: 'Ich wolt gern wissen, wie der man selig worden' (*ibid.*).

[14] *Ipse vituperat mulieres et loquitur de mulieribus absentibus*. 'Darumb wolt ich yhm gonnen, das er ein weyb het gehabt; so vil ding anders geschriben haben' (*ibid.*).

[15] *Ergo nullum doctorem scio, quem aeque oderim, cum tamen ardentissime eum amaverim et legerim* (*ibid*.).

[16] As suggested by the index of names *WA* 63.211–34 and the index *WA.TR* 6.581.

[17] It is true, as Fürst (*Hieronymus*, 15) points out, that Luther did not rate Jerome the theologian as highly as Augustine, because in his view he had no understanding of Pauline theology in the way Augustine had and therefore had comparatively little to say about Christ and the faith. However, he did appreciate Jerome's support for Augustine in the Pelagian controversy and held it against Erasmus; compare M. Brecht, C. Peters eds., *M. Luther. Annotierungen zu den Werken des Hieronymus*, *AWA* 8 (Köln, 2000) 69–70 (hereinafter cited as "Luther, *Annotierungen*"). Luther's attitude to Jerome was therefore still rather different from that of a modern Lutheran theologian like e.g. A. v. Harnack, for whom Jerome was *doctor ecclesiae Romanae katexochen* who had nothing to say on Christian doctrine; see A. von Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vol. 3 (Tübingen, ^{4}1910) 28 n. 2; on Luther's use of Jerome against Pelagianism and his disappointment at Jerome's

Yet there has been a tendency to neglect Jerome's influence upon Luther. An important reason for this is undoubtedly the way Jerome and his reception in the time of Luther was interpreted in modern scholarship until fairly recently.[18] The predominant cultural memory of Jerome tended to be in stark contrast to that of Luther. It was influenced on the one hand by Medieval representations of bizarre images of eccentric and extreme ascetic practices,[19] including non-Biblical myths and sensationalist miracles, and on the other hand by the role ascribed to Jerome by the Catholic Counter-Reformation, as translator of the Latin (Vulgate) Bible and promotor of typically "Catholic" ecclesiastical traditions like monasticism, clerical celibacy, and the Papacy.

In contrast, more recent scholarship has unearthed a very different memory of Jerome during the Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, dynamic and forward looking, characterized by spiritual and cultural renewal. Exceedingly popular as a saint (in fierce competition with Augustine)[20] he became the patron saint of many pious societies.[21] More significantly, he was also chosen by Humanists, including women,[22] as patron saint. They saw in him the ancient Christian who, despite the dream of *Ep*. 22.30,[23] did not deny his classical education in favour of his Biblical learning and, at any rate, stood for literary, as opposed to scholastic, erudition.[24]

In this scholarly, philological, context Jerome's image now increasingly lost its "Medieval," saintly, features. It was assumed that even in a saint like him one had

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lack of understanding of Paul see also M. Schulze, "Martin Luther and the Church Fathers," 601–9.

[18] A major breakthrough against this tendency was the publication of Rice, *Saint Jerome*.

[19] For further discussion of this feature see Lössl, "Hieronymus—Ein Kirchenvater?," 434.

[20] Compare Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 137–8; Hamm, "Hieronymusbegeisterung," 134–9; Lössl, "Konfessionelle Theologie," 131 n. 52; Lössl, "Hieronymus – Ein Kirchenvater?," 436 n. 33. One famous argument of "Jerome fans" was that Augustine acknowledged Jerome's superiority in *Ep*. 82.33 (*CSEL* 34:385): *Quamquam ... episcopatus presbyterio maior sit, tamen in multis rebus Augustinus Hieronymo minor est*.

[21] Compare Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 64–8; J.M. McManamon, "Pier Paolo Vergerio (The Elder) and the Beginnings of the Humanist Cult of Jerome," *CHR* 71 (1985) 353–71; J.R.L. Highfield, "The Jeronimites in Spain. Their Patrons and Success," *JEH* 34 (1983) 513–33; Lössl, "Konfessionelle Theologie," 131 n. 54.

[22] Compare Rice, *Saint Jerome*, 95–9, on the case of Isotta Nogarola (1418–66) of Verona, who held the official panegyric of the city on the feast of Jerome in 1453.

[23] For a balanced summary and evaluation of this passage see Fürst, *Hieronymus*, 139–44; for a detailed philological analysis N. Adkin, *Jerome on Virginity. A commentary on the* Libellus de virginate servanda *(letter 22)* (Cambridge, 2003).

[24] For the increasing tension between literary and scholastic approaches to Theology in the early sixteenth century see Lössl, "Konfessionelle Theologie," 132 with note 58.

to expect "faults" or "chips."[25] In turn, his life and work could become the subject of meticulous critical study. One of the results of this development was Erasmus' monumental edition of 1516 of Jerome's complete works in nine volumes.[26] The 'monument' of Jerome now consisted in his massive contribution to Biblical and Patristic scholarship. In the same year, 1516, Erasmus also published his edition of and "Annotations" to the New Testament.[27] Luther was to be highly critical of these works, though he also owed them a lot. In the end Erasmus' deeper trouble was to be with the Catholic church.[28] Since his works contained much that could be used by Luther and other reformers to support their views, they were put on the index of prohibited books and eventually replaced by "more orthodox" editions.[29]

It was never in question that when Luther "most ardently read" the works of his "detested" yet "beloved doctor", he was using a copy of Erasmus' edition. Still, it was a small sensation when in 1988 Ulrich Bubenheimer announced that he may have found that copy in the library of the Wittenberg Predigerseminar, containing hundreds of notes.[30] In the mid-1990s Martin Brecht and Christian Peters began preparing an edition of these notes, which was published in 2000.[31] There are two sets of notes from Luther's hand in that edition, an earlier one, which can only be found in one volume (Volume 2), and a later one, which extends across the whole edition. The later set suggests that Luther, at some period in his later life (perhaps in the 1530s or early 1540s), read the whole edition in what seems to have been a *lectio continua* underlining many and sometimes quite extended passages of text, and occasionally inserting marginal notes. The purpose of this reading seems not to have been to collect material for a particular project (e.g. his Bible translation, work on Biblical commentaries, or a polemical work), but simply, and primarily, to read Erasmus' Jerome, so to speak, as a primary source.[32]

The composition of the edition too is of interest in this context. Erasmus' nine *tomi* are bound into five volumes,[33] but these are not all of the same provenance. Volumes 1 and 3–5 (Erasmus' *Tomi* 1, 2 and 5–9) were originally the property of

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[25] For these phrases see Erasmus, *Vita Hieronymi* (ed. Morisi Guerra 73:1354–5): *...expedit etiam saepenumero commissum ceu cicatricem in sanctis agnoscere*.

[26] D. Erasmus, *Omnium operum divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis tomus primus (- nonus), una cum argumentis et scholiis Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (Basel, 1516).

[27] D. Erasmus, *Novum Instrumentum* (Basel, 1516); *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* (Basel, 1516).

[28] Compare Lössl, "Konfessionelle Theologie," 128–9.

[29] For details compare Lössl, "Hieronymus—Ein Kirchenvater?," 443.

[30] U. Bubenheimer, "Unbekannte Luthertexte. Analecta aus der Erforschung der Handschrift im gedruckten Buch," *LJ* 57 (1990) 220–41, 220–34.

[31] Luther, *Annotierungen* (see above note 17). What follows is based on the introduction to this edition.

[32] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.8).

[33] For details see Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.3–4): Volume 1 contains *tomi* 1 and 2, Volume 2 *tomi* 3 and 4, Volume 3 *tomus* 5, Volume 4 *tomi* 6–8, and Volume 5 *tomus* 9.

the Humanist Johannes Rhagius,[34] who from October 1517 until his death in May 1520 lectured in Wittenberg on theological and classical authors and bequeathed his edition to the University Library.[35] But Volume 2 (*Tomi* 3–4) was not part of that edition. It came from another library, perhaps of the Augustinian monastery in Wittenberg.[36] There are no traces of Rhagius' Volume 2 nor of the other parts of the edition to which the present Volume 2 originally belonged. Nor is there a satisfactory explanation as to why and under what circumstances the present set was assembled. It seems that it had been assembled by the time Luther read and annotated it in his later life, with the exception of Volume 2 which contains a set of notes from an earlier period (perhaps as early as 1516), when the parts of the edition that belonged to Rhagius would still have been out of Luther's reach.

Volume 2 therefore contains annotations from both periods. The earlier notes are smaller and written in red ink, the later ones bigger and written in brown ink. The later notes also contain more German phrases.[37] The earliest notes in Volume 2 could date from as early as 1516. We know that Luther was eagerly awaiting Erasmus' edition as early as August 1516.[38] By October he had read Erasmus' critical study of Jerome's life (*Vita Hieronymi*), which opened Volume 1, and criticized Erasmus for what he perceived as a tendency to demean Augustine in favour of Jerome.[39] Early in March 1517, in a letter to his friend Johann Lang, he expressed growing disgust at Erasmus' casual treatment of theological questions in his edition.[40] This means that by now Luther must have had read his way well into the edition. The notes found in Volume 2 unearthed by Bubenheimer provide important evidence in that respect. In what follows all annotations discussed will be from that early period (late 1516, early 1517), unless otherwise indicated.

For Luther the main theological question during that period was concerning the doctrine of justification by faith, and this he found treated precisely in Volume 2 (*Tomi* 3 and 4), which contained, among various other items, mainly letters and polemical works. Thus in the anti-Pelagian letter *Ep*. 133 to Ctesiphon we find underlined a sentence of Jerome's that says that the only kind of perfection open to human beings is the knowledge of their own imperfection,[41] and added at the right margin of that line is a capital letter "N." for *nota*, "Note!". At the bottom of the same page Luther then underlined a quotation from Galatians 2:16 ("No flesh

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[34] Johannes Rhagius Aesticampanus (= Johannes Rack of Sommerfeld / Niederlausitz); compare P. Walter, "Rhagius, Johannes," *BBKL* 8 (1994) 116–19.

[35] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.4).

[36] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.5).

[37] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.7).

[38] Thus Luther in a letter to Georg Spalatin (*WA.B* 1.50 line 12–13 (19)); for this and the following two references compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.7).

[39] Letter to Georg Spalatin (*WA.B* 1.70 line 17–19 (27)).

[40] Letter to Johann Lang (*WA.B* 1.90 line 15–26 (35)).

[41] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.66; *Tomus* 3, fol. 116a, line 1): [Jerome:] *Haec hominibus sola perfectio, si imperfectos esse se noverint*.

will be justified by works of the law") and two words of the ensuing commentary in which Jerome points out that this does not only refer to the Law of Moses, but to every kind of human legislation;[42] and to this Luther writes at the margin: "Note this against those who in our own time think of the sacraments in such terms [i.e., as works]."[43] This is directed against Erasmus, as will become clearer below.

While Luther was disappointed by Erasmus, he was impressed by Jerome. On the next page (fol. 116b) he found this sentence in which Jerome says of himself: "Let me speak of my own frailty: I know that I want to achieve many things that need be done, and yet [I also know that] I am not able to accomplish them."[44] On the margin of this line Luther wrote: "Saint Jerome cites himself as an example."[45] Years later, when reading this passage again and annotating it for the second time, he still seems to have been impressed; for he underlined the sentence with a bold quill stroke, now in brown ink.

His response to Erasmus was different. Two pages further down (fol. 117b) he had this to say to Erasmus' *scholion* on Romans 7:24, where Erasmus argues that when calling himself miserable (*miser ego homo*) Paul did not mean himself, but another person, or power, in himself:[46] "You are wrong, Erasmus. He [Paul] does speak of his own person. Jerome says this quite clearly."[47]

As far as Luther was concerned, Erasmus had not understood Jerome. Pelagius' argument, according to Jerome,[48] had been that in Romans 7:24 Paul did not refer to himself as involuntarily doing bad things, but to bad habit (*mala consuetudo*) as exerting its power in himself as if it were another person in himself. The solution to that problem would have been to tackle the power of that bad habit by asserting more control over the self through ascetic practice. As a result, so the implication, the power causing the bad habit would all but disappear. The self would be in full control. This explanation, according to Jerome, is equivalent to the Stoic teaching of *apatheia*, which had already been refuted by Aristotelians and Academics, and should also be rejected by Christians. But against Jerome Erasmus points out that

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[42] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.67; *Tomus* 3, fol. 116a, line 50): [Jerome:] *Et iterum:* Ex operibus legis non iustificabitur omnis caro [Gal 2:16]. *Quod ne de lege Moysi tantum dictum putes et non* [116b] *de omnibus mandatis*...

[43] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.67; *Tomus* 3, fol. 116a, line 50): [Luther:] *Hoc nota contra eos qui nostro tempore de ceremoniis accipiant*...

[44] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.68; *Tomus* 3, fol. 116b, line 35): [Jerome:] ...*ut de mea fragilitate loquar: novi me multa velle quae facienda sunt, et tamen implere non posse*.

[45] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.68; *Tomus* 3, fol. 116b, line 35): [Luther:] *Exemplum suum praestat beatus Hieronymus*.

[46] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.69; *Tomus* 3, fol. 117b, line 29–30): [Erasmus:] Porro quod Paulus ait: miser ego homo [Rom 7:24] *alienam personam in se transtulit*.

[47] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.70; *Tomus* 3, fol. 117b, line 29–30): [Luther:] *Et tu Erasme erras. De propria persona loquitur. Ut hic Beatus Hieronymus clarissime dicit*.

[48] What follows in this paragraph is an outline of Jerome's argument in *Ep*. 133.1 (*CSEL* 56:242).

in Romans 7:23 Paul had spoken of another law (*alia lex*) active in his body (*in membris meis*), a law of sin (*lex peccati*) lying in conflict with the law of the mind (*lex mentis*). The latter constitutes the real self, created by God, free, and good by nature, the former brings sin into the open and causes death. In 7:24, according to Erasmus, since Paul was still speaking of that law, its identification with the self (*miser ego homo*) had to be understood rhetorically, or metaphorically. The place of the law of sin is the body of this death (*corpus mortis huius*).

This was an accepted interpretation of the verses in early Christianity outside the Pelagian controversy. Erasmus, when making his comment, may have thought of Origen as a possible interpreter, who drew a link between law, sin and death in his exegesis of Romans 7:24,[49] or of Pelagius, who in his commentary on Romans paraphrased the verse as follows: "Who will liberate me from the death-bringing bodily habit?"[50] It was Jerome who, in opposition to Pelagius, and perhaps in an attempt to align himself with Augustine[51] against what he saw as a new version of the Origenist error,[52] argued in favour of a person—rather than principle—centred reading of the passage.[53] This is what Erasmus could not understand: "I wonder," he writes, "why Jerome is so hostile against the Stoic paradox. Nothing could be more Christian, if interpreted correctly."[54] When Luther came across this passage again later in his life, he wrote at the margin sarcastically: "Rightly surprised you are, you Epicurean (*recte demiraris Epicureus*)."[55] In his first set of annotations he was less personal and focusing more on the theological issue as such, i.e. the fact

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[49] Orig. *In Rom*. 7:24 (*PG* 14:1089): *Corpus mortis appellatur, in quo habitat peccatum, quod mortis est causa*. It is clear from the context that *peccatum* is here understood as *lex peccati*.

[50] Pelag. *In Rom.* 7:24 (60.9 Souter): *Quis me liberabit de consuetudine mortifera corporali*? This text is included in *Tomus* 9 of Erasmus' edition, but Luther seems not to have taken any particular interest in it. The manuscript tradition transmits Pelagius' *Expositions of the Pauline Epistles* as a work of Jerome's.

[51] For Jerome's and Augustine's exceptionally genuine agreement on this point compare A. Fürst, "Zur Vielfalt altkirchlicher Soteriologie. Augustins Berufung auf Hieronymus im pelagianischen Streit," in J.B. Bauer ed., *Philophronesis für Norbert Brox* (Graz, 1995) 119–85, 130.

[52] See for this view O. Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius. Die theologische Position der römischen Bischöfe im pelagianischen Streit in den Jahren 411–432* (Stuttgart, 1975) 51–5; E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy. The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, 1992), especially 7 and 11–42.

[53] *Ep*. 133.1 (*CSEL* 56:242): *Hoc est enim hominum ex homine tollere et in corpore constitutum esse sine corpore et optare potius quam docere*..

[54] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.69; *Tomus* 3, fol. 117b, line 24–5): [Erasmus:] *Demiror cur Hieronymus tam iniquus sit huic Stoicorum paradoxo, quo nihil esse possit Christianius, si quis recte interpretetur*.

[55] For the word "Epicurean" as an expression of abuse in (especially the older) Luther see G. Maron, *Martin Luther und Epikur. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des alten Luther* (Göttingen, 1988).

that Erasmus was supporting Pelagius against Jerome, who revealed himself as a veritable Augustinian in his defence of justification by grace.

Thus when Erasmus wrote, "in my view Paul identified himself with the law of sin in a metaphorical sense, to simplify his argument, not because he was troubled by some sort of emotions, since after all he was perfect,"[56] Luther underlined two words, "my" (*mea*) and "perfect" (*perfectus*), adding to "my" at the margin "i.e., false" (*falsa*), and to "perfect" "i.e., Pelagian" (*pelagianus*). And when Erasmus wrote, "I beg you, [Jerome,] what is this against the Stoics? Just because at one time some people were found to be sinners, it does not follow that all men will always be sinners," Luther underlined the expression "I beg you" (*obsecro*) and added in the margin: "You see that Erasmus understands nothing of the nature of grace, and is much more sympathetic towards Pelagius than towards Jerome."[57]

And so it goes on: In *Ep*. 133.3.10 Jerome calls Pelagius' doctrine an offshoot (*ramusculus*) of Origen's.[58] The later Luther wrote on the margins of this sentence "Origen's" (*Origenis*).[59] In 1516 he did not mark the passage. But he did annotate Erasmus' *scholion* on it. The content may have been highly relevant for Luther at the time. Jerome was speaking of nightly pollutions. Origen, he wrote, had taught that a holy man approaching perfection would be free from them. Not even in the sleep would he be troubled by titillating thoughts. For Jerome such a thought was heretical. In his view it was not possible to overcome temptation in this life once and for all. The expectation that it was possible was typical for heretical groups like the Manicheans, Gnostics, Priscillianists, and others who had been the topic of *Ep*. 133.3. Erasmus disagreed. Why, he asked, would Jerome be displeased at the suggestion that an ascetic might become perfect in this life?[60] The fact is that Jerome thought that because of human weakness it was not possible to lead a life entirely without sin. Even for the most perfect human being the possibility to sin, even involuntarily, like in nightly pollutions, was always real. Luther's view was similar. When Erasmus wrote: "However, we do not quasi attribute this degree of integrity to many saints,"[61] Luther underlined part of this clause (*quasi vero*) and

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[56] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.69; *Tomus* 3, fol. 117b, line 44): [Erasmus:] *Video aliam legem* [Rom 7:23]. *Et haec,* mea *sententia, Paulus in suam personam transtulit* [*In Rom* 7:24: *miser ego homo*], *quo minus molesta esset disputatio: non quod ipse iam huiusmodi vexaretur affectibus, utpote* perfectus.

[57] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.70; *Tomus* 3, fol. 117b, line 51): [Erasmus:] Obsecro, *quod haec adversus Stoicos? Neque enim consequitur ex his, omnes semper peccaturos, si semel peccatores deprehensi sunt.* [Luther:] *Vides quod Erasmus nihil intelligat gratiae proprietatem. Et faventior sit Pelagio quam Hieronymo*.

[58] *Ep*. 133.3.10 (*CSEL* 56:247): *Doctrina tua Origenis ramusculus est*.

[59] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.64; *Tomus* 3, fol. 115a, line 42).

[60] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.71; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118a, line 26–35): *Cur nunc usqueadeo displicet, nihil turpe somniare et nihil obscoeni cogitare?*

[61] See Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.71; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118a, line 26–35): …*quasi vero non tribuamus hanc integritatem multis sanctis*.

noted on the left margin: "Or, with Augustine, rather none"; while writing on the right: "See the obvious error" (*vide errorem apertum*).[62]

There is one more annotation on a *scholion* on *Ep*. 133. It throws further light on Luther's character at the time and also touches a somewhat lighter note. In *Ep*. 133.4 Jerome lists a number of early Christian heretics, whom he compares with Pelagius, among them Nicolas of Antioch,[63] the alleged founder of the Nicolaitans, a Gnostic sect.[64] He had probably gleaned their names from a heresiological work like the one compiled in the 370s by his episcopal friend Epiphanius of Salamis,[65] who himself had found them in Irenaeus and Hippolytus. Jerome's account does not provide any historical information. Rather, he treats the names of the heretics like literary set pieces. For instance, he draws up parallel lists of male and female heretics and links them with vices which he alleges them to have had in common, in particular sexual deviations.[66] As David Frankfurter has pointed out in a recent book, there is no reason to believe that any of these accusations was ever based on fact. The obsession with which "reports" particularly of the most deviant practices were handed on and often embellished was not motivated by a quest for historical accuracy. It had other causes.[67] In the light of this it is all the more interesting that in his *scholia* Erasmus provided additional "details" of deviant behaviour (none of it founded on evidence), where Jerome had merely listed names and some general accusations of heresy and immorality. Thus Erasmus writes: "Nicolas: One of the seven deacons [Acts 6:5], who introduced wife swopping beginning with his own, an exceptional beauty. What a generous man (*homo candidus*)!"[68] Of the last word, *candidus*, Luther underlined just the first three letters to mark the word, and noted on the margin: "Ironic. (A singular case of absence of envy;) for if anyone was ever

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[62] Compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.71; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118a, line 26–35): *Jmmo prors(us) nullis cu(m) Aug(ustino) .. Vide Errorem ap(er)tum*.

[63] *Ep*. 133.4.2 (*CSEL* 56:248.2): *Nicolaus Antiochenus*.

[64] The fundamental modern study is A. von Harnack, "The Sect of the Nicolaitans and Nicolaus, the Deacon in Jerusalem," *JR* 3 (1923) 413–22; more recent studies include N. Brox, "Nikolaos und Nikolaiten," *VChr* 19 (1965) 23–30; and, with particular reference to Jerome's mentioning of Nicolas and the Nicolaitans in *Ep*. 133, A. Ferreiro, "Jerome's polemic against Priscillian in His Letter to Ctesiphon (133.4)," *REAug* 39 (1993) 309–32; A. Ferreiro, "Priscillian and Nicolaitans," *VChr* 52 (1998) 382–92.

[65] The *Panarion* ("medicine chest") *omnium haeresium* (*GCS* 25.31.37). On Epiphanius' sources and his treatment of Nicolas and the Nicolaitans compare A. Pourkier, *L'hérésie chez Epiphane de Salamine* (Paris, 1992) 291–341.

[66] Compare Ferreiro, "Jerome's Polemic" 316–19; Ferreiro, "Priscillian" 390–91.

[67] Compare D. Frankfurter, *Evil Incarnate. Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Satanic Abuse in History* (Princeton, 2006), especially 104–8.

[68] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.71; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118a, line 39f.): *Ni- / colaus.) Vnus e septe(m) diaconis, uxores fecit co(m)munes exorsus a sua, qua(m) habuit formosissima(m), homo can- / didus*.

free of jealousy, it was this man."[69] It seems that neither Erasmus nor Luther took this material seriously in historical terms. But they transmitted it, even putting some moral gloss on it, while all the while, it seems, relishing the opportunity to crack a schoolboy joke. In this area, rather than turning against Erasmus, Luther turns out to be a keen disciple of Erasmus and Jerome.

In Erasmus' edition *Ep*. 133 to Ctesiphon is followed by the "Dialogue between Atticus and Critobulus," also known as "Dialogue against the Pelagians."[70] Here we find yet more striking evidence of Luther's early doctrine of justification by faith alone. To begin with, in the preface Jerome states as his philosophical aim in this work, which he classes as a Socratic dialogue,[71] the refutation of the doctrine that complete freedom from emotion, *apatheia*, can be achieved in the present life and by human effort alone. This doctrine, which he traces back to the Stoics and to the Old Academy, he then attributes to all the heretics whom he had already listed in *Ep*. 133 and of whom he now provides once more a comprehensive list. Luther's interest, however, is not particularly in this list. His first annotation consists in an underlining of the phrase "Socratic practice," *Socraticorum consuetudinem*, where Jerome describes the method of his discussion. Then, a few lines further down, he underlined a second phrase, consisting of three words, *illud autem Origenis*, "that however is one of Origen's very own statements"; *proprium est*, Jerome adds, but Luther underlines only the first three words and then adds on the margin: *Origenis sententia*, "Origen's own words."[72] The sentence in question is a saying attributed by Jerome to Origen that while it is impossible not to sin throughout one's earthly life, it is possible that after one's conversion one gains so much in moral strength that one ceases to sin henceforth.

Already in the preface Jerome had criticized Origen for trying to mix the "pagan" doctrine of *apatheia* with Christian teaching.[73] Here now he cites him quasi as the grandfather of the heresy in question. As the dialogue unfolds, Critobulus, who in the dialogue represents the Pelagian side, argues for a position based on the same premise: Does not the first letter of John say that anyone born from God does not sin (1 John 5:18–19), he asks? That is not the meaning of that passage, Atticus (= Jerome) answers; for the letter also says that if we claimed to be without sin, we would be lying (1 John 1:8). Rather, we have to confess our sins. Only then Christ will forgive us our sins (1 John 1:9). And it is at this point, following this raft of quotations from Scripture that Atticus (= Jerome) says: "Therefore, only then are

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[69] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.71; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118a, line 39f.): *Ironice (i[d] e[st] sine Jnuidia singulari[um]) / quia null(us) e(st) sine zelotypia nisi iste solus*.

[70] *Adv. Pelag.* (*CCSL* 80:3–124), in Erasmus' edition *Tomus* 3, fol. 118b–49b.

[71] *Adv. Pelag*. prol. (*CCSL* 80:4.22–3): *Hic liber ... Socraticorum consuetudinem conservabit, ut ex utraque parte quid dici possit exponat*.

[72] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.72; *Tomus* 3, fol. 118b, line 15–16).

[73] Compare *Adv. Pelag*. prol. (*CCSL* 80:3.11–12): *Quorum* [*i.e. Stoicorum et Peripateticorum*] *sententias ... Origenes Ecclesiasticae veritati in Stromatibus suis miscere conatur*.—"Origen, in his Stromateis, tried to mix their sentences with the church's truth."

we just, when we confess that we are sinners," *tunc ergo iusti sumus, quando nos peccatores fatemur*.[74] It is this sentence which Luther underlines, and to which he writes on the margin: "Definition of the just: That is, earnestly to accuse oneself:" *Deffinitio Justi: Est serio accusare seipsum*."[75]

As in Augustine, the only word Luther would have been missing here in view of what would become his own definition of the believer, justified by faith alone, *simul iustus et peccator*, was *simul*. He was disappointed by Augustine that he did not find it in his work.[76] But if he did not even find it in Augustine, how could he have expected to find it in Jerome? Remarkably, he still found enough in Jerome to have his own approach confirmed by a venerable Patristic tradition, against the dead pan criticism of a modern Humanist theologian like Erasmus.

Interestingly, a few pages further on Luther does criticize Jerome over against Augustine, in a passage where Jerome concedes, in a reference to Galatians 2:13–14, that Paul (*ipse apostolus*) said of Peter that he had not acquired straight away the truth of the Gospel and was therefore blameworthy (*reprehensibilis*) inasmuch as Barnabas too was misled into displaying the same hypocritical behaviour. Here Luther notes on the margin: "Here he [i.e. Jerome] concedes that Peter had erred, something he consistently denied against Augustine" (i.e. in his correspondence with Augustine).[77]

A last example from Luther's study of the "Dialogue against the Pelagians": It illustrates how Luther was also imagining his thoughts in graphic and schematic terms. On the margin of a passage alluding to Hebrews 7:26, where it says that the high priest who prays for the people must first, on account of his own sinfulness, offer a sacrifice for himself,[78] Luther writes the following sequence of words in the schematic way as presented here:

		se	*Peccator*
Sacerdos offert pro		*quia*	
		aliis	*Iustus.*

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[74] *Adv. Pelag.* 1.13 (*CCSL* 80:15.14–15).

[75] Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.73; *Tomus* 3, fol. 120b, line 23–4).

[76] Thus A. Schindler, "Rechtfertigung bei Augustin und im reformatorischen Streit," in C. Mayer, A. Grote, Ch. Müller eds., *Gnade—Freiheit—Rechtfertigung: Augustinische Topoi und ihre Wirkungsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 2007) 41–72, 65, referring to Luther's reading of Augustine's *De spiritu et littera* 15: "Luther was not entirely happy with Augustine."

[77] Compare *Adv. Pelag*. 1.23 (*CCSL* 80:29.4–8): *Si enim ipse Apostolus dicit de Petro quod non recto pede incesserit in Evangelii veritate, et in tantum reprehensibilis fuerit ut et Barnabas adductus sit in eandem simulatione, quis indignabitur id sibi denegari quod princeps apostoloum non habuit*? Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.75; *Tomus* 3, fol. 123a, line 26): *Hic concedit Petru(m) errasse, q(uo)d ta(m) co(n)stanter negat aduersus Aug:(ustinum)*. This note too is from the early period. For Jerome's position in the correspondence with Augustine see A. Fürst, *Augustins Briefwechsel mit Hieronymus* (Münster, 1999) 1–176.

[78] *Adv. Pelag*. 1.33 (*CCSL* 80:41.27–8):...*pontifex qui pro cuncto populo deprecatur, ante pro se offerat victimas*.

Here once more the arrangement of the words *peccator* and *iustus* is striking in the light of the concept which Luther developed at the time of the simultaneity of being sinner and righteous (justified) in Christ.

So much specifically on the early set of annotations in Volume 2. Looking at both sets of annotations across the whole edition there are many more interesting features worth noting. Two may be singled out before we come to a conclusion. Luther seems to have been a keen student of Jerome the Bible translator, exegete, and interpreter. This is important in the light of Luther's own importance in that respect. A survey of Luther's career as Biblical scholar reads almost as if he had aimed at emulating Jerome.[79] In individual cases Luther disagreed with Jerome on text-critical points,[80] or with his Hebrew.[81] But far more frequently he carefully marked Jerome's comments in a way that suggests that he agreed with them and learnt from them.[82]

One area in which his reliance on Jerome as exegetical guide is quite striking is that of Old Testament prophecy. As the annotations from his second reading of the edition suggest, he seems to have closely read almost all of the commentaries on Old Testament prophets. He made only a few notes, but he underlined many and extensive passages. This is interesting in the light of the fact that one of Jerome's achievements for his time in the Latin West was his detailed typological exegesis of Old Testament books through which he related most prophecies to Christ and the church. Today we know, of course, that he was not original in doing this, but gleaned from Origen and others. But in the West he was at the time largely alone and unique in providing a detailed and comprehensive exegetical account of the whole of the Old Testament.

Notoriously, in his later life Luther developed a paranoid Antisemitism which also affected his understanding of the Bible and its prophetic message.[83] In early Christianity the possibility that the Christian message was proved wrong by the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and a return of the Jews to the Holy Land was perceived as a real threat.[84] The apocalyptic end time vision of Revelation 19:11–21:8 competed with similar Jewish models. It is therefore understandable that there was a tendency to interpret it literally, in a Millennialist sense, though

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[79] See for this H. Blanke, "Bibelübersetzung," in Beutel, *Luther-Handbuch*, 258–65.

[80] Compare for example Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.168; *Tomus* 5, fol. 74b, line 30–32), on Hier. *In Es*. 42.4 (*CCSL* 73A:480.56–8): *Quod autem sequitur: Splendebit et non conteretur: donec ponat super terram iudicium, Matthaeus evangelista non posuit* (Matthew 12:20): *sive, inter iudicium et iudicium media, scriptoris errore sublata sunt*; where Luther underlines the last clause and writes on the margin "*Non.*"

[81] For examples compare Luther, *Annotationes* (*AWA* 8.93–5; *Tomus* 4, fol. 17a–b) on Hier. *Ep*. 73 *ad Evangelum presbyterum de Melchisedech* (*CSEL* 55:13–23).

[82] For examples see Lössl, "Hieronymus—ein Kirchenvater?," 440 n. 58.

[83] Compare H.-M. Kirn, "Luther und die Juden," in Beutel, *Luther-Handbuch*, 217–24, 220–3.

[84] See for this M. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem* (London, 2007) 500.

there was also a strong anti-Millennial tendency in early Christian eschatology.[85] As time went on, this tendency became stronger and exegetes tended to interpret Old and New Testament prophecy more and more in spiritual terms, though they did not necessarily spiritualize the Biblical message entirely. This is true of earlier authors like Victorinus of Poetovium and Tyconius, and also of their later editors, Jerome[86] and Augustine.[87] Augustine seems to have held Millenialist views until he discovered Tyconius' doctrine of recapitulation which seemed to allow him to combine a historical and spiritual understanding of the end.[88] But the question has been asked how well he understood Tyconius' concept.[89] At any rate, the lack of coherence of the original text of Revelation made it an impossibility to interpret it entirely literally. On the other hand, a degree of literalism was always retained in early Christianity, even when the spiritual interpretation became dominant.[90]

It is largely because of the influence of Augustine's works (in particular the *City of God* and *De doctrina christiana*) that Augustine's and Tyconius' interpretation of the millennium are considered more influential than Jerome's new edition of Victorinus' commentary on Revelation. However, Luther's close reading of Jerome's commentaries and his reliance on Jerome's comprehensive exegesis of all the canonical texts of the Bible indicates that in order to guarantee the survival of Christianity as a religion it was not sufficient to provide it with a synthetic philosophy of history, but it was necessary to provide a comprehensive, point by point, explanation of all the relevant Old Testament texts. Only that would guarantee that these texts found in the Jewish Bible had ultimately Christian meanings. This was vital in view of the fact that Judaism as a religion had not gone away but existed side by side with Christianity.

It may be something of an irony at the end of a paper like this to find that the eschatological typologies of Jerome, which were to some degree an attempt to

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[85] Compare J. Lössl, "'Apocalypse? No.' The Power of Millennialism and Its Transformation in Late Antique Christianity," in A. Cain, N. Lenski eds., *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot, 2009).

[86] Compare M. Dulaey, "Jérôme, Victorin de Poetovio et le millénarisme," in Y.-M. Duval ed., *Jérôme entre l'Occident et l'Orient: XVIe centenaire du départ de saint Jérôme de Rome et de son installation à Bethléem. Actes du colloque de Chantilly, septembre 1986* (Paris, 1988) 83–98; M. Dulaey, "Jérôme, éditeur du commentaire sur l'Apocalypse de Victorin de Poetovio," *REAug* 37 (1991) 199–236.

[87] Compare K. Pollmann, "'Apocalypse Now?!'—Der Kommentar des Tyconius zur Johannesoffenbarung," in: W. Geerlings, Ch. Schulze eds., *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden, 2002) 33–54.

[88] See M. Dulaey, "A quelle date Augustin a-t-il pris ses distances vis-à-vis du millénarisme?" *REAug* 46 (2000) 31–60.

[89] See M. Dulaey, "La sixième Règle de Tyconius et son résumé dans le *De doctrina christiana*," *REAug* 35 (1989) 83–103.

[90] Compare T.J. Bauer, *Das tausendjährige Messiasreich der Johannesoffenbarung* (Berlin et al., 2007) 6–7.

defuse the more radical Millennialism of Victorinus of Poetovium (which was itself already an attempt to tone down yet more radical, earlier, forms) may have taken the edge off some of the uglier sides of Luther's Antisemitism, so that the unfashionable, backward looking, un-modern, catholic procrastinated Jerome would have had something to teach to the "modern, forward looking" Martin Luther. As already Rebenich and Fürst have shown, the attitude is changing. The edition of the Annotations by Brecht and Peters provides plenty of new evidence for this, which sheds new light not only on Martin Luther, but also on his teacher, Jerome of Stridon.

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